

I again awoke and was conscious that something was wrong. I rushed on deck, and at the head of the stairs met the mate with a pale face.

"It is all right, captain," said he; the fire is out and no harm done."

"What fire?" I asked. Has the ship been on fire?"

"Why," said he, "the boy stupidly upset a lamp in a lot of cotton waste and it made a nasty blaze, but it is all out now and no one the worse."

"Thank God!" I exclaimed and without another word I returned to my cabin, but before I went to sleep again that night I had made up my mind what I would do on my arrival in port. It was the first accident of the kind that had ever happened to a ship of mine and I vowed that I would never give fate another such chance.

We reached New York in a couple of days, and the other owners there were very much surprised when I told them I was not going to sea any more. They were sincerely sorry to lose me, for I had made money for them as well as for myself, and, when I expressed a wish to sell out my shares in the vessel, they met me in a liberal spirit and purchased them on favorable terms. My good ship went to sea again, a few weeks later, and when I saw her depart so staunch and gallant-looking, I almost regretted the step I had taken. But I thought better of it as week and month passed on without any tidings of her arrival in any friendly port, for from that hour to the present she has never been seen by living man. Did she perish by fire, or by violence of the tempest? Who can tell? But I shall always firmly believe that my good angel sent me the midnight warning which hindered me from sharing her fate.

My business in New York had detained me for some