

manner, threw herself upon him and held him back. Her cries brought Hobson and Long to her assistance, and they did all in their power to dissuade the unhappy man from carrying out his purpose, but he was not to be moved, and merely shook his head.

His mind was evidently disordered, and it was useless to reason with him. It was a terrible moment, as his example might lead some of his comrades to commit suicide also. At all hazards he must be prevented from doing as he threatened.

"Kellet," said Mrs Barnett gently, with a half smile, "we have always been very good friends, have we not?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied Kellet calmly.

"Well, Kellet, if you like we will die together, but not to-day."

"What, ma'am?"

"No, my brave fellow, I am not ready; but to-morrow, to-morrow if you like."

The soldier looked more fixedly than ever at the courageous woman, and seemed to hesitate an instant; then he cast a glance of fierce longing at the sea, and passing his hand over his eyes, said—

"To-morrow!"

And without another word he quietly turned away and went back to his comrades.

"Poor fellow!" murmured Mrs Barnett; "I have asked him to wait till to-morrow, and who can say whether we shall not all be drowned by that time!"

Throughout that night Hobson remained motionless upon the beach, pondering whether there might not yet be some means to check the dissolution of the islet—if it might not yet be possible to preserve it until they came in sight of land of some sort.

Mrs Barnett and Midge did not leave each other for an instant. Kalumah crouched like a dog at the feet of her mistress, and tried to keep her warm. Mrs Mac-Nab, wrapped in a few furs, the remains of the rich stores of Fort Hope, had fallen into a kind of torpor, with her baby clasped in her arms.

The stars shone with extraordinary brilliancy, and no sounds broke the stillness of the night but the rippling of the waves and the splash of pieces of ice as they fell into the sea. The colonists, stretched upon the ground in scattered groups, were as motionless as corpses on an abandoned wreck.

Sometimes Surgeant Long rose and peered into the night-mists, but seeing nothing, he resumed his horizontal position. The bear,