

"It may, my dear, it may," she said; "but it isn't the *maybes* that'll comfort you, my lamb. You must trust the Lord."

"I do," I said; "indeed I do. But he promises us no security from danger—none from any danger, does he?"

"Well, Mrs. Kitty," she said, "I can't say I think he do; but he promises to care for us; and he tells us to trust; and we must—my dear, we must!"

And when Betty had gone I did kneel down, and I proved what she said to be true. I proved that all possible promises are included and absorbed by that one, "I will never leave thee" that all hopes of deliverance are weak to sustain, compared with simple trust in the Deliverer.

I would not blot out the lessons of that night for twice its pain. For, at last, I was able to put out the light and lie down in the darkness, without shuddering, alone with the storm; although the rush of wind up the valley, as gust after gust broke against the house, made the branches of the old elms strain and groan like a ship's timbers, and the windows rattle, and the old house tremble to its foundations. For the tones of an enemy's voice had passed from the tempest. I could take refuge with the arm that wielded it, for me and mine. And this is something to prove; for it would, doubtless, have been easier to have been at sea by Hugh's side than in that quiet chamber; far easier to have been tossing helplessly, as I thought he might be, from the crest of one wave to the trough of another, feeling the ship stagger at every blow of the waves, than to lie there, safe and sheltered, listening to the winds as it surged up the valley after lashing the sea into fury.

In the morning Betty came to me as I was dressing, her face white, and her eyes large with fear. Toby, she said, had just come down from the cliffs, and had said there was a dismantled ship, of British build, out of her course and quite unmanageable, making as fast as she could the fatal rocks at the entrance of the little bay. He was going back to his cottage, with two or three of his class, to pray for the crew; and then they were to keep watch on the points of the coast from which help was most practicable, ready to throw ropes, or to render any possible assistance.

None of us could rest in the house with such a catastrophe at hand. Father and Roger went up on the cliff to join the old seamen and the fishermen already there. Evelyn and I tried to accompany them, but we could not stand before the wind; and it was arranged that we, with mother and Betty, should remain in Toby's cottage, keeping up the fire—taking thither blankets and warm wraps and all kinds of restoratives, in case any of the shipwrecked crew could be rescued.

But that moment on the cliffs had

been enough to imprint the terrible sight on our hearts forever.

Dismasted, helpless, full, we knew, of our countrymen driven on our own shores—the shore they had been eagerly looking for so long—to perish!

Not one of us spoke a word as we busied ourselves in making every possible preparation, or in the still more terrible moments of inaction which followed, when every possible preparation had been made.

Then Toby came for an instant to the door and shouted: "There is hope! There is hope! Don't give over praying! She is jammed in between two rocks. If she can hold together till the ebb, there is hope!"

A sob of relief broke from us all, and we knelt down together. But no one could utter a word.

Soon Toby came again.

"They are making signals!" he said. "We have made signals to them to wait. But either they don't make us out, or she won't hold together. One of them is tying a rope round him to throw himself into the sea. We can see him from the beach. We could make him hear if it wasn't for the roar of the wind and the sea."

Then we could remain in the cottage no longer. Evelyn and I went back with Toby to the point on the beach nearest the wreck.

"He hopes to reach us, and get the rest in by the rope," said Toby; "but he'll never do it—the sea is too wild."

And then, in a low tone,—
"He must know the coast. He is climbing the slippery rock at the only point it can be climbed, where Master Hugh and I used to hunt for gulls' nests."

He stopped. His eye met mine. "Oh, Mrs. Kitty, take heart, take heart!" he said; "Master Hugh knows what he is about, and the Lord'll never let him be lost."

The form we were watching plunged from the rock and disappeared beneath the waves. There was a shout among the fishermen. Again another; he had reappeared above the breakers. Then again a terrible, breathless silence.

What happened next I did not see. A mist came before my eyes, blotting out sound and sight.

And the next thing of which I was conscious was waking up in Toby's cottage, with my head on mother's bosom, and seeing some one stretched on Toby's little bed beside the fire, but not too close; while Toby and Betty, on each side, were chafing the hands and feet, and the face was motionless and pale as death.

But slowly, almost before I was fully conscious, his breast heaved slightly; the eyes feebly opened and met mine; and the next instant I was kneeling beside Hugh.

