

"No, you shan't stir one step," said Mrs. Rider, "till that hay is all got in. There's two loads out that's made enough to get in now, and you know there's as much as one load to mow yet."

Mrs. Rider's will was all the law or gospel there was about the house. Of course her husband did not undertake to gainsay her dictum, but told Bill they could not possibly get ready to start before the next night, as that hay would have to be taken care of first.

"Well, then," said Bill, "call all hands, and let's go at it. Come, where's your scythe? I'll go and finish mowing that grass down in the first place."

"But can you mow?" said Jonathan, doubtfully.

"Mow? I guess you'd think so, if you should see me at it. I worked on a farm six weeks once, when I was a boy, and learnt to pull every rope in the ship."

All hands repaired to the field. Bill Stanwood took a scythe and went to thrashing about as though he were killing rattlesnakes. He soon battered up one scythe against the rocks, and presently broke another by sticking it into a stump. It was then agreed that he should change works with Asa Sampson, and help get the hay into the barn, while Asa mowed. The business then went on briskly. The boys and girls were out spreading and raking hay, and Mrs. Rider herself went on to the mow in the barn to help stow it away. The next day the haying was finished, and all things were in preparation to start for Jewell's Island. Mrs. Rider, however, whose imagination had been excited by the idea of Old Nick being set to guard the money, was still unwilling her husband should go; and it was not till he had solemnly promised to bring her home a new silk gown, and a new pair of morocco shoes, and some stuff to make her a new silk bonnet, that she finally gave her consent. When the matter was finished, she took a large firkin and filled it with bread and cheese, and boiled beef, and doughnuts, for them to eat on their way; and Bill said there was a great plenty to last till they got down to the pots of money, and after that they could buy what they wanted.

Asa Sampson, who was at work for Mr. Rider, agreed to go with them for his regular daily pay, with this proviso: if they got the money, they were to make him a present outright of a hundred dollars, which he said would be as much money as he should ever know what to do with.

As a parting caution, Mrs. Rider charged them to remember and not speak while they were digging, and told them, lest some word might slip out before they thought of it, they had better each of them tie a handkerchief over their mouths when they begun to dig, and not take it off till they got down to the money. They all agreed that it would be an excellent plan, and they would certainly do it.

Mr. Rider's old horse was tackled into the wagon, the baggage was put on board, and the three fortune hunters jumped in and drove off for Falmouth. It was a long and lonesome road, but the bright visions of the future, that were dancing before their eyes, made it seem to them like a journey to Paradise.

"Now, Mr. Rider," said Bill, "what do you mean to do with your half of the money, when we get it?"

"Well, I think I shall take two thousand dollars of it," said Jonathan, and buy Squire Dickinson's farm, that lives next neighbour to me. He's always looked down upon me with a kind of contempt, because I wasn't so well off in the world as he was; and I should like mighty well to get him out of the neighbourhood. And I guess he's drove for money too, and would be glad to sell out. And now, neighbour Stanwood, I'll tell you what I think you better do. You better buy a good farm right up there alongside of

me, and we'll build each of us a large nice house, just alike, and get each of us a first rate horse, and we'll live together there, and ride about and take comfort."

"By the hocus pocus!" said Bill, "I hope you don't call that taking comfort. No, none of your land-lubber vices for me. I'll tell you what I mean to do. As soon as I get my money I mean to go right to Boston and buy the prettiest ship I can find—one that will sail like the wind—and I'll have three mates so I shan't have to stand no watch, but go below just when I like; and I'll go cap'n of her, and go away up the Mediterranean, and up the Baltic. And then I'll make a vige straight round the world, and if I don't beat Captain Cook all to nothin', I think it's a pity. And now you better sell out your old farm up there among the bushes, and go with me. I'll tell you what 'tis, shipmate, you'd take more comfort in one month aboard a good vessel, than you could on a farm in a whole year. What comfort is there to be found on a farm, where you never see anything new, but have the same thing over and over forever? No variety, no change, but everything always the same—I should get as tired as death in a month."

"Well, now, neighbour," said Jonathan, "you are as much mistaken, as if you had burnt your shirt. There's no business in the world that has so much variety and so many new things all the time, as farming. In the first place, in the spring comes ploughing time, and then comes planting time, and after that hoeing and weeding; and then comes haying time; and then reaping time; and then getting in the corn and potatoes. And then, to fill up with a little fun once in a while, we have sheep washing in the spring, and huskings in the fall, and breaking out the roads after a snow storm in the winter; and something or other new most all the time. When your crops are growing, even your fields look new every morning; while at sea you have nothing new, but the same things over and over, every day from morning till night. You do nothing but sail, sail, all the time, and have nothing to look at but water from one week's end to another."

Here Bill Stanwood burst into a broad loud laugh, and says he—

"Well done, shipmate. I must say you are the greenest horn I've met with this long time. No variety and nothing new to be seen in going to sea! If that ain't a good one! The very place, too, to see everything new and to learn everything that there is in the world. Why, only jest in working the ship there's more variety and more to be seen than there is in working a whole farm, to say nothing about going all over the world, and seeing everything else. Even in a dead calm you can see the whales spouting and the porpoises rolling about. And when the wind is slack, you have enough to do to stick on your canvas. You run up your topgallan-sels, and your rials, and out with your studden-sels, and trim your sheets, and make all the sails draw. And then you walk the deck and watch the changes of the wind; and if a vessel heaves in sight what a pleasure there is in taking your spy-glass and watching her motions till she's out of sight again; or, if she comes near enough, how delightful 'tis to hail her and learn where she's from, and where she's bound, and what her captain's name is! And when it comes on a blow what a stirring time there is! All hands are out to take in the light sails; down goes the topgallan' yards; and if the wind increases you begin to reef; and if it comes on to blow a real snorter, you furl all sails and scud away under bare poles. And sometimes, when the storm is over, you come across some poor fellows on a wreck, half starved or half froze to death, and then you out with your boat and go and take 'em off, and nurse 'em up and bring 'em to. Now here's some life in all this business,