

The Pilot.

BY MARGARET J. PRESTON.

"I hope to meet my Pilot face to face,
When I have crossed the bar." —Tennyson.

Who is the Pilot, into whose sure hand,
Waiting the summons as the day grows
dark,
Upon the border of this earthly strand,
We may commit our barque?

Can Reason rule the deck, and firmly steer
Through depths where swirling maelstroms
rave and roar,
And madly threaten to o'erwhelm us ere
We reach the fluther shores?

Has calm Philosophy, whose lore unrolls
The axioms of the ages, ever found
A perfect chart, to map what rocks and
shoals
Beset the outward bound?

Can Science guide, who with exploring
glass,
Sweeps the horizon of the restless tide,
And questions, 'mid the mists that so har-
rass,
"Is there a farther side?"

Dare old Tradition set its untrimmed light
Upon the prow, and hope to show the
way,
Through gulging troughs, that blinder make
the night,
Out into perfect day?

Nay, none of these are strong to mount the
deck,
And with authority assured and free,
Guide onward, fearless of the loss and
wreck
That crowd this soundless sea.

Oh ye who watch the ebbing tide,—what
saith
The Wisdom that through ages hath suf-
ficed
For questioning souls—*The only chart is
Faith,—
The only Pilot—Christ!*

The Wreckers of Sable Island.

BY

J. MACDONALD OXLEY.

CHAPTER - III.—THE WRECK.

MAJOR MAUNSELL gave a great gasp of relief when the brig righted.

"Keep a tight hold of your rope, Eric," he cried, encouragingly. "Please God, we may reach shore alive yet."

Drenched to the skin, and shivering with cold, Eric held tightly on to the rope with his right hand, and to Prince's collar with his left. Prince had crouched close to the foot of the mast, and the waves swept by him as though he had been carved in stone.

"All right, sir," Eric replied, as bravely as he could. "It's pretty hard work; but I'll not let go."

Rearing and plunging amid the froth and foam, the *Francis* charged at the second bar, struck full upon it with a force that would have crushed in the bow of a less sturdy craft, hung there for a few minutes while the breakers, as if greedy for their prey, swept excitedly over her, and then, responding to the impulse of another towering wave, leaped over the bar into the deeper water beyond.

But she could not stand much more of such buffeting; for she was fast becoming a mere hulk. Both masts had gone by the board at the last shock, and poor little Eric certainly would have gone overboard with the main-mast but for his prompt rescue by the major from the entangling rigging.

"You had a narrow escape that time, Eric," said the major, as he dragged the boy round to the other side of the mast, where he was in less danger.

The passage over the bars having thus been effected, the few who were still left on board the *Francis* began to cherish hopes of yet reaching the shore alive.

Between the bars and the main body of the island was a heavy cross-sea, in which the brig pitched and tossed like a bit of cork. Somewhere beyond this wild confusion of waters was the surf which broke upon the beach itself, and in that surf the final struggle would take place. Whether or not a single one of the soaked, shivering beings clinging to the deck would survive it, God alone knew. The chances of their escape were as one in a thousand—and yet they hoped.

There were not many left now. Captain Sterling was gone, and Lieutenants Mercer

and Sutton. Besides the Major and Eric, only Lieutenants Roebuck and Moore, of the cabin passengers, were still to be seen. Of the soldiers and crew, almost all had been swept away; but Captain Reefwell still held to his post upon the quarter-deck by keeping tight hold to a belaying-pin.

The distance between the bars and the beach was soon crossed, and the long line of foaming billows became distinct through the driving mist.

"Don't lose your grip on Prince, my boy," said the major to Eric. "We'll strike in a second, and then—"

But before he could finish the sentence the ship struck the beach with fearful force, and was instantly buried under a vast mountain of water that hurled itself upon her, as though it had long been waiting for the chance to destroy her. When the billow had spent its force, the decks were clear! Not a human

were lifted up, and then hurled violently upon the sand. Had he been alone the recoil of the wave would certainly have carried him back again into the surge; but the dog dug his big paws into the soft beach, and forced his way up, dragging his master with him.

Dizzy, bewildered, and faint, Eric staggered to his feet, looked about him in hope of finding the major near, and then, seeing nobody, fell forward upon the sand in a dead faint.

