

The Sunshine of the Face.



IT was a terrible night. The storm was raging fearfully round a man-of-war far away in the Chinese Sea, not far from the coast of Singapore. Could the vessel live through the tempest? It seemed doubtful, and many stout hearts not used to tremble were trembling now.

The men off duty were in their berths below, but it was no time for sleep, for nobody could say whether they might not all be swept into the angry waters long before the morning. All were wishing they were safe on shore; many were feeling now, with death staring them in the face, that there was something wrong within—that the great matter between themselves and God had never yet been settled.

But a cheerful voice was heard amongst them, "Well, my men, I'm come down to read to you the Word of God is the same in a storm as a calm, and always does us good." The words came from a young military officer on board—one who, whether on sea or land, always served his God as well as his earthly sovereign, and never lost an opportunity of doing that Master service. His own heart was full of the love of Jesus; he had come to the Saviour with his load of sin, and had left it there, and he had felt the perfect peace which that Saviour gives to those who trust Him in simple faith like this.

Yes, even on this night of tumult and danger the peace was in his heart, and it shone out into his countenance, and as he sat, there on a mess-table, holding on to a rope, with his Bible open in his hand, his face was like a sunbeam. The men were in their hammocks, some lying down, some in sitting posture, but all straining their ears to catch the words, which the noise of the wind and the confusion on deck made it difficult to do. There were but a few planks between them and death, and the hearts of all were serious and solemnised. The officer read and talked and prayed out of the fulness of his own spirit rejoicing in his God.

After a while the storm seemed to abate, the

howling wind sank gradually, the morning came at last, and the sun shone out on dripping decks and torn sails and weary workers; but the danger was over and no harm done. Everything went on as usual, and as far as human eye could see, the solemn feelings of that awful night had passed away with the storm that gave rise to them. The vessel reached the port, and the officer went on his way.

Some years after, while walking in the streets of Singapore, a man touched his hat to him. The officer stopped and asked him how he knew him.

"Oh, sir," said the man, "I have reason to know you, and much indeed to thank you for. Do you remember the night of that terrible gale off St. Paul's? I was lying in my hammock in fear and trembling, when I saw you come down to read the Bible to the men. I could not hear a word you said, but I could see your face, and I watched you the whole time. I saw your bright, happy smile, just the same as ever. I said to myself, 'Here am I, an old sailor, many years at sea, and I am afraid now in this gale, and here's a landsman as happy as if he were ashore.' I felt that you had what I had not; I felt that you had what I had heard you say you had—forgiveness of sins and eternal life. I prayed that night. Ever afterwards I came near you when you were reading, and when I left the ship I was a believer in Jesus Christ."

See what a work there is for a happy face to do! Have you ever thought about it? Have we not all too often forgotten this? Some of us are not free with our words, or we are shy and retiring, and it is an effort to us to speak for Jesus. What a comfort then that our faces can shine for Jesus.

If the Lord's peace is there, do not hide it—do not shut it in; let others see the sunshine, and let Jesus get the glory. Be sure there is no more winning preacher anywhere than the sunshine of the face.—*Religious Tract Society.*

THE peace of the Christian is perfect because he has a perfect Christ,

PRAYER and praise are like the double motion of the lungs; the air that is drawn by prayer is breathed forth again by thanksgiving.—*Goodwin.*

THE man who has in him the elements of a worker for Christ will find a field or make one. Paul, when a prisoner, made converts in Cæsar's household.—*Spurgeon.*

Do you want to know the man against whom you have the most reason to guard yourself? Your looking-glass will give you a very fair likeness of his face.—*Whately.*