

# The Home Mission Journal

A record of Missionary, Sunday-School and Temperance work, and a reporter of church and ministerial activities, and general religious literature. Published semi-monthly. All communications, whether containing money or other wise are to be addressed to

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As we have decided to stop publishing the paper at the close of this year, and as many of our subscribers are asking us to give the whole of the story, "Cruising for the Cross," before the paper stops, we shall have to give it more space in the remaining issues than we have heretofore, consequently there will be less other reading matter than usual.

## Cruising for the Cross.

By Rev. C. A. S. Dwight.

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### CHAPTER XV.

John Henton and his sister loved to be on deck as the staunch and spacious yacht, which seemed almost alive with the poetry of motion, ploughed its way onward through the broad billows that rolled grandly up in stately succession from the latitude of the Cape. John Henton was a true sailor, and while he utilized steam as occasion required it, he felt that in the tapering masts, graceful spars, snowy canvas and noble contour of a square-rigged ship or bark it is to be found the finest type of marine architecture; and on such a craft, which draws its motive power from the winds of heaven, is to be found the most romantic and exhilarating style of sea life. Henton loved to study and speculate on the precise amount of "draw" of each sail, the proper slant to be given each yard, and the many questions which continually come up concerning the handling of a man-sparrad ship.

It was a glorious sensation to look abroad over the vast expanse of heaving sea, while the yacht now dipped boldly downward and again rose as if shooting skyward as it met the mighty movement of the sea.

"How grand are the works of the Creator!" was a thought that at least coming again and again to the minds of the young Americans, as their faces were famished by the refreshing breezes that blew with increasing force the farther south the craft, now under press of canvas alone, worked its way. "How like a chip on the eternal surge seems this yacht of ours!" exclaimed Grace, after standing watch one day on the bridge with her brother.

"Yes," replied John, "and yet these vast waves are but as so many globules of mercury rolling in the palm of the great Creator!"

And then, when at times refuge was taken in the deck-house from the dashing spray that came flying over the bows, as though in silvery protest at its temerity in disputing the opposition of the surges, Captain Hardy would be invited in, and to the great delight of his American hosts would spin yarn after yarn, detailing his adventures, which had been many and exciting, as a skipper in the East India trade.

At last the *Glad Tidings*, beating up now close hauled against the wind, after much tacking to and fro, succeeded in creeping by that frowning Cape of Good Hope which has seemed to many a luckless seaman to be the head of the Cape of Terrors. Many a ship alas! was dismasted and torn by the raging seas has never passed that forbidding old headland, but has foundered somewhere off in the yeasty, yearning seas, inattentive in their greed for prey.

When the *Glad Tidings* dropped anchor in Table Bay, off Cape Town, it found that spacious harbor crowded with vessels, chiefly English men-of-war and troop ships. Here, thought Henton, is a fine opportunity for Christian work? He had not been long at Cape Town, before—by means of the same kindly, tactful methods which he had

previously pursued—he succeeded in obtaining access to the cabins and decks of most of the ships about him. Sometimes, indeed, his request for a chance to do gospel work was met by a rough response from some old sea dog; but generally John Henton was cordially received by the officers—whether naval, military or mercantile—for most leaders of men well understand the usefulness of efforts looking to the elevation of seamen and soldiers. Then too, there were several chaplains attached to the ships or regiments, and while a few of these put official red tape before efficiency in Christian labor, the majority cordially welcomed religious help from any quarter, and some of them became fast friends of Henton, whom he met afterwards at other parts of the world to their mutual joy.

Strange feelings overcame Henton, as he gazed away northwards from the heights of Cape Town and thought of the two competing European civilizations in Africa at that time—Boer and British—and also as he reflected that back of those more civilized settlements in South Africa there stretched the great plains and jungles of the Dark Continent, where millions and millions of degraded human beings dragged out a weary existence, with no joys above those purely animal, and with the dread fear ever before them of massacre by a stronger tribe or of deportation into hopeless slavery. "God direct the issue of the coming years," prayed Henton, "so that the issue may mean a new and Christian Africa.

After a stay of some months in Cape Town during which time the engines of the *Glad Tidings* were thoroughly looked over and weakened parts replaced, and a good supply of provisions laid in, the prow of the ship was headed again in the direction of the Indian Ocean, this time passing Mauritius without stopping. The course was laid almost directly for Bombay, which was reached without incident—other than those ceaselessly interesting changes of cloud or climate, or those numberless little happenings which to a true sailor lend interest to a sea voyage.

There at Bombay the *Glad Tidings* was again in touch with the mercantile marine of all nations, and many and glorious were the gospel meetings held on the yacht—and occasionally on some large steamer lying near by at anchor. Henton well realized that the sailors frequenting those ports were missionaries for good or evil wherever they went. The heathen were not likely to be converted by rum soaked, blear-eyed representatives of England or America—simply because they came from so-called Christian lands.

