

he replied: 'Yes, it is time for thee to return; thou shalt have thy own place once more.'

'But thou hast made it very hard for me—how shall I come after thee?' wailed the man. 'I shall grieve and disappoint those whom thou hast made glad. Oh, angel, tell me the secret of thy bliss!'

'The angel's smile grew more radiant.

'Yes, it is time for thee to return; but first I will tell thee the secret of the Lord, which is with them that fear him. When thou comest again into this body of thine, consecrate it with thyself to God. Remember: always that thou art altogether his, and he will make thee dwell in his heaven. We too, we angels, can sin and be sad, as some of us have done; and thou, too, brother, with all men, mayest obey and be happy as the angels are, utterly blessed because utterly resigned to his will who is Peace and Love and Joy. When any being is the servant of sin he is kept back from heaven and God; but when any being turns the very centre of his mind into the will of God and obedience to him he straightway enters into the heavenly and the divine. Be thou the servant of God, then all thou dost shall be for God, and God himself shall dwell in thee and gladden thee.'

The man still wearing the dimmed glories of the angel bowed his head.

'By the grace of Christ,' he said, 'I surrender myself to him whose I am, whom henceforth I serve.'

Even as he spoke a thrill that was almost pain passed through him, and the man was a man once more, while the angel glowed before him, a smiling splendor. Brighter and more glorious than ever he seemed as he spoke in tones of music, 'Blessed art thou, my brother, heaven is in thee, for God is with thee. Thou shalt be as the angels who do his will, hearkening unto the voice of his word: nay, more; thou shalt be as the King, who loveth thee, before whose glory the angels do homage now not more than when they watched his lowly life which manifested his Father among men: and evermore thy heart shall have its share of the music of heaven, praising him who is worthy to receive the glory and the honor and the power!'

The glory paled and faded out of sight; the angel-song melted into an exquisite silence that breathed unearthly peace; and the man bent forward in rapturous prayer.

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Then he started and glanced about him in amaze. The room was dark; the cool night breeze poured through the open window. The caretaker, holding a flickering light, was exclaiming and apologizing at the door. Was it possible that he had but slept and dreamed?

Yet God speaks to men in dreams, and from that night there was a change in the man, so that, though he never heard them, his clerks and associates commented upon it as in his dream he had heard them speak of the angel, and one day when his children tried to fancy what an angel could be like, the eldest said, 'I expect an angel would be something like our papa!'

Our Little Home.

Our little home, my darling,

Oh, whatever wind may blow,
The south, with its quiver of sunbeams,
The north, with its flakes of snow.

Our little home, my dearest,

Is under the dear Lord's care,
And we fear no ill nor sorrow,
Lovingly sheltered there.

--'Sunday Hour.'

First Mate Pitman.

(By Grace Livingstone Hill, in 'Presbyterian Banner'.)

The good ship 'Chasca' was doubling the Cape of Good Hope for India one Christmas Day. She had on board twenty-eight souls. The captain, the first and second mates, eighteen sailors, and seven passengers—missionaries and their wives, bound to their several fields of labor. The air was clear, the sun bright, just an ideal Christmas sky overhead, and the beautiful seas beneath.

The second mate was on watch on the deck. The captain and the missionaries were in the cabin at their sumptuous holiday dinner, trying to choke down and forget the sadness that would arise at the thought of former Christmases and loved ones left far behind.

Captain Merrill was a coarse, rough man, ignorant, overbearing and jealous. He professed to be an atheist. The sailors were forbidden to have any conversation whatever with the passengers. The missionaries were not even allowed to hand a tract to one of them. His tyrannical manner was a great trial to his passengers during the four months' journey. He loved a dispute, and would talk loudly and beligerently against religion.

Sometimes when the sea was smooth enough to permit, and he himself could be present, he would allow a service held on board, but it was thought by the earnest-hearted passengers that he only allowed it for the purpose of securing fresh butt for his ridicule.

He was getting off some of his rude jokes now, laughing coarsely, perhaps really trying to be a little agreeable for the sake of Christmas day; and the good things on the table were vanishing rapidly.

There was another Christmas dinner being eaten on board, but in solitude and silence. In his small state-room, dismal, ill-smelling, and close, sat First Mate Pitman eating his portion; no fowls, or meats, or dainty sauces, only a scanty supply of ship's biscuit, and water.

