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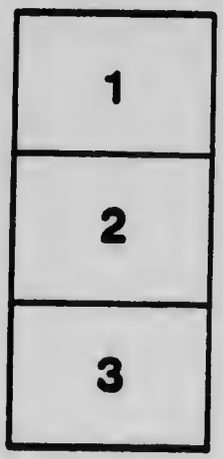

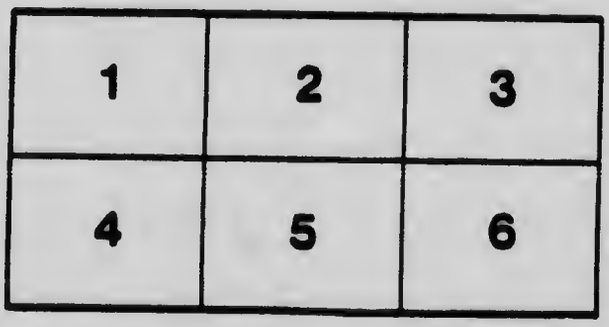

Shadows of the Deep

Charles Sparrow

Shadows of the Deep

BY

Charles Sparrow

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR BY
WILLIAM BRIGGS
TORONTO
1903

To Elsie

From Irv

Wishing you a
merry Christmas

Dec. 25, 1919.

SHADOWS OF THE DEEP.

CHAPTER I.

GLORIOUS in splendor, one early Spring morning the sun was rising above the distant hills, throwing forth his divine light over the mighty universe. The birds had already left their resting places and were sweetly singing, filling the calm and peaceful atmosphere with their delicious harmonies.

In the distance, two boys were strolling along a beautiful avenue of beech trees, that led from a magnificent park, studded with oak, elm and pine, and a rich covering of bushes and bracken for the game, which were very numerous in this part of the estate. They passed into the garden of Longtown Hall. A spaniel dog with curly brown hair sulkily followed, looking entreatingly every minute up into his master's face, as if asking him to unfasten the chain by which he was led, for hundreds of young rabbits were bounding to and before them.

"Shame! let him go, Algernon," said Jim, and in another instant he darted down and unfastened the chain. The dog shot away immediately with a bark and a bound, scattering the rabbits right and left, and his wild, shrieking cry as he chased them could be heard for miles.

Jim was the only son of Mr. Miles, the owner of this fine estate called Longtown. He was a lad of eighteen, strong and well built; dark hair, almost black, covered his head in curls, his eyes were a rich black color, and his pink lips, finely but firmly cut, and well formed nose and brow, truly showed that nature had ordained him with her blessing.

Algernon, Jim's friend, was the son of the Vicar of Longtown Church. He was strikingly the opposite in appearance to Jim, being thin and tall, fair complexion, light blue eyes and golden hair. He was very delicate when he was a baby, and there were times when the pretty, blue-eyed child, as he was then called, was not expected to live. Ah! what trying times those were for his parents, but with their fond care and tender devotion he, as he grew older, began to gain strength, and when he was five years old had developed into quite a sturdy little fellow.

He was a very kind, loving boy, having a most affectionate disposition, and being always bright and happy. And it was very touching to see, in his younger days, the extraordinary love he bore for Jim.

See them now with their arms fondly locked round each other, and their faces bright with happiness. One can see plainly that the same love they bore in childhood has not died out. Algernon's sparkling blue eyes the same, and Jim's large black eyes, with a touch of sadness in them, met each other's with a look that seemed to say, "Our love will never be quenched."

But Jim was rather sad now; he had been thinking of the life of the sailors thereon, and wondering what sort of life it really was—for he and Algernon were going to be sailors. A sigh escaped from his lips as he thought of the deep—its fascinations, its horrors—and Alge noticed it.

"Sighing, Jim—what troubles you?" he asked fondly, looking with his clear blue eyes into Jim's dark ones, sadly.

"Oh Alge, it is not a day for sadness, is it? For a day like this should make one feel happy—but," sighing, he said, as he gazed before him at the far stretch of country, studded with trees of rich green foliage, and bright daisies and buttercups that clustered together in the green fields, "all this loveliness makes me feel sad, knowing that after a few days we will not see it for a long, long time, and—who knows?—perhaps never again."

"Oh! Jim, do not say that. I know the sea has her dangers and a sailor's life truly is a risky one, but next year I trust," he said, solemnly, "will find us here again."

"With all my heart, Alge," said Jim fervently, and gazing tenderly at his friend he swore to himself that he would do all that was in his power to protect him from any dangers that might beset him while on the deep. From childhood they had both wished to be sailors, and now their wish had been answered, for in a few days they are to join their ship.

Longtown Hall was a very ancient building. One part of it, the east side, was in ruins, and covered with thick foliage of ivy; but the other part, being newly added from time to time, was in very good condition. It stood upon elevated ground, towering nobly above the valley on the east side, where the river Avon slowly winds her way. Westerly, inclining to the north, the road runs that leads to the Hall, getting steeper and steeper as it passes the building. About half a mile along this narrow road, you come to a sudden turn, and that leads you to the village.

It was a little place, chiefly inhabited by the laborers of Longtown Hall. Not far from the village, surrounded by oak trees, snugly lay the church, and a stone's throw from that the Vicarage. The Miles's were a very ancient family, and could trace their genealogy generations back, but strange to say, not one of them had ever been sailors, as far as they knew. "Jim, my boy," his father would say to him, "I don't like your being a sailor," but

seeing him look sad and disappointed, for he had set his mind on it—"Never mind, my boy," he would fondly say, patting him gently on the head, "if you wish to, then you can." So the permission given, and sanctioned by his mother, but only after a great deal of persuasion, he only had to wait until he was a certain age before commencing the life that had filled his youthful mind with so many charms. Then, of course, Algernon wanted to go too. They were from childhood practically brought up with each other. As children they played with each other, and as they grew older they went to the same school. And now Jim had determined to be a sailor, so Alge must be one also. "Whither thou goest, Jim," he used to say fondly, "I will go too." But it must be borne in mind that Jim was as fond of Alge as Alge was of him—although Alge always used to look upon Jim as the leader; and what Jim thought, whether it seemed right or wrong, Alge always agreed with it. True, he was younger than Jim, so he had good reason to look upon him as his senior; but having such a kindly disposition and loving Jim so, I doubt if Alge would have done otherwise had he been the older of the two. At the Hall, where he was staying until they sailed, Alge was a great pet. Mr. and Mrs. Miles were very fond of him. Jim was their only son, and they always looked upon Alge as Jim's brother. And a brother, if not by birth, he was by affection.

"Oh! Jim," said Alge suddenly, "what is Shot barking so wildly about? Look! See, there is someone coming. Who can it be? Shot seems to know."

"Sure enough, Alge, and it is Sisie," exclaimed Jim, as he spied a young lady in the distance making towards them.

"It is, Jim. And doesn't Shot love her," he exclaimed passionately. For Shot was nearly frantic with delight.

"Love her, Alge? I should think so, and somebody else does also," he said quietly.

Alge smiled, but said nothing, and in another moment Sisie came up to them. "Good morning, gentlemen," she sweetly greeted them, with eyes sparkling, eyes which were as blue as the morning sky. Shot ceased barking and lay down by her feet, furiously wagging his tail while she fondly patted him, her golden hair hanging loosely over her shoulders and her eyes shyly glancing up at Alge and Jim.

There was a painful stillness for a moment, broken by Alge, who somewhat nervously stuttered out, "You are early out this morning, but we are awfully pleased to see you."

"Yes, but I love the early morning," said she, smiling. "I often go out of doors to see the sun rise and watch the country awake from its slumber. What charms they have with me," she said with deep emotion.

"True, Sisie. What is a more lovely sight than to watch the sun rise from the hill there, and to see the sun set across those plains to the west?"

"I agree with you, Jim," said Alge absently, nodding his head. "But does not Shot look happy?" and he stooped down and gave him a fond hug. "Dear old boy," he muttered, "how happy you have made him, Sisie; how he loves you!"

"Yes, I think he does," thoughtfully said she. "Yet he will miss you both when you go to sea, poor Shot—"

'And will you, Sisie?" timidly asked Alge, glancing up at her. "God knows I will," exclaimed she reverently, with a touch of sadness. And immediately her face dropped, and tears, but not seen, dimmed her eyes for a moment.

She was a distant cousin of Alge—an orphan. When she was two years old she lost her father, and ten years afterwards her poor mother died. She then went to Warwickshire to stay with her aunt, a widow, Mrs. Checkley, and had lived there since. She had not been with her aunt many days before Alge and Jim, two little boys then, were introduced to her. And she soon began to love them, and they also loved her.

"Poor Sisie," said Alge tenderly, slowly stroking the dog's curly coat of hair, and twining the curls around his fingers. "We will be very, very sorry to leave you too, so sorry—but we will

be back in a year's time. Won't we, Shot, old boy?" giving him a tender pat, "and you must look after Sisie when we are away." Shot answered by vigorously wagging his fat stump of a tail. And I have no doubt but that he quite understood him.

Jim was attentively watching them with a curious expression upon his face. His dark black eyes were first fixed upon Alge's face and then rapidly passed to Sisie's. He knew, he could tell, that her heart was given to Alge; long ago he suspected it, but now he was sure of it. A chill shudder passed rapidly over him, why, he could not tell, unless because of a fear that her heart's desire might be snatched away. And as he looked at her sweet, innocent face, so full of love and gentleness, he sighed as he thought, what if the love she bore Alge should be cast away either by Alge rejecting it—but no, he would not do that, he thought; as he looked into those clear blue eyes there seemed no cruelty, no deception there—or perhaps by death. "Could she bear that sorrow? I doubt it—would it have been better that she did not love him?" pondered he, while his uncontrollable thoughts imagined some coming evil.

Suddenly Alge's eyes caught Jim's searching ones.

"Jim, how sad you look," he uttered. And springing up he fondly locked his arm around him. "Tell me why!"

"Alge! you silly boy, it is quite natural, is it not? Now that soon we shall be leaving this beautiful country, all our dear friends, and— "

"But Jim," broke in Alge, "we shall soon be back again—do not talk as if we were going to our funeral," pleaded he.

Sisie was kneeling on the grass. She was nervously twisting her hat in her hand; her sad face was uplifted toward Alge's, and her beautiful eyes, looking so sad, caught his.

"Sisie, dear Sisie, have I vexed you? Do not think that I will not be sorry to leave you, Sis," said he with low and trembling voice, "for I love you too much for that."

"Oh Alge, I am not vexed, only sad, very sad. It is so hard to part, and a year is such a long time," she said sorrowfully.

"Yes Sisie, but there always comes a time when even the best of friends must part."

There was a momentary look of sympathy from Alge to Sisie, a gentle softening of his pale blue eyes that spoke of a deeper love than Sisie had imagined.

CHAPTER II.

THE daylight was slowly fading. Already the sun had sunk far below the long bank of clouds that thinly stretched across the western horizon. Some birds were sweetly singing their last song before retiring to their sleeping places, and their notes sounded clearly in the calm, almost motionless atmosphere. For not a breath of wind stirred the stillness, that heavy drowsiness that filled the air. Brighter the pale moon shone as the shades of night fell around, shedding forth her silvery tints across the pools and rivulets, seas and oceans—all being hallowed with her silvery streaks of light. Myriads of stars gradually became visible, faintly twinkling.

Through the moonlit streets of Longtown village two youths were walking arm-in-arm. An expression of sadness was on their faces, and somewhat of weariness was in their movement as they slowly strolled along.

A mile in the direction where they walked stood a large mansion. "The Liaches," as it was called, standing all alone in its garden of fine trees, was prettily situated on a low hill, and picturesquely surrounded with large trees which shelter the house

from the severe winds that sometimes sweep down across the hill. A long but narrow carriage-drive winds its way from the main road up to the front door on the west side; and on the east, down in the valley, flows the river Avon.

In one of the large rooms of the mansion, Mrs. Checkley was sitting in her arm-chair. In her lap lay some worsted, and her hands were busily knitting stockings.

She was not what you would call a handsome lady, being stout and large featured, but her face wore a kind and loving expression, and there was a peculiar gentleness in her mild grey eyes. She was about fifty years old, and her black hair was thickly streaked with grey.

Opposite, sat Sisie. A book was in her hand, but she was not reading it. She now and again glanced at the page, but her thoughts were far away, and there was a sadness in her eyes and a nervous twitching of the mouth. There was not a sound in the room except the ticking of the large marble clock on the mantelpiece, and the low purring of the handsome Persian cat that lay stretched out on the hearth rug. The large chandelier lighted up the room. One of the low windows was open to let in the cool air, which gently moved the curtain backward and forward, and filled the room with freshness. Round the walls hung some fine old pictures, and the furniture was of massive oak. Suddenly the clock

struck eight. Mrs. Checkley looked up, glanced at Sisie, but went on with her knitting.

"Sisie, dear," she said presently, "when did the boys say they would come?"

"Eight o'clock, aunt," she answered drearily.

"Had you not better shut the window, dear? They will be here soon," said she kindly.

Sisie gave a sigh, and putting down the book, she got up and shut the window, remarking how much older it had got. Then she sat down in her seat again, and picking up the cat began to stroke and caress it on her lap.

Again there was silence, but only for a few minutes, for suddenly there was a knock at the door, and the servant announced the Messrs. Miles and Deed.

Mrs. Checkley rose and shook hands—"Take a seat," she said kindly. "Well, I suppose we are not to see you again for some time, boys?"

"Not for a very long time," laughed Alge.

"Surely you are not pleased you are going to sea?" inquired Mrs. Checkley in amazement—for she had a great dread of the sea.

"Very!" said Alge, laughingly.

"Indeed we are," put in Jim, who had been interestingly watching them. Mrs. Checkley still looked surprised, and her large grey eyes first rested on Alge and then on Jim, as if asking for an explanation from them.

"But, Mrs. Checkley," said Alge, "although we

are glad to go to sea we are sorry, awfully sorry, to part with you all."

Mrs. Checkley's eyes dropped, and she went on knitting. There was silence for a few minutes, then she said, slowly—"We will miss you."

A faint sigh passed from Sisie's lips as she leaned back in the chair, and a hot burning flush lit up her pale face.

Jim half glanced at her, then he drew his chair close up to hers, and picking up the cat that lay by her feet began to caress it.

"When we are away, Sisie," he whispered to her, "mother says you must often call and see her."

"I will, Jim," said she with quivering voice, while she held back a sob that nearly choked her; and it was with great effort that she controlled herself. She had determined not to break down, she vowed she would bear up a little longer, until they had gone and said their last good-bye. Her face turned pale again as she made the resolution, and a feverish light gleamed in her eyes.

"Sisie," said Alge suddenly, as he glanced up from a calendar he had been studying the last few minutes, "eleven months to-day, that will be March 20th, we will be, weather and circumstances permitting, sitting in this very room."

"Will it really be eleven months before you are back again?" inquired Mrs. Checkley. "What a long time!"

"A long time," wearily cried Sisie.

"Oh, no, not so long, Sisie," said Alge, as he got up and began to play with the cat that had scrambled down from off Jim's lap and was then playing with the hearth rug. "It will soon pass away," he added.

She glanced towards him, and for a few minutes watched him as he dragged a piece of string round and round the hearth rug, while the cat playfully ran after it. A bright, merry smile shone on his handsome face, while his blue eyes sparkled with delight.

"Too bad to tease her so, Alge," said Jim.

"She likes it," laughed Alge, as he suddenly caught hold of her and rubbed her soft fur against his face.

"Sisie, dear," exclaimed Mrs. Checkley, as she put down her knitting and opened the piano, "do favor us with a tune."

"Oh, do, Sisie, that's a good girl," said Alge, caressingly, while he kneeled on the hearth rug with the cat in his arms, and his eyes looking beseechingly into hers.

"What would you like me to play?" asked she, slowly rising, and seating herself at the piano quickly ran her fingers over the keys. Her head was bent as her eyes glanced at Alge's for an answer.

"Beethoven's sonata, please," said Alge. She

had expected that; she knew very well it was his favorite, for how often had she played it to him? and tears dimmed her eyes as she swiftly dashed her hands over the notes which filled one's soul with bliss.

Never had she played it so well as she did to-night. Never did the notes "good-bye" express so much anguish as those that thrilled through and through Alge's being. Rapt in silence and as in a spell he watched her while her hands dashed out the music in a whirl, until the last notes vibrated through the air with awful joy and then slowly died away.

CHAPTER III.

It was late when they got home. The last chime of the Hall clock was slowly striking twelve as they retired to their bedroom. And it was with a tired and very weary feeling they went to rest.

The first streaks of day had lit up the sky as Jim drew up the blind, letting in the sunlight, which was just rising in a perfect blue sky. On opening the window the cool balmy air poured in, cooling his feverish brow, for he had slept very little that night.

Algernon still lay asleep, dreaming no doubt of happy thoughts, for his face was animated by a faint smile. The sun, which was shining through the window, lit up his golden hair that lay in curls which thickly covered his head and brow.

Jim leaned out of the window. The cool air had refreshed him somewhat, but he felt very down-hearted and exceedingly sad. Not that he did not want to go to sea, for that was his great ambition, to be a sailor; but because he loved his mother and father, and his heart ached in parting with them. He knew only too plainly how grieved they were over it.

While he was thinking, Alge turned over in his bed and awoke. He was somewhat surprised to

see Jim at the window, and rising up in bed he gazed for a few moments at him with an astonished look.

"Hello, Jim," he suddenly yelled, "I wondered who on earth you were at first. What are you doing there?"

Jim started, turned round, and immediately his melancholy thoughts vanished as he saw Alge's happy face smiling at him.

Algie sprang out of bed and hastily put on his clothes and joined Jim at the window, giving him a fond slap on the back.

"Well! old man," he exclaimed, "what sort of night did you have? Not very good, I should say," he said thoughtfully, gazing into his somewhat worn face.

"True, Alge, I did not sleep well at all. Ah! how I envied you!" he said, smiling.

"Poor boy! You look a bit out of sorts, and this our parting day," he said sadly.

"It is, Alge. How I will miss this country," he continued, sorrowfully. "I did not realize before the pain it would give in parting with the dear old place."

They stood still a moment, and with hands clasped together gazed at the scenery before them.

Down the valley below them calmly the river Avon rippled by, glittering in the sunlight like a streak of silver, winding its course along the thick

bushes, trees, and hamlets, this never ending sheet of water.

"God knows how I will miss it, Jim," he said sadly, "but the place is yours not mine—it is nothing to me to part with it as long as I do not part with you, kind friend."

A figure in white flickered through the park as he spoke—they noticed it, it was Sisie—and in another moment she was out of sight.

Alge's face dropped, and tears seemed to run down his eyes.

"Sisie," he said presently, "wandering through the woods like an angel, pure and good. Yes, I will miss her, that only makes it all the harder in parting."

"Do you love her, Alge?" asked Jim softly. It was the first time he had asked him such a question, although he guessed it.

"Jim, I do!" he said fervently. Then he paused for a moment and hung his head, for the thought came to him, for the first time, that perhaps Jim did too. He never thought of such a thing before, but now he saw it was quite possible he might do so. "Good God, if so," he thought.

"Jim, forgive me for saying so," he said, clasping his hand, "but who could not help loving her—a perfect beauty, a goddess—yes, a saint. It is not my fault that I love her, Jim; say so, else I will never forgive myself."

"Alge, be calm, my friend. I have nothing to forgive you for. No, Alge, love her with your whole heart, and may she love you likewise."

"And you do not love her, Jim?" he asked with quick coming breath.

"No, Alge, not as my future wife; only as a sister, and as that I love her dearly."

"Thank God," he breathed, and he suddenly seized hold of Jim and kissed him, for his heart was so full of love. If only Sisie had seen him I am sure she would have been very jealous over his outburst of sentiment.

"Jim," he said presently, "how I should like to see her before we sail, to hear from her lips whether she loves me as I love her."

"Yes, Alge, but it is too late to see her now; but you may be sure she does."

Alge nodded his head. "Not sure," he said quietly.

"Hark, Alge, eight o'clock is striking, and in another hour the carriage will be around, and we will soon be launched into the world, into this new life that we have chosen."

"Do you dread it, Jim? It seems easy to make up our mind to do a thing, but when the time comes then comes an aching of the heart, a feeling one never expected to realize. Do you not find that so, Jim?"

"Yes, but I do not dread it, Alge, no, never. But come, we must go down to breakfast."

They went down stairs and into the morning-room, where breakfast was laid for them.

It was a large room, beautifully furnished in oak. Mr. and Mrs. Miles were already seated at the breakfast table, both looking rather miserable, but no wonder, for it was very hard to lose their only son, and they felt it keenly.

He was a handsome man, about middle age, tall, broad-chested, black eyed, clean shaven, excepting the upper lip, which was covered with a heavy black moustache. He was every inch a gentleman, and a good sportsman, being a capital shot and a fine rider, and was very popular with his tenants. His wife was a lovely woman, and although she was past middle age—being nearer fifty than forty—she looked more like eight-and-twenty, so well she wore her age.

