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MASONS AMONG SAVAGES.

FROM THE "MYSTIC STAR."

Some time since, it was my fortune to become acquainted with a seafaring man, who had made his home on the ocean for many years, and had experienced all the dangers and adverse fortune of a seaman's life, although at the time when I became acquainted with him, he was moored in a snug harbor, safe from all storms and gales that blow.

Like many others of his calling, he delighted to live his active life again, in relating to his friends the scenes and incidents through which he had passed. He was one of the most devoted and zealous Masons with whom I ever had the pleasure of an intimacy, and told several occurrences that served to illustrate its value to one who, like himself, was "rocked upon the billow, and borne upon the wings of the blast" for so many successive years. One of these struck me as being singular, and as it has never, to my knowledge, been in print, I propose to write it out for your Magazine, and in doing so, I shall use as nearly as possible his own language, though I shall be obliged to omit the nautical terms, which I cannot command.

"It was in the year 18—, that I was in command of the whaler Bristol, from and of New Bedford.— She was a staunch, tight, sea-going vessel, and had as good a crew as ever handled a marlinspike. We had no adventure worth naming on our voyage out. There was the usual rough weather about the Horn, and calms when we had doubled it, and the unbroken sameness of a seaman's life was unbroken by a single startling incident, until we had taken in nearly a full cargo of oil, and were seriously thinking of the day when we could lay our course for the home that we so much longed to see.

"We had been cruising in the vicinity of the Navigator's Island Group, for the mighty denizens of the deep had not then been driven to seek safety beneath the frozen crusts of the northern seas, and it became necessary to send a boat on shore to replenish our water casks, which would not hold out for the home voyage. In order to do this, the vessel was run up to an anchorage about two miles from a small island which we supposed to be uninhabited, and which was known to afford an abundance of pure sweet water. The boat was manned with a crew of twelve men, who took with them the casks necessary to contain the water for which they were sent, and a single gun, that they might bring down any game, either quadruped or fowl, that might chance to come in their way.

"They landed safely, secured the boat, and taking their vessels, proceeded to a small ravine in a low hill that gave promise of containing the fluid for

which they were in search. When they turned the point of the bluff, they were out of sight of the vessel, and of course, would remain so while engaged in the work of filling their casks. They went ashore early in the morning, and it was not later than eight o'clock when they disappeared in the ravine. When twelve o'clock came, and they did not make their appearance, I began to feel some uneasiness, lest they had met with some misfortune, but of what nature it could be, I could scarcely satisfy myself. Two o'clock came, and passed, and still they were invisible. I had the other boat launched, and taking six men with me, determined to go in search of the first boat's crew.

"On landing, we did not go around the point of the bluff as the others had done, but struck directly across it. You can scarcely appreciate my surprise and dismay, when I arrived at the crown of the hill and was enabled to see into the ravine. There was my boat's crew nearly surrounded by savages, of whom I should say there were fifty or sixty, but bravely standing their ground and defending their water casks, which the savages appeared to covet.— Bows were bent and clubs were raised, but no blows had been given or received. All this was taken in at a glance, and the next moment with the second boat's crew I was among them. That there was a malicious design was evident, but it was for my interest to stop the fray, if possible. In fact, our only safety lay in the possibility of doing this. My men had wisely temporized, refusing to fire upon them, so they had no revenge to gratify. Intent on stopping the encounter, I rushed among them, and involuntarily and unconsciously gave that sign which is so promptly recognized by every Master Mason. To my astonishment, every bow was unbent, every club was lowered, every hand was stayed.

"By the most expressive signs which they could command, they gave us to understand that we were their friends and brothers, and from that moment they treated us as such. On examination, the tribe were found to be in possession of the "mystic grip, the word and sign," peculiar to the first three degrees of Masonry, and that they understood its moral precepts, they gave us abundant proof. They assisted in filling our casks, and in conveying them to the beach, and when we left them, impressed upon our hands the touch that enables us to know a brother whenever we may meet him. They watched us until we weighed anchor, and when the low hills of the island were receding from view, they still stood upon the beach, as if anxious to catch the last glimpse of the departing vessel.

"It is probable that some sailor, perhaps shipwrecked and despairing of ever seeing home again, taught them the mystical language of Masonry. If