

"As a last resource my father sent me to sea, on board of a small merchant vessel. I need not detail the hardships of the next few years, suffice it to say, that my temper was thoroughly soured by the treatment which I received, and which, to tell the truth, I richly merited, and from a quarrelsome boy, I became a morose and vindictive youth—my father's words were prophetic.—I found 'a Betty everywhere.' During this time, I however acquired sufficient knowledge of navigation to be fit at the age of one and twenty to take a situation which was procured for me as second mate on board an East Indiaman, through the interest of my father. He, dear, good man, thought me improved, but alas! he little knew the evil of my heart.

"Our captain was a bluff, hearty, English sailor, never so happy as when afloat, attentive to his duties, and rather strict with his crew. The first mate was a young man, about two years older than myself, a thorough seaman, and, what was rare in those days, studiously inclined, and yet of such a frank, open disposition, that he was a favourite with all on board except myself. He was kind to me, but his disposition was so contrary to mine, that I hated him; and, although he strove in every way to conciliate me, I alone of all the crew remained insensible to his attentions. Nay, more, I tried to prejudice the captain's mind against him, but it was useless; and having been detected in a gross falsehood, I was severely reprimanded for my conduct in the presence of the whole crew. This public disgrace rankled in my mind, and increased my hostility towards this innocent, and as I now believe, truly estimable young man, until my hatred, unrestrained by any sense of religion, impelled me to the commission of a crime which, had I succeeded in my attempt, would have embittered every moment of my after existence, and sooner or later brought me to an untimely grave. I often shudder when I look back on this part of my mad career, and bless God's redeeming grace that frustrated my evil designs. One night I had the morning watch and was rather late on making my appearance to relieve the first mate, who was then on duty. He spoke to me gently about it; I answered him roughly; he reproved me, and I struck him. This was too much even for him, we closed and wrestled together; I was strong and active and I used every exertion to throw him overboard, when by some accident which I never could rightly understand, but not I believe from any fault of the first mate, I went overboard myself. The cry went through the ship, 'A man overboard!' and hen-coops and other things were soon cast over to me. I was a good swimmer, and soon managed to secure one of the hen-coops, and

though the night was rather dark, I could see that the sails were backed and every exertion made to rescue me. I shouted, but the wind was rising, and my voice was lost, I suppose, for after some time, the ship was put on her course, and I was left alone on the ocean. My first act was to lash myself firmly to the hen-coop with my handkerchief, which I tore into strips for that purpose. How bitterly did I then lament my folly and wickedness. Oh! how wearily that night passed away. The day dawned, the sun rose and set, and still I was alone on the ocean. Overcome with watching and hunger I now fell into a kind of stupor. How long it lasted I know not, but I was aroused by the flashing of lights, and close upon me, bearing down directly upon me, was a large ship in full sail. She passed so close to me that I seized hold of a rope which hung from her side, and fastening it to the hen-coop, shouted loudly for help; I was soon heard and speedily hauled on deck.

I was now safe, but the sudden transition, combined with the fatigue I had previously suffered, was too much for me, and I fell senseless on the deck. The next thing that I distinctly remember, is that of awaking one evening, as if from a dream, and finding myself in a berth, with my arm bandaged, and a venerable looking man dressed in black standing by the side of my berth. In reply to my questions, he informed me that I was on board a ship which was conveying soldiers to England, and that he himself was the Chaplain. He also told me that I had lain for several days in a most precarious state, at times raving frightfully, and then again lying for hours together with scarcely any signs of life. From that hour, the venerable Chaplain paid me repeated visits, and reminding me of my recent dangers and deliverances, urged upon me most faithfully the duty of repentance. I listened to him with attention; my heart was softened by the extraordinary events of the last few days, and through the grace of God I rose from the bed of sickness an altered man. In due time the ship arrived at Portsmouth, and, having made up my mind to quit the sea, I obtained employment in an establishment at Portsmouth as a kind of coach-houseman. While living here, I learnt by the papers that the East Indiaman had never been heard of since she left port, and was therefore supposed to have been lost, and I therefore determined not to present myself before my father again until I could do so with some credit to myself. In this, however, I was clearly wrong, for it would no doubt have gladdened his heart to see me return as a penitent, and as it was, circumstances have since prevented me from seeing him or any member of our family, who all