Breakfast over—one of the most miserable meals that family had ever known—Alge left the room with Mr. Miles, whose intention it was to see the boys off from Liverpool, and the few minutes they had to wait before the carriage came, they left Jim alone with his mother. Glancing round as they stepped into the passageway they saw them locked in each other's arms, while her tears were flowing fast.

CHAPTER IV.

As gay and as proud as a swan looked the sailing-ship *Olympian*, while she lay at anchor in mid-stream—now and again rising to port and starboard as the gentle waves washed against her keel. Her newly-painted masts and sides glittered in the sun like many diamonds, and her clean, polished decks shone like silver. The landing stage was crowded with people. Some were embarking on the ferry boats, others landing from them. A great many were watching merely for curiosity sake, or getting a whiff of the ozone. There were all sorts of nationalities there: Chinese, Norwegians, Scandinavians, and all nations under the sun seemed to be represented in that crowd.

A small fishing boat, manned with just two sailors, left her moorings and made out to sea with her head set towards the *Olympian*. And as she swung round on the other tack, for the wind was slightly ahead for her, three people besides the sailors could be seen seated in the stern, and by a close observation one could recognize them as Jim, Alge and Mr. Miles.

Jim and Alge had their sailors' uniform on, and they looked quite smart in it. The two boatmen

sat for a time eyeing them, and winking at each other. "Maybe you two gentlemen are sailing with her?" asked one of the men with his eyes still fixed on them.

"Yes!" answered Mr. Miles, "my son and his friend have joined her."

"I wish them luck, sir, with all my heart," he said, while he tightened up the sail, and belayed the rope to a half-broken belaying-pin. "Yes, sir," he continued, "and she's one of the smartest boats afloat. She broke the record to Yokohama, last voyage, so I heard, and I guess it's right. But the captain, they say, is a bit of a demon."

"In what way?" quickly demanded Mr. Miles. And he felt very much inclined to take the boys back with him.

"Oh, nothing much, sir," he answered rather sulkily; "strict, I guess, that's all."

"Maybe you have not been to sea before?" asked his mate, who was in the bow.

"No," answered Alge, "this will be our first voyage. Why?"

He reached over for some tobacco, and chewed a piece before answering, and flung the rest of the tobacco over to his mate.

"Well," he said, "it's a devil of a rough life, this sailors' life—but I guess you will find that out for yourselves 'ere long," and he again lapsed into silence.

Several voices crying hoarsely on deck echoed across the water, and the men could be distinctly seen hoisting up the royal-yard. "Heav-o, heav-o, heav-o," they cry, and then a clear voice cries out, "Belay that." It was the first mate's.

They listened in the boat until the last sound died across the water. "They be busy," said the boatman, breaking the silence. "Yes, seemingly," answered Mr. Miles, rather absently. "I wonder when she reaches San Francisco?" he asked.

"'Frisco she's bound to, then? Well, I reckon," he snarled out, "it will take her between four and five months to do it in."

There was a twinkle in the old man's eyes as he spoke, which irritated Mr. Miles almost beyond endurance, and he was not sorry when they came alongside the ship.

Jim and Alge wondered whether it was the way of sailors to be so. If a sailor's life is a dog's life, surely their company must be very disagreeable, they thought.

But it was wrong to judge a sailor by two ignorant boatmen whom they had first happened to meet, and they were not long in finding that out.

"Make her fast alongside!" thundered out a voice from off the ship, and looking up her steep sides that towered above them, there could be seen two men standing close together by a rope ladder that hung down and just touched the water.

"Aye, aye! Sir," shouted back the boatman in the bows, and immediately heaved a coil of rope on deck, which was caught by some of the seamen there and made fast.

Down went the little sail with a flutter, and the boat swung to, close to the ship's side, and in another moment they were alongside the rope ladder. It was a very awkward ladder to climb to those that were not used to climbing, being entirely made of rope, which swung about with the ship's motion. And it was with great difficulty Mr. Miles managed to reach the deck. Jim and Alge followed, but to them it was an easier matter.

They were confronted by the two men who had previously given the order to make the boat fast alongside. The one stood a little before the other, as if he was by rank the superior of the two. He was an ugly little man, very short and broad. Two black, ferret-like little eyes, that shone like beads, stared from his round face, which was thickly covered with brown frizzy hair. A huge sheath-knife hung from his belt, and gave him a war-like expression, and in his right hand he grasped the end of the main buntline.

"Captain!" said Mr. Miles, holding out his hand.

"Yes, sir," he answered in a thick, gruff voice, that sounded more like a growl. "Captain Bear, sir."

Alge shuddered, and so did Jim. His voice sounded so terrible. Bear, good heavens! how he

resembles one, they thought. And I believe if they had seen him before going on board they would never have sailed by that vessel, such a terror his first impression had made on them.

"This is my son, and his friend, Captain Bear," said Mr. Miles in as friendly a tone as he could muster. "They have never been on the sea before, Captain," he continued, handing him a cigar, "and they practically know nothing about the life, but I sincerely hope they will get on, and make good sailors, as that is their desire."

The captain lit his cigar and immediately brought his ferret-like eyes to bear upon them.

"Very fine boys," he grunted, "and no doubt they will do well, but it's a hard life, sir, hard for the toughest of them, and a dog's life for the rest."

"Come, Captain, it's not so bad as all that, surely."

"May not be, Mr. Miles, true; but you will see what the young gentlemen will have to say about it when you see them again. But come in my cabin, Mr. Miles, and try some of my grog. It is a new brand, only came on board the other day."

"I will, Captain, thanks."

And as they turned to go below, the captain told the first mate, who was close by, to show the boys around the ship until Mr. Miles was ready to go ashore.

The first mate, or Mr. Lockey, as he was called, was a man of medium height. His hair was light

brown, and a long beard hung down from his chin and nearly reached to his waist. His eyes were pale blue, surrounded by thick eyelashes, and altogether he had a very pleasing expression. The boys took to him at once.

The crew were all on board and they expected to sail in a few hours. They consisted of twenty-eight hands all told, divided into seventeen able-seamen, one ordinary, three mates, captain, sail-maker, carpenter, steward, cook, Jim and Alge.

She was a clipper-built boat, carrying three masts, a foremast, main, and mizzen-mast. Her sails were the same as other ships carry, from her foresail to her royal, staysails, jibs and spanker.

The mate took great pains in showing the boys around, telling them the names of the different nautical materials that are used on board, names which are very hard to pick up at first.

He was showing them the compass on the poop, telling them how to box it—and underneath the poop are the captain's quarters. One of the sky-lights was open, and Jim being near it overheard some loud talking going on in the saloon and listened to it.

"Ha, ha, ha," he heard the captain's harsh laugh, that sounded so horrible that it caused a creepy sensation to pass over him.

"Do you say so, Mr. Miles?" he heard him say, in a voice that sounded like the rumble of the water.

"Yes, Captain," answered Mr. Miles, "if they arrive back safe and sound the fifty pounds shall be yours."

Jim started, looked round suddenly at Alge, but he had not overheard them, for he was busily learning the points of the compass.

"Have another glass, Mr. Miles," he heard him say, and immediately they closed the skylight, so that he heard no more.

CHAPTER V.

ALL alone on a strange ship, with a strange crew, a demon of a captain—such dismal thoughts passed through Jim's and Alge's minds as they leaned over the ship's side and watched, with their hearts almost breaking with sorrow and a dread loneliness, the little boat speeding toward the landing-stage with its precious burden, Jim's father. Courage seemed to desert them completely, and a sickly, forlorn feeling came over them. The broad ocean lay before them, there was no way to get back, nothing only to wait for months on the ship as she crosses the vast seas. Whether good or ill, the ship must be their home.

A tear came trickling down Alge's face and fell on Jim's hand; he glanced at Alge and sighed, as he thought that "It is through me he came; if I had not wanted to be a sailor he would not have been here, and all the responsibility rests on me."

"Sonnies!" said a kind but gruff voice behind them.

Glancing round they saw a rather old man, dressed in blue overalls. His figure was tall but somewhat bent, his face was a reddish-brown color, and his hair hung in thick locks from his head.

"Don't fret, sonnies," he said kindly, laying at the same time his big rough hands gently on their shoulders, "we sailors may seem to be a rough lot, but remember we have a kind heart."

"Sir," said Jim timidly.

"Nay, not sir, but sailmaker," he said, and a huge grin passed over his face. "Some call me Thomas," he said. "No, do not speak," he continued, "I know perfectly well your feelings. How I remember my first thoughts when I first stepped on board. Ah, but times are different now at sea. Hardships not so great; yes," he said, shaking his head, "be strong, fear not, and you will get along all right. And remember, you have a friend in me," and he immediately made aft to the sail-locker.

Joyful words they were to them, and they knew they had a friend on board.

A shrill note sounded, as the mate blew his whistle, and instantly yelled out, "All hands get ready to hoist up the anchor."

The men in an instant came rushing out of the deck-house and made forward, and at the same time a loud blast rent the air, and looming in the distance, whence the sound came, could be seen a tug-boat steaming towards them.

Like one in a dream, Jim and Alge followed the men from one place to another. Now they would give a hand to pay in the slack cable, while the men hoisted up the anchor by the aid of the wind-

lass, then they would follow some of the men and help to drag the huge tow-rope forward, and make it fast to the tug-boat. How strange it all seemed to them! The bustle and the smartness of the men, who thoroughly knew their work, bewildered them. They had no time to think or fret now. All was work. One continuous hauling and belaying ropes and cable. The deck seemed to wake up from its slumber and echo forth the roar of the men, as they yelled and sang chants while they hauled on the ropes.

Soon the tug was made fast alongside, and the anchor being hoisted up the huge paddle-wheels of the tug began to slowly beat the water, which hissed and bubbled and foamed like an angry beast who had been awakened from his slumber by some treacherous enemy. So the quiet river now surged and snarled, throwing up her spray in all directions, while the ship left in her wake a thin line of white foam as she was tugged out to sea.

Suddenly the mate yelled out, "Haul up the topsail yards!"

"Aye! aye! sir," responded the men. And soon all hands were busy loosing the sails and hauling up the yards. As the sails were set they immediately filled out with the wind that was blowing very freshly on the port quarter, and soon she was ploughing on her way, leaving the tug-boat far behind.

Old England's cliffs and sands were soon left far astern. Just a faint form of land could be seen when they let go the tug's tow-rope, and now it was hardly visible.

Jim and Alge leaned against the rail, watching the land disappearing from view. All hands went below, and only the first mate paced up and down the poop while one of the seamen was at the wheel. As he strolled up and down the mate would glance towards Jim and Alge, and a soft expression would steal over his face, for he felt sorry for them. No heed he took of the motion of the ship, as she pitched and rolled while she swept on, cutting and dashing up the water along her bows. But it was different with Jim and Alge. They found it very difficult to walk, not having found their sea-legs yet, and a sickness came over them.

Presently, clank, clank, clank, clank, rang out the bell four times, aft, and was immediately repeated in a louder key, forward, by the man on the look-out on the forecastlehead.

"Relieve wheel and look-out," shouted the mate, as the last sound of the bell died away, and at once one of the seamen left the deckhouse and mounted the poop ladder, relieving the man at the wheel, who then went below.

"How's her head, Tod?" asked several of the men.

"South-west, mates," he replied, dipping at the time a large pannakin into a barrel of water, and putting it to his lips he swallowed it in one gulp.

"I reckon it would have gone down better diluted with whiskey, Tod," said Dick, who was lying in his bunk, and was astonished to see him drinking cold water in that fashion.

"Nay, Dick," he answered, shaking his head to and fro. But seeing the men, who were all staring with open mouth at him, as if they wondered what sort of a being he was, he said, "You see, boys, I am a teetotaller."

A grin spread over their faces at first, and then they broke out into a loud laugh.

"Ye may laugh, boys," said Tod indignantly, and he immediately lit his pipe and strolled out along the deck, where he met old Thomas, who had been listening near the cabin door.

"Fools," he whispered in his ear; "they seem to think of nothing but grog."

"Yes, but they will have to do without that, Tod, three or four months at least now."

"Yes, but when they get ashore, it's drink, drink, drink. Of course there are a few that don't, but very few, I am sorry to say."

"True, Tod, it's only now and again you come across a sailor who does not."

They went past Jim and Alge, but did not notice how ill they were looking, and they made aft for the sail-locker.

The mate, who was still pacing up and down the poop, noticed them, and he came down and brought

them a glass of sea-water, remarking at the time that sea-water was a grand thing for sea-sickness. Poor boys, they did look miserable, and felt, too, very bad indeed, especially Alge, for the sickness had a great hold on him, so much that he fainted. The mate immediately picked him up and carried him to the cabin, there laying him in his bunk. How frail he seemed as he lay there, with his eyes closed and his golden hair hanging loosely over his white temples. "Does it not seem a pity," thought the mate, "that one so frail should take up this life, which is only fit for the dog-like strength and temperament of our strong ones. But it may be for the best, God only knows," he sighed, for he remembered when he first went to sea how delicate he was. Jim was soon himself again, and the mate sent him after some brandy; after Alge had taken it he soon got better. As the mate was passing up and down the poop again, he knew who would make the finest sailor of the two—Jim, cut out for one.

CHAPTER VI.

How gloomy Longtown Hall became. The ringing laugh, the cheerful voice that sounded like music to Mrs. Miles' ears, were gone; so silent and dejected the old Hall became, that for years used to echo forth the silvery laugh and well loved voice that always filled Mrs. Miles' soul with joy. "Oh! where is that face I love so well?—my son! my only son! Why, oh why, did I let you go!"—she moaned in anguish.

But how often does it happen thus! We can keep up our spirits until our fond ones have gone from us. Do we not even plan out their · ·ture, and at the time we do not think of th ɔw, the anguish, that the beloved one will cause us after he or she has gone?

So it was with Mrs. Miles. The excitement of his leaving, the getting things ready, the packing, and other trifles, did not give her time to seriously think of the great loss it would be to her, and now he was gone she completely broke own. All day she would lie on the sofa mourning and weeping. And there was someone else who uffered too.

Sisie, poor child, was nearly heart-broken. She sat in the arm-chair near the sofa and bravely tried to comfort Mrs. Miles.

Outside, the weather was charming. It was an ideal morning. The sun shone brightly in the cloudless sky, and a gentle westerly breeze stole over the country, fanning the spring flowers and filling the atmosphere with delicious scents.

The village church bells pealed merrily, for it was Sunday, and the residents of Longtown and Ringworth, the neighboring village, flocked to church. Mrs. Miles felt too sad to attend the service, and only twice in her life, as far as she could remember, had she missed going, and then through illness. As the congregation gathered in, and the service commenced, there were many faces that watched the empty pew of the Miles's, and thought of her sorrowing over the loss of her son.

Some of the villagers in this midland county thought a sailor's life a terrible one, and some even went so far as to think that they would never see Jim's or Alge's face again, with such terror they looked upon the sea.

The Rev. Mr. Deed, Alge's father, preached. He took his text from the twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses of Psalm cvii, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters. These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." Never before had the congregation

listened so attentively to a sermon as they did then, and before he had finished there were few eyes dry.

In the old oak pew, blocked on one side by the bulky stone pillar that helped to support the roof, Sisie's bent form could be seen, half kneeling, half sitting, trying, but in vain, to hide the tears that constantly flowed. And by her side sat her aunt. A thick veil covered her head, hiding her sad face.

On her right sat Mrs. Deed, Alge's mother. She was a tall, somewhat thin lady, of light complexion, with an exceedingly kind looking face. She had Alge's eyes, pale blue. He greatly resembled his mother, more so than his father. She looked very young; true she was some years younger than her husband, and marrying very young she would not be much older than thirty-six. All the villagers respected and loved her. She was always helping the sick and the poor in one way and another, and really she never felt happy unless she was doing good, so fond she was of it. Her drooping head and pale face plainly showed the agony she was going through. Her husband, as he preached, reminded her of his fond son's dangers on the deep. And while she thought of her bright blue-eyed boy, she breathed out a prayer to God to watch over him while on the sea.

At last the sermon came to an end, and immediately the choir rose and the organ thundered out

the music from the hymn, "Eternal Father, strong to save." The congregation caught up the air and sang loudly; the west wind gently wafted the music across the park, on through the open window of the Hall, and, creeping into the room where Mrs. Miles lay, filled it with its sweet melodies. While she listened a drowsiness came over her, and before the organ's last sound had died away she fell into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER VII.

WEEKS had gone by, and Jim and Alge had settled down to their sea life. Seasickness was a thing of the past; and they had found the great thing that is necessary to have at sea, their sea-legs; and great was their delight when they could walk comfortably about the deck, whether she was rolling or pitching about. They soon picked up the uses and names of the many ropes, and could manage to furl or set the sails; splicing ropes, turning in dead eyes, and other nautical feats, all came easy to them in time.

A little excitement was caused for a time when a stowaway was found, who had been hiding in the bowsprit under the forecastle head. The captain ordered him to work with the port watch, they not being so strong as the starboard, and a great help he was to them, for he could work as well as any man; he must have been a sailor before, although he would never own being one. He was smart in furling a sail, and making knots and splices of every description, strapping blocks and turning in dead eyes, and he also knew the uses of all the ropes. He was really a very smart man. His great weakness was spinning yarns. One day

when it was his watch below and all the port watch, including Jim and Alge, who were in that watch, were in the deckhouse, he gave one of his yarns.

"Boys," he began, after filling his pipe, "what do you say to a yarn?" Of course they were ready; you never find a sailor who is not ready to listen to a yarn.

"Well, boys," he began, "I was on board a barque some years ago, bound for Philadelphia."

There was a titter amongst some of the men. "Did not we tell you you had been a sailor? and now you own it," exclaimed Dick, and there was a loud laugh all round.

After scratching his head, he continued, "Well, boys, she was the smartest boat that ever stretched canvas. But the captain was a very wild man, and before we were many weeks out he took to drinking, and used to get very drunk at times. Well, one day a storm arose. The wind was blowing great guns, and we were sailing through the water at a mad pace. Every second great green waves rose high up in the air, and came crashing on the deck, sweeping her fore and aft.

"We had furled some of the sails when first the storm struck us, but instead of it decreasing it got worse and worse; so the mate he yells out, 'Clew up the topsails,' and we rushed to the clewlines and buntlines, but some before they got there were washed off their feet and thrown forward with the

water. But those who got there began to haul away the main topsail clewlines. And as I was hauling hand o er hand, I looked towards the poop, and the sight I saw I hope never to see again. There stood the captain, looking more like a demon than a man. In his hand I saw the gleam of a revolver, and I shuddered to think what would become of us. 'Belay the clewlines,' he roared out; 'Furl not a sail, or I will shoot any man that disobeys me.'

"'Set the topgallant sail!' he thundered out huskily.

"Now with such a pressure of canvas as we were carrying it was madness not to take in the sails. She was simply running with her head under the water, while the waves dashed madly over her weather side.

"I looked at the two mates who stood by me, and then at the captain on the poop, and without saying a word I belayed the clewlines. We then rushed to the lifelines and hung on there for dear life. 'Smack,' 'crack,' 'bang,' 'bang,' 'bang,' went the sails, as they carried away one after the other. An ugly and cruel grin hovered on the captain's face as he watched the sails carrying away, and the waves rolling one after another on board.

"For a few minutes we hung on the lifelines, and then to my astonishment I saw the two mates let

go and fight their way through the water that swelled round and round the deck, and make towards the poop. In another instant I was by their side, and climbing up the poop-ladder with them. A faint report echoed forth, and a loud groan passed from the second mate's lips; as I looked I saw him fall, for the bullet struck him in the body, and the next thing I saw was the captain's hideous face looking down at us, with his revolver pointed at me.

"Up the ladder the first mate and I rushed, expecting any moment to feel a bullet pierce us. But whether the revolver missed fire or he had not had time to fire I know not. But in another moment we sprang upon him. A fierce struggle lasted for a few minutes, but the mate and I were one too many for him.

"After we had unarmed him we marched him down into his cabin and there locked him in. The words he said, and the threats he raved, were terrible. It strikes me to this day, he had gone mad. Well, as we rushed on deck the poor mate yells out, 'All hands save ship.'

"Poor fellow. The words had hardly left his mouth when a huge wave shot up and came bounding on deck right on the top of us, carrying us God knows whither.

"When I regained my feet, and could look about me, I found myself under the forecastle head; but

the mate, poor soul, we never saw again. Then we looked at each other horrified. Men with haggard faces were clinging on to the lifelines ; each with a despairing look in his bloodshot eyes stared at the other.

"The wind shrieked and yelled around like a lot of devils ; and the waves roared and thundered, and wildly beat on deck. 'Oh God!' I muttered, 'What's to be done? The captain's drunk or mad, the two mates are gone, and there's not a man now among us who can navigate.'

"I thought for a moment, till I saw a large wave strike the port poop-ladder and break it to pieces. My mind was then made up. 'To the poop,' I yelled out, 'every man of you!' I knew we would be safer there than on deck, until the storm died down a bit ; and it was simply suicide staying on deck then. We lay down there for hours—some went to sleep, being thoroughly worn out—and trusted to Providence. In time, which seemed to me like days, the storm gradually died down.

