

"Ah! Mr. Supercargo, I mistrusted we should find you at this island!" exclaimed the mate, turning round, and shaking hands with him, as the gentleman touched his shoulder upon joining this officer near the cupstan. "All well at home, Mr. F.— Here's a letter from your wife."

The other tore open the letter, and devoured it with evident delight, and then shaking hands again with the officer, exclaimed, "Thank you, thank you; all are well at home, as you tell me. But how in the world came that beautiful insane creature in your vessel?"

"A mad woman! The devil a bit of a mad woman or any other woman have we on board, except Mrs. T—, the wife of Parson T— that is to be."

"The wife of Mr. T—?"

"Why, yes, as good as his wife. She's a gal from York State we are carrying out to be spliced to old Dead-eyes."

The gentlemanlike supercargo seemed struck with concern; in fact, the true state of the case flashed upon his mind in a moment. The deep mourning which he wore out of respect for one of his employers, whose ship he was that day to visit, had evidently caused him to be mistaken for a clergyman; and the excited imagination of the lonely girl had prompted her to see in him the future guardian of her friendless condition. Nothing, however, could be done; an attempt at explanation would but betray her secret to the coarse natures by which she was surrounded. Her lot in life, too, was cast; his sympathy could avail her nothing, and a few days voyage would consign her to the care of him who might legitimately receive the proofs of tenderness which he had so innocently elicited in his own behalf. He called for his boat, and passing slowly and dejectedly over the side of the vessel, pulled for the shore.

Alice Vere had in the mean time retired to the cabin, where she expected her lover—it was the first time she had even thought the word—to join her. Her own feelings had so crowded upon her mind during the brief interview, that they had prevented her from observing his; and the luxury of emotion in which she now indulged, and in which she thought there was not one consideration human or divine to make it wrong for her to indulge, prevented her from observing the lapse of time. Simple and single-hearted, with a nature whose affluent tenderness piety could regulate and delicacy could temper, though neither could repress, she poured the flood of her pent-up feelings in what seemed their heaven-appointed channel; in a word, she was gone an age in love while numbering the minutes of her acquaintance with her lover. His noble and manly figure, his alert and elastic step in approaching her, and the kindly look of feeling and intelligence his features wore—a look of intense interest, which she, poor girl, little dreamt was prompted by concern for another, of whom he was about to ask her;—nay, even the hurried tones of his agitated but still most musical voice, all, all were stamped upon her heart as indelibly as if their impress had been the work of years.

The water rippling along the vessel's side first roused her from this delicious reverie, and the mate, who was a rough but kind-hearted seaman, at that moment came below to make an entry in his log.

"Well, miss, he cried, "with this breeze we'll soon bring up at the parson's door; and right glad to be rid of us you'll be, I guess, when we get there. Only thirty-six hours more, and you'll be home."

"This island, then, is not Mr. T—'s residence?"

"This?—Oh no. There used to be a Britisher here, but they have got no missionary man upon it now."

"And does Mr. T— have to go thus from island to island in the performance of his duty?—or did he only come so far from his people meet me?" she asked with some embarrassment.

"Come!" exclaimed the seaman, not a little puzzled; "why, how bless your soul, Parson T— has not been here, at least that I know of."

"Surely he's now on board," cried Alice, alarmed, yet hardly knowing why: "surely I saw him speaking to you on deck."

"To me, missus!—I never cared to exchange two words with old Dead-eyes, axing your pardon, since I knowed him. Speaking to me! Why, that—that was—why, — my eyes! you have not taken young Washington F—'s handsome figure for old Ebenezer T—'s mouldy carcass?"

The rude but not unfriendly mate had hardly uttered the sentence before he cursed himself to the bottom of every sea between the poles, for the use he had made of his tongue. Alice fell lifeless upon the cabin-floor. The seaman shouted for assistance; and then, as he and the better-bred captain, who, as the father of a large and estimable family, was a more fitting nurse for the forlorn maiden, applied one restorative after another, she recovered animation at intervals. Fit succeeded fit, however; and then, as the wind rose, and a brewing tempest called all hands on deck, the captain could only place her kindly in her berth, in the hope that the new excitement at hand might possibly be of service to his patient.

