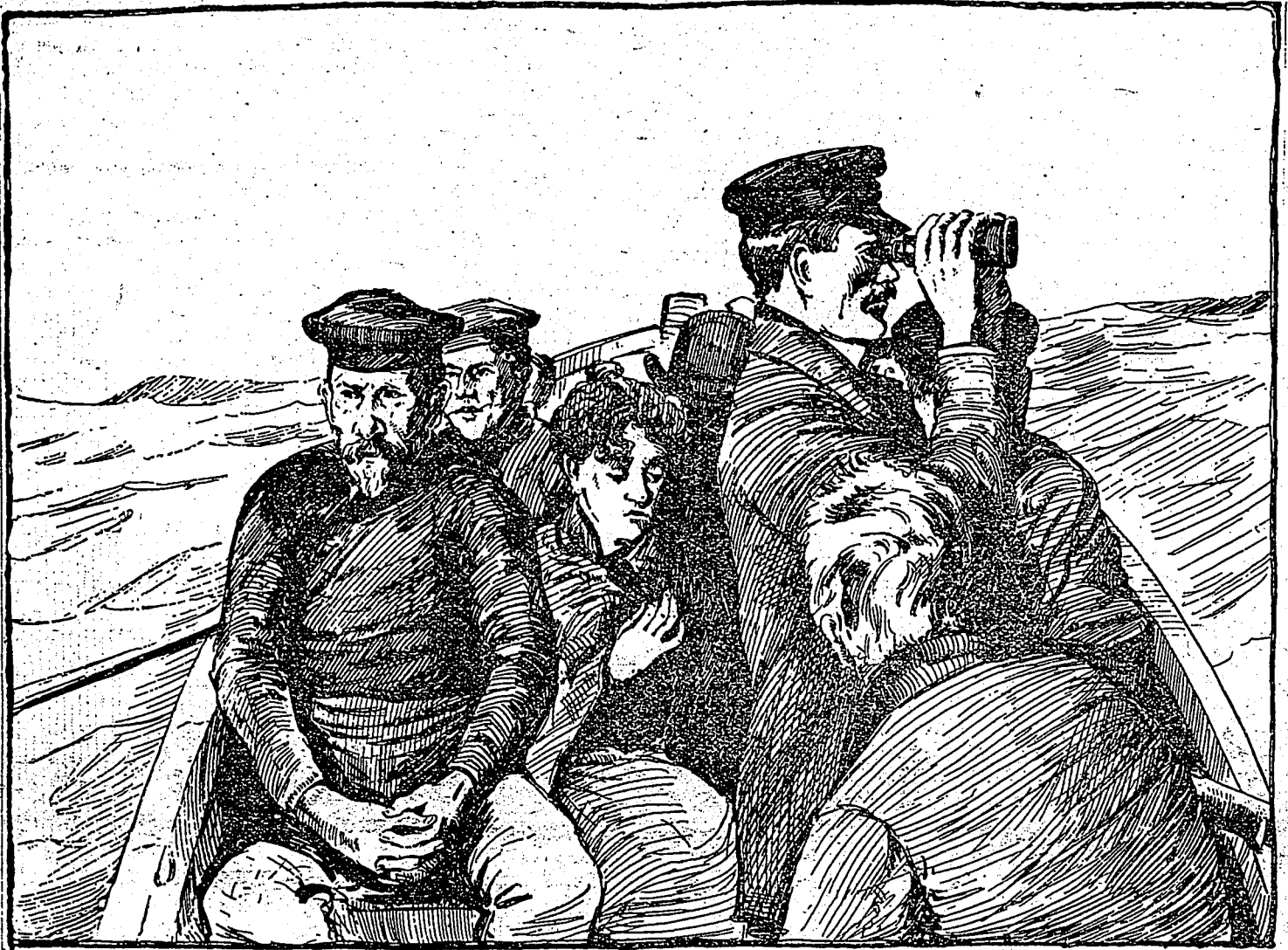


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LOST AT SEA!

ADrift IN A LIFE-BOAT, AWAITING A RAY OF HOPE AMID THE CLOUDS OF DESPAIR.

—'Leslie's Weekly.'

'Is Not This the Christ?'

(By Levi Johnson, in 'The Occident'.)

While on a missionary tour recently along the coast of South-western Oregon, I stopped in a little town over night at the end of one of the stage lines, and held a meeting in the little church, which I found was open to ministers of all denominations. The attendance at the meeting was good, and the interest manifested by the people was refreshing to one accustomed to meeting with a good deal of indifference in a sparsely settled country where preachers are few and far between.

I noticed in the audience a man I had met before, and in whom I had more than a passing interest. I had learned a little of his history and knew him to be intelligent and honest, a man of broad and generous views, respected by everybody who knew him, and yet so quiet and unassuming that I did not know whether he had any positive religious convictions or not. I learned that he was stopping at the hotel a few days while attending to business, and I determined if possible to have a private conversation with him.

So after the meeting was over and I had taken leave of the friends in the church, I started for the hotel, and found my friend had already arrived there and was seated

before the open fireplace quietly enjoying the warmth, and, as I hoped, meditating on the sermon he had just listened to. Being slightly acquainted it was a simple matter to engage him in conversation, and I found him very interesting. In a little while I managed to turn the conversation to religious things, and to my surprise found my friend even more interesting in the realm of religious thought than in commonplace affairs; and I listened attentively while he told me his story; how he had been led out of the mists of scepticism to believe in the Christ, the Saviour of the world. I shall give the story as nearly as I can recall it in his own words.

'When I was a boy I developed a fondness for reading. I read history, travel, poetry and biography. I loved 'Shakespeare,' 'Emerson' and 'Irving,' but had a prejudice against the Bible. A few years ago I went with a company of miners prospecting among the hills of Southern Oregon. We built a cabin and prepared to spend the winter. The need of something to read did not occur to me until the stormy weather compelled us to stay indoors the greater part of the time. An investigation revealed the unwelcome fact that all we had to read in the camp was an old, well-worn copy of the Bible, in the gripsack of one of my companions. There

was nothing else to read and read I must; so I determined to read the Bible, and not knowing any more interesting place to begin I began at the beginning.

'I was delighted with some of the characters in the book. I studied Moses, and wondered at his meekness, coupled with his executive ability in the wonderful organization which he perfected; the completeness and comprehensiveness of his ten commandments, covering as it seemed to me the whole of man's duty to man, as well as man's duty to God; the mysteries of the sacrifices and the ritual service. I was interested in David because of his keen sense of justice and his ever-present sense of his personal responsibility to God. I greatly admired Solomon's wisdom and Nehemiah's devotion and singleness of purpose. I was overcome with a sense of the shallowness of my own life as I contrasted it with the intensity and unselfishness of Peter and Paul after their conversion.

'But when I came to study the life of Jesus Christ, I said, Surely here is a character different from all the rest; yes, different from any I have ever met, either in history, fiction, poetry, drama, biography or actual experience. This character is surely worthy the profound study of every mind. I studied his birth and early life, and confessed to myself my inability to under-