"Now all this time I had not been down to see the captain. So I thought I would go and see how he was, tell him about the mates, ask him whether we should set the sails, as the wind had died down considerably, and what course we should steer.

"So I went down the hatchway, quietly unlocked the cabin door and cautiously peeped in.

"'Captain,' I yelled out, 'Captain.' But no answer came.

"An awful feeling came over me, and I dare not move. As I stood, shaking all over, the ship gave a terrific lurch to port, and a muffled noise caught my ear. I looked, and saw the black form of a body rolling across the cabin from the starboard side towards the port. It went past me, over and over, and every turn it took I saw the horrid grin set on the face, and eyes staring wildly, but blindly, at me. A deep gash stretched across the throat, and the black clothes were saturated with blood.

"The spell that held me there seemed to break, and I wildly rushed on the deck yelling, 'The Captain's dead! We are doomed! We are doomed!'

"For over a fortnight we drifted helplessly about, but one day we sighted a steamer on the horizon, and thank God she was heading our way. We signalled to her, and she hove to.

"After we told the captain the pitiable tale, he sent his third mate to us, and he piloted us to Philadelphia."

CHAPTER VIII.

As Alge lay in his bunk that evening he was not in a very courageous state of mind. Yank's story seemed to have upset his nervous system; and perhaps also the wind that had increased considerably had something to do with it. The starboard watch was busy taking in the royals. Very weird and dismal the wind sounded, as it shrieked through the rigging and mournfully howled across the water. And then above all could be heard the somewhat weird tones of the men shouting, while they hauled on the ropes, and the splash of the spray from the waves beating against the deck-house.

"Jim! are you asleep?" Alge somewhat nervously asked.

"No, but I guess I will be soon," answered Jim somewhat irritably. "Why?"

"Oh, nothing much Jim, but I have been thinking that in case anything happens to me —"

"What on earth is the matter with you, Alge? For heaven's sake don't talk like that, as if anything is going to happen you," suddenly broke in Jim.

"God only knows that, I know. But I have a kind of presentiment there will, and I want you

to promise me that if anything does, then, will—will you marry Sis?"

"Oh, Alge, nothing will happen to you, I swear," he said vehemently, for he, too, began to feel a bit nervous.

The wind shrieked more wildly round the deck-house, and in the midst they heard the second mate yelling, "Furl the mizzen topgallant sail."

"Do promise," almost pleaded Alge, "do, and then whatever happens I will rest in peace."

"It grieves me to the heart, Alge, to hear you talk like this—but I will promise if you wish it."

Suddenly one bell struck aft—the call for the watch to get up—so there was no sleep for them that watch. And as eight bells rang out they went on deck, and immediately the first mate piped, "Furl the main and fore topgallant sails."

What a night it was. Pitch darkness greeted them as they went on deck, and the wind beat cruelly against them as they blindly crawled towards the mainmast.

"Lower the halyards," cried the mate, after he had sent Dick and Yank aloft.

"Belay that," he shouted, when it was lowered.

"Clew up the clewlines and buntlines!"

Immediately the men rushed to the ropes and hand over hand, followed with "Heav-o, heav-o," they rushed them up, until the sail was clewed and bunted, Dick and Yank fastening the gaskets round the sail.

Fierce as the squall was it did not last long, and in another hour it passed over. Then all sails were set again, so the port watch was kept pretty busy, and they were not sorry when eight bells rang out, so that they could go below. And Jim and Alge had not turned in many minutes this time before they were fast asleep. Not even the noise of the starboard watch, as they sang a chanty while hoisting up the main royal-yard by the halyards, disturbed them.

But before dawn another squall suddenly struck them, and again the cry went, "Furl the mizzen-royal."

There was a rush and a scamper of heavy feet along the deck, and a clank of blocks and flapping sails. And again wild shrieking wind howled, and the loud voices of men yelled, "Clew up the sail."

"Hark, Jim!" cried Alge, suddenly waking, "another storm."

"What's up, Alge," said Jim with a start. "Good Lord, we are in for it again; how sudden these squalls are."

"Terrible, and I reckon we have had three hours' sleep, so it will be our turn on deck again—curse these winds," said he, shuddering.

"Listen!" said Jim anxiously, "there goes the pipe—furl the main-royal."

There was a rush along the deck and the mate's voice could be heard shouting—"Come along, you

men! Let go the halyards and bunt her up!" Then there was a deafening noise of flapping sails, and the shouts of husky voices rang through the wild night.

"Clew up the mizzen topgallant sail!" thundered the captain, who had come on deck.

"Aye, aye, sir," replied the mate.

A cold, creepy sensation passed over Alge, and he pulled the rug which covered his body further round him. "I wonder why I always feel so nervous when I hear that voice," he pondered. "Strange how I dread that man. It is silly, I know, of me to feel so, and how angry Jim would be if he knew it. But I am not like Jim. Ah! how I wish I was brave like him."

"Jim!" he called, "have you gone asleep again?"

"Very nearly, Alge, and I advise you to also, for we have a lot of work to do again ere long."

"I can't go to sleep now, Jim. Good God! I wonder how you can in such a storm. Just listen; did you hear that wave strike on deck?"

"Never mind the waves, Alge, but go to sleep, and do for heaven's sake try to be a sailor. You know you will never be one if you do not behave differently."

"Yes, I am a coward and a fool, I know," he said sadly, "and I begin to think that I should never have taken up this life."

"No, Alge, you are no coward; you may be timid, but you will soon get over that. And as regards coming to sea, I for one am very glad you came. I may be selfish in thinking so, but I would be very unhappy without you. Have we not been brought up together? and how could we be separated?"

"Unhappy, Jim! So would I be without you; and we will never part, my friend—no never, until death parts us."

The wind still howled and shrieked, and to Jim as it shrieked and whistled through the blocks and rigging, it seemed to say—"Until death parts us."

"Never, Alge," he said wildly, "will death part us. No, since we were little lads we have been with each other, loving one another more than brothers, and so we will keep and die together."

"God only knows that, Jim."

"But He is good, Alge, and surely He will not separate us! Alge, as long as there is life in my body, I will take good care you live also."

"Oh! Jim, we cannot rule fate. God might take one of us now, for it is in His hands."

"Yes, it is, I know. But why do you talk about death? Good God! it is terrible to think about. I could not bear it, Alge—"

One bell suddenly struck, and King, one of the seamen, poked his head into the cabin, showing only a large nose and two round eyes, the rest of

his face hidden behind a southwester which was tied on his head by a string round his chin. He wore a suit of oilskins, the trousers being made fast round his heavy sea-boots, so that the water could not get in.

"Get up, get up," he shouted. "One bell has gone, my men."

"Good heavens," exclaimed Jim, "and is that you, King?"

"Yes, that's me—and it won't be long before eight bells."

"Wait a bit," shouted Jim, as he was turning to go. "How's the weather now, King?"

"Settling down a bit."

"Thank heaven!" escaped from Alge's lips.

King laughed loudly and then disappeared, and in another moment eight bells rang out.

CHAPTER IX.

IN a few days they ran out of the squally weather and into the tropics. It was a very slight breeze that carried them across the equator. Slight puffs of wind would slowly swell the sails out, but only for a very short time, just sufficient to keep her on the move, and then the breeze would get lighter and lighter, and the sails slacker and slacker, and suddenly, with a thud and rattle of blocks, they would smack back against the mast, to stay there for a time and beat slowly out again. The ocean looked more like a duck pond, being so quiet, and the sun came scorching down on deck, making it so hot that one could hardly bear his feet against the deck.

The sea literally swarmed with fish. Droves upon droves of flying-fish were darting in and out of the water; and by the bows large dolphins were jumping and slapping about, slashing the water up in little swells as they plunged about. Now and again a solitary shark could be seen slowly swimming round the ship, as if he were waiting for someone to fall overboard.

The watch below were in for a good time, for they set to and played havoc with the dolphins,

hauling them in with fishing lines as fast as they could get them hooked.

Alge and Jim leaned lazily against the fore-hatch, talking to old Thomas, for it was the dog-watch and he had put away the sails he was making.

"Well, what do you think of the sea life now?" he asked them.

"So far," Jim said, "I like it, but of course one cannot give a definite opinion on the subject yet."

"Thomas, you might tell us your opinion of it," asked Alge.

"A very hard, rough life, Alge. I have been nearly forty years as a sailmaker, but that is quite a different kind of work to a sailor's. Some of the ships I have sailed on, the crew have had a terrible time of it; and in some cases the sailors are to be pitied in the way they are treated. For instance—some owners have sent ships to sea with very little food on board, hardly enough to keep soul and body together. Then what do the poor fellows do when they arrive at the port they are bound to, but desert the first opportunity they get? Can you blame them? Then that is a great advantage to the owners. You see, Alge, the men are not paid their wages until they arrive back in England, if she's an English vessel. Now, say they are bound for 'Frisco; that takes about four or five months to do it in, and each able seaman is getting about five

pounds per month, and ordinary four—and if they desert they don't get a penny,—a nice haul for the owners, aye!"

"Yes, Thomas," spoke Yank. "I have been served that trick many a time, but it is partly your own fault."

"Maybe, Yank, but the only thing I complain about is, if the owners would only look a little after the comfort of the crew, well there would not be so much desertion as there is. And I think it is a shameful thing to desert. Stick to your ship, my boys, until you are paid off, that's my motto."

"Talking about the sea life," said Dick, "it's a grand life—give me a life on the roaring waves, nothing can beat it."

"Well, what I think of it," said Boag—he was a foreigner—"it's what I call a very peculiar life. Now nearly every voyage I go I make up my mind to chuck up the life, but I can't. One gets paid off by the owners and settles down somewhere, feeling downright sick of the sea life, and you make up your mind never to go to sea again. But soon all your money goes—which does not take long for a sailor to spend—but I don't think I need to tell you boys how it goes, for all sailors are alike. But it goes and that's an end of it, so you begin to think what are you to do next to make more. Then your roaming spirit comes back to you, you can't settle down on shore to do anything, so you must go to sea again—and off you go."

"Another thing," said Alge, "a sailor can never call his time his own. It may be your watch below, and who knows any minute all hands may be called on deck and you have got to go, whereas when you have finished your work on shore, the time after work you can always call your own. You are not hauled up out of bed in the midst of your sleep to take in sails."

"Yes! such are the trials of a sailor," said Jim.

"Let's alter the subject," said Thomas. "I tell you what, I will tell you a yarn, if you like."

"Capital idea," said Alge. "Fire away, Thomas."

"It was fifteen years ago, when I was on board a barque bound for Yokohama. A splendid boat she was; but the crew consisted of the vilest and bloodthirstiest men imaginable. I never could make out why the captain set sail with such a bad lot, but he paid dearly for it. There were sixteen of them altogether, and they embarked at Philadelphia, as our original crew had deserted us there. They were all Dutchmen and Spaniards. For a time things went on smoothly, and I had begun to think I had mistaken the men and they were not so bad as they looked. But one day when the starboard watch was working on deck—they were cleaning the vessel down—the mate told one of the men to fetch a bucket of water from for'rd, as we were working aft at the time. Well. the man absolutely refused and gave tongue. The

mate in an instant held up his fist to knock him down, but before he had time to do it the man drew his knife out of the sheath that hung from his belt, and stabbed at him, but luckily I was near at the time, and wrenching hold of a belaying-pin close by, I struck the man on the head, knocking him senseless on the deck before he had time to thrust the knife home. As soon as the wretch came to his senses we put him in irons, and then left him for a day and night. Well, for about three weeks or so after that they behaved very well, until we ran into bad weather; then they commenced grumbling and trying their best to shirk out of the work. They kept on grumbling and complaining about the work, and other things that did not suit them, to such an extent that it gave me the impression that if it goes on like this much longer something terrible is bound to happen before we ever reach Yokohama. And I wasn't wrong in my judgment—as you will see presently. Now the storm that had beset us had lasted three whole days and nights—and on the fourth day it increased in its fury. It was in the early morning of that day, just as the first streaks of light lit up the sky, when the captain, who had been on the poop with us all night, ordered all hands to reef the foresail. Now the crisis had come, for the men had turned mutinous, refusing to touch a rope. 'Reef the foresail,' again thundered the captain. 'Aye, what,

you dogs!' yelled he, while his mighty frame shook with anger, 'You shall pay for this.' And as he spoke he drew a revolver from his pocket and aiming at them, shouted, 'Any man that refuses to obey me I will shoot.'

"Immediately the mate, cook, carpenter and I armed ourselves with anything we could snatch up —for we saw plainly that it meant a fight. The cook had hold of a large carving knife, and the rest of us snatched up belaying-pins, and away we rushed aft, ready to help the captain through thick and thin. And a very serious business it was, for no sooner had we got there when the whole set of curs, after giving a mighty yell like an Indian's warwhoop, rushed headlong at us, brandishing their sheath knives as they came. Bang, bang, bang, went the captain's revolver, and down went the two leaders, one after the other, but the others rushed on right up to us—and, as I was striking at them right and left with the belaying pin I had in my hand, I suddenly felt a great thud on the back of my head which knocked me senseless on deck. When I came to my senses I found myself in my bunk and the mate was bending over me. 'Thank God,' he muttered, crossing himself, 'I thought they had done for you, my boy.'

"'No, sir, not this time,' I said. 'But how went the fight?'

"'We won, Thomas, but we lost our brave cap-

tain,' he said solemnly. 'The last words he said were—"Win the day, Carr, don't let those scoundrels have hold of the ship." 'Yes,' the mate went on, raising his voice, 'and we did win the day, but we had to kill six and wound two of the brutes before they would give in.'

"The rest of them were put in irons," said Thomas, "and they had to pay dearly for it when we reached port."

"Terrible," said Alge.

"Were any more men wounded on your side, besides yourself, Thomas?" asked Jim.

"Yes, the carpenter, poor fellow, he was wounded in the stomach and he died before we reached port."

"How sad!" said Alge.

"You have been through a great deal then, Thomas," said Jim.

"Yes, I have, and it would fill a good many volumes if I wrote all the adventures I have been through."

CHAPTER X.

THAT evening before sunset a small cloud was seen on the horizon, looking as if it sprang out of the sea. When it was first noticed, it seemed no bigger than one's hand. But it quickly grew larger and larger, and blacker, spreading in no time across the weather sky. Suddenly, giving no warning whatever, the wind burst forth with a roar and a howl, and like an angry beast it came sweeping down with terrific force over the ship, simply heeling her over on her beam ends. The sea, so quiet only a minute before, was swept hither and thither before the wild wind— blowing before it in showers, sprays of water. In the roar of the wind the mate's voice could be heard shrieking, "Clew up the sails," and with a rush the men caught hold of the clewlines and clewed away.

Not long it lasted—but they never do, these tropical squalls—but long enough to do a great deal of damage. But as luck had it this time, only the fore-royal was carried away.

Ere long the last rush of wind died away—and what quietness followed. To them it seemed as if the whole world was at peace, so suddenly the roar ceased. The sails that the men clewed up were

loosely hanging, and now and again a few puffs of wind would partly blow them out, as if they were trying their best to rise in this sudden quietness. Just for a minute it would last, then die away, leaving the sails again loosely hanging against the masts. Not a ripple was on the water, except where the flying-fish darted in and out, as if they thoroughly enjoyed the stillness of the waters.

Far, far out could be seen a whale spouting water into the air, and two sharks were slowly swimming round the vessel. It was a busy time for the men that evening setting the sails and bending a new fore-royal.

In a few days' time they ran into the trade winds, that brought them along at the nice rate of eight and ten knots per hour. In the morning when Jim and Alge went to breakfast, which consisted of sea biscuits, ship's tea, and Irish butter, it was Sunday morning.

"Guess what I have been dreaming about," said Alge, his mouth full of hard biscuits, which he was doing his best to bite, but their being very much like bricks making it no easy job to do without breaking your teeth.

"Don't know," said Jim, "but let's hear, old chap."

"Well, I dreamt you and I were at home. You were at the Hall, and I at the Vicarage, sitting reading the newspaper in the library. Presently

the servant came in and handed me a note. Looking at the envelope I saw at once that it was your handwriting, and I hastily tore it open to see what you wanted. And glancing over the contents I read, 'Engaged to Sis, the marriage is coming off in three weeks' time.' A strange dizziness came over me, and falling backwards I woke up with a start."

"What a strange dream, Alge. Just fancy me marrying Sis," he laughed.

"Very strange; do you believe in dreams, Jim?" he asked.

"No, not always; sometimes I know some of my dreams come true. But don't look so solemn over it. I'll tell you what made you dream it, old chap. Do you remember, some time ago, asking me to marry Sis if anything happened to you?"

"Yes, Jim."

"Well that would do it."

"Perhaps so, Jim," he said absently.

It was a lovely day, that day. The sun was scorching down through a cloudless sky, but the heat was far from unbearable, for a cool trade wind was blowing that took away the intense heat of the sun. All hands during the day were busy washing their clothes, and hanging them across a rope they had made fast from mast to mast to dry. For Sunday on board was a day of rest the same as everywhere. Some were stripped

of their clothing and taking a good bath, not in the sea, but in large tubs they filled with sea-water for the occasion.

And so the weeks went by. And one morning when darkness had lifted her curtain and the sky began to faintly show her pale blue color, and the sun rose above all, throwing forth her golden hues across the horizon and the deep sluggish water, then, far in the distance towards the east, rose majestically the Falkland Islands, standing as alone in the Southern sea.

The wind that had died down during the night sprang up, and increased as the sun gained more power in the sky. And as the morning advanced, hundreds of albatross came hovering with outstretched wings around the ship, as if they were welcoming her to their land. It is a fine sight to get a glimpse of land, after weeks and weeks seeing nothing but water, and now and again a few stray ships, visible only for a short time as they pass on their lonely way.

Before many days had gone by, "Land ahead!" again was heard from the man on the lookout, and this time it was Staten-land. It lay on the port quarter, and on the starboard the mainland of South America, called Patagonia. How weird the land looked on both sides! Patagonia, with her rugged mountains towering in the air, lay quite close, so that you could plainly see the sea dashing

on the rocky shore, while Staten-land, with her snow-clad peaks, loomed farther away.

It was the captain's intention to sail through the straits, and so cut off a nice slice of the ocean, but when drifting down he found it impossible to do, so they tacked and went about, and swinging round on that tack they made headway back, and ere darkness had set in they were clear of the strait.

As morning set in the wind increased and moaned softly as if it threatened to turn into a gale. And the sky, too, looked like an approaching storm threatening, being a dull lead color.

Presently Cape Horn was sighted, a great long stretch of land with rugged pieces jutting out into the sea, looking like large icebergs, so thick were they covered with snow. Very weird and majestic the scenery looked, with its wintry appearance.

The wind above, which increased hourly, howled and shrieked, whistling a mournful tune through the blocks and rigging, and now and again the masts would crack and groan, and like a wild creature the vessel swept on, leaving in her wake a milky way, bubbling and hissing far behind.

Holy thoughts filled Alge's mind as he watched with all hands the scenery, for such thoughts do visit us sometimes, and he thought of the wonders of the Lord. While he was lost in such meditation, and nothing could be heard except the raging of the wind, the mate coming down from the poop, cried

out, "About ship." The men like magic rushed to their respective stations, and with a yell and a cry they pulled at the ropes running the yards round; and round Cape Horn she went, pointing her head northwards.

CHAPTER XI.

TEN knots, the log said, she was making; and if the wind gets a shade stronger it means taking in the royals. So the mate thought, as he paced up and down the poop, dreading the storm which he knew they were running into. And a Cape Horn storm is not to be trifled with.

The wind was bitterly cold, for it was winter time, and the port watch, being their watch on deck then, had on their oilskins, Southwesters and sea-boots, and were huddled up under the forecastle head, expecting every minute to hear the pipe go. Jim and Alge with their oilskins on joined the men there. This wild life had made a great difference in them, they had grown considerably in length and breadth, become strong and broadchested, and they had quite developed into sailors. Jim's tanned face, as dark as a berry, matched his black eyes and hair. But Alge, with such a fair complexion, had not tanned much, but his light golden hair was curlier than ever, and his eyes as blue as the sky. They were a handsome pair.

"I don't like the look of the sky"—Dick was gazing at it—"no, not at all," he said, shaking his

head, "and I think we are fairly booked for bad weather."

"I should just think so," said Boag. "My! doesn't it blow, and that mate is a rare one for sticking to the sails so. Now if it were any other man, I reckon we would have had the royals off before now."

"True," said Yank, "but he must take care else he will have them carried away."

"I don't like them to stick to the sails until the last minute."

Dick shook his head again, as if he dreaded the bad weather that was coming.

The sea first in sprays began to come on board, and then now and again a few waves, more venturesome than the rest, popped up on the side of the ship with a whiz and a whirl, and dropped on deck. But they were soon carried back again by rushing across the deck to leeward into the gutters and thence back whence they came.

Suddenly the pipe went, and the mate yelled out, "Furl the mizzen-royal." In twos and threes the men came from under the forecastle head and went tearing aft to the poop.

"Jim and Alge and Dick up aloft and make it fast," yelled the mate; "the rest of you clew and bunt her up."

