

Presence coming into the hushed and vacant air, as Religion, daughter of the skies, descends to earth to bring peace and good will to men.

HENRY M. FIELD.

A WONDERFUL DELIVERANCE.

BY J. HUDSON TAYLOR.

The 19th of September, 1853, a little service was held in the stern cabin of the "Dumfries," which had been secured for me. Our voyage had a rough beginning, but many had promised to remember us in constant prayer. No small comfort was this, for we had scarcely got outside the Mersey when a violent equinoctial gale caught us, and for twelve days we were beating backwards and forwards in the Irish Channel, unable to get out to sea. The gale increased. When we had been out nearly a week we lay to for a time, but, drifting on a lee coast, were compelled at last to make sail and endeavor to beat off to windward. The utmost efforts of the captain and crew, however, were unavailing, and on Sunday night, September 25th, we found ourselves drifting into Carnarvon Bay, each tack becoming shorter, until at last we were within about a stone's throw of the rocks. About this time, as the ship, which had refused to stay, was put round the other way, the Christian captain said to me, "We cannot live half an hour now; what of your call to labor for the Lord in China?"

I had previously passed through a time of great conflict, but that was over, and it was a great joy to feel and to tell him I would not for any consideration be in any other position; and I strongly expected to reach China: but if otherwise, at any rate the Master would say it was well that I was found obeying his command. Within a few minutes after wearing ship the captain walked up to the compass and said to me, "The wind has freed two points; we shall be able to beat out of the bay," and so we did. And, though the bowsprit was sprung and the vessel seriously strained, in a few days we got out to sea, and the necessary repairs were so thoroughly effected on board that our journey to China was in due time completed.

The voyage, however, was a very tedious one. We lost a good deal of time on the Equator from calms, and when finally we reached the Eastern Archipelago (the monsoon being against us it was needful

to take the eastern passage) we were again detained for the same cause. Usually a breeze would spring up soon after sunset and last until about dawn. The utmost use was made of it, but during the day we lay still, with the sails flapping, often drifting back and losing a great deal of what we had gained during the night. This happened notably one day when we were in a dangerous position to the north of New Guinea.

Saturday night had brought us to a position some thirty miles off the land, but during the Sunday morning service, which was held on deck, I could not fail to notice the captain look troubled and frequently go to the side of the ship. When the service was over I learned from him the cause—a four-knot current was carrying us rapidly towards some sunken reefs, and we were already so near that it seemed improbable that we should get through the afternoon. After dinner the long boat was put out and all hands endeavored, without success, to turn the ship's head around from the shore. As we drifted nearer we could see the natives plainly rushing about the sands, lighting fires here and there. The captain's horn book informed him that these people were cannibals, so our position was not a little alarming.

After standing together some time in silence on the deck, the captain said to me, "Well, we have done everything that can be done; we can only await the result." The thought occurred to me and I replied, "No, there is one thing we have not done yet." "What is it?" he said. I replied, "Four of us on board are Christians" (the carpenter and our colored steward were Christians, as well as the captain and myself); "let us each retire to his own cabin and in agreed prayer ask the Lord to send immediately a breeze. He can as easily send it now as at sunset."

The captain agreed to the proposal. I went and spoke to the other two men, had some united prayer with the carpenter, and we all four retired to wait on God. I had a good but very short time in prayer, and felt so satisfied that the prayer was heard that I could not continue asking, so very soon I went on deck again. The first officer, a godless man, was in charge of the deck watch. I went up to him and asked him to let down the clews or corners of the mainsail (the corners of the sail were drawn up to lessen chafe from the flapping