

emplary Churchman (when next brought up before him). These things weighed with me a little, it is useless to deny ; but my main desire was that the parish should see me there, and know that I was not abroad on a long-shore expedition, but was ready to hold up my head on a Sunday with the best of them, as I always had done.

At one time, while I ate my breakfast, I had some idea perhaps that it would be more pious almost, and create a stronger belief in me, as well as ease my own penitance with more relief of groaning, if I were to appear in the chapel of the Primitive Christians, after certain fish were gutted. But partly the fear of their singing noise (unsuitable to my head that morning after the hollands at Sker-house), and partly my senses that after all it was but forecastle work there, while the church was quarter-deck, and most of all the circumstance that no magistrate ever went there, led me, on the whole, to give the preference to the old concern, supported so bravely by royalty. Accordingly to church I went, and did a tidy stroke of business, both before and after service, in the way of lobsters.

We made a beautiful dinner that day, Bunny and I, and mother Jones, who was good enough to join us ; and after slipping down to see how my boat lay for the tide, and finding her as right as could be, it came into my head that haply it would be a nice attention, as well as ease my mind upon some things that were running in it, if only I could pluck up spirit to defy the heat of the day, and challenge my own weariness by walking over to Sker-Manor. For of course the whole of Monday, and perhaps of Tuesday too, and even some part of Wednesday (with people not too particular), must be occupied in selling my great catch of Saturday ; so I resolved to go and see how the little visitor was getting on, and to talk with her. For though, in her weariness and wandering of the night before, she did not seem to remember much, as was natural at her tender age, who could tell what might have come to her memory by this time, especially as she was so clever ? And it might be a somewhat awkward thing if the adventures which I felt really must have befallen her should happen to be

contradicted by her own remembrance ! for all I wanted was the truth ; and if her truths contradicted mine, why, mine must be squared off to meet them ; for great is truth, and shall prevail.

I thought it as well to take Bunny with me, for children have a remarkable knack of talking to one another, which they will not use to grown people ; also the walk across the sands is an excellent thing for young legs, we say, being apt to crack the skin a little, and so enabling them to grow. A strong and hearty child was Bunny, fit to be rated A.B. almost, as behoved a fine sailor's daughter. And as proud as you could wish to see, and never willing to give in ; so I promised myself some little sport in watching our Bunny's weariness, as the sand grew deeper, and yet her pride, to the last declaring that I should not carry her.

But here I reckoned quite amiss, for the power of the heat was such—being the very hottest day ever I knew out of the tropics, and the great ridge of sand-hills shutting us off from any sight of the water—that my little grandchild scarcely plodded a mile ere I had to carry her. And this was such a heavy job among the deep dry mounds of sand, that for a time I repented much of the over-caution which had stopped me from using my beautiful new boat at once, to paddle down with the ebb to Sker, and come home gently afterwards with the flow of the tide towards evening. Nevertheless, as matters proved, it was wiser to risk the broiling.

This heat was not of the sun alone (such as we get any summer's day, and such as we had yesterday), but thickened heat from the clouds themselves, shedding it down like a burning-glass, and weltering all over us. It was, though I scarcely knew it then, the summing-up and crowning period of whole weeks of heat and drought, and indeed of the hottest summer known for at least a generation. And in the hollows of yellow sand, without a breath of air to stir, or a drop of moisture, or a firm place for the foot, but a red and fiery haze to go through, it was all a man could do to keep himself from staggering.

Hence it was close upon three o'clock, by the place the sun was in, when Bunny