The ship was driven widely out of her course. Alice was long indifferent to every thing around; but as the storm lasted for several days, and finally threatened to destroy the stout craft in

which she sailed, the near prospect of the death for which she had but now been longing called all her religious feelings into action. She felt that she was the child of destiny: her gentle piety would not allow her to wish for a sudden and violent death, though the peace of the grave was what she most desired. She prayed then, not for life, but for an escape from its horrors; alike from those which raged in the angry elements around her, and those which warred so fearfully in her own bosom.

Weeks elapsed before the vessel reached the haven, of which she had once been within a few hours' sail. The missionary girl had apparently recovered from all bodily indisposition, and her features were again as calm as ever; but it was the calmness of rigidity, and not of peace, they wore. It was a sacrifice of herself to Heaven she had meditated originally. "And why," exclaimed she mentally, "why should I shrink from the offering now, when Providence has enabled me to make it richer and more abundant—to make my soul's triumph more complete, as its trial is more bitter and severe!" Still, when the isle of her destination hove in view, it was with a shudder that she first looked upon the shore, and thought of the fate that there awaited her.

Woman's heart is a strange, a wayward thing. In many a bosom its strongest chords are never touched by the hand to which it is yielded. It is often bestowed with faint consent on him who seeks it—bestowed in utter ignorance of the power of loving—the wealth of tenderness it hoards within itself;

"Circumstance, blind contact, and the strong necessity of loving," will afterward mould it to its fate, and prevent repining at its choice; but when once its hidden strings have vibrated, and given out their full music,—when once its inmost treasures have been disclosed to its owner, counted over, and yielded up with a full knowledge of their worth to another,—when "the pearl of the soul" has been once lavished in the mantling cup of affection, it revolts from all feebler preferences, and is true, even in death, to its one only love.

The missionary soon came on board to claim his bride. He was a plain and worthy man, with nothing to distinguish him from the members of his profession in our country, who, mistaking the promptings of zeal for the inspiration of a special calling, and who, without minds matured by experience or enlightened by education, leave the plough or the shopboard to become the instructors of those who, with feelings as sincere as their own, and understandings far more exercised in knowledge of good and evil, are expected to bow to their narrow teachings,—to receive them, not as humble soldiers of the Cross needing guidance like themselves, but as the captains and leaders of the church militant, armed in full panoply,—a living bulwark against its foes.

Alice Vere had but little experience in society; but the quickening power of love had lately called all her dormant perceptions of taste and feeling into play, and a very brief interview sufficed for her to read the character of her destined husband. She felt that she could never love him. Respect him she did, as she would have done the humblest brother of her faith; and had she never known what love was, her regard would perhaps not have been withholden in time; for every woman loves the father of her children, if he be not a creature to be abhorred. But if there be an agonizing thought to a girl of delicacy and sensibility, it is the idea of becoming a bride under such circumstances as surrounded poor Alice Vere—the thought that her heart shall beat against the bosom of a stranger, when its every pulse throbs for another. Still a high, imperious duty, as she believed, constrained her, and she prepared to resign herself to her fate.

The nuptial day arrived. It had been arranged that the master of the vessel, on board of which Alice, wistfully lingering, had begged to remain, should perform the ceremony (agreeably to the laws of the state of New York, by which marriage is merely a civil contract, requiring only a formal declaration of the parties before competent witnesses). Mr. T— himself commenced the ceremony by a prayer, which, as giving solemnity to the occasion, was perhaps most proper in itself; but it was painfully long, and seemed to refer to almost everything else but the immediate subject of interest. At length the bride, whose languid limbs refused to sustain her so long in a standing position, sank into a seat, and the missionary, glancing a look of reproof at her, abruptly concluded his harrangue. The worthy seaman was more expeditious in getting through with his share of the office. He merely asked the parties severally if they acknowledged each other as man and wife. The missionary made his response in the affirmative with a slow and grave distinctness; but Alice faltered in her reply. A tumult of feelings seemed oppressing her senses for a moment; she looked to the untamed forest, whose boughs waved unfettered on the shore, to the broad main that spread its free wave around her, and the wild bird that sported over its bosom,

"Thence she turned
To him who was to be her sole shelterer now,
And placed her hand in his, and raised her eye
One moment upward, whence her strength did come."

The certificates, which had been previously drawn up, being then signed and witnessed, the missionary concluded with another

homily; and the crew, who had been allowed to collect upon the quarterdeck during the ceremonial, dispersed over the vessel.

