

nights are cool, we experience some relief; but during the day the heat is insufferable. We cannot doubt, from the constant height of the temperature, that the raft has drifted far to the south.

As for land, no one any longer looks for it. It seems as if the terrestrial globe were only a watery sphere. Always and everywhere, this infinite ocean!

On the 10th there is the same calm and the same heat. The sky pours down upon us a rain of fire; it is burning air that we breathe.

Our desire to drink is irresistible, and we forget the torments of hunger; we await with furious impatience the moment of receiving the few drops of water which are our portion. O that we might drink to satiety, just for once, even if we were to exhaust our supply, and die!

About noon one of our companions is taken with sharp pains which force him to cry out. It is the wretched Owen, who, lying down forward, writhes in terrible convulsions.

I hurry towards him. Whatever his conduct in the past, humanity impels me to see if I cannot afford him some relief.

Just at this moment the sailor Flaypole gives a shout.

I turn round.

Flaypole is standing near the mast, and is pointing towards the horizon.

"A ship!" he cries.

We are all upon our feet in an instant. Perfect silence reigns on the raft. Owen, ceasing his cries, stands up with the rest. A white speck appears in the direction indicated by Flaypole. But does it move? Is it a sail? What do the sailors, with their experienced eyes, think of it?

I watch Robert Curtis, who, with folded arms is observing the white speck. His cheeks are projecting, every part of the face expresses intensity of attention, his brow contracts, his eyes are half shut, and he concentrates upon the spot all the power of vision of which he is capable. If this spot is a sail, he will be sure to recognize it.

But he shakes his head; his arms fall to his side.

I look. The white speck is no longer there. It is not a ship; it is some reflection, the broken crest of a wave,—or if it is a ship, the ship has passed out of sight!

What prostration follows this moment of hope! We all resume our wonted places. Robert Curtis stands motionless, but no longer scans the horizon.

Then Owen's cries begin with increased violence. His whole body is writhing in terrible pain, and his aspect is really frightful. His throat is shrunk by a spasmodic contraction, his tongue is dry, his abdomen swollen, his pulse feeble, rapid, and irregular.

The unfortunate man has violent convulsive movements and tetanic shocks. These symptoms are not to be mistaken; Owen has been poisoned by oxide of copper.

We do not possess the medicine to neutralize the effects of this poison. Still, vomiting may

be provoked, to eject the contents of Owen's stomach. Lukewarm water is sufficient for this. He consents. The first cask being exhausted, I am about to be procure water from the other, which is still untouched, when Owen gets upon his knees, and in a voice that is scarcely human, cries,—

"No! no! no!"

Why this "no"? I return to Owen, and explain to him what I am going to do. He replies yet more eagerly that he does not wish to drink that water.

I try then to relieve him by tickling the uvula; and this succeeds.

It is but too clear that Owen is poisoned, and that nothing can be done to save him.

But how has he been poisoned? He has had some relief. He can now speak. The captain and I question him.

I will not attempt to describe our feelings on hearing the wretched man's reply.

Owen, urged by atrocious thirst, has stolen several pints of water from the full cask. The water in this cask is poisoned!

Owen died during the night amid terrible agonies.

It is but too true! The poisoned cask formerly contained copperas. This is very evident. Now, by what fatality was it converted into a water cask, and by what yet more deplorable fatality was it taken on board the raft? It matters little. What is certain is, that we have no more water.

We have been forced to throw Owen into the sea at once, for decomposition immediately began its work. The boatswain could not even use the flesh for bait, so far gone was it. The death of this wretched man will not have been of any use to us!

DRAWING LOTS.

January 26.—The proposition has been made. All have heard it, and understood it. For some days it has been a fixed idea, but an idea which no one has dared to utter.

They are going to draw lots.

Each will have his share of him whom the lot condemns.

Well, so be it! If the lot chooses me I will not complain.

I think I hear it proposed that Miss Hervey shall be excepted, and that is the suggestion of Andre. There are eleven of us on board; each therefore have ten chances in his favor, and one against him; were an exception made, this proportion would be lessened. Miss Hervey will be subjected to the common fate.

It is now half-past ten in the morning. The boatswain, who has been revived by Douglas's proposition, insists that the lot should be drawn at once. He is right. Besides, none of us cling to life. He who is chosen by the lot will only precede the others a few days, perhaps a few hours. We know this, and do not dread death. But to cease suffering from hunger for a day or two, to cease being crazed by thirst, is what all of us crave; and this will now occur.