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was captured in this way by a British cutter, "The Sparrow," and sent by Commander Wylie into Port Royal, the nearest British port, there to be condemned as a prize. The captain of "The Nancy" and his companions swore that the vessel was not American, but that it belonged to one of the neutral nations. He thought he was quite safe, for he had produced false papers, and believed that the real ones were at the bottom of the sea. But, though he had thrown them overboard, they had not sunk deep enough!

While the suit was being tried in the Court of Vice-Admiralty at Kingston, Lieutenant Fritton, commanding another British vessel, "The Ferret," produced the real papers of "The Nancy Brig," which he had found inside a shark! These showed that the vessel belonged to America, with which the King of England was at war, and that she was trading with America; for there were letters from the owners, orders to the captain, particulars of the cargo, and its destination. All these proved conclusively that the owners and captain of "The Nancy" were, as the accusation said, "enemies of our sovereign Lord and King," and that, therefore, the vessel was "good and lawful prize on the high seas."

The capture of these incriminating papers took place thus: "The Sparrow" and "The Ferret" were companion tenders of "H.M.S. Abergavenny," the flagship at Port Royal; and just after the capture of "The Nancy" they were cruising in company with one another. One morning Lieutenant Fritton signalled to his friend Wylie to come over from "The Sparrow" and breakfast with him on "The Ferret." While he waited for him to row across from the other vessel, he watched his men catch a shark which, with many others, had fastened on a dead bullock that was being towed alongside "The Ferret." This shark attracted Lieutenant Fritton's attention on account of its size, and he ordered some of his seamen to separate its jaws and clean them.

On its being cut open the papers of "The Nancy Brig" were discovered. At breakfast Wylie was telling how he had detained "The Nancy," and was greatly astonished when his friend said, "I have her papers." "Papers," answered Wylie, "why, I sealed up her papers and sent them in with her." "Just so," replied Fritton, "those were her false papers; here are the real ones." And these papers, which we may see to-day in the museum in Whitehall, very speedily led to the condemnation of the brig and her cargo.

What must have been the feelings of the men whose ship was on trial when those papers were produced? The Captain thought he had got rid of the evidences of the true character of "The Nancy" and its trade, but they had not been cast into the depths of the sea. He had not reckoned on the shark. We can imagine how he might have felt reluctant to part with valuable documents. He might have wished that he could send them overboard attached to a line, so as to be able to pull them up when the search was over!

Is not this how we sometimes try to get rid of our sins? We throw them overboard for a time, but soon pull them up again, and go on just as before, unless in the meantime we have been found out. Or we throw them overboard hoping they will sink and never be found again. But we cannot get rid of them, after all.

When God forgives He puts our sins away for ever. Concerning those who come to Him it is said, "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." It is only God who can thus cast them down, down into the very depths where they can never be found.

We know that there are some parts of the ocean so deep that men have never been able to fathom them. No diver has ever gone down to the bottom, no line could reach as far. If we have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, God has cast our sins into unfathomable depths such as these.

Down, down so far that even He Himself will never pull them up again!

If they had only been thrown on to the surface of the waters, as when we try to get rid of them ourselves, Satan, the great accuser, might easily seize on them, as the shark seized upon the papers of "The Nancy Brig," and bring them up against us.

Another incident which had taken place nearly twenty years before the capture of "The Nancy" illustrates the same lesson. In this case the same officer, Fritton, again played an important part. It took place in 1780, when he was on his first ship, "The Vestal," and the War of Independence was going on between England and her American Colonies. "The Vestal" was chasing "The Mercury," which had on board the late President of Congress, who was on his way to Holland as Ambassador of the revolted colonies.

Fritton had climbed to the foretop gallant yard when he saw a dark object fall from the enemy's vessel. He hailed the deck to say that a man was overboard, but the object was found to be a bag of papers "not weighted sufficiently to sink it." On examination these papers were found to compromise the Dutch Government, and led to a declaration of war against Holland a few months afterwards.

Where are your sins? Have you tried to throw them overboard into the depths of the sea? If so, you may be sure that, like these compromising papers, they are "not weighted sufficiently to sink," and they will surely be found and brought up against you. It would be a terrible thing when you have to stand at last in the presence of God, if the true record of your past life proved you to have been amongst the "enemies of our Sovereign Lord and King," and to have been really at war with Him.

Would you not like to know to-day that God has cast all your sins into the depths of the sea?

When Martin Luther was in the Convent of Erfuth he became very much distressed on account of an overwhelming sense of sin. Nothing seemed to bring him relief. "I tortured myself almost to death," he said, "in order to procure peace with God for my troubled heart and agitated conscience; but, surrounded with thick darkness, I found peace nowhere." At last he became seriously ill, but one day as he lay in his cell he was visited by an aged monk, who reminded him of the words in the Apostles' Creed which he had learnt in early childhood, and had so often repeated, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." "I believe," he repeated, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." "Ah!" said the monk, "you must believe not only in the forgiveness of David's and of Peter's sins, for this even the devils believe. It is God's command that we believe our own sins are forgiven us." From this moment light shone into Luther's troubled heart, and the truth that brought peace to him can still bring peace to those who long to know that their sins are forgiven. "Our own sins"—that is the secret!

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." We need to take a

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faith-look at the Lord Jesus dying on the cross for those who need forgiveness, and then, putting ourselves amongst the number, and believing that it was for us, because we are "sinners," each one individually has a right to say, "He was wounded for (my) transgressions, He was bruised for (my) iniquities, the chastisement of (my) peace was upon Him, and with His stripes (I am) healed"; and my sins have been cast "into the depths of the sea."

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