

faith, that they cannot be moved to a momentary forgetfulness of duty, by a sudden and startling occasion. After the widow had heard the letter read, in which her son announced his approaching return, the quiet of her life was for a time disturbed. She thought of heaven indeed, and prayed even more fervently than before; but the burning fever that possessed her heart, showed that its confidence was qualified. In the hours of devotion, she often found her thoughts wandering from that Being whose breath could still or trouble the surface of the ocean, far over the wide waters themselves, to meet the vessel that was flying to her with the tidings of bliss. She shuddered as she went morn after morn, to the cliff-head, and cast her eyes on the graves of the shipwrecked voyagers, which were scattered along the turf mountains on which she trod. In the silence of the night, when she endeavoured to drown her anxieties in sleep, imagination did but overact the part with which it had terrified her waking. Stormy seas and adverse winds—a ship straining against the blast, her deck covered with pale and affrighted faces, among which she seemed to detect those of her son, and of his family—winds hissing through the creaking yards—and waves tossing their horrid heads aloft, and roaring for their prey. Such were the visions that beset the bed of the longing mother, and made the night ghastly to her eyes. When she lay awake the rustling of a sudden wind among the green boughs at her window, made her start and sit erect in her bed; nor would she again return to rest until she had opened the little casement, and satisfied herself, by waving her hand abroad in the night air, that her alarm was occasioned by one of its fairest and most favourable motions. So indeed it was. The Almighty, as though to convince her how far she was from conjecturing aright the quarter from which calamity might visit her, bade the winds blow, during the whole of that period, in the manner which, had they been in her own keeping, she would have desired. Her acquaintances and neighbours all seemed to

share in her anxiety. The fishermen, after they had drawn up their canoes at evening, were careful, on their way homeward, to drop in at the widow Reardon's door, and let her know what vessels had entered the neighbouring river in the course of the day, or had appeared in the offing. She was constantly cheered with the assurance that fairer weather for a homeward bound ship, or more likely to continue, was never known before. Still, nevertheless, the poor woman's heart was not at peace, and the days and nights lagged along with an unaccustomed heaviness.

(To be continued.)

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## TRAVELS.

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### RUINS OF ANCIENT BABYLON.

(Continued from page 133.)

The sides of the ruin exhibit hollows, worn partly by the weather, but more generally by the Arabs, who are incessantly digging for the bricks, and hunting for antiquities. Several of these excavations I entered, and have no reason to suppose that they are inhabited by such ferocious animals as the generality of travellers assert. There certainly was an offensive smell, and the caves were strowed with the bones of sheep and goats, devoured most probably by the jackalls that resort thither in great numbers: and thousands of bats and owls have filled many of these cavities; fulfilling to the very letter the following prediction of Jeremiah:—“Because of the wrath of the Lord, it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate; every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations. The wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the island, shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein; and it shall be no more inhabited for ever, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom & Gomorrah, & the neighbouring cities thereof, saith the Lord; so shall no man abide there