They had been chafing and rubbing, and trying every means of restoration for an hour; and it was only just before I recovered consciousness that the first faint gasp, the first pale flush of colour, gave any signs of returning life.

But, as I knelt there beside him, his eyes opened again, and rested with such rest on mine, and he rather breathed than said, so faint was his voice,—

"Aro the rest saved?"
And Toby answered,—

"They're all saved—all. The Lord bless you, Master Hugh. The waves which dashed you, a drowned man as we thought, on the beach, did not break the rope which bound you to the wreck. Three of the boldest clung to that and were saved at once, and all the rest when the tide went out."

Then Hugh was satisfied, and asked no more questions, but kept firm hold of my hand and closed his eyes. His lips moved, tears pressed slowly out from under his closed eyelids, and an expression of unutterable peace settled on his face.

Before night we were all kneeling there beside him, the shipwrecked crew around the door, while in feeble, but distinct tones, he was thanking God whose mercies are "new every morning," whose "mercy endureth for ever."

That is the way in which God has answered a thousand prayers at once.

Life was given back to the perishing by Toby's fireside, and through his hands. The wrecker's house of death became a threshold of life. The den of thieves became a house of prayer.

And Hugh is given back to me. That was the first service in which Hugh led the prayers and praises of his flock. A "prosperous journey" had indeed been given him—such as was given to St. Paul of old—beyond all we could have dared to ask.

He had reached his native shores in a nobler triumph than if he had been convoyed by all the King's fleet, and greeted by a royal salute, cast on the beach a shipwrecked man, all but dying for those he had plunged into the waves to rescue.

The "amens" of his first thanksgiving service had been sobbed from the lips of those whose lives he had risked his own to save.

We accept it as a token.
When "the storm of life is past;" when we wake to our first thanksgiving service on the other shore, will there (oh, will there not?) be such a company of rescued men and women around us then?—rescued from wreck more fatal—pouring out their praises, not indeed to us, but to him who loved us all and redeemed us all to God by his blood; not at the risk of his life only, but, by giving it up, redeemed us not from hell to heaven only, but from sin to God.

For the storms never cease on earth. And even when Mr. Whitefield, and the Wesleys, and John Nelson, and Silas Told, have passed from this world, with all the noble men and women who work with them, rescuing wrecked souls from destruction, and chafing fainting hearts into life, Hugh says the storms will still continue, and the wrecks. For till heaven and earth

shall pass away, the work of rescuing the lost will have to begin again, generation by generation, and day by day.

But there is no fear, Hugh is sure, but that with the storms God will send the deliverers; the new workmen for the old work of rescue from the old perils, waking the new song of redemption, fresh as the first, in every heart that learns it fresh from heaven.

THE END.

Which is the Mother.

You have all heard of the judgment of Solomon—what he did when two mothers claimed the same baby.

Curiously enough, the same idea seems to have suggested itself to a Chinese mind in a similar dilemma.

This is the story:

Two women came before a mandarin in China, each of them protesting that she was the mother of a little child they had brought with them. They were so eager and so positive that the mandarin was sorely puzzled. He retired to consult with his wife, who was a wise and clever woman, whose opinion was held in great repute in the neighbourhood.

She requested five minutes in which to deliberate. At the end of that time, she spoke:

"Let the servants catch me a large fish in the river," she commanded: "and let it be brought me here alive."

This was done.
"Bring me now the infant," she said; "but leave the women in the outer chamber."

This was done, too. Then the mandarin's wife caused the baby to be undressed, and its clothes put on the large fish.

"Carry the creature outside now, and throw it into the river in the sight of the two women."

The servant obeyed her orders, flinging the fish into the water, where it rolled about and struggled, disgusted, no doubt, by the wrappings in which it was swaddled.

Without a moment's pause, one of the mothers threw herself into the river with a shriek. She must save her drowning child.

"Without a doubt, she is the true mother," she declared. And the mandarin nodded his head, and thought his wife the wisest woman in the "Flowery Kingdom."

Meantime, the false mother crept away. She was found out in her imposture; and the mandarin's wife forgot all about her, in the occupation of dressing the little baby in the best silks she could find in her wardrobe.—*Jewish Free Press.*

It is the habitual thought that frames itself into our life. It affects us even more than our intimate social relations do. Our confidential friends have not so much to do in shaping our lives as thoughts have which we harbour.—*F. W. Teat.*