Immediately they manned the rigging and were soon on the weather-yard making the sails fast,

after she was clewed and bunt up. But it was not so easy as one might imagine, furling sails in a storm, and it takes a very long time, at times, before you can get the sail gathered in, and the gaskets properly made fast round it.

The men then gathered forward again under the forecastle head waiting there for any more orders that might be given.

"Well, boys," said Yank, rubbing his hands together, "that's one sail short."

"Yes," said Boag mournfully, "and I reckon before we are clear of this storm we won't have many sails set."

Presently eight bells went and the starboard watch in oilskins came on deck to do duty. Jim and Alge hurried below to their cabin, which seemed to them so snug and warm after the bitter cold wind on deck.

"Shut the door, Alge, for heaven's sake," said Jim, pulling off his oilskins and getting ready to turn in. "We don't want those waves to come in and swill us out, you know."

"No, by jove, we don't," replied Alge, banging the door to, and at the same time a large wave broke against it, for they were on the weather side.

"Lucky you shut it then, Alge, else we would have been pretty well swilled out by now. Just listen," he continued, hanging over his bunk, for he had turned in, "how they keep thundering on deck.

I reckon it is getting worse and worse. Doesn't the wind roar and shriek through the rigging like a lot of cats and dogs howling?"

"Yes, it's terrible weather," said Alge drowsily, "but I vote we go to sleep; the next time we go on deck will be twelve, midnight, and I guess we shall have plenty of work to do then."

"You are right, Alge," replied he, "so good night and sleep well, friend."

Strange how one soon gets used to almost anything. For although there was enough row even, I might say, to wake the dead, with the wind howling and roaring, the waves booming on deck, and the men yelling as they took in the sails, they slept through it all, and not until one bell had gone and Walker came bounding in with a yell did they wake.

"What's the weather like now, Walker?" were the first words Jim uttered, sitting at the time up in his bunk with his legs dangling out, and vigorously rubbing his eyes, which were heavy with sleep.

"It's blowing great guns," answered he, "and we have furled all royals, and the mizzen topgallant sails."

"Look well out when you do go on deck, boys. I only got in here in time, for just as I closed the door a great wave came banging against it, and, if they catch you, they will have you off your feet

pretty soon, and you will find yourself in the scuppers or overboard, I guess."

Even while he spoke another came thundering against the door.

"Well, I am off now, boys; I reckon one won't come over now for a few seconds," said he, as he gave a bound for the door and disappeared in the darkness. Eight bells went, and the port watch turned out on deck into the fearful night. The darkness was intense, and the wind and the ocean increased in their awful roar every hour. Large, grim waves, terrible in strength, came madly bounding on deck, simply sweeping the vessel fore and aft. The atmosphere was intensely cold. Now and again cruel showers of hail, carried before the wind, swept by, cutting deep into the flesh. The ocean rose up like a huge mountain around them, only to bear the ship up with it, leaving as it were a dark valley below them. The captain, with an anxious look, accompanied by the mate, paced the poop. The men were under the forecastle head waiting for the pipe, which they expected to hear any minute, for they knew the glass was still going down.

They did not have to wait long, for the mate blew his whistle, yelling, "Furl the main top-gallant sail."

Six hands were sent up aloft, while the rest clewed and bunted her up. No sooner was that

taken in than they were sent forward to take in the fore one, and Jim and Alge with four men were sent up to furl it. As the men were clewing her up there came a large wave which shot up out of the water and came down on the top of them, and if they had not had such a good hold of the rope they would have all been swept away. There was a good deal of cursing amongst them when the water had passed away and they found themselves wet to the skin.

"Get the —— thing clewed up," yelled the mate, "and don't stand gossiping there like a lot of old women." For they had stopped clewing in the excitement.

By the time they had it furled it was past two o'clock, so four bells was struck and Dick relieved Yank at the wheel.

And so the time went on, and still the never-ceasing gale raged in its fury. The deck was soon covered with water that rushed along as the ship heeled over, tossed from one side to the other with the tempest, like a mighty waterfall. As you look along the watery deck, you see men passing hither and thither by the aid of lifelines, and if it wasn't for them they would have been certainly washed overboard.

CHAPTER XII.

DAYS had gone by, but still the storm raged. Not a change had come in the weather, except for the worse. The sea by this time was mountains high, and like a helpless cork the ship was tossed about, now lifted up with a huge mountainous swell, then borne down below, surrounded for the time by the water mountains, in the valley of the deep.

In those dreary days that had passed by they had taken in all the sails except the main and fore-sail. Day and night all hands were on the poop, some lying down resting, being worn out with work, and in the case of some you could see despair plainly written on their haggard faces.

And still with terrific force the waves came bounding on deck, sweeping all before them. Now the weather ladder leading up to the poop was swept away and carried overboard as the ship rolled helplessly to leeward.

The captain clenched his teeth and muttered to the mate, "Terrible."

His voice sounded harsh; there was a kind of ring of despair in it.

"Mr. Lacky," he said, bitterly, "I'm afraid we won't live through it. Thirty years have I been to sea, but never have I experienced such a storm."

"No, Captain, neither have I. And if it continues so, surely we will have to heave to."

"Heave to? not I," said the captain, bitterly, pacing to and fro. "No, Mr. Lacky, I shall not give in yet. We must hope on, and keep her running with the wind."

But he had hardly finished talking when with an awful roar the foresail shattered asunder, going off like a report of a cannon, and in no time it was simply torn to rags, while the blocks and the deadeyes were helplessly banging to and fro. "Good God," gasped the captain, "it's done for. Take in the mainsail, Mr. Lacky," he wildly shouted, "we cannot afford to lose that."

"Aye, aye, sir. All hands furl the mainsail," yelled he. "All man the weather clewlines and buntlines."

Dodging the waves, some managed to reach the clewlines, while others were washed off their feet, and some whirled forward and some aft. Twelve had hold of the clewlines, and as they were clewing her up a huge green wave rose up and came bounding on to the top of them, forcing the weaker ones to lose hold of the rope, so that they found themselves on the other side of the deck. Jim and Alge were amongst them who were washed away, and before they regained their feet they found themselves under the forecastle head, washed thither with the water. The remainder hauled away at the

clewlines and buntlines, shouting, in gasps, "Heav-o, heav-o," while they clewed her up.

"Belay the buntlines and clewlines!" yelled the mate. "Clew up the lee ones."

Beaten and shattered with the cruel waves they crossed to the lee side. Now clinging hold of the lifelines as the waves threatened, while they bounded on deck, to wash them away, still, but with great difficulty, they got her clewed up. When they were belaying the ropes, the mate shouted out, "All hands aloft to furl the sail." Clinging to the rattlings, they scrambled up the rigging and then on to the yard. Alge went out on to the weather yardarm, and Jim to the lee one. And in that wild night, with the roar of the wind above and the never ceasing rush below, the men gathered in the sail. Bit by bit, little by little, they tucked the sail under them, slowly but surely they dragged it up, struggling on, blinded with hail as it was driven before the wind against them, freezing and numbing them to the very bone. Now the ship was hopelessly heeling over on one side, then rolling heavily to the other, still she struggled on—but whither! For at last she was hove to, and at the mercy of the waves.

Oh! what a terrible thing it is to be shattered by the fearful blast! And only those that have been on the deep know then the dangers thereon.

"O God, Thou who makest the storms to cease:

save us, we beseech Thee." So some of those old weather-beaten seamen inwardly cried unto the Lord; for this they knew, that only He could deliver them from their distress.

A shrill cry, "Are the gaskets fast out there?" came from the second mate, who was in the bunt making it up. It was hardly heard with such an awful roar as there was, but it was faintly echoed on as the blast swept it to leeward and on across the black and cruel water.

"Aye! aye!" replied the men.

"Down from aloft then," yelled he, "and get something to eat, you starboard watch—while the port watch go on the poop until we relieve you."

"Aye! aye!" they cried. And wading through the water, by the help of the lifelines the port watch reached the poop, and joined the captain there.

With a haggard face, being thoroughly worn out with fatigue and anxiety, he leaned over the ship's side, wearily watching the waters rush from one side of the deck to the other, as he thought, seemingly trying their best to drown them. "Alge, my boy," said he, anxiously, when he had reached the poop after a desperate fight with the waves, "go forward, my lad, and pour every minute a few drops of oil down the weather bog, and we will see if that won't calm the angry waves a little. You will find the oil in the locker under the forecastle head," said he, handing him the key.

"Aye, aye, Captain."

A few drops of oil; such a simple order to carry out. But his time had come, and he never carried it out.

Obeying the order, he immediately left the poop and carefully made his way forward, but ere he could reach the forecastle head, a monster of a wave could be seen rising up higher and higher in the air, and towering over the fore part came with a mighty thud on the deck, simply sweeping and breaking all before it. Right on the top of Alge it came, and lo, horror of horrors! it lifted him up, and with a mighty sweep carried him overboard, never to be seen again, until the last trump sounds and the sea shall give up her dead.

At the same time the boats were smashed asunder, the bulwarks all battered in as if made of mere tin. The fore hatch was stove in, simply breaking up like a frail piece of matchwood. The vessel shook and trembled all over, steadied herself just a moment, then leaped forward with a mad bound and a shudder, as she gallantly withstood the storm.

"Good Lord," groaned the captain.

"All hands save ship!" the mate frantically cried.

What a confusion! what a fight with the waves there was! Cowards some of the men were, who were hiding in the bowsprit, but only two, thank God, and they were not Englishmen.

"Alge is lost," was the beseeching cry. "Save ship," and "All hands for themselves," they cried in anguish. Working on like demons they fought with the tempest. Some with sprained arms, others with sprained legs, some with faces deeply cut and bleeding, doing their best to save the ship. The mate, whose face you could not recognize for blood and bruises, urged the men on, who were now and again washed away, as they were trying to batten the canvas over the hold, where the waves had broken the hatch, and the water was pouring in.

In this awful struggle, Yank had his head cut open, and Dick and an ordinary seaman had their arms broken. A few of the men carried them below, where the captain attended to them. At last they got the canvas safely battened down over the hold, and then Jim wearily crawled into his cabin. What anguish was written on his face! "Not a hand lost except Alge," he was muttering as he threw himself across his bunk.

"Poor boy, my beloved friend," he sobbed. "And is this what it has come to! My God! my God! Oh, how could this terrible disaster happen."

"Come, brace up, Jim," said the mate kindly, who had followed him into his cabin. "Be brave, do not give way so; the waves are terribly cruel. but, dear Jim, it's God's will, remember." He then left him, thinking it would be better to leave him to himself for a little. Tears were in his eyes as he turned away.

Ah! how sad it was, right in the midst of life, so full of hope and strength, and then to be carried away, as it were, without a minute's warning! Verily it was, "In the midst of life we are in death."

And so Jim's mind wandered. Sometimes he would burst out weeping as if his heart would break. Then he would pathetically mutter, "Those cruel waves, rising higher and higher in the air, then with a ton weight come crashing on my poor lost friend; just for a second I saw him, and then no more. Oh, how cruel, how cruel, it is, my God! Will I forget that awful sight? No, never; how could I, my beloved friend! And to think, even to think, I will never see you more. No more! Such thoughts," he wildly cried, "seem too awful. But I will," and a sudden light came in his distorted face, "thank God, in the one to come," he breathed.

He seemed comforted for a little, but his mind soon strayed on wildly. "How cruel," he moaned; "no burial service, no solemn prayer read over your dear body, simply snatched away by those cruel waves, and hidden far, far down in the deep. Hark!" he cried, crawling out of his bunk, "the wind and the waves are gradually ceasing—too late, too late, they have done all they could, they have taken my best friend, and God knows I loved him," he shrieked. "Yes! I would have willingly given up my life for him, and how will his poor mother and

father take this terrible news, and poor Sis. Good God, I remember now," muttered he, tightly holding his aching head. "Jim, I want you to make me a promise; promise me to marry Sis if anything happens to me—yes, and I promised. Ah me, ah me," he wildly lifted his voice, "little had I expected to lose you then. How could have I even dreamed of such a thing, Alge? How horrible, how horrible it is. Life to me is not worth living now. How dreary I feel, sick unto death," and his head fell into his lap.

"Come, cheer up, Jim, dear boy," said the mate tenderly, bringing him some brandy. "We are all so sorry for you, and poor Alge will be missed by all hands. They were very fond of him, and they are terribly cut up over it. Now, dear Jim, drink this brandy, it will do you good," he said, holding the glass to his lips. "That's it, now try and go to sleep. We have had a terrible fortnight of it."

"Thank you," muttered Jim, and his eyes looked pathetically into the mate's. "How can I get over this loss?"

"God bless you, and comfort you, my boy," said the mate, leaving the cabin.

All this time poor Yank lay unconscious in his bunk. The captain did all he could for him, but the poor fellow died in a few hours after he was brought there. Dick and Claude were getting on first rate. The captain set their broken arms, and

left them progressing favorably. The cargo had shifted, so the news spread from one to the other, for the ship was heeling over on the port side with her gunwale right under the water. "Thank God the storm is abating," some breathed, "else we would never have lived through it." "And," said some, "it is simply marvellous how she has weathered such a storm." So the men talked to each other in an awed whisper. "Poor Jim," Boag said, "he must be terribly cut up, they were such friends; and it is awful to see a man, whoever he may be, lost in that way, for no one could give a hand to save him; terrible to see him drowning as it were before our eyes."

"Sad, very sad," said the old sailmaker, rubbing his great hands across his eyes, wiping away some tears that kept springing up when he thought of Alge. "But we must be thankful there was nobody else washed overboard."

"Then there is poor Yank," said Boag, "he's passed away, they say; such a good old soul. Ah! two of our best comrades have gone; it's terrible hard lines."

And so they talked, these sailors, all sympathizing with the lost, but thankful it wasn't worse.

A fair total wreck the vessel looked. Not a strip of canvas on her except a few shreds blowing out from the foreyard. And nothing could be seen standing from aft to forward excepting the deck

houses. Hatches, tanks, ladders—all were carried away. Her sides were battered in, the lockers forward all smashed in, the boats completely broken up, and now she lay heeling over on the port side while the waters rolled over her gunwale.

The men were all below, thoroughly worn out with constant work and hardship. A little rest they were taking, and a well earned one. But soon they had to heave part of the cargo overboard to right her.

"A little sleep to forget one's troubles," thought Jim, "but only to wake up again in the midst of it. Yes, but the blow has passed, and, thank God, I feel very much stronger." So he thought as he awoke. "What a happy dream it was," he murmured, "Alge, my Alge come back to me." He said, "Do not trouble, Jim, for the dead but the living," and then in that sweet voice that he used to sing in when he was a little child years ago, he broke out in his shrill note, as clear as crystal, "O comfort ye." "Yes, Alge, I will be strong, so God help me."

"Still sleeping, Jim?" asked Mr. Lacky, quietly peeping into the cabin.

"No, sir, but I have had a good sleep, and feel so much stronger."

"I am so pleased, Jim."

"How are Yank and the other two doing, Mr. Lacky?" he asked presently.

"Oh, poor Yank has passed away—he never

regained consciousness; the other two are doing well."

"Poor Yank," said Jim pathetically, "I am so sorry; he was a rare good fellow."

"He was, Jim, a fine fellow indeed. Is it not terrible?"

"Very!" There was deep sadness in his voice.

Poor Yank was buried at noon. All hands were called to see the remains of their comrade. A very sad scene it was. Strong sailors as they were, men who could buffet any storm, their hearts were as tender as a woman's. With downward heads and tear-dimmed eyes they stood before the dead, while the captain read the burial service; then they lowered their comrade into the deep; thence never to rise again until the Judgment Day.

The port watch went below, and the starboard came on deck. Jim, before turning in, wrote to Mrs. Deed and Sisie letters too sacred, too full of sadness, for me to quote.

CHAPTER XIII.

WEEKS had elapsed since that awful storm, and they now found themselves entering the harbor of San Francisco. What a beautiful day it was! One of those glorious days that fill your soul with gladness, and your heart, as it were, leaps with joy. You gaze with longing eyes on the land in front of you. Beautiful green grass greets the eye, then farther on woods studded with trees of all sorts, all sizes, can be seen. Then a sparkling rivulet attracts the eye; glittering in the sunlight it winds about like a thread of silver, ever winding through the woods, and dales, green fields and hills. How glorious it is to think that you will soon set foot on dry land after five months on the deep! Presently they hailed a tug-boat, which smartly answered their signal and promptly steamed up to them.

It was just as the sun was setting when the tug-boat was made fast alongside and began to tow them towards the harbor. What a glorious evening it was, and, as the sun set, right ahead of them lay the "Golden Gate," rightly called golden, for who could wish to see a more lovely sight! Above, the sky was perfect, in her pale blue color, not a

cloud to mar its beauty. Then, as the sun was dipping into the water, she threw her golden light over land and ocean, all hallowed with her glorious light, which gradually turned to scarlet, so that the water, so peaceful, looked like blood.

Steadily and quietly they were towed on through the calm water—on and on, until they pass the Golden Gate, and at last they found themselves in the Bay of San Francisco. For there in front of them lay that noble city, facing the great expanse of the Pacific Ocean.

Just as the light was fading away and the darkness set in, they dropped anchor, and were snugly moored about half a mile off the city.

Early next morning, ere the sun rose, all hands turned out, after a whole night's sleep, the first long sleep they had since they left England ; and how refreshing it seemed.

What a sight greeted them as they came on deck. Instead of seeing nothing but the wide, wide ocean, there in front lay the beautiful city. Noble it looked in the evening light, lighted up with the myriads of lights, but far, far nobler now it shone in the rays of the rising sun.

At eight o'clock the tug-boat came alongside, and after all hands had got up the anchor, she was made fast, and then towed into dock. Crowds of people of every nationality had gathered to see her towed in. Men, women, and children flocked

thither. Some had come to pass away their time by watching her, others no doubt bent on business. Now a Chinaman came on board, and assuming the best business-like manner he could muster, went up to the captain.

"What do you want, my man?" asked the captain, eyeing him up and down, for some of these gentlemen are very cute persons to deal with.

"Me do washing," he said innocently.

The captain laughed, and immediately made an agreement with him to wash his clothes. Yang Kang, he called himself, and after he had bundled the captain's dirty linen in a parcel, as tight as he could make it, he went up to the mate and tried his luck there.

"Me do washing," he said again.

The mate looked at him, but did not speak.

"Me do much washing," he said cutely. "Me washee wellee, wellee."

The mate then smiled. "How much do you charge, my man?" he asked.

"Me do lot for twenty cents, me different to other Chinamen, me no cheat."

"Well," said the mate, "you look an honest man." The man then grinned from ear to ear. "So you can wash my clothes," he continued.

The agreement thus made, he straightway gathered the dirty linen up out of his cabin and tied them all together with the captain's, and thus marched off to Jim's cabin, and, knocking, went in.

"Me do washing," said he.

Jim looked up, for he was writing a letter. "You wash clothes, you say?"

"Me wash much clothes; me do it cheapee, cheapee."

"I see, you want to wash my clothes. Well, I have some you can wash, but mind and bring them back, and that soon."

"Me bring them back soonee, soonee," he said, stooping down and picking them up. And bundling them up he marched off, doing, as he thought, an excellent trade. The vessel was to stay three months in harbor, for unloading the cargo, and loading, and the many repairs to be made before they should be fit to go to sea. Jim had got a month's leave, so he intended to spend it in the city. One fine day he left the docks, and boarding a car made for the Stanley Hotel, at which place he intended to put up. It was a fine, large, handsome building, then one of the finest in 'Frisco. He found the house pretty well crowded with visitors, but there were a few vacant bedrooms, so he booked a small one on the top floor.

"Show this gentleman to No. 160," said the manager.

"Yes, sir; this way, sir, please."

Jim soon found himself seated in a small room, as he thought it was at first. But it was an elevator, and when the man shut the door it began to ascend,

rather to Jim's surprise, and in a few minutes he found himself on the top floor.

"This is your room," said the porter, opening the door, and Jim passed in.

How strange it all seemed to him now, and how pleasant to be waited on thus. He sat down for a few minutes in an armchair and surveyed the room. "Ah!" he thought, "this reminds me of my home." He then looked at the bed, and thought, "How delightful it will be sleeping there after the hard bunk, and if only Alge, poor Alge, were with me my happiness would be assured."

Presently a knock came at the door.

"Come in," said Jim.

"Table-de-hote is ready, sir," said one of the servants, who really had come to have a look at the sailor they had announced downstairs; for immediately the gong went.

"Table-de-hote," repeated Jim, "that sounds good."

"The dining-room is on number four floor, sir," said the man, with his head on one side, and his eyes fixed on Jim.

"Thank you," said Jim, and he went past him, and entering the elevator went down. The dining-room was crowded with visitors, but after looking around he managed to find a vacant seat, and sitting down there, he found himself between two old ladies. This he thought was rather hard lines,

especially when he saw at the next table two of the prettiest young ladies he had ever set eyes on ; so he thought.

"Excuse me," said one of the ladies at his table, narrowly eyeing him with a pair of eyeglasses which she had purposely put up to her eyes to look at her neighbor, "Excuse me for asking such an impertinent question—but are you a sailor?"

