

THE KING'S SERVANTS.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

PART III.—FAITHFUL IN MUCH.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE SEA.

I KNOW now that this was one of the perfect hours of my life. I had almost said, "Would to God I had known it then!" But would it not have been a greater grief to have recognised its perfectness, and to see it waning, than to have gone through it with a heart a little fretted from its happiness by small cares which seemed to tarnish the brightness, but served to soften it into light that did not dazzle my half-dim eyes?

One thing I grudged—that Philip should gain so little personal advantage from his wealth. Certainly he bought a vessel of his own, and he and his father went hither and thither as they pleased. They came home oftener; but every time they stayed on shore longer than a few weeks it became more evident that as long as Captain John Champion was living, Philip must still spend the best portion of his time on the sea.

"It baffles me rather," said Captain John Champion to Mrs. Transome one day, "why the wise Lord spared me so long in Africa, and leaves me now to be a burden on my son. I look upon it as a hardship for him."

"Never say the word again, Captain John Champion," cried Mrs. Transome, excitedly. "Love's no hardship. There can't be any hardship between father and son, or husband and wife, like me and Transome. No, no! True love knows no hardship, whatever it brings to us. Never say such a word again."

It was about two years after Philip came into his inheritance that at last a plan for sending out to America some of our rescued girls became practicable and advisable. It was a new step for us, and gave us much anxiety. But Philip had already joined in some emigration movements, and had given free passages to many a poverty-stricken artizan and his family to Canada and the States. For the times were bad in England just then; and there was a great clamour of distress and want, which reached our ears more directly than it could have done in former days. George and Philip and I discussed the matter in and out, from every possible point of view.

"Milly," said George, "what would you say to going out yourself to America, and seeing the ladies who are to take charge of our girls?"