John Henton did his best, therefore, to redeem the men of the sea, whose actions for good or bad are conspicuous before the eyes of all natives in all ports visited, that they might become messengers of a holier faith, rather than debauched sowers of the seeds of corruption, vice and decay.

The arrival of the *Glad Tidings* at Bombay realized a dream which long had charmed the imagination of Grace Henton—to visit India, which more perhaps than any other country in the world is the land of weird romance and metely historic suggestions—the home of subtle magic, unholy necromancy, and uncanny arts, as well as of hybrid faiths, extravagant conceits, debasing superstitions, and cruelties and intrigues innumerable. John and Grace had read many books on India—for the *Glad Tidings*, among its other articles of equipment, carried a well-stocked library, which was at the disposal of all on board—and they were quite familiar with the faiths and philosophies of the Hindus. They had dreamed with the Buddhist of "The Road" they had travelled in thought the painful path of the fakir and the ascetic, only to remind themselves the next moment that the only true road for all mankind is that trod centuries ago by Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Their curiosity was aroused to see for themselves the motly Indian life. At Calcutta accordingly they left the yacht for a few weeks' tour amid Indian scenes, taking care to visit on the way many missionary stations where their coming brought much joy, and whence they in turn took away increased inspiration for Christian service. Of course the Hentons saw many wonderful old palaces and temples and all manner of sights quaint, queer, ludicrous, pathetic and fearful. And equally as a matter of course they were disillusioned of many of their presupposed ideas regarding fairy-like India. When once they came face to face with heathenism at home, on its native heath—heathenism un-

mitigated by an apologist, heathenism bald and bold and beastly, they realized as never before the worth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the sole redeeming agency capable of making out of a naturally corrupt human nature a humanity decently civilized and socially developed. Interested as they were in all the sights and sounds that greeted them in India, the Hentons could not but feel a deep repugnance to the paganism which was so much about them in all its sordidness and squalor, were still.

"The heathen in his blindness,  
Bows down to wood and stone."

It was a great relief to turn from such near contact with dreary, weary paganism to the mission halls, where gospel meetings were being carried on for the riff-raff of sailors of all nationalities who are cast up in Bombay like drift-wood on a beach.

Henton, and some of the members of his crew on whom he particularly relied for help in religious work mingled with the Jackies ashore as much as possible, giving to one a Bible, to another a tract in his own language, whatever that might be, and to a third, a bit of timely counsel. In some instances Henton was the means of righting the wrongs of seamen who had been duped by boarding-house keepers or other land-sharks or maltreated by their officers. Such victims of rapacity ashore or brutality afloat found most unexpectedly a powerful backer in John Henton, who possessed both the money and the influence to bring their persecutors to justice, co-operating as he did in each port visited, with the United States and British consuls in efforts to defend the rights of seamen.

It was an unpleasant surprise to Captain Henton, on one of these tours of mission work in Bombay, to meet two of his own men tumbling unsteadily out of a low dram-shop—one was a rough ex-man-o'-war's-man, Mike Bailey, who had served a term of enlistment in the British Navy and the other was Lascar, nicknamed "Hoggy." As soon as the two tipsy sailors caught sight of Captain Henton they tried in a half-studied way to avoid him. But before they could sink away Bill Saunders blocked their path while Captain Henton demanded in stern tones, "What are you doing here, men? What do you mean by bringing disgrace on the *Glad Tidings* by this sort of low conduct?"

The ex-man-o'-war's man gave a sly grin by way of reply to this reproof, while defiance blazed in the eyes of the dark-faced Lascar.

"Saunders, see that these men get back to the ship at once!" commanded Henton, "No more shore leave for them in Bombay?" he added as the two sailors reeled away, half-led, half-borne along by Saunders and two others of the crew who happened to come along at that moment. But as the Lascar turned away, he shook his fist at his young captain in a way that boded no good to him or to his yacht.

The next day after Captain Henton's encounter with his two drunken sailors on the streets of Bombay, Bill Saunders, the boat swain's mate, approached the captain as he stood on the quarter-deck, and touching his cap said "Cap'n may I have a word with you?"

"Certainly," said Henton, leading the way into his private cabin.

"Cap'n," began Saunders again, "I think it's right to tell you that that Lascar is not a trustworthy hand and I advise you to ship him right here in Bombay."

"Why, Saunders, what has he been up to? I know he has been on a carouse, but do you know anything else out of the way that he has done?"

"No, Cap'n, but I don't like the looks of him. He's a sly dog, and I think he would be better out of the ship than in it!"

"Well, Saunders, I thank you for your warning," replied Henton, "but I don't want to cast any man off, if there's a chance of reforming him. Let us see if we can't convert him, instead of shipping him! I will have a talk with both men. Send them both to me to the mast in turn."

"Aye, aye, sir!" said Saunders. "It's as you say of course!" But as he went out, having had more experience of the world than his young captain, he shook his head in silent protest against the excessive good-nature, as he considered it, of the master of the yacht.

Captain Henton's interview with the Lascar