"Yes, madam," answered Jim, "I am."

"O really, and an Englishman, I presume."

"Yes, madam, I am proud to say."

"How interesting," exclaimed the other old lady, in a rather squeaky voice, "I am so fond of Englishmen," said she.

"You quite flatter me," said Jim.

She smiled faintly, and then said, "We Americans are great friends with the English."

Jim now and again glanced at the two young ladies he had taken such a fancy to, and he was trying to make up his mind to ask them who they were. It seemed to him a rather hard task to ask such a question ; why, he did not know. At first he thought they might think him rude, and a fast young man. But he had determined to find out, and who knows this might be the only chance—so he thought he would risk it, and what does it matter what they will think of me, he thought.

Turning to one of them, he asked in as calm a voice as he could muster, although he felt very

nervous, "Excuse me, ladies, but could you tell me who those young ladies are over there, the two in pink, I mean."

"Those," exclaimed one of the ladies, "are my grandchildren." "And my niece," said the other lady.

"Thank you kindly," said Jim, "but do excuse me for seeming so inquisitive."

"Good gracious," he thought immediately, "I must keep in with these two old ladies, then."

"Not at all," exclaimed they, sipping a cup of tea.

"Have you been long in 'Frisco," inquired the lady on his right.

"Oh, no, our ship only arrived two days ago."

"Really!" exclaimed she, opening her eyes very wide. "And we have only been here a week."

"It was a week to-day, was it not, dear," she turned to the other lady, "when we arrived from New York?"

"Yes, dear," exclaimed she. "And what a journey it was."

"Shocking; fancy days and days in a train." She turned to Jim, "I really began to think we never would get here, and poor Eva was so ill."

"How sad," said Jim, although he did not know who Eva was, but he guessed it would be one of her grandchildren.

"Yes, the train always upsets her, poor child," she said sorrowfully.

Jim, after having a "rattling good dinner," as he termed it, wished the ladies good-night, and retired to his room. He was in a happy frame of mind. The ladies had promised to introduce him to their grandchildren—so Mrs. Richardson had said, for that was her name, and Mrs. Storey, the aunt, had said how pleased they were to have made his acquaintance, so no wonder he was happy. It was strange how these two old ladies had taken such a liking to him. Such a nice gentleman, they said, and so polite.

They had retired to the drawing-room, where presently they were interrupted in their tete-a-tete by the two young ladies, who came laughing in the room.

"Oh, grandma," exclaimed Eva, the elder, "who was that nice looking young gentleman sitting between you and aunt? You seemed quite taken up with him."

"Yes," joined in Ethel, "who was he, do tell us, dear aunt?"

"A sailor, my dears," exclaimed Mrs. Richardson. "An English sailor."

"How jolly," exclaimed Ethel, smiling, showing two rows of pearly teeth. "And did he tell you any sea yarns, grandma dear? I do love to hear about the sea," she said thoughtfully.

"No, my dear."

"What a pity," said Ethel, looking very disappointed.

"You know, my dear grandma," said Mrs. Storey, she generally called her grandma, being so accustomed to hearing the children call her so, "I always had the idea sailors were rude, uncultivated men, but he seems very gentlemanly, indeed."

"Yes, dear, I know you always had that absurd notion about sailors, but you see there are two classes of sailors—and I guess he comes from a very good family."

"Now grandma," said Ethel, smiling, "I see you have fallen in love with him."

Then they all laughed.

Jim had not the slightest idea that they were talking about him so, as he sat in his room thinking of nothing but the two young ladies in pink. He had fallen in love, that was certain, not with them both, but the shorter, whom he thought was the younger. And so she was. Ethel he was smitten with; her golden hair, and pink lips like rosebuds, for she was an exceptionally pretty girl, had done it. Eva, too, was pretty, but not so pretty as her sister. She was darker and more of the beauty of the Eastern type, tall, with dark, solemn eyes and graceful features.

Jim did not cease thinking about them until he dropped off to sleep; then he was haunted with feverish dreams, wild and weird. And so the night passed, and as the darkness passed away and the sun in all its beauty rose, and the city traffic had

commenced, with the electric cars whirling up the streets, he awoke with a start, and immediately dressed.

A great number of ladies and gentlemen were at breakfast when he entered the room, and his first thoughts were to see whether his new friends were amongst them, but to his disappointment they were not. "Confound it," he muttered, biting his lips.

Presently a waiter came up to him, and Jim, turning to him, asked in as unconcerned a voice as he could, "Oh, have Mrs. Richardson and party come down yet, waiter?"

The waiter looked rather surprised, but answered: "Yes, sir, they have had breakfast and have retired to the drawing-room, I believe." He's after those pretty girls, thought he.

"Thank you, waiter," said Jim, and immediately ordered breakfast, which it did not take him long to consume, and he made for the drawing-room.

"Good morning, ladies," he greeted them with outstretched hand. But alas, the girls were not there.

"Good morning," said they. "We were just planning out what we should do with ourselves to-day, and perhaps you can help us. It's such a pity to stay indoors such a lovely day."

"That it is, Mrs. Richardson, but I am sorry I am unable to give you any advice, as you see I am quite a stranger."

"Of course, I quite forgot."

"We were thinking," said Mrs. Storey, "of going to 'Cliff House.' It's a charming out-of-the-way spot, facing the Pacific Ocean beach. On such a clear day as this we shall be able to see the Farallome Islands quite distinctly; they are about twenty-three miles out, I believe. And the view, too, will be magnificent, with the islands in the distance and the large rocks close at hand, washed by the sea, swarming with seals and sea lions."

"I am sure, Mrs. Storey, that would be a delightful outing," said Jim.

"Yes, it would," remarked Mrs. Richardson, "and I think we will decide on that, Mrs. Storey. And if you would like our company," she said, turning to Jim, "we shall be very pleased to have yours. Eva and Ethel are coming with us. Where they have got off to, I know not, but I told them we would be going out most likely in an hour's time, so I guess they will be in soon."

"It is very kind of you to ask me, Mrs. Richardson, and I shall be very pleased to come."

"Excuse me," said Mrs. Storey, "but Mrs. Richardson and I have been wondering what your name is."

"I hope you won't be offended," said Mrs. Richardson, smiling, "but we have been calling you Neptune."

"Not at all," laughed Jim, "in fact it's a very

sweet name; but my proper name is Miles; but believe me, Mrs. Richardson, the one you have given me sounds far nicer."

"Well, here at last come the girls," cried Mrs. Storey, and immediately they came in, with their faces flushed with health and pleasure. Happy smiles lit up their handsome faces as they entered the room, but, perceiving Jim, they hesitated for a moment. "I thought them pretty last night, but how much prettier they look now," thought Jim.

"Let me introduce you, my dears, to our sailor friend, Mr. James Miles," said Mrs. Richardson, rising.

"We are going to take him with us, dears, to Cliff House, to see the sea lions," remarked Mrs. Storey.

"How nice," said Ethel, "I am sure you will enjoy it, Mr. Miles, and such a clear day, too; we shall be able to see the Farallome Isles. Aunt, do you remember the last time we went, it was so misty we could not see them?"

"I remember well, dear; such a mist there was on the ocean."

"I expect you have seen lots of seals in your travels on the sea, Mr. Miles?" asked Ethel.

"Yes, I have seen a fair quantity in my time, Miss Richardson."

"Don't you think they are funny looking creatures," said she, smiling.

"Very funny, especially sea lions."

"Yes, Mr. Miles, and such a noise they make. It is simply deafening at Cliff House at times."

"Do you remember that day, Ethel," asked Eva, turning her hat in her hand, "when the whole beach was swarming with them?"

"Plainly, Eva. Wasn't the noise terrible?"

While they were talking Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Storey slipped out of the room and went up stairs to get ready. Presently a carriage and pair was announced, and ere long they were all driving off to Cliff House.

"How glorious the scenery is," remarked Ethel, while they were looking over the cliff at the vast ocean in front of them, "so distinctly you can see the Farallome Isles lying right to the westward."

"Yes, it is a charming spot, Mrs. Richardson," said Jim. "Who could wish for a prettier sight," he exclaimed, gazing before him. "There in front of us lies the great Pacific Ocean, while just below are the seals diving in and out of the water. Now they climb up the rocks, then with a splash they dive in the water again, enjoying their sea bath. And then, yonder, far to the westward, lie the famous islands."

"I was sure you would be charmed with it, Mr. Miles," exclaimed Ethel, joyfully. "But I suppose you have seen far prettier sights than this, have you not?" she asked wistfully.

"No, Miss Richardson, I cannot say I have," he

said thoughtfully. She glanced at him for a moment, but did not speak. He broke the silence by pointing out to her a sailing vessel that was passing in the distance.

"You see, my dear," said Mrs. Richardson to Eva, while they were walking up the cliff making for a higher position, "my eyes are not as young as yours; I can not distinguish the islands."

"Can you not really, grandma? How terrible. But you can see that ship there?" she said, pointing seaward.

"No, I could not say for certain that it was one, Eva? I can only make out a dark form. But your aunt has very good eyes."

"O yes," said Mrs. Storey, "I can see the islands quite distinctly, but I am really getting quite concerned about your eyes dear; I wish you would see a specialist."

By this time they had left Ethel and Jim a long way behind, for these two had been so busy talking that they had not noticed them go. Presently Ethel looked up and noticed.

"O dear! what a way they have gone, Mr. Miles," exclaimed she, "how naughty of us to leave them so; see, Eva is waving for us."

"I am so sorry, but I did not know they had gone, Miss Richardson; how stupid of me," he stammered.

"No, Mr. Miles, it's not your fault; and see,

they are coming back, so we can wait until they join us," she said smiling.

"Do you like grandma and aunt?" she asked, looking so sweetly at him.

"Yes, very much, Miss Richardson; I think they are two charming old ladies."

"Do you?" laughed she. "We love them. They are our nearest relations. Mother died when we were quite little, and father only three years ago," she said sadly.

"How very sad," said Jim with deep emotion. Poor child, thought he, how terrible for her.

"Have you lost your father or mother, Mr. Miles?" she asked, wistfully glancing up at him.

"No, I am thankful to say, but I have lost a very dear friend at sea," he said sadly, and his face dropped.

"How sad," she said tenderly. "I should like to hear about it, Mr. Miles, if it won't pain you," she said, looking with her beautiful eyes at him.

Jim's pained face relaxed. "Yes," I said slowly, "I will tell you."

"Poor Alge," she murmured, when he had finished telling her; "how very, very sad."

CHAPTER XIV.

THAT night when Jim lay in bed he was wondering whether Ethel cared for him. He knew that he loved her, but did she love him? Still, he thought that she liked him, if only a little, and that was a comfort. She seemed so sorry for him when he was telling her about his lost dear friend. Yes! And when they said good-night she held his hand so firmly and seemed sorry to part.

That same night Ethel was thinking about Jim. Yes, she loved him, she knew; she could not help but love such a kind-hearted boy, and so handsome. How dreadfully sad it was to lose his friend like that! So they both fell asleep, each dreaming of the other, but not knowing that each loved the other. Jim thought that Ethel liked him just as a sailor. She, being so pretty, will be sure to have no end of suitors, and poor me, a sailor, what chances have I? And Ethel thought, Jim will be sure to love some girl in England far better than I, and are not all sailors fond of any girl they meet? The next morning after breakfast Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Storey were in the drawing-room making their usual plan out for the day's outing, while

Ethel and Eva were taking a stroll out of doors, accompanied by Jim.

"They seem very sweet with each other—I mean Ethel and Mr. Miles," remarked Mrs. Storey.

"Yes, dear, I have noticed that too; he seems to like Ethel better than Eva."

"He does, and Ethel, I can see, likes him too," said Mrs. Storey. "But, dear, do you think it wise for them to be so much together, you can see it can never come to anything. Mr. Miles will soon be going back to sea again, and in all probability they will never meet again. Of course, dear, I am thinking of Ethel's happiness in the future. Suppose it might end in her loving him if they are so much together, and what then?"

"Well, dear," said Mrs. Richardson, "I cannot see how any harm can come by it. Of course when he leaves she will be sure to be sorry; and so we all will be, if that's it. He has such winning ways and is so handsome, I am quite taken with him."

"Well, well," sighed Mrs. Storey, "let it be so."

Then the conversation ended, so they can go on flirting with each other as far as they are concerned. But I think, situated as they were, it would have been far wiser not to have let them so much with each other; but we will see, time will tell.

"Grandma, dear!" exclaimed Ethel, coming in the room with smiling face. "Where is the outing to be to-day?"

"Your aunt and I have been thinking of taking you and your sister to the Park."

"How delightful," she exclaimed. "But not Mr. Miles as well?" she said, and her face dropped.

"Of course, love, Mr. Miles must consider himself one of the family now," said Mrs. Richardson.

"You are too kind, Mrs. Richardson," said Jim.

"Well, it will be a delightful outing," exclaimed Ethel joyfully.

"But have you been there, Mr. Miles?" she asked, turning to him.

"No, Miss Richardson, but that is all the more reason why I should like to."

"Oh! it's a splendid park, Mr. Miles," exclaimed Eva, "the Golden Gate Park. It takes after its name too, for it is the finest one in the world, I should say."

"It is really," said Ethel; "just fancy, Mr. Miles, about three miles long, and I cannot mention all the things there are to be seen there, they are so many. Well, for instance, there is a magnificent conservatory, bears in cages, an art gallery, a museum full of rare things, and a splendid music pavilion——."

"Yes," exclaimed Eva, "and the band will be playing there to-day."

"That will be delightful," said Jim.

"Wait a moment, Mr. Miles, I have not finished yet," said Ethel excitedly. "There is also a large

aviary, containing about one thousand five hundred birds, and deer glen, buffalo park, and not these things only, for the park is just full of lakes, beautiful walks and drives."

"It must be a regular paradise, Miss Richardson," said Jim.

"It is, Mr. Miles," said Mrs. Richardson. "I was charmed with it."

"Had we not better get ready, dear?" said Mrs. Storey. "You see the carriage will be here in a few minutes."

"Yes, I had quite forgotten what time it was. And here it comes," she said, hastily leaving, as a carriage and pair was seen pulling up outside. Presently they were all seated therein, and it did not take them long before they were driven through a large archway, one of the entrances to the park.

"Really, the scenery is lovely," exclaimed Jim, while they were driving through the park. "Who would have thought it?"

"Yes, Mr. Miles, charming," said Mrs. Richardson.

"O do look!" exclaimed Mrs. Storey, "at that pretty lake yonder. How peaceful it is!"

"Yes, very," said Eva.

"It must be Stowe Lake, aunt, dear," exclaimed Ethel.

"So it is. O how lovely that waterfall is," said Eva, as they passed along by one of its waterfalls.

"Really, I never dreamed the scenery would be so lovely," exclaimed Jim.

"Just look, Mr. Miles," said Ethel, pointing across the park, "What are those funny animals?"

"Why they are kangaroos, just fancy."

"This must be the deer glen, dear?" said Mrs. Richardson.

"Yes, to be sure it is," exclaimed Mrs. Storey, "and what beauties they are."

"Let's stop here, grandma dear, it's such a pretty spot, and we can get the coachman to bring our lunch basket under those trees there in the glen."

"Why, love, it is not lunch time yet."

"But, grandma dear," pleaded she, "I am feeling so hungry and," she looked across at Jim, "I am sure Mr. Miles is too. Then we could not get a more lovely spot than this, dear."

"To tell you the truth," said Mrs. Storey, "I could also do with some luncheon. Driving makes one so hungry."

"There, grandma dear, you will surely let us stop now?"

"Very well, love."

"Coachman," said she immediately, "pull up, please. We are going to get out and have luncheon under those trees yonder. So will you get the hamper out, please?"

"Yes, ma'am," he said, pulling up the horses.

"You might help him with it, Mr. Miles," said Mrs. Richardson, as she lighted on the ground.

"Yes, certainly," said Jim.

And as the ladies were comfortably seated under the shady trees, they brought the hamper then.

"It is good of you to trouble so, Mr. Miles," said Ethel, all aglow with excitement.

"Just what I like doing, Miss Richardson," laughed Jim, placing the hamper on the ground and opening it, and handing the contents to her and Eva, who spread them out.

"Coachman," exclaimed Mrs. Richardson, "you can call for us in an hour's time." She was sitting on a mossy seat, comfortably leaning against an old fir tree, with a book in her lap.

"Very well, ma'am," he said, and immediately drove away.

"Such a grand spread you have brought us, grandma dear," exclaimed Ethel. "Chicken, ham, tongue, bread and butter and cheese. Oh, it's delightful! Will you take ham with your chicken, aunt dear?"

"Just a little, love."

"Excuse me, Miss Richardson, let me cut the ham for you."

"No, no, Mr. Miles, I can manage nicely. But you and Eva can hand the plates round, if you care to," she smiled.

"You will find some port wine in the hamper, Mr. Miles, so help yourself," said Mrs. Richardson.

"How charming, you dear old darling grandma," exclaimed Ethel.

"I did not ask you whether you would have any, love; at least, I think you should not. You know, Mr. Miles," she said, turning to him, "port wine is her great weakness."

Ethel pouted and looked offended, until Mrs. Richardson kissed her and declared that they would all have a drop.

"There!" cried Ethel, "I knew you did not mean it, you must excuse her, Mr. Miles."

"I am grieved to hear that you are so fond of wine," said Jim thoughtfully, filling up some wine glasses, trying to look disdainful, but all the time he was doing his utmost to prevent laughing.

"Now, Mr. Miles, that is too bad," she said in a troubled voice.

"Do not believe him, love," said Mrs. Storey, "I am sure he does not mean it." Jim then burst out laughing, which set Ethel laughing too. And then they drank to each other's health in a wineglass of port.

After luncheon, Ethel proposed taking Jim for a stroll through some of the beautiful narrow walks that wind about the glen in all directions. Jim was delighted with the idea, and, as the ladies agreed with it, saying they would stay where they were and rest until they came back, they marched off and were soon hidden from sight by the thick foliage of the shrubs. They wandered on through flowery shrubs, ferns, and billowy sea of green trees

for about a mile. Ethel feeling tired, she proposed to Jim to sit down, and in a secluded spot they sank down on the green grass and soft moss that lay around. Above, huge trees with outstretched branches, thick with their foliage, spread over them, shading the fierce sun that shone down with burning heat.

"How wrong of me in bringing you so far, Miss Richardson. Do forgive me," he said, sitting down. "I believe I would have walked on for ever, I felt so happy, and I never thought how tired I was making you."

"Do you not feel happy sitting down?" she asked, wistfully.

"Happy—I am always happy when I am with you," he said slowly.

She glanced up, and her beautiful blue eyes met his steadily, and from then she knew that he loved her, and he knew she loved him.

"Miss Richardson," said he softly, "I never thought that I would have such a happy time. We, I mean Alge and I, used to talk about having a nice time on shore at 'Frisco; then when I lost him, I felt so lonely, so sad, all my hopes were crushed. Then I met you, my love," said he tenderly, laying his hand gently on hers, "and the first time I saw you I loved you, a new life came in me; I knew I had someone to live for."

"Say you love me," he pleaded, "let me hear

from those sweet lips, although I know you do." And as he leaned down beside her their faces almost touched.

"Dear boy, I do," she said, and her sweet lips trembled with emotion.

"Dear Ethel," he said tenderly, and a faint blush passed over his face, for he remembered it was the first time he had called her by her Christian name. "Darling," he murmured, "you have made me so happy."

And there we will leave them for a time, embraced in their first love. Tenderly holding each other's hand; they sat nestled together, while Ethel's head reclined contentedly on Jim's shoulder.

"I wonder wherever they have got to," suddenly exclaimed Mrs. Richardson. "The time is getting on and we will have to be driving home now."

"I cannot make out," said Eva, "and I have been hunting high and low for them, and cannot even see any signs of them."

"They must have lost their way," said Mrs. Storey in awe; "there are, you see, so many paths winding all about here, and it strikes me they have taken the wrong one."

"Such a pity," exclaimed Mrs. Richardson, "and it will be quite dark before we get home, if we don't find them soon."

"We had better hunt for them, grandma. What fun! Shall I take one path and you and aunt another?"

"No, I would not do that, dear, else we would lose you also. But if we take this path—the one they went by—we may find them."

"I do hope so," exclaimed Mrs. Storey, "it's getting quite serious. What a terrible thing if they have to stay out all night."

"Surely they will find their way out, dear But, Eva dear, you run on ahead; you will be able to go quicker than we—we will follow up slowly."

Presently Eva came running back, waving her handkerchief. "There they come," she shouted.

"Oh, Ethel dear," hurriedly exclaimed Mrs. Storey, "we were in a terrible way about you—we thought something terrible must have happened."

"Too bad," said Mrs. Richardson, "we have been hunting high and low for you these last two hours."

"I am so sorry," said Jim; "it is all my fault—don't blame Miss Richardson, please."

"It is time's fault," said Ethel, with her eyes fixed on the ground. "It went so quickly, we quite forgot it was so late. Poor grandma, I am sure you must be tired, but do forgive us, dear," she said coaxingly.

