

This was all that passed at that time; but the offer fastened on my mind; and to make short work of this part of my story, I got my father's leave, and, what was harder, my mother's, to go on board as a mid.

I never had reason to repent this; for I really like the sea, and always did. But I should be far from recommending a lad to come to so sudden a determination as mine was. In fact, the circumstances under which I became a sailor, were peculiar. The captain who took me under his charge was a remarkably kind and considerate man, and a Christian. It was this that made my parents willing to yield to my wishes; for they were Christians. The captain was also under some obligations to my father, which he was glad of an opportunity of returning in double kindness to me: he always treated me as a son. Nevertheless there were hardships to be borne and work to be done, on which I had little calculated, and though our ship was a marvel of regularity and sobriety, compared with many others, there was much to drive away from a young mind like mine the serious impressions which, by God's blessing, had been made upon it in childhood and early youth, by my parent's instructions, example and prayers.

I was becoming careless. Who can tell what the end would have been, if God, in his mercy, had not interposed, and, in saving my life from destruction, brought me also to determine that my father's God should be mine, and my guide, even unto death!

It was in this wise:—

I had been several voyages, when my old friend, the captain, died, and other changes were made in consequence, which induced me to relinquish my berth. The ship sailed again without me; and I was for some time unemployed. This was a great disappointment and vexation, for though sailors are glad enough to see land after long voyage, they soon tire of life on shore. So, at any rate, it was with me. And besides this, having chosen my profession, I had to live by it; and I was losing both time and interest, and that at an age when, if I did not get on, perhaps I never might.

I was at home a good many months without finding anything to do, and was beginning to think of giving up the sea altogether, when I was sent for by the owners of a vessel lying in the Dock, waiting for a fair wind to proceed on her voyage to India. I was tried for a berth in her while she was freighting, but, as I thought, unsuccessfully. You may judge of my delight then, when I was told that I was appointed third-mate of the Burhampooter;