How long he lay unconscious upon the beach, Eric had no idea; but when he at length came to himself, he found a big, bushy-bearded man bending over him, with a half-pitying, half-puzzled look, while beside him, ready for a spring, was faithful Prince, regarding him with a look that said as plainly as words:

"Attempt to do my master any harm, and I will be at your throat."

him, and he was sorely bruised besides. Turning his face to the strange man, who seemed to have nothing further to say on his own account, he asked anxiously:

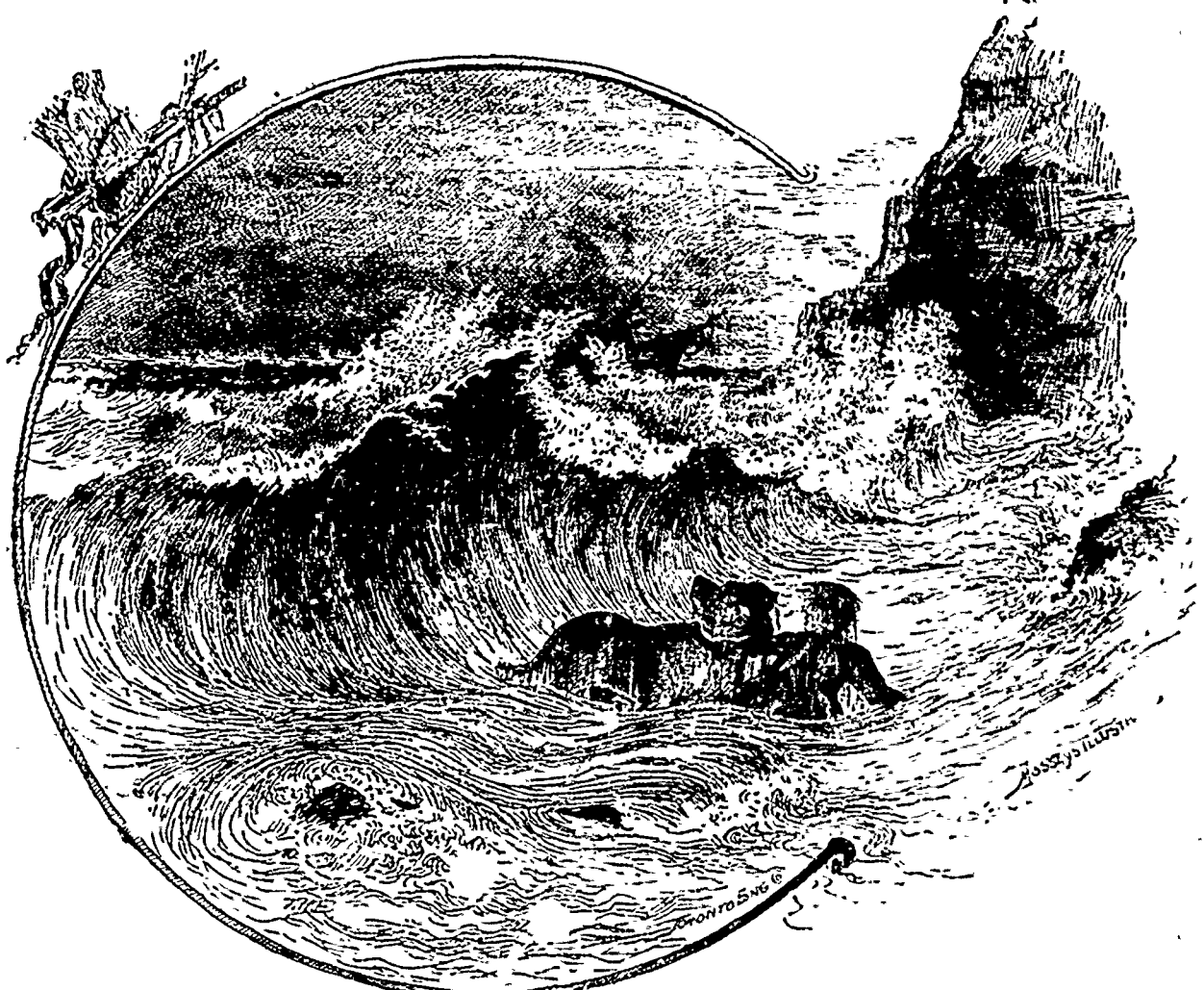
"Where's Major Maunsell?"