"Yes, we will fc give you, child, but I sincerely hope this won't occur again." They soon made their way to the carriage and getting in were driven straight for the hotel, all tired except Ethel and Jim, they being much too happy for that.

After dinner, Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Storey

retired to their private sitting-room on the plea of feeling tired.

"My dear," said Mrs. Storey, sitting in a comfortable armchair, while Mrs. Richardson lounged on the sofa, "it strikes me that Ethel and Mr. Miles get fonder of each other every day. And it also struck me, when we saw them after they were lost, that it was something more than fondness, they really looked as if they were betrothed. Did you not think so, dear?"

"My dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Richardson, "you surprise me. I think you are mistaken. They like each other, there's no doubt, but it is only a brotherly and sisterly love between them, I think, as friends ought to feel towards each other."

"More than that, dear, I am sure—and I will be surprised if I am mistaken."

"But really, dear, we must investigate into the case if that is it—you know we are her guardians, and we know nothing whatever of Mr. Miles' family, although he himself seems very gentlemanly and nice. "No," she said, shaking her head, "I cannot blame Ethel."

"It is not that which I am thinking about, dear," interrupted Mrs. Storey, "I mean, you know, that Mr. Miles will be going back to sea shortly, and poor Ethel will fret so over it. Perhaps they may never meet again, and will she get over it?"

"But are you sure she loves him so much, dear?

You see I only thought they liked each other as friends."

"Quite certain of it. Do you not notice when Mr. Miles is away how downcast she becomes, and when he is with her how bright she is? Then Eva told me only last night how Ethel loved him."

"And does Mr. Miles love her?" she asked, thoughtfully.

"Why dear, can you not see it—loves even the very ground she treads on, I should say."

"A thorough entanglement we are in then," sighed Mrs. Richardson. "But we must talk it over one of these days with Mr. Miles, and see what can be done. For a kinder and nicer man he could not be, and Ethel in that respect has made a good choice; but a deep gulf, as it were, divides the two."

While this discussion was going on, Ethel, Eva and Jim were at the theatre. The play was called "Trilby," and the house was packed. During the intervals you would hear many gentlemen inquiring who were those two pretty young ladies in the private box with that handsome sailor. And many an opera glass was levelled upon them. Yes, they did look most lovely, especially Ethel. She was dressed in a pure white silk dress, with an opera cloak thrown loosely over her shoulders. Jim had his best uniform on, open front and dress tie. He sat between the two. And Eva was dressed in a

similar fashion to Ethel, the color of her dress, however, being more of a creamy tint.

How happy they all were there, but by far the happiest were Ethel and Jim. The play was a great success, far better acted than they act in England, thought Jim. But everything was better to him when Ethel was with him.

CHAPTER XV.

ONE day Jim called at the General Post Office to see if there were any letters for him, as he had told his people to address them there. "Three letters for Mr. Miles," said the man, and Jim quickly caught hold of them and hastily ran his eye over the address to see whether he could tell by the handwriting who they were from. One from his mother, another from Mrs. Deed, and the other from Sis. He looked carefully at the latter.

"Can it be from Sis," he thought deeply. "Yes, I am sure this is her handwriting," and he hastily tore it open. And as he glanced over the contents his face clouded.

"My dearest Jim," it read: "How sorry I was to hear of that terrible news, none but myself can tell. It came as such a blow to me! I can hardly realize it, that our poor darling Alge has gone. But now it is you, dear boy, I grieve over, knowing how heartbroken you will be over it. Darling, although you may think you are friendless, you are not, for you have a friend in me, ah! far greater than that, for I love you, darling, I love you with my whole heart. You may think it strange of me to write thus, but I always loved you, Jim, and now

God has taken away our Alge, my love grows stronger and stronger towards you. How I yearn to see you once again, dear boy. Good bye, darling Jim. Trust in God and all will be well.

"I am,

"Your ever loving (can I say) sweetheart,

"SIS."

Poor Jim! he had quite forgotten her since he came to know Ethel, and now he remembered Alge's words, they went ringing through and through his head. "Make me a promise, Jim; promise me if anything happens to me you will marry Sis." And he promised.

"Oh, Alge," he moaned, "if you were alive you would forgive, but now! How can I, how can I marry Sis? Only one person can I marry, and that is Ethel, my dearest Ethel. O that I had not promised, my God, my God! Never in all my life have I broken my promise with you, Alge, and how can I now when you are dead? And to think that Sis loves me. Once I loved her, I thought, but I know now it was not true love. How differently I love Ethel, and she loves me, the darling, and no one shall part us.

"But what am I thinking about, can I break that sacred promise? O Algie, little did I think then this trouble would come. But I have not promised Sis," he almost shrieked aloud; then again it went

whirling through his head, "You promised, and Sis loves you." And as he was thinking so a hand gently touched him on the shoulder. He looked up, startled and frightened, with his face all white and haggard, and there stood Ethel by his side. She had gone out for a stroll and had accidentally come across him.

"Why, what is the matter, dear Jim, you do look so ill. What has happened, O tell me, dear?"

"Yes, something has happened, Ethel, but I cannot tell you," said he with bowed head.

"Jim, can you not tell me?" she pleaded. "Tell me your trouble, darling." But he stood motionless.

"Jim! once I thought you loved me, but no, you cannot, for if you did you would not keep anything away from me," she said in a pained voice.

"Ethel," he said [illegible]ly, "I love you with my whole heart, and if you love me, please, please do not ask me to tell you," he pleaded. "Some day I will, dearest."

"Jim, forgive me, I was hasty. I am so sorry for what I have said. O say you will forgive me," sobbed she.

"Dearest! I will, so now dry your eyes," he said. "You know, my love, troubles will come, even to the best. And I have received a letter which greatly troubles me. That is all, darling."

"Poor Jim, I am sorry. God knows I would help you if I could."

"Darling, I know it. But you could not help me, love, in this case. Only trust in me, and if I am hiding anything from you, it is not because I do not love you, but because I love you so."

So they strolled home, and reached the hotel just in time for lunch. Jim's paleness had gone, and nobody could have told that anything had upset him. For by looks he seemed the opposite, being, too, very cheerful and gay, keeping them all roaring with laughter with his yarns during the meal. For Ethel had driven away his melancholy thoughts. He loved her so and he knew she loved him.

"Have you been to China Town, Mr. Miles?" presently asked Mrs. Richardson.

"No, not yet, but I mean to before we leave."

"You will see some terrible and shocking things there," said Ethel.

"Why, dear, you have not been there!"

"No, grandma," she laughed. "I should be frightened to death to go. You know, Mr. Miles," she said turning to him, "you will have to have a guide; it is really not safe without one."

"Why, Ethel, love! you are not thinking of going to China Town," exclaimed Mrs. Storey, coming in the room, for she had overheard the latter part of the conversation only. "No ladies should go there."

"Excuse me, Mrs. Storey," said Jim, "it is only

I that am going there, just for curiosity sake. And Ethel proposes that I should take a guide with me."

"Yes, I certainly would, Mr. Miles. It is a terrible place, I hear; I mean parts of it. There are opium and gambling dens there; it is really shocking! Although it is in the city it is quite a town of its own; the population, I believe, is about sixty thousand. There are theatres, restaurants, and splendid curio shops, which are the chief things the place is noted for."

"That will be nice, Mrs. Storey. I will have to get some curios for my people at home, and I can get them there."

"Do you intend going this afternoon, Mr. Miles?" asked Mrs. Richardson.

"No, not to-day, we have made an engagement; but most likely to-morrow."

"No, certainly not to-day," protested Ethel. "But did not I tell you, grandma dear, that Mr. Miles has promised to take me for a row on the sea?"

"Really!" said she in astonishment. "But I don't think it's safe, love; you know I never think it safe on the water."

"Oh grandma, don't be in such a fidget. I am sure it will be safe," she prettily pouted, "you know the water is so calm to-day; then I could not be in better hands than with Mr. Miles, a sailor."

"Well, what do you say about it, Mr. Miles?" asked she, rather annoyed. She had a dread of the sea.

"I am sure it will be perfectly safe, Mrs. Richardson, you can be assured of that. The sea is so calm and I can manage a boat in the roughest of seas."

"Very well, then, but do take care of yourselves, dears."

"That we will, grandma, you dear creature," said Ethel, giving her a fond hug.

"I hope you will enjoy yourselves," said Mrs. Storey. "But I don't envy you; I detest the sea, it always makes me so ill."

"Good-bye, dears, for the present," said Ethel, skipping out of the room.

"I do not know what Ethel will do when Jim goes back to sea," said Mrs. Storey. "She is awfully in love with him, and his time of leave expires next week, I believe."

"Yes, dear, and we must be going back to New York then. I really meant to go home sooner, but I thought we might stay until Mr. Miles goes back to sea again."

"Quite natural, dear, and Ethel must wait as other lovers have to do sometimes, and if in years to come we ever meet Mr. Miles again, and they still love each other and wish to marry, then I think it would be our duty to let them."

"Tut! dear, I don't think it will ever come to anything. And you know this coming season we will be taking her to parties and balls, and in time she will soon forget all about Mr. Miles."

"I am afraid that won't be so," said Mrs. Storey, shaking her head, "but we must hope for the best."

"How delightful it is," exclaimed Ethel, as she sat in the stern of a neat little boat which shot through the water at a swinging pace, being forced onwards by every stroke of Jim's oars. How pretty she looked as she lay there, dressed in a plain white dress, with a neat sunbonnet on her head to keep the sun, which was very powerful, from off her face.

It was a charming day. The sky was a rich blue color; and the water, so peaceful and quiet, was as clear as crystal, so that you could even see the bottom. A slight refreshing breeze was blowing across the sea. Jim, with his coat off and his shirt sleeves rolled up, was lazily pulling at the oars, now taking it easy after the exertion he had used.

"This reminds me of heaven, Jim—what I imagine it is like, happiness, peace and love; if it would only last," sighed Ethel.

"Why should it not, darling—what is to prevent it?"

"Nothing, dear, only I was thinking that soon you will be going away to sea, and perhaps we will never, never meet again; it seems so cruel to think so, and it makes me feel so sad."

"My love," said Jim fondly, going aft, and sitting down in the stern seat he fondly put his arm around her—leaving the boat to drift with the tide. "Yes, love," he said sadly, "I know we must soon part. But I will always love you, always think of you. And I promise you dear, that I will never marry any one but you. And some day, God willing, I will come for you, perhaps not for years, maybe not until I am a second mate, but I will come, love, and then, if you still love me, we will marry. This, dear, is a token," said he, taking off his ring and putting it upon her finger—"a token that I love you and only you, and when you look at it you will know, though I am far away, that Jim loves you, and one day we will be husband and wife."

"Husband and wife!" she repeated, "how sweet it sounds, darling. Yes," she said slowly, "I will be patient, dear Jim, and wait, wait even years for you to come and claim me, love, and if you never come—awful to think so—but if you do not, I shall never marry, dear, no never."

"Dearest, I am not worthy of such a love as yours; truly I am the luckiest man in the world," Jim said, then kissing her. "When I saw you at first, little did I dream that you would love me as I love you."

The sun was setting in the far west when Jim manned the oars and began to pull back again. He thought of Mrs. Richardson, knowing what a

terrible way she would be in, it was getting so late. He leaned back on the oars so that at every stroke he pulled the boat shot at a terrific pace through the water.

"Do let me row a little, love," said Ethel. "I am sure you must be getting tired."

"Not at all, dear, thanks. I could row all day and night without ceasing, dear," he said smiling, "if you were in the boat. But I wish you would put my coat over your shoulders, love; the wind is springing up and it is quite chilly."

"Won't you put it on, Jim?"

"No, thanks, it is very warm work rowing, love."

"Very well, dear," she said, throwing the coat over her shoulders. "I wonder what grandma and aunt would say if they saw me in this," she laughed.

"'How nice you look!' that's what they would say, dear, for it suits you very grandly. You dear Ethel."

"You know, Jim, I am awfully fond of sailors' suits; such pretty blue and such grand buttons."

"Really, love! Perhaps it is my uniform that makes you love me so," said he, wistfully.

"Jim, how dare you say that; you know I would love you the same if you were in rags."

They both laughed at this, and as they were now only a few paces from the shore, a few more strokes brought them safely to the quay. When they arrived at the hotel they found Mrs. Richard-

son and Mrs. Storey in a terrible fright. They said they thought some awful accident had happened; either they were drowned, or lost on the ocean. But, being so pleased to see them come in looking so happy and well, they quite forgot to scold them, as they had intended to do.

"You must be hungry, dears," said Mrs. Richardson, ringing the bell and immediately ordering the waiter to lay supper for two in the private drawing-room.

"I should think so, grandma dear, we are fairly perished with hunger. But we have had such a nice time, dear, it was so lovely on the water."

"I am very glad you have enjoyed yourself, love," said Mrs. Richardson kindly.

The waiter then came in and announced that supper was ready for two. So Jim and Ethel left them and went into the drawing-room, there to find a most tempting repast laid for them.

After supper they joined the ladies. Very little was said that evening. Mrs. Storey complained of a headache. I expect it was partly from fatigue, and partly from the excitement of the afternoon. Whatever the reason, they all soon retired for the night.

CHAPTER XVI.

EVERYTHING has an end, whether we are in happiness, sorrow, trouble or pain; all must cease sometime, for there is an end to all things in this life. Jim's last day of leave had come, but very sudden to him it was.

One day when he went downstairs in the morning for breakfast he found a letter waiting for him. It was a note from the captain, telling him to join the ship at once, as he had heard from the owners, instructing him to set sail for England the day following. It came, as it were, a terrible blow to him and Ethel; alas, the news came as a shock to all.

It was only last night that they had decided to go for a picnic that day. Poor Jim had not even dreamed that he would have to join the ship so soon; for only a week ago the captain had given him a month's extra leave. But, as the captain said in his note, "he was sorry to give such a short notice, but we must obey the owners."

"Yes, duty calls me, and I must obey, dear Ethel," he said, holding her hands and looking dreamily into her eyes, "although, love, it is heart-breaking to leave you. But you must hope, and

trust in me, dear, and some day, God willing, I will come to you, and you will be my very own, my very own dear little wife."

"Jim, dear Jim, I will try to bear it," sobbed she, "but it is hard to part, so hard," she wailed softly.

"It is, love. But I know you will be brave and patient. God will give us happiness in due time," he said, tenderly kissing away her tears.

"Darling, I will, and I will wait even years for you if it should be so, for I know that some day you will come for me, love," and she fondly put her arms around his neck and kissed him.

"Brave child!" he breathed, "God bless you."

The parting blow had come and gone. Farewell partings ceased to be heard, as Jim was hurriedly driven away to the station. The world to him, for a moment, seemed all dark, and it was with great strength of will he controlled himself from weeping aloud. Poor Ethel stood, as the carriage drew away, bravely withholding the tears that filled her eyes, and waving her handkerchief until the cab swiftly turned a corner and was lost from sight.

Arrived at the station, he booked for Port Costa, where he was to join the ship, which was moored to one of the wharves there, in the river Sacramento. She was taken there to be loaded with wheat; then she was to be towed down the river, anchor off 'Frisco for the night and set sail

for England the next day. The crew were all pleased to see him back again, and they gave him a hearty welcome. "Welcome to the *Olympian*," each man shouted and hastily shook hands with him.

Jim gave a short speech. He said—"He was glad to be on board again, and sincerely hoped they would have a much pleasanter voyage than the outward one was, which ended so disastrously to them, robbing us of two of our companions—yes, two of our best ones, which cast a gloom over the rest of our voyage which could not be dispelled."

The men cheered again and again. A great favorite he always was with them, but now they seemed to like him more and more.

Port Costa, is, or was then, a tiny place, too small even to be called a village. Two or three small houses lay near the wharf. You go into one of them and find it a public house, where they sell drinks and groceries and many other kinds of articles. The scenery all around is very pretty. As you follow down the railway track, which runs for a space along the bank of the river, you pass big woods, rich with their foliage in the summer time, small precipices, and farther on extensive prairies whose limits the eye cannot reach. And, as you voyage across the wide river, you may see, to your surprise, a huge tug-boat approaching, a

train snugly resting on board, perhaps crowded with passengers, and while you wait, watching, wondering what is going to happen next, the boat goes alongside the station, and when made fast the train slowly puffs and steams away, until she is seen no more.

That day a tug-boat came and towed them down the river into the harbor, where they once more dropped anchor. Here Jim wrote a farewell letter to Ethel.

"My Dearest Ethel,

"We are at last anchored off 'Frisco, and to-morrow morning we set sail, leaving the dear old place, and you, my love, far behind. But as it is to be so, I am not sorry we are sailing so soon. For how I hate seeing the city lying so peacefully, only as it were a few yards away, knowing that my love is there, and yet, although so near, I cannot see her. Darling! I enclose my photograph, knowing that you would like to have it.

"Well! good-bye, fond love. Be a brave girl, I will soon be with you again.

"I am,

"Your ever loving sweetheart,

"Jim Miles.

"*Olympian*,

"Off San Francisco, Cal."

The next morning just before they sailed a boat came alongside and brought the mail. There were four for Jim, but the one he prized the most was a sweet little note from Ethel, enclosing her photograph. How eagerly he read over the contents, and how often he kissed the photograph over and over again. She said that they were leaving for New York the day he sailed for England. She also sent a lot of loving messages, too sacred for me to quote.

It did not take long to set the sails, and, the anchor being got up, she once more ploughed the waves on her lonely way. When fairly under way, Jim went below to his cabin to read over the rest of his letters, and then to meditate. He read over and over again Ethel's, and then after fondly kissing it, he locked it up in his desk.

He also had a letter from Sis, saying how pleased she would be to see him again, and that his mother and father and all were looking forward with delight to his home-coming. After reading them all, he carefully locked them up in his sea-chest, and with a heavy heart turned into his bunk. Not to sleep, no, far from it; his thoughts wandered far away, with Ethel, until at last a drowsiness came over him, and he fell into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE next morning the men were divided into their usual watch, and the port watch had the first four hours on deck. When Jim awoke that morning he determined to shake away all cowardly feeling. He had his work to do and he meant to do it with all his might. He knew that Ethel would like him to do his duty, and he determined to do it. For her sake he would get on, so that he would be worthier to become her husband. This, then, became his passion henceforth, and it was the secret strength of his life. He felt that he could bear hardships and face the world like a man for her sake; for one day he would be her husband. And so it was the turning point of his life. After he had lost his great friend, Alge, he seemed to be gradually drifting the wrong way—but now his course was steering the other way, keeping to the right. They all noticed it, for he seemed a changed man, cheerful, kind, and always ready to do his duty. And so the days and nights swiftly went by, watch after watch came and went, farther and farther San Francisco was left behind, but nearer and nearer they got to dear old England.

Things went on smoothly, each of them cheerfully doing his work, but not hard work then; now

and again shifting the yards as the wind changed its course, a few blocks to strap, rigging to be repaired, splicing the ropes and making different kinds of tacks, such nautical work as this occupied their time for several weeks.

One day when they were travelling with the trade wind, which was carrying them along at about eight knots, they saw a terrible sight. Far out on the horizon was seen a ship on fire, an awful sight—it was one mass of flames. All hands were gazing at it, but it was too late to give them any assistance, for all at once it suddenly disappeared. Poor fellows, they were all burned to death or drowned.

"How very, very sad," said Mr. Lacky to Jim, who was watching from the poop. "It is a terrible thing, a ship on fire. What terrible agony the poor fellows must have been in. A terrible death," he said sadly. "Yes, Jim, once a ship gets on fire and you cannot extinguish it, you know what it means, death staring you in the face. Then supposing the boats are burned or damaged, you know you are doomed, for there is no back door. And you look and watch the flames leaping up and devouring in their glory all before them, then all around you lies the wide ocean, and you see to your horror two deaths staring you in the face, either to be burned to death or drowned ; yes, it's a fearful thing."

"All are lost," said the captain, scanning the horizon with his telescope. "Not a soul can be seen."

"I wonder what vessel she was?" said the mate. "I reckon she was carrying a cargo of oil, else she would not have burnt up so quickly."

"Yes, that must have been it," said the captain, going below.

The sight had cast a gloom over all hands. No angry waves or cruel rocks had wrecked her—down she went in a mass of flames, down in a quiet, peaceful sea to her grave.

Leaving the awful sight behind they pass on, slowly ploughing the waves. And as one in a dream the men went back to their work, some filled with solemn thoughts, and some with awe, but all hearts melted with the sight. How many vessels are lost with all hands, either by fierce storms, fire or rock, God only knows. And when you think of the perils of the deep, those solemn words come to you, words that you often hear read or sung in church—"They that go down to the sea in ships, . . . see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." Ah! the world as a whole does not know the dangers of the deep, and the single thread, as you may say, that divides the sailor from a nameless ocean grave.

"It's a bad sight, Jim," said Dick huskily.

"Very! And I hope never to see such a one as

that again. It was awful to see her burning, and to be of no use to give any assistance to her!"

"Yes, that was terrible, Jim," said Dick, shaking his head. "And to think how many wives are widows, and children fatherless, wives who are patiently waiting at home, praying at nights maybe for the safe return of their husbands, and sweet little children waiting to welcome their fathers back again."