It was now sunset, and, as a heavy cloud which threatened rain brooded over the island, the captain politely insisted that Mr. T— should not think of returning to the shore, but take possession of his own private cabin. The rain soon after beginning to fall in torrents, drove those on deck below. Here the mates claimed the privilege of having a jorum of punch to drink the health of the bride, and the captain being willing to unite with them, Alice was compelled to retire to the new quarters which had just been provided for her; while the festive seamen insisted upon keeping their clerical guest for a while among themselves. Their mirth soon became so uproarious as to mock the tempest without, when a sudden squall struck the vessel, carrying her over, even as she lay at anchor under bare poles, upon her beam ends. The seamen, followed by the missionary, rushed to the deck, where the glare of the lightning, as they looked to windward, revealed to them a female figure standing upon the taffrail, with arms outstretched towards a huge wave that lifted its over-arching crest above her, and threatened to engulf the vessel. A cry of horror escaped the revellers, the bridegroom breathed a prayer as he clung to the rigging for safety: and then, as the descending sea righted the vessel, a suffocating moan was heard above the surge that swept the body of Alice Vere like a drift of foam across her decks.

The morning came at last, the sun rose serenely, the bright waves rippled joyously beneath the stern of the vessel, and their reflected light playing through the sloping windows of the cabin, glanced upon the unpressed couch of the Missionary Bride. None could even tell how she had made her way to the deck in the midst of the tempest; yet none have ever whispered the sin of self-destruction against the lovely, the lonely, the ill-fated ALICE Vere.—Let this "over true" tale bear a sad and solemn warning.

[We have inserted in our journal the above tale from the October number of Bentley's Miscellany, because we know that the outline of the story does not outrage facts, it being no uncommon thing for a female to leave her native land to unite her destinies with an individual entirely unknown to her. It is one of these sad cases in which the end is supposed to sanctify the means.

Rather than enlarge on the impropriety of such a course by any notices of our own, we would take occasion to refer our readers to an elaborate essay "ON FALSE PRINCIPLES OF BENEVOLENT ACTION," by Rev. R. W. Dickinson, and written no less in accordance with the spirit of divine revelation, than with the dictates of sound philosophy. Here is an extract from the practical part of the essay, which we introduce to our readers, with this single remark, that there are a multitude of other cases, distinguishing modern times, beside those enumerated below, and which shew to what an alarming extent "false principles of benevolent action" are in operation at the present day.

"Is money necessary to the accomplishment of a benevolent project? Almost any expedient is sometimes thought to be justifiable. An individual whose favour is deemed essential, may be humoured in his prejudices, may be complimented contrary to truth on his acknowledged liberality; statements of facts may be *overdrawn*; or the urgency of the case *exaggerated*. Is it necessary to change public opinion in order to further a seemingly virtuous project? Then, it is conceived to be perfectly allowable to condemn whoever may doubt its propriety; to slander whoever may oppose its advancement. Is intemperance the giant evil? Then it is deemed perfectly proper, in order to effect our humane object, to denounce the use of wine as sinful, though the Scriptures discountenance only its abuse. Is the system of slavery a great moral and social evil? Then, the feelings of the master may be outraged, and his character traduced and vilified;—the church may legislate in civil concerns; and the constitution of the country be overthrown. On the other hand, are the staple commodities of a place endangered! are the wealth and luxuries of a community liable to be disturbed by the claims of humanity and justice? then it is deemed allowable to rivet yet more closely the chains which bind a race in degrading servitude, and the ministers of Jesus, to retain their posts of usefulness, may violate their convictions of truth and right. So, in the ardour of their compassion for dying sinners, many men usurp the prerogative of God's own spirit. So, in their all-absorbing love for the purity of the church, do brethren quiet their consciences while *epithets of reproach* roll from their lips, and feelings of malice rankle in their hearts. Thus might we proceed to show the influence of this principle in all the relations of society,—how unlawful business is sometimes prosecuted for the sake of private good; how dishonesty and falsehood are sometimes justified by the necessity of making a living; how parents, for the sake of giving their children a knowledge of the world, or of enabling them to form eligible connexions, sometimes attempt to justify themselves in countenancing the dissipations of fashionable life; or in imposing on public credulity by assuming both at home and abroad the appearance of affluence; but we have already adduced instances more than sufficient to prove how wide spread is the influence of a false prin-