

to all reasonable expectation, she took advantage of a temporary lulling of the wind, and stood off, with her shivered mast showing strongly in the first bright flash that came. But the schooner!—where was that? They missed the bright light that had shown itself from the binnacle, and at once the fearful truth seemed revealed to them in characters as burning as the fierce lightning that flashed over the waters. The ship in righting had borne down the schooner!

Mr. Washburn had no comfort to give to the half-distracted father, who lay on the wet rock, unable to move, or to control the terrible sighs that burst from him. Nothing could be known, for the ship was still standing off, under bare and shivered masts, and there was no probability that any communication could be had with her until morning. The stricken father arose slowly, and turned towards his home. Mr. Washburn supported him. He had mastered his own anxiety about the *Cygnets*, feeling nearly sure, after her late exploit, that she would ride out the gale; and his sympathies went to his poor neighbour in his sighs and desolation. He bore him up kindly to his home. Mrs. Wayne, hearing the sound of footsteps, joyfully believed that her son had returned with his father. She opened the door, and the appearance which her husband presented sent her back reclining to her chair. The white faces of the two men told a tale which she had for hours been dreading to hear.

Mr. Washburn left the pair together, conscious that here there was no comfort to be given, and then went back to the beach. As the clock struck twelve the wind subsided, and with it the dense black clouds parted. Through a rift a single star shone out like a diamond upon the black robe of the night; and as the wearied man threw himself down on the rocks, beside the powerless watchers there, he saw another and another, until the deep, clear vault showed itself all studded with the "poetry of heaven." A soft, warm, south wind had succeeded the storm, but the ocean lay, with its great heart palpitating in strong, deep throbs, and the stars were looking down on fragments of wrecks that already were thrown on shore.

On the opposite point large fires were burning, and showed, even at that distance, figures moving about, but dimin-

ished by the distance to mere specks. There was doubtless then another wreck there; and the watchers on the opposite point began to think of walking round the narrow strip of land that separated them. A solitary horseman was heard galloping round, and the remaining few felt assured that he would soon be back with the news, whatever it might be; so they walked up into the town. Mr. Washburn was fascinated to the spot. As long as that black mast stood there before him, he must stay, and not lose sight of it. A man crossed the beach, and called to him. He answered, and the man ran up to where he sat.

"Mr. Washburn," said the man, "is that you, sir?"

"It is, Burns," replied Mr. Washburn; "and yonder is the *Cygnets*—and in her is my poor, motherless boy! Burns, there is a stout wherry turned up on the beach a hundred feet from here—I will give fifty pounds to the man who shall row me over to that ship."

"I will do it, Mr. Washburn," said Burns—"not more for the sake of the money than for the sake of the boy. Willie was always kind to every one, and I will engage to take you over safely. The waves are still boiling, but we can do it."

The boat shot out from the beach, and was soon riding on the billows, with the strong spray dashing over her, yet swaying to the fall of the waves, as if conscious that she carried a father's love. The strong arm of Burns was severely taxed, but they soon came within hailing distance. Burns lifted the trumpet, which he invariably took with him whenever a storm seemed to indicate any use for it, and hailed the battered ship. "Ship ahoy!" he shouted, with a strong and powerful voice. "What ship ahoy?"

"The *Cygnets*—Crawford, master," was the reply.

"Are all on board?"—"All on board, but one!"

Washburn started. Was that one Willie? He shrank trembling to the bottom of the boat, awaiting the answer to his name, for which Burns had called. At length it came—"Stephen Morrison!"

"Thank Heaven!" was all that Mr. Washburn could utter. In a moment his joy struck him as selfish. *Somebody* would mourn for that poor lost sailor!

Concluded in next No.

THE SEASONS.

The tender beneficence, wisdom and loving kindness of the divine Maker of the universe is strikingly illustrated in the changes of the seasons; each follows the other in just such order and at just such fit time as to make itself gratefully welcome.

Spring, gentle Spring comes to us precisely at the time when the peculiar joys, amusements and pleasures of Winter, have begun to pall upon the senses, and weary both body and mind. The earth has been, as it were, entombed for months; the verdure has been enshrouded in a mantle of white, or withered, shrivelled, and destroyed by the bleak blast of the tempest or the blighting breath of the frost; the flowers have veiled their bright and many-hued faces from the sight of men, and gone into their graves to await the glad resurrection promised them in May. All geniality and gaiety and warmth seems to have vanished from the face of the earth. Just when the ingenuity and invention, the inconstant and change-loving spirit of man, begin to fail of finding compensations in any of his devices of merriment, and pleasure, for the forbidding face which nature shows to him at this season, the soft and fragrant breath of Spring comes to him like a benison, dissipates the gloom, melts the snow and the ice, unlocks the rivers, the fountains, the brooklets; infuses elastic life into the tender and swelling buds; disenthalls the poor buried flowers; woos back the feathered warblers of the wood; inaugurates the hopeful seed time, and gives cheerful promise of future harvest; sets germination all a-jog, and irradiates the whole earth with laughing sunshine and merry life.

When Spring has begun to "lag superfluous on the stage," like a guest, who, though welcome, agreeable, and entertaining when he came, makes his visit a trifle too long, Summer, luxurious Summer, riper, richer, warmer, but not quite so fresh and jubilant, steps, like a queen with all the conscious pride of full blown beauty, into Spring's abandoned place; and when the delicious and voluptuous languor of her days, the starry loveliness of her nights, her ripening fruits, her fragrant odors, her rainbow colors, and her infinite profusions of delights, have, like confections and bon-bons, eaten by a child, begun to be a burden, and the