"A bad omen," muttered an old seaman, passing them on his way to the deck house. "A bad omen."

"He's a queer one," said Dick; "awfully suspicious. I wonder what he has on his mind now?"

"Some nonsense, Dick, I reckon. He's old and silly, but not a bad sort, all the same."

"No, he's not, Jim; seems very kind-hearted. But have you not noticed that he is nearly always by himself, muttering aloud as he paces up and down the deck?"

"True, and I have many times wondered whether he knows what he is talking about all the time. I cannot make out a single word."

"Neither can I, Jim, but he seems to be enjoying himself, for he now and again bursts out laughing."

"He's a strange man, Dick, and if he did not answer when spoken to, which he does quite sanely, one would think that he had gone quite silly through old age."

"Have you heard what Jock, the old prophet, says?" asked Tim, coming up to them.

"No, Tim, said Dick. "What did he foretell?"

Most of the men called Jock "the prophet."

"Just a few minutes ago, Dick, he came into the deck house muttering, 'a bad omen.' 'What's up, old man,' asked Yates. 'A bad omen,' muttered he. And that's all he said. But he has scared most of the men; they thoroughly believe in his prophecies."

"Poor fools!" exclaimed Jim. "Take no notice what he says, that is my advice, Tim."

"No, I do not believe in him, Jim. He's one of the old superstitious sailors, but half crazy, I reckon."

Tim was an ordinary seaman. Though young, being about nineteen or twenty, he was a very strong fellow, tall and broad, and the muscles of his arms were as strong as iron. He spoke in a deep, gruff voice, and always looked you straight in the face when speaking to you. He had been only about four years to sea.

"How sad it was to see that ship on fire, Jim," said he, "and no help to be given to the poor fellows."

"Very, Tim. What a cruel death they suffered!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

As the days went on, so the shadow that was cast over all hands lifted. Time and work had driven away the memory of that awful sight. But now and again, as the light from a candle that is nearly burnt away, flickers and goes out, so it came back to some of them, but only to be driven away with work and glad thoughts—thoughts of getting nearer to dear old England, to see once more those that are dear to them. Once more wives will meet their husbands, and children their fathers. What a happy meeting it will be! Such were the thoughts of all of them at that present moment. Each man's soul had risen with hope and filled with joy. But can it not be so? Imagine yourself, a year or so buffetting the waves, and as you draw nearer to England, nearer to your home, each day surely your hope rises, you are looking forward with excitement for that home-coming day, which looks so near at hand. It may seem near, but you can never rely on a sailing ship. Head winds and storms may delay you for weeks, there is no knowing.

All that day the ship had been drifting help-

lessly about, for not a breath of air stirred. But suddenly during the dogwatch, without any warning whatever, the wind sprang up. And with a mighty sweep and a roar as of thunder it swept down upon them, heading the ship, as if it might have been a small boat, to leeward, so great was the force of the wind that struck her. And the sea, which only a few minutes ago was so calm, then became one mass of spray, as the wind swept down on the water driving the mist and spray before it. Suddenly a deafening noise was heard; between the roar of the wind could be heard the roar as of many guns booming off, as the sails carried away. In the roar and the din the mate's voice was distinctly heard, calling all hands on deck to furl the sail. "Man the buntlines and clewlines," he yelled, "quick, lads, and save the remaining sails." The men responded with a cheer, and with a shout and a yell which was scarcely heard amid the roar of the wind, they clewed away. Clouds of flying foam rose up and covered them, drenching them to the skin. Every minute the sea became more angry and trembled with the terrific wind, which drove before it hither and thither, even like smoke from a funnel, massive clouds of white foam and spray.

But although the sea was so troubled it had not time to rise up in waves. Presently a wild cry rose up, "Stand clear of the mast." But too late—for

with a horrid din the royal mast came thundering on deck. Sick with horror the men turned their eyes toward the spot. A deep groan came from their lips, as they saw one of the men lying senseless on the deck. Jim hurriedly belayed the clew-line he had hold of, and ran to the spot, followed by some of the men. What a sickening sight they saw, for there lay Jock on the deck apparently dead. The mast had crushed him to pieces. Horror stricken, they carried him to the deck house, but nothing could be done for him, because he was dead. Poor fellow! without a minute's warning, hurled into eternity. Sick with the sight, the men left his dead body, and joined the rest of the hands who were busy with the sails. Like magic it spread from one man to the other that Jock was killed. In the roar of the wind and the blinding of the spray, again the mate's voice could be heard, "Clear away the mast." The men, although saddened with the sight and the news, did not lose heart but worked with a will, and as the water foamed over the weather side, streaming down the deck, it washed away the blood of Jock, that had stained the deck when he fell. As suddenly as the cyclone came so it ceased—passing on in its fury, on, on, on, leaving the ship behind as a wreck, passing on in its mad fury to wreak more destruction. And now quietly and peacefully she lay like a log in the water, shattered with the wind. Scraps of sails, ropes and

broken rigging lay strewn about the deck. Such destruction it had wrought. Ah! and one more soul had gone. Poor old Jock! "In the midst of life we are in death," truly. A good old soul he was. For sixty years he had been on the roaming waves, and now he is no more! They laid him on a stretcher and the men gathered round him, as he was carried by two of them to the side of the ship, to see the last of their mate. A pitiful sight it was. Some said he was forewarned of his death, when he muttered, "A bad omen."

A solemn prayer was read over his body, and there in the quiet sea they lowered him into the deep, there to sleep his last deep sleep in the ocean grave.

It was late at night when they buried him, and when the dawn arose a silence had fallen over all hands. They missed their comrade, the kind-hearted old man. And death on board ship seems a terrible thing, no matter who it is. For the ship to a sailor is his world, a little world, and when death carries away their companions it casts sorrow and gloom along their way; causing a dark cloud to be hanging over all hands, a shadow they cannot lift.

The morning sun rose in a cloudless sky and the stillness of the atmosphere was stirred by a slight breeze, which gained strength as the sun rose higher in the sky. All day the men were busy

setting the sails, and bending new ones in the place of those that were carried away. A spar was rigged up in place of the broken royal mast, and in time all sails were set. The wind that sprang up with the sun increased during the day, so that she was sailing along at about eight knots then.

All now over, the men as they finished their work went below. Weary of work and laden with grief, they left the ship which was proudly sailing on in the then peaceful sea, looking as if nothing had happened, for the damage that the cyclone had done was temporarily repaired. All things looked the same as they did a few hours ago, except in one particular, and that which was missing will never be seen again, no never, until the sea gives up her dead.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE next week or two passed quietly on. Driven on with the trade winds, steering on her course, she ploughed day by day through the deep blue water. Sailing with her fair weather sails set, she made on her lonely way, nearer and nearer to the English shore. Then came a day of intense heat, the sun scorching down on the ship, even drying up the water as soon as the men heaved it on deck, while they were swilling her down. Trudging about with naked feet they swilled the water in bucketfuls about, causing a thick steam to rise up in a mist all around them, which looked as if the deck was on fire.

As the day advanced and the sun was just at its fiercest, the cry of land ahead was heard from the man on the look-out. "Land ahead, land ahead," shouted several of the seamen, rushing to the ship's side, all eyes eager to get a glimpse of it.

Yes, land it was, not very clear it looked at first, true—but there was no mistake, no false alarm. Right ahead could be seen a huge misty form, like a white wall of vapor. Still straining their eyes while the ship sped nearer, the misty form seemed to suddenly change into the clear form of land.

What joy! to see land once more, after weeks and weeks of nothing but the sea to look at. One begins to think that you will never see it again, as the weeks go by and still you see nothing but water, until you give up the idea that there is such a thing as land. Passing on, they gradually reached the Isle of Madeira, looking so lonely in the southern sea while she nobly towers above you, casting forth her dark shadow in the pale blue waters. And, as the sun set in the far west, she was suddenly lit up with a bright scarlet color tinted with purple, which gradually turned to red, then faded away. Soon the shades of night fell around, and, as the light faded away, she could be seen no more, and ere morning they had passed and left her far behind.

What solemn thoughts filled Jim's mind as he thought of the time when he last saw her. Then Alge was alive, and all hands were happy, never dreaming of the coming sorrows that were to beset them. Such thoughts passed through his mind, causing a deep sadness to come over him. With aching heart he turned and went into his cabin and threw himself on his bunk.

Poor boy! truly your trials are hard to bear—but one should remember what is done cannot be undone, and all things are for the best. So in his agony he fell asleep, and while he slept he dreamed that Alge in the form of an angel visited him, and

in his pure crystal-like voice, so full of tenderness, sang a verse of his favorite anthem, "O comfort ye," and, as Jim was dreaming thus, he wept in his sleep and suddenly awoke.

He felt mentally stronger as he went on the poop to keep watch. He thought that he had quite got past grieving over the loss of Alge, but yet how painfully it came back to him. So he had, but what brought it back so suddenly was Madeira, remembering the time when he and Alge together were looking at it, and how it looked the same now; such remembrances brought back that bitter grief. And as Jim marched up and down the poop lost in his own thoughts, the mate came and fondly patted him on the shoulder. "Jim, my lad," he said kindly, "time has been very hard to you and all of us, but I think, Jim, we ought to thank God, because it might have been far worse."

"Mr. Lacky," said Jim quietly, with tears creeping into his eyes, "what could have been worse for me? I sometimes feel that I should rather have been washed overboard than Alge. But Mr. Lacky," he said vehemently, "you cannot tell how I loved him; it was cruel, very, very cruel," he said sadly, and a deep shudder passed over his stalwart frame.

"Poor lad!" sorrowfully said the mate, "it is a noble resolve to be willing to lay down your life for your friend. a noble resolve" he muttered partly

to himself and partly aloud. "But Jim, my friend, if fate has been cruel to you, you should not give way to morbid feelings. God has taken him away, and He does all things for the best, hard though they may seem. But believe me, Jim, no harm will come to them that trust in Him."

"Forgive me, Mr. Lacky," he said sorrowfully, "I have been selfish in thinking more about my own sufferings than those of others."

"Nay, Jim, I cannot believe you; your lot has been the hardest to bear, and it is quite natural you should think more of your own sorrows than those of other people. But it has been a trying time to all, and, as one looks back over the past, it must surely bring back sad recollections of our lost ones who were so dear to us, and fill us with gloom. But only a little while longer; then our voyage will end; and taking the voyage on the whole, we have a great deal to be thankful for, for God's goodness to those in peril on the deep," reverently said he.

CHAPTER XX.

It was a wild and black night. The wind was fairly blowing great guns, sweeping the cold rain before it in blinding clouds. All hands were on deck taking in the sails. It was in the evening, after they had sighted "Land's End," when the gale sprang from the east and swept them in its mad fury down the English Channel. Every minute the waves became more angry, now sweeping on deck, then tumbling and rolling over each other as the ship swept on like a frightened deer. The din and the blackness of that awful night the crew never forgot. And true, it is not a pleasant thing to be in one of these gales in the Channel. The men taking in the sails worked with a will, for their spirits were buoyed up in knowing that in a few days more they would be once more on land. Now and again, as the ship rose with the waves, the lights of the different towns they passed on the south coast could be distinctly seen. And while the men clewed up the sails, though beaten with the angry waves that came bounding on deck, they lustily sang chanties, and yelled "We are homeward bound." The gale was so fierce that they had to

take in all the sails, except the lower topsail and lower sails.

Suddenly, "A light on the port bow!" was cried from the man on the lookout, and there could be seen an outward-bounder with all her sails furled except the foresail, which was reefed. She was struggling, tacking down the Channel. It was weary days for them, for the gale was right in their teeth, being a head wind for the outward-bounders and fair for the homeward. And such a gale as this would take weeks to clear the Channel, but only a day or two for the homeward-bounders. "A wild night," said the captain to the men as they went on the poop after they had taken in all sails that were necessary, and nothing could be heard except the howl of the wind and the roar of the water, which now and again came crashing on deck.

"It is a terrible night, Captain!" said the mate, who was by the wheel. All night the wind raged, shrieking like unearthly spirits through the rigging, and howling like a lot of angry beasts. Now and again in this deafening roar could be heard a steamer's blast, and then to windward the sound of a gun was heard faintly from a vessel, no doubt in distress, a ship of some sort perhaps struggling on the rocks.

So on they bound, on, on. At the break of day huge black clouds were swiftly blown across the

sky, and the rain ceased. Presently the sun would peep through the parted clouds, then disappear as the wind swept the clouds over it again, but only for a few moments. As the morning advanced the wind decreased, and they set the upper sails, with the exception of the royals, the captain fearing the wind was yet too strong for them.

On, on, good ship, speed on, only a few more miles and your work will be finished for a time. Then a rest in the docks for a short while, and again pass out in the ocean. By this time the clouds that hung overhead were fast disappearing, and to windward the sky was one mass of blue. Large flocks of sea-gulls were flying about and screeching round and round the ship. Some would hover overhead, and others dart in and out of the water. Presently the sun shone clear in the sky, and the wind gradually died down. They then set the royals.

Passing Dover lighthouse they hoisted the Union Jack and saluted. Then the signals were hoisted up, "*Olympian*, bound to Hull from San Francisco."

Ere long the mate yelled out "About ship!" and the men rushed to their respective stations, and with a shout and a yell they rushed the yards round, heading the ship due north.

When in the North Sea the wind sprang up very suddenly, and increased hourly. All hands were ordered on deck to furl the royals. The

storm arose during the first two hours of the dog-watch, and by eight o'clock it was blowing quite a gale, sweeping down in tremendous force and driving before it the heavy rain. The sea had been very choppy all day and was now roaring, and the waves dashed madly against the ship, shooting sprays of water on board. No sooner had the royals and topgallant sails been furled than the man on the lookout was faintly heard yelling, "A light on the port bow."

"Hull lighthouse," immediately exclaimed the captain, who was on the poop with the mate and Jim.

"Yes, sir," said the mate.

"Jim, go and bring the blue lights here, they are in my cabin," said Mr. Lacky.

"Aye, aye," said Jim, disappearing down the poop ladder, and was soon on the poop with them.

Suddenly the captain roared out "About ship!" and away went the men to their respective stations and hauled the yards round. And while they were doing so Jim and the captain were flashing the blue lights every minute from off the poop.

Like a frightened deer the vessel ran before the wind, which howled and shrieked, bearing the vessel out to sea again, and leaving the lighthouse far behind. As soon as the light had vanished to a small speck again, the captain could be heard yelling, "About ship." All that dreary night the

storm raged, never for one moment ceasing, never altering its awful roar that sounded like the roar of cannons booming out across the darkness, and all that night they constantly went about, the captain striving to keep the light in sight, but not daring to run her too near it in case he ran her on the rocks.

At last the weary night ended, and with the first peep of daylight a small steam tug-boat was seen approaching, and presently four more came following in her wake. All eyes were straining through the blinding rain, watching them coming nearer and nearer. But it was only bit by bit they made headway through the surging sea. Like little heroes they swept on and gained headway through the angry waves, bravely heading towards them. So on they came, fighting their way through those waves that fiercely swept over them, and struggling on till they came within hearing distance.

The captain instantly turned to the men who were watching from the side of the ship, "Are you all ready with the tow-rope?" he yelled.

"Aye, aye," they replied, passing the rope forward to make fast to the tug-boats.

The tugs, which had steamed close up, were now and again buried in the trough of the sea, then to rise up only to be half smothered in surf and flying foam. The men worked like devils trying to make the ropes fast, while the breakers dashed over them.

Clinging to the ropes they struggled on, shouting and yelling, though scarcely heard amid the roar of the water. But presently one mighty roar from the men rose up as the tugs were at last safely made fast. Immediately they slowly steamed off, towing the ship towards the shore. All sails were soon furled, and ere long she was safely towed into dock.

CHAPTER XXI.

MANY days had passed by since the *Olympian* was towed into dock, and to Jim they were days of happiness, peace and rest. One balmy day he again stood on the lawn at Longtown Hall, admiring the flowers and greenery that surrounded him, the same plants and flowers with their sweet fragrance as were there a year ago, when his great friend Alge was with him. Such sad remembrances they brought back to him! Close to his feet old Shot lay panting, now and again snapping at the flies that buzzed around him.

The mild air of spring was scented with the delicate odors from the thousands of flowers, so that a delicious languour filled the atmosphere. Feeling its influence he went across the lawn and made for the seat under the tall pine trees that spread their branches tenderly over it, covered with the spring foliage and glistening in the sun like silver. Faithful Shot followed him to the seat and lay down on the grass by his side, now and again wagging his tail, as Jim fondly patted him.

Presently a light footstep was heard approaching across the lawn, and as Jim looked up a smile crossed his face. Immediately Shot jumped up

and ran, barking with delight. It was Sisie. She had not altered much, but seemed taller and more womanly. She was dressed in a white silk dress, with a broad hat on her head, shading from her face the sun, which flashed on her loose golden hair that rippled with the breeze.

"Sisie," exclaimed Jim, rising for a moment, "this is Paradise here. And is not the air delicious?" he said while he comfortably lounged against the seat.

"It's charming, Jim, but I thought you had gone to church."

"No, Sis, I altered my mind since I saw you yesterday. Such a day as this I could not resist the temptation of staying away."

"Jim," she exclaimed, as she sat down on the seat and looked up into his face, "this used to be Alge's favorite seat, and always when I sit here my thoughts go back to him. Oh! Jim, it always fills me with sadness to think so."

"Poor Sisie!" said Jim tenderly, steadily looking at her. "Yes it does, we all miss him, and poor Shot does too, I know," he said sadly, "and a better friend I never will have again. No, never, Sis."

As he spoke a cold shudder passed over him, for he remembered the promise he had made Alge. He then looked at her wonderingly, and while he did so his features softened, a tender light lit up his eyes as they met hers, which were softly gazing at him, with a look of innocence and love.

The sunshine had fallen on her uplifted face, lighting up her lovely features, casting as it were a hallowed look over her, while her pure innocent eyes met his, so full of sympathy and love. A deep silence reigned, which was only broken by the chant of the village church organ, chanting the hymn, "For those in peril on the sea." As the last notes of the organ died away, Sisie sank farther in the seat, and her face dropped lower, while she tried to hide the tears that filled her eyes.

"Jim," she breathed softly, "when I hear that hymn sung, which is often sung now in church, it always makes me feel so desolate! so lonely! A dark cloud seems to hover over me, shutting out the sunshine of my heart. Yes, Jim, ever since I got your letter of poor Alge's death. Then after that, but only for a time, the cloud lifted. A new hope lit up my heart. I thought of you, Jim, on the lonely waves. And as I pondered over it a great love for you came over me. I always loved you, little as you may have known it, God knows that! but the love grew more and more. You cannot tell how happy I felt, but only for a very short time. Then soon, as you know, I received your letter which cast the cloud over me, damping out the life I clung to, yea, the sunshine out of my life, and now it grows denser and denser." Her voice broke with sorrow.

"Yes Jim, only you are left to me," she pleaded.

"O, Jim, why do you seem so cold? You, and only you, can lift that cloud which envelops me. I have tried to be patient and calmly bear it, but as the days go by you seem to be drifting farther and farther away from me." As she spoke, she shook all over with emotion, and her blue eyes gleamed, making her look like an ancient goddess.

Jim's face grew livid white, as he watched her and listened, large drops of perspiration stood on his face, and it was with great effort of will he controlled his passionate words, and calmly said—"I cannot, Sisie, for my love is already given."

"Forgive me, O forgive me, Jim, I did not know it, indeed I did not," she wailed.

"Dear Sisie, it is not for me to forgive you," he said sorrowfully, catching hold of her hand.

"Sisie, do not grieve so; I will do anything that is in my power to help you, dear child! Let me be your brother," fondly said he. "And I trust this pain I have given you will soon pass away. But I cannot be your husband, because I love someone better. But, dear, as a brother I have always loved you, and always will. Do not grieve over it, Sisie; it pains me to the heart to see you so unhappy."

"Oh Jim, I will try and bear it, but it is hard, it is hard," and as she spoke a tear fell on Jim's hands and he knelt down and tenderly kissed her. When she looked up again he had gone, and she burst into a flood of tears.

Her trials were exceedingly hard to bear, poor girl. She loved Jim with all her heart, and now she was cast away from him for ever. She had hoped that one day she would become his wife, and now she had been told the bitter truth, that he loved another better. What cruel words they seemed to her, crushing out the little hope she held. Now all seemed blacker than ever. The sun had set when she reached home, but the full moon cast a rich silver light through the window, and lit up a white figure kneeling by the bed, half hidden with her golden hair. Her hands were uplifted in the attitude of prayer, and her colorless lips were moving in supplication. Her eyes were filled with tears as she breathed out a fervent prayer, "O God, give me strength to overcome this trouble." And as her head fell in her hands she murmured out, "Not my will, but thine, O God." As she rose, the shadows fell from her countenance, and a look of determined patience and endurance lit up her face. Her heart had softened, and God had heard her prayer. Yes, she had conquered, and the trial that had looked unbearable now, with God's grace, she could bear.

