

called the boys to his side, and stood upon a rock, the centre of the little group. "As you all realize, we have been mercifully saved by a kind Providence, after great peril at sea. Where we have been cast away we have no means of knowing at present. It is probable, however, that this spot is an island, perhaps an uninhabited one. Should this be true, and should it lie out of the course of ships, we may remain here for a long time to come."

Youthful exuberance was manifested at the Professor's announcement. The boys did not seem to trace any serious aspect in the picture presented.

"Regular Robinson Crusoes!" cried Ernest Blake.

"If so, I hope my students will learn to emulate the patience, industry and ingenuity of that noted character in fiction," remarked the Professor, gravely. "We can formulate no plan for the present, but when breakfast is over we must endeavour to determine the true merits of our situation, to abide its uncertainties and discomforts, and to better the same by all means that lie in our power."

"Breakfast?" repeated Ralph Warden, with a glum face. "I don't see it cooking, nor any prospect of it."

Like all selfish persons, Ralph's personal discomfort was pre-eminent in his calculations. He had at first regarded Ned Darrow with gratitude for his rescue, but his old disagreeable manner was too natural to be held long in check.

"Why, of course, we'll have breakfast!" cried Ned Darrow. "Either all the story books don't tell the truth, or we'll find plenty of shell-fish on the beach yonder."

His words caused a scamper of the group to the rocks, and for half an hour they resembled a gay picnic party. They returned in triumph to the cave and presented the result of their explorations to the Professor.

Ned's search was rewarded by the finding of quite a number of small oysters, while his comrades had gathered together a quantity of mussels, shell-fish and other mollusks, of which there seemed no scarcity.

It was an appetizing meal that the boys managed to prepare at the moss fire, and they voted their first breakfast a complete success, finding fresh water from the recent rain in the hollow of a large rock.

The storm had passed away, and the sun came out strong and warm. The sea was placid as a mirror to the view. There was not a trace, however, of the Neptune, or its captain or mate.

The life-boat lay quite a distance from shore, wedged in between the rocks, the rope still running to the shore, but at that distance they could not determine how badly the boat had been injured.

The spot where they had landed was almost a perfect semi-circle, less than five hundred feet in extent. On all sides it was enclosed by almost perpendicular walls. That beyond it might be verdure and beauty, the Professor did not doubt, and imparted that belief to Ned Darrow.

Ned's brain was busy with thought as he surveyed the cliffs.

"I believe, with the aid of the rope from the boat, I might reach the top point yonder, and see what the island is like," he remarked to Ernest Blake.

"The rope is not long enough."

"Then I could work my way up ledge by ledge."

"The cliff is two hundred feet high," remarked Ralph Warden.

"Nonsense, it ain't more than a hundred feet," chimed in Dick Wilson.

"We can soon find out," said Ned.

"How?"

"By applying some of our geometrical theory to practice."

Among the sea-grass Ned found a long, dry stalk, and planted it in the sand some distance from the base of the highest cliff.

The boys watched him with considerable curiosity, and Ralph demanded:

"What are you trying to do?"

"Find out the height of the cliff yonder."

"You can't do it."

"Yes, I can," and Ned walked a short distance from the stick and lay flat on the sand.

He moved forward and backward until his eyes were on a perfect line with the top of the stick and also on a line with the top of the cliff. Then he called for a pocket-rule. Ernest Blake produced one, and at Ned's direction measured the distance from the spot where his eyes had the stick and cliff in line to the pole.

"Twelve feet," he reported.

"And the height of the pole?"

"Six feet."

"Good, now then, measure from where I lay to the base of the cliff."

Ernest was some time doing this, but finally reported:

"A hundred and sixty feet."

"The height of the cliff is eighty feet," said Ned, promptly.

At this moment Professor Ballentine came up, and was a pleased witness of Ned's clever mathematical experiment.

"How do you know that you are right, Ned?" inquired Ernest.

"Because the distance from my eyes to the foot of the stick, shows the same proportion to the distance to the foot of the cliff that the height of the stick does to the height of the cliff. Twelve is to one hundred and sixty as six is to eighty. Of course this is not mathematically correct, as the ground is not quite level, nor the face of the cliff exactly perpendicular, but it won't vary much."

Ned appealed to the Professor to allow him to attempt to scale the cliff, but the latter shook his head negatively.

"It is too dangerous an experiment," was the reply.

"But we cannot remain here always, Professor. There's the life-boat yonder."

"We have had such a terrible experience at sea, I hesitate to trust again to the water."

Ned explained that once around the point of the cliff the level beach might begin, and finally won Professor Ballentine's consent to visit the life-boat.

Ernest Blake and four other bare-footed lads accompanied him, crossing the slippery rocks and wading to the spot where the life-boat was by the aid of the rope.

They found the boat scarcely injured, and for over an hour they worked at the imprisoned craft. A cheer went up from the watching boys on the shore as they saw it pushed from between the rocks into the water.

The Professor, Ned, and two others took each an oar as the throng seated themselves in the boat, pushed off from shore, and were once more afloat.

Every eye was strained as the life-boat rounded the point of rocks which surrounded the cliffs at their base and reached some distance out to sea. Then one universal cry of delight escaped their lips. A scene of glorious vernal beauty, of sunny, flowery loveliness burst upon their enraptured vision.

(To be Continued.)