Instead of answering the man looked away from Eric, and there was an expression on his face that somehow sent a chill of dread to the boy's heart.

"Please tell me what has happened. Oh! take me to him, won't you? He's looking after me, you know," he pleaded earnestly, the tears beginning to well from his eyes.

Still the big man kept silence. Then, as Eric pressed him with entreaty, he suddenly wheeled about, and spoke in gruff tones than he had so far used:

"You'd best be still and keep quiet. You'll never see Major Maunsell, as you call him, or any of the rest of them again, and you might just as well know it first as last."



HE YIELDED HIMSELF TO THE CREATURE'S GUIDANCE.

form was visible where a moment before more than a score of men had been clinging for dear life: Hissing and seething like things of life, and sending their spray and spume high into the mist-laden air, the merciless breakers bore their victims off to cast them contemptuously upon the beach. Then, ere they could scramble ashore, they would be caught up again, and carried off by the recoil of the wave, to be once more dashed back, as though they were the playthings of the water.

The major and Eric were separated in the wild confusion; but Eric was not parted from Prince. About his brawny neck the mastiff wore a stout leathern collar, and to this Eric clung with a grip that not even the awful violence of the breakers could unloose. Rather did it make his sturdy fingers but close the tighter upon the leathern band.

Into the boiling flood the boy and dog were plunged together, and bravely they battled to make the shore. The struggle would be a tremendous one for them, and the issue only too doubtful. The slope of the beach was very gradual, and there was a long distance between where the brig struck and the dry land. Wholly blinded and half-choked by the driving spray, Eric could do nothing to direct his course. But he could have had no better pilot than the great dog, whose unerring instinct pointed him straight to the shore.

How long they struggled with the surf Eric could not tell. But his strength had failed, and his senses were fast leaving him, when his feet touched something firmer than toasting waves, and presently he and Prince

But the big man seemed to have no evil intent. He had evidently been waiting for Eric to gain consciousness, and, as soon as the boy opened his eyes, said in a gruff, but not unkind voice:

"So you're not dead, after all, my hearty. Morrie's the pity, maybe. Old Evil-Eye'll be wanting to make a clean job of it as usual."

Eric did not at all take in the meaning of the stranger's words; his senses had not yet fully returned. He felt a terrible pain in his head and a distressing nausea, and when he tried to get upon his feet, he found the effort too much for him. He fell back with a cry of pain, that made the affectionate mastiff run up to him and gently lick his face, as though to say:

"What's the matter, dear master? Can I do anything for you?"

The man then seemed for the first time, to take notice of the dog; and, putting forth a huge, horny hand, he patted him warily, muttering under his breath:

"Sink me straight, but it's a fine beast. I'll have him for my share, if I have to take the boy along with him."

Perceiving by some subtle instinct the policy of being civil, Prince permitted himself to be patted by the stranger and then lay down again beside him in a manner that betokened: "When wanted I'm ready."

Eric was eager to hear about Major Maunsell and the others who had been on board the *Francis*. Were it not for his weakness he would be running up and down the beach in search of them. But the terrible struggle with the surf, following upon the long exposure to the storm, had completely exhausted

At these dreadful words Eric raised himself, by a great effort, to a sitting posture, gazed into the man's face as though hoping to find some sign of his not being in earnest, and then, with a cry of frantic grief, flung himself back, and buried his face in his hands, while his whole frame shook with the violence of his sobbing.

The man stood watching him in silence, although his face, hard and stern as it was, gave evidence of his being moved to sympathy with the boy. He seemed to be thinking deeply, and to be in much doubt as to what he should do. He was just about to stoop down and lift Eric up, when a harsh, grating voice, called out:

"Halloo, Ben! What have you got there?"

(To be continued.)

ONLY ONE VERSE.

A MISSIONARY writes: "I wish you could witness the longing desire of the natives to learn about Jesus Christ. One poor woman, past sixty, came to me, and said, 'I cannot see to read, but do teach me one verse every night, that I may think about it when I go home, for I want to know about Jesus so much.'"

Is this was manifest the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.—1 John iv. 9.