Jim was greatly moved too. He loved the girl very much, but he could not marry her, as she pitifully pleaded, with her loving eyes searching his face, yes! even his whole soul. What loveliness, what tenderness, there was in her pleading! Then

with great effort of will he remembered his love for one who was far over the seas, divided by the wild ocean that roared and tossed between them, there she was patiently waiting for him. "My beloved! My noble Ethel!" and as he thought of her, he overcame the temptation, and gently clasped her hands and unshrinkingly told her of his great love which he had for another, and only she could he marry. After kissing her, he dared not trust himself any longer with her, and it was with heavy heart that he turned away and left her. Before entering the house, he turned round and saw her bent form through the green trees, and with bleeding heart he went slowly indoors, followed by Shot. When he entered his bedroom and had closed the door, he went to his desk, and unlocking it took out a letter that he had received from Ethel two days ago. He tenderly opened it and read the contents over and over again, then kissing it he put it back, and locked it up. And as he knelt down in prayer, the silvery light from the moon lit up his noble features, and folding his hands together he breathed out a prayer for help and forgiveness. Then rising he turned into bed, and fell asleep, dreaming of Ethel.

CHAPTER XXII.

As the days passed cheerfulness and happiness reigned again over Longtown Hall. Jim was as gay as ever, enjoying his furlough to the letter. Riding was his chief delight, and hardly a day passed without seeing him on horseback. Sometimes Sisie would accompany him. She generally rode a large grey mare, while he always took his favorite horse, a fine chestnut.

Although Sisie tried to be cheerful, she never looked really happy. Now and again she had to fight fierce battles with herself, as jealous feelings arose when she thought of the woman that had stolen away Jim's heart.

Some days Jim would be seen fishing along the banks of the river Avon, and other days roaming about the estate with his gun and faithful old Shot, who generally accompanied him wherever he went.

So as the time went on, Sisie gradually overcame those bitter thoughts and a warm, sisterly affection towards Jim sprang up in her heart. Jim noticed it with joy.

One evening Jim and Sisie went out riding together. It had been a glorious day, to be followed

by a spotless evening. The cool wandering air wafted by as they rode through the park, now trotting, then breaking into a canter and gallop. The sun was setting in a clear blue sky, casting a golden light across the hilltops.

"How beautiful the evening is, Jim," exclaimed Sisie, aglow with pleasure, when they had pulled up their horses into a walk, after cantering across the open park.

"Yes, it is lovely," said he softly.

The moon in her first quarter was now struggling feebly to show herself through the pale evening sky, while a few stars spotted about were faintly twinkling. The dark sluggish Avon was winding by, and gradually as the moon became brighter the water was lit up with silvery streaks.

As they rode towards home that glorious evening, Jim reined his horse nearer to Sisie's, and looking into her eyes a faint sigh passed from his lips as he watched the loveliness of her face, which had a noble look, like one that had been wronged, but was patiently bearing the cross.

"Sisie," he said, sadly, "soon I will be going back to sea again. Dear Sisie! I want you to come to an understanding with me. Hard though I may seem to be to you, I know, dear, and God knows, I would not offend you, nor give you any pain. Sisie! how could I pace the deck on board ship, up and down, week after week, month after month,

with the thought which would be constantly coming to me of you, dear, being unhappy because of me? Promise me, that you will be happy, and look upon me as a brother, a friend to help. As a brother I love you, Sis, but it is not my fault I do not love you as you wish. I know, Sis, that you are too noble to wish me to marry anyone that I could not love as I ought to love my wife."

"Jim, forgive me for feeling so hard," she pleaded, "I will try to forget, and return my great love to you as a sister's love. But, Jim, you will never find such great affection again as I offer you. You and only you I could marry, and as it is to be so, then I will never marry, Jim; no, never! But, dear, do not grieve over me when you are away. It is God's will, and He will give me strength and patience to endure it, I am sure. And do not, I beg of you, let any sorrow over me trouble your noble heart, Jim. With a sister's affection I wish you joy in your new love," said she, turning her head towards him, and their eyes met. And the silvery light of the moon lit up her face, which was hallowed with a holy and noble look.

"God bless and comfort you, my brave patient darling," said Jim, and leaning over he caught hold of her hand and reverently kissed it.

We will now go back to the *Olympian*, which, after she had been unloaded, was towed to Cardiff, where they loaded her with a cargo of coal. A

more dirty and filthy cargo you could not wish for. Everything on board, even inside the deck houses, was in a mess. The vessel being one mass of coal dust, there was plenty of work for the crew to do as soon as they joined her, greatly to their disgust. She had been for a few weeks in dry dock, and her sides and keel were thoroughly scraped clean, and the other repairs which were necessary to do, attended to, so that now she began to look in fair condition for the coming voyage. Yokohama was the seaport she was bound to this time.

But, dear reader, it is not my intention to write a description of this voyage, nor of any other. All long sea voyages, on the whole, are the same, or very much so. You meet with similar hardships, storms, losses, and sights, as I have previously related. But although the land you may see as you pass is in quite a different hemisphere from what you saw last voyage, still, seeing it as you do in the distance on the ocean, it has pretty well the same effects to you as the other did. Then there are the same dangers, the same awful perils on the deep, in whatever part of the sea you may be in. We pick up the daily papers, and do we not read of shipwrecks, perhaps of all hands lost, or all saved, but still on the whole we do not realize what dangers there are on the deep, and what hardships a sailor encounters.

It was a totally new crew that sailed with her,

except Jim, who stuck to her until he had passed his second mate's examination. Four years he sailed with her, and during those years he only once saw Ethel. He heard from her often, and she was still waiting for him, never for one moment losing heart. Although months sometimes went by before she heard from him, yet the letters did come, and she could not wish for truer or more loving ones than they were.

It was his last voyage before going in for the examination, when he saw her again. They were bound to Philadelphia, and he saw her there. Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Storey had taken her there on purpose to see him, when they heard he was bound there. What a happy meeting it was! And what a happy time they had! Ethel had not changed much, but what she had was for the best. Passing into womanhood she looked lovelier than ever.

"It is nothing but you she thinks of," said Mrs. Richardson, to Jim, one day. "Not that she has had no suitors, for she has had many, but she refuses them all. You ought to be a happy man, Mr. Miles, to be loved so by such a lovely creature."

"Dear Mrs. Richardson, nobody knows how happy I am but myself, and nobody knows but her how I love her. She's my all. And if anything happened, so that she died—awful to think so—but if anything did, my life would be blighted,

nipped as it were in the bud. And if it was not that I know how nobly she loves me, I would sometimes be very despondent when I am at sea, thinking that some man had taken advantage of me and had carried off my pretty sweetheart."

"You can rest assured, dear, that that won't be the case. For when we were in New York, after we left you, we met a young gentleman whom we had often seen in society, a very respectable, well-to-do young man. He fell in love with her, and we encouraged it, thinking that you would forget all about her, and never see her again. So for her sake we tried to make her forget you, but it was no good. She loved you with her whole heart, she said, and she would trust in you. Then, after some time, she received a letter from you, and we then gave up persuading her of her own folly, as we then thought it."

"My love! my noble Ethel!" exclaimed Jim. "Such love as that I am not worthy of."

"Nay, my dear," said Mrs. Richardson. "I am proud of my grandchild's choice, and I wish you every happiness, and my fondest blessing to you both."

What tender words they were to Ethel. "Dear, kind, loving grandma," thought she. "Yes," she pondered, "I knew Ethel would love him, and now I can rest in peace."

Ah! and what tender loving words they were to

Jim, filling him with happiness that will never be quenched, causing his trials and hardships to become easier to bear. Assuredly it meant much to him to have such passionate love as he had for Ethel, and then to be blessed by her grandma, her guardian.

Our life is so very short in this world, and how much more happiness there would be if we would only try to help each other more than we do, by a kind word put in due season, a kind action, and thought, instead of all working, as it were, against each other, to see who could outpace each other in the mad race for riches!

CHAPTER XXIII.

WE pass on. Time on its ever fleeting wings has sped forward, never in its flight ceasing, never altering its ever monotonous roll, as days and nights, weeks and months and years roll by. To some it may seem speeding on quickly, to others slowly. Ah! how fast to those who are happy, enjoying themselves either in the pleasures of this life, or in good works; but how slowly it drags along to the poor weary ones, depressed with the cares of this world, or perhaps sorrowing for some dear lost one that has departed this life. We all have our sorrows, little or big as they may be, and we all have our pleasures, so that the days and nights seem to have no end; or else they pass on so quickly, month after month rapidly going by, and New Year's Day comes round, we say, it only seems a few months ago since last one. But still, time never alters its pace, never for one moment drags or quickens its ever monotonous roll.

One evening after they had dined, Jim was sitting alone in the smoking-room at Longtown Hall. He had drawn one of the great oak-chairs close to the fire, and with a pipe in his hand, which he had been smoking, was lost in thought. Pleasant ones, I should say, by his appearance, for the light from

the gas above lit up his face, showing his smiling eyes and happy countenance.

The weather outside was wild and stormy. The wind was shrieking and howling through the trees, blowing before it in gusts heavy showers of rain, that pattered against the windows like showers of hail. Such a night as this would cast a gloom over many a happy, contented spirit, as the wind howled in its awful, monotonous roar round the house, creeping in through any crack where it could make way, tearing up young plants, and strewing the ground with branches of all descriptions. Mr. and Mrs. Miles had gone to bed, not to sleep, no, far from it, for the roar outside was terrific, and every minute Mrs. Miles, who was scared nearly to death, expected the house to come down, as the wind howled and roared, rattling the doors and windows, and even rocking the house. For never had there been known such a storm, and such mischief done by one in the quiet village of Longtown.

But Jim, as he sat slowly smoking, did not heed it, for his mind had wandered back to the past, for now he was no longer an apprentice, but second mate. Yes, he had passed that examination, and had obtained that certificate. As he thought over the past, when Alge, his ever beloved friend, was alive, those thoughts were always sacred to him. Now his mind wanders on, and the remembrance of Ethel rises before his eyes, and such remem-

brances were ever dear to him ; he thinks that soon he will be able to claim her, soon she will be his wife. His mind then wanders to her in New York, to her who was waiting for him, and he smiled as he thought that perhaps even now she would have heard of his success. "Ah! how pleased my beloved will be," he mused. And so she was, none but her could tell what joy the news was to her. "My beloved! my ever dear, clever boy!" she murmured, with her beautiful eyes filled with tears for very joy. As Jim woke up from these musings, he listened to the continuous roaring of the wind, howling and raging louder than ever, as the night advanced. Solemn thoughts filled his mind as he thought of the poor sailors tossing on the waves.

Suddenly there was a crashing roar outside, and, startled, he went to the window to see what it was, but the darkness outside was great, and he could see nothing except the reflection in the window of the gas light, and his own face looking at him from the dark and black void.

A heavy step, a tug at the door, and in came Mr. Miles, looking very white and haggard. With him came also a sudden, strong rush of wind that filled the room, for one of the landing windows was broken by the wind, and it came blowing in with fearful force.

Jim started, turned round.

"It's a fearful night," said Mr. Miles, as he sat down in a chair, and drew it up close to the fire,

which hardly could be called one now, having nearly burned itself out.

"Terrible, father."

"Yes, and your mother is so nervous and upset, poor woman. When there is a storm she always thinks of you tossed on the waves, and she gets low spirited until it is over."

"Poor mother!" sadly said Jim, and a sudden painful expression passed over his face. Perhaps he thought he was the cause of her sorrows, and then he thought of Alge.

Mr. Miles looked tenderly at him, and seemed to read his thoughts. "My son," said he quietly, laying his hand fondly on his shoulder, "it is only because she loves you so."

"I know it, dear father."

Mr. Miles was very fond and very proud of his son. He always thought that nobody ever had a better or nobler son than Jim was. He may not have been far wrong, I think not. And if ever a son loved and honored his father with his whole soul, Jim loved and honored his. So he did his mother, and blessed are they that do likewise.

They sat for a long time talking, and then, as it was getting late, being past two o'clock, Mr. Miles proposed going to bed. They said good-night and retired. Jim lay awake for some time tossing restlessly about, haunted by many sorrows and regrets, and many dear remembrances.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHEN the dawn arose a great silence had fallen after that fearful night. The storm had died down, but as the wind ceased it was followed by a heavy downpour of rain and sleet, which lasted for a few hours; but presently the sky broke and the sun shone clear through the rain clouds and swept them away by her fierce rays.

Jim was late astir that morning, and when he went down stairs he found a letter waiting for him, a short letter from Sis. It read thus:

"DEAREST JIM,—I have just heard of your success in passing the second mate's examination. How proud I am, dear boy, of you; how I glory in it. Ah, dear Jim, I knew you, so good, so noble, would soon rise in your profession, and I look forward to further fame, which I am confident you will obtain. For I am sure such a nature as yours will not stop there, nor lose your head now, with the enjoyment which will sure to be yours, but will plod on, endeavoring to rise more and more until you reach the top.

"To God I commend you, dear boy, He who has taken away our beloved Alge to his rest.

"Your affectionate friend and sister,

"SIS."

Jim fondly put the letter in his pocket and pondered over it. And as he ate his breakfast many thoughts came clouding over him. He thought over his life from childhood upwards, when he first saw Sis, and how always she had helped him, cheering him when in trouble, and now how she was the same, helping him onward like his good angel, and cherishing him with her sisterly affection. How noble it was of her, who loved him with a passionate love, only to know that it could not be returned, for he was never to be hers, to bravely bear her cross, throwing that sacred love into a sisterly affection, bestowing her passionate tenderness in another way.

After he had finished breakfast he took a stroll through the park. The sun was now shining through a perfect blue sky. How balmy the air felt, as a cool gentle breeze wafted by, filling the atmosphere with delicious scents. But what havoc, what destruction, had been caused by last night's storm. Large trees were uprooted, and shrubs and branches of all sizes were strewed about.

It was with a lighter heart Jim wandered aimlessly along now, leaving the old Hall with its massive tower soaring high up in the air and towering above the trees that clustered around it far in the distance. Inspired with noble thoughts he wandered on, until to his surprise he suddenly came upon Sis, who was leaning against the wooden footbridge that stretched across the river.

She was gazing thoughtlessly into the stream, which had overflowed its banks on account of the heavy rains, and was swiftly flowing in a surging torrent onwards, carrying before it sticks, branches and everything it could lay hold of, and all were madly swept on by the surging swell. It was a very strange occurrence for the sluggish Avon to be so disturbed. "Why, Sisie, I am so pleased to see you," exclaimed Jim.

Startled, she looked around, for she had not heard his approaching footsteps on account of the torrent's deafening roar.

"Jim, how you startled me. I was just thinking of the surging river, studded with its little breakers, and how it has risen since last night's storm, and if this little narrow river can rise and rage, how awful it must have been at sea, and what mischief there must have been done. Ah, and how many ships have gone down with all hands in last night's gale, or how many have been laboring in great distress, perhaps to keep off the shore and cruel rocks. Ah! I pity the poor sailors in such a night as the last."

"So much like you, Sisie," said Jim tenderly; "always thinking of others, trying to lighten their burdens; so good, so true, my dear sister."

"No, no, Jim, you forget," she said, lowering her sweet face.

"Forget nothing, my sweet sister," passionately said he.

"Ethel," she whispered.

"Sisie, never. She's my love, my wife, my all, and you are my good angel, my sister, friend and help."

A slight flush stole over her face, and she sadly smiled. "Dear Ethel," she said tenderly. "I am sure I will love her. I am longing to see her, Jim. I often picture to myself what she is like. A noble, lovely girl rises up before me."

"She is, Sisie," he said passionately. "And I shall bring her over here soon. I am sure you will love her, Sisie; and she will love you. Bless her!"

"When do you intend marrying?" she asked, wistfully glancing up, with her beautiful eyes looking tenderly at him.

"We have not decided yet, Sis. Mother and father wish her to come here so that we can be married in this church, and I have written to her and to Mrs. Richardson about it."

"Oh! I do hope she will."

"My dear Sisie, so do I. For I should like to be married where I have been brought up, the church I have attended since I was a little child. Ah, what remembrances are connected with it so dear to me!"

"When will you be going back to sea again, brother?" asked she; "as a second mate, I mean."

"Very soon, Sisie. But not with a sailing ship this time, but a steamer, one of the P. & O. liners."

"How nice," she said, with her eyes filling with tears. "And soon you will be too proud to know me, when my clever boy becomes a captain of one of those large steamers."

"Sisie," said Jim, putting his hand in hers, "if I am successful it is through you, my sister."

"Oh Jim—Ethel!"

"Yes, love, and through her; but you I have known since I was a silly little boy, who would have strayed away, but you have safely guided me on, my solace, my resource. And when I think how you once loved me with such a love, and when I told you I loved someone else, I think I have been so cruel to you; and then how nobly you bore it. Anyone but you, my angel, would have turned that love into hatred."

"Jim!" a sorrowful shadow crossed her face, "it was your noble pleading, your brotherly love, that saved me from being a wretch. And God knows how grateful I am to you for helping me. And I shall always love you as a sister, always Jim, always!"

"May God bless you, my noble darling."

It was beginning to get late, so Jim asked her whether she would go home with him and stay to dinner. She accepted, and they went home together. Mr. and Mrs. Miles were very pleased to see her. They loved her dearly, and so she loved them. After dinner they retired to the

drawing-room, and Sisie, who was very fond of music, sang and played. And what music! what a voice! so firm, so sweet, it filled one's very soul with soothing awe, and roused up fervent emotions and endeavors.

"It reminds me of heaven," said Jim dreamiiy, after the last notes had died away.

Sisie smiled and began to play softly on.

"You laugh at my fancies, Sisie."

"No! I was only thinking that heaven was far, far better than I can represent it."

"That is because you are so noble," said he. But she slowly shook her head, and changing the music, for she was then playing a part of the "Messiah," she took up the "Geisha," which was lying by, and played parts of that.

"I do adore that music, Sisie," said Mrs. Miles.

"So do I, dear," said she, looking round, "and I think the song, 'Star of my Soul,' is so pretty."

"Very!" said Jim, bending over her, as he was turning over the leaves of the music.

Sisie looked at him and smiled.

So that happy day came to the close, and as the evening advanced, she wished them good-night and went home accompanied by Jim. How bright the moon was. How the stars twinkled. How she with her arm in his gently talked to him of Ethel, who, far away, was waiting for him.

CHAPTER XXV.

SEVERAL months had gone by. Jim had been to sea and was back again. But a heavy sadness had fallen upon him. Several weeks before he got home, when he was on the deep, happy in the sweet thoughts of his dear Ethel, and never once dreaming of the awful blow that was waiting for him, a cablegram was sent by Mrs. Richardson, saying that Ethel had been taken seriously ill, and calling him over to New York, as she was not expected to live. Then a week afterwards another was sent, saying how she had passed peacefully away.

Poor Jim! how gently they tried to break the news to him, and what anguish was written on his face when he grasped the bitter, bitter truth. The awful blow staggered him for a time, and then for many days and many weary nights he lay moaning in bed, on the verge of brain fever.

How desolate! how forlorn he felt. He who had arrived in England feeling so happy, so joyful, for Ethel was to come over, and they were to be married in that little church before he went back to sea again, and now—oh, cruel fate!

Slowly those dark, gloomy days dragged on.

With gentle nursing he gradually began to get better. But what sorrow had taken the place of happiness, a sorrow that had nearly been his death-blow. After he was out of danger and when the doctor said he could see friends if he wished, it was after that, when one day Sisie came. Like a good angel she ministered unto him, sorrowing with his sorrow, and helping to lighten his awful trial. How painful it was to see them. He now so feeble, whose heart and spirit were nearly shattered, and she, sitting by his bed, holding his hands and soothing him with comforting words, with her face so full of pity and tender grief. So the weary days dragged on, and then little by little he began to regain his strength, so that, but only at first for a few hours in the day, the doctor allowed him to go into the drawing-room; then Sisie would play the melodies on the piano that he was so fond of. Shot, who was getting very old now, used to whine outside the door until he was let in, and then he would creep slowly up to Jim and affectionately lick his hands, and then lie down on the mat, gazing with dim eyes at him and feebly wagging his fat stump of a tail.

"Poor Shot!" said Jim quietly. "You won't live much longer I fear."

"Do you think so, dear?" said Sisie, still playing.

"No darling, he may live a few weeks or a few more months, but I doubt if he will last another year."

"Poor old Shot," said Sisie so tenderly, while her eyes filled with tears. "He has been a faithful dog."

"Are you feeling better, love?" asked Mrs. Miles, as she came in the room and brought him a cup of tea and some buttered toast.

"Yes, mother." And a faint smile crowned his face, but only for a moment.

"We will soon have you quite well again, love," said she cheerfully, "Won't we, Sisie?"

"Very soon," said she. But nevertheless she thought it would be a very long time before he would be himself again, the cheerful, happy and bright boy.

"Ah! Sisie," said he when his mother had left them, "if it was not through you I would surely have died. But perhaps it would have been better if I had," said he sadly, looking at her.

"No, dear Jim, do not say that. Think how you are getting on, still look upwards, and persevere, never