He was a powerful man, six feet and three inches in height, and finely proportioned. His grizzled hair had here and there a streak of silver. His face had a look of high nobility, uncultivated. There were hard lines on his brow, and marks of dissipation, but a sort of tender gravity seemed to have overspread this, and tried to hide the story of his former life. By his side lay a new bible, a few of its pages already worn and creased by usage. As he ate, he looked at it, and thought of all that had happened since the beginning of this voyage. Then he was profane and wicked, perhaps more than any of his companions. But for this book he might now be out in the cabin yonder at dinner with the rest, his the loudest laughter, his the wittiest jokes, and on deck the longest stream of oaths. But not a shade of sadness passed over his face at this thought. He reached his hand and turned a leaf and read again a sweet new verse he had just spelled from the pages; 'Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.'

Early in the voyage First Mate Pitman had boasted one day: 'There's nothing that any man ever done that First Mate Pitman can't do.'

One of the missionaries said: 'I'm afraid you are mistaken. I have known men who left off swearing.'

He looked the missionary steadily in the eye a moment, and said: 'If any man has done that, First Mate Pitman can do it. How much'll ye bet?'

'If you'll leave off swearing for a week, I'll

give you the most valuable article I possess, for a present,' said the missionary.

'I'll do it!' said the mate, and so he had done.

But when at the end of a week he was presented with a bible he looked disappointed.

'The trouble with it is,' said he, shaking his head, good-naturedly, 'it ain't no use to me. I lived with my mother in Boston, and went to school a spell when I was ten years old, but I ran away to sea, an' ain't never seen her since, and forgot how to read. But I'll put it away and keep it to remind me o' you.'

The gentleman hazarded an offer to teach the old sailor how to read, and to his surprise it was eagerly accepted. So, after that, in the presence of his sneering companions and scornful superior officer, First Mate Pitman sat day by day spelling out words from his bible, and learning with the words the truth of the Christian religion. He left off swearing and changed his conduct in many ways. He became a favorite with everyone except the jealous old captain. The more others liked Pitman the more the captain hated him, until, on pretext of some violation of the ship's discipline, he arrested him, and put him in confinement in his state-room. Pitman meekly and quietly took his bible with him and submitted. And so he sat alone on Christmas day, in disgrace and forbidden intercourse with any of the ship's company, instead of eating his dinner with the rest.

Out in the cabin, the whole table were laughing over one of the captain's stories in which he figured as a double hero, when in rushed the second mate his bronzed face ashy grey. He spoke a few hurried words in a whisper to the captain, who arose hastily and drew his subordinate officer into his state-room. Two or three minutes passed full of anxiety to those left behind; and then both men returned, the captain's face overspread with a look of absolute terror. He held in each hand a revolver, and strode through the cabin out to the deck without saying a word. Dinner was forgotten. Everyone followed to the deck.

There, gathered in the fore-castle, with determined looks and darkened brows, stood the sailors; eighteen ferocious, powerful men, each gripping his glittering knife, mutiny written in every face. They were just ready to make an attack; resistance upon the part of the hand-ful on the quarter-deck seemed utterly useless—insane. The only hope was in mercy—where mercy was little to hope for in hearts burning for revenge against a long series of insult and injustice—not the least of which was foul and insufficient food. The sharp contrast between the Christmas dinner fore and aft, between fore-castle and cabin, had precipitated the storm long brewing. The passengers looked for their captain, but he had disappeared. Where was he? Someone came striding up the deck but it was First Mate Pitman, not Captain Merrill. Pitman, come from his bible. In his hand the two revolvers of the captain; on his brow the helmet of salvation, his face wearing the courage born of the promise he had in his heart, 'The Lord thy God is with thee.'

Without waiting for others to help, he walked straight up to the surly, maddened men, and without an oath, but with an authority and coolness that few experienced officers could have shown, he said: 'Men, lay down your knives. I will give you until I count ten to lay them down.' And then he began deliberately to count: 'One—two—three—' One by one the knives were laid at Pitman's feet, the lowering brows relaxed, and the mutiny was quelled.

Those who watched and waited anxiously for the result, breathed freely once more,