

tightening here, setting straight there; one or two remained on deck watching the less fortunate boats as they raced up, the foam flying from their bows, and passed on to occupy the outer stations. How fine was the view from that fishing boat. As I lay upon the sails and looked around I could not help asking myself how it was that so many know absolutely nothing of half the beautiful scenes which are to be found at home in their own country, and wondering, and trying to discover for myself what strange impulse it is that drives men to the furthest corners of the earth in pursuit of pleasure which they may find at their very doors. Seagulls were circling listlessly around the boat, floating lazily on the water or skimming between the crests of the waves, now and again a gannet would dash headlong into the sea making the very water foam again as he plunged far below after some hapless fish. Around us lay the boats, some few were near the land, scores were scattered far as the eye could reach to west and south, whilst here and there some larger craft, a coaster, or stately merchant man or steamer bound down channel gave variety to the picture; such was the view looking seaward. Landward, blue in the distance, lay England's westernmost bulwark, the rugged, inhospitable, storm-swept Land's End, which has for countless ages stood an impregnable rampart against the waves of the Atlantic. I had myself from that point of vantage watched the struggle between the elements; the water lashed into perfect fury by the south-west gale, battling against those rocks, rocks worn and seamed, showing ghastly marks of the conflict, the huge waves plunging against, bursting with noise like thunder on the land, hurling far overhead great blinding clouds of spray. Now in the distance, softened, evened down, it appeared a low line of hills on the margin of the water, of Mount's bay, which swept in a noble inland. Penzance was no longer visible, nor were the white sands of Marazion, but St. Michael's Mount, Trevaas Head, and nearer still the iron bound coast between Mullion and the Lizard, with the intervening coves and stretches of silvery sand, smiling fields, and struggling little fishing villages appearing as if almost clinging to the rocks, formed a perfect picture. I sat and drank a deep full draught, then envied, aye envied, for, even at such moments, the baser feelings will intrude themselves; envied those who had the power to make their canvass speak, who can reproduce in tints and shades less beautiful yet still so like, those glorious scenes which we can only gaze at for the time, then must forget. I hardly heeded that the evening was creeping on, hardly noticed that the wind was gradually freshening, that the boat was rolling more and more with the rising swell, that the hour for shooting the nets drew on.

It was perhaps seven; the sun was just touching the horizon, all was preparation on board the boat. The crew, each man had a place assigned to him, worked with a will, and soon a dark line of corks bobbed up and down upon the rollers as the train of nets was paid "shot"

over the side of the boat to be drifted down by the tide. How those men worked, net after net was fastened securely to the footline—a strong rope, which by its weight, sinks the lower end or foot of the net, which thus, as the head is buoyed up with corks forms a perfect wall in the water—and sent overboard, some forty-five pieces, in all a train perhaps a mile and a half in length; then down with the mast to ease the rolling a little, supper, arrange the watches, and turn in or sit about the stove in the little cabin and listen to yarns of storms, of wrecks, of fishing experiences and fishing boats, till the rising of the moon when the nets would be hauled. I spent part of the time on deck watching the little points of light bobbing up and down all around us, now lost for a moment, hidden by the intervening waves, and again flashing up all the more brightly when raised for the moment on the breast of a larger roller. These were the lights of the boats, lights which all fishing boats must, in accordance with regulations display, when riding or drifting with their nets. I listened to the stories for a time and slept for the remainder.

Between eleven and twelve I was awakened by a great clattering and pounding of feet overhead. I turned out and clambered on deck, how the wind was blowing, keen and strong, how the boat was pitching, it required a man to have his sea legs well under him she was so lively, in fact the night was what might be called ugly; we had had what the sailor would call a short slant of fine weather, the bad weather had left us but for a brief spell and was now returning; the nets however must be hauled, and so the men took up their positions in the bows to pull on the nets, and ships to lift them overboard and to take out the fish; in the net room to stow these away, and so to stow that damages might be repaired, or fresh nets put in without all having again to be disturbed; at the capstan, to heave the top line, and in the rope room to coil this away. The night being bad, the work was heavy on all hands. I assisted at the capstan, this when the strain is great as is generally the case when a heavy sea is running, is fitted with a pair of handles so that two men can work at the same time. Well, we worked for two, for three, for more than three hours, kept comparatively cool by the wind and the spray, which now and again dashed over us wetting us to the skin; the work was much too warm to allow of "oils" being worn. Meanwhile the others toiled away at the nets; how beautiful these looked as they were lifted from the water, dripping with living fire, *briming* as the fishermen express it. It was perfectly fascinating, every mesh of the net beaded with innumerable globules of light, semi-transparent, phosphorescent. Now they streamed off in a broad undulating band of light, then separated and mingled with their myriad brethren; the sea all around was brilliant with them; sometimes too, when the surface currents of the water would turn the nets aslant, fathom upon fathom, far as the eye could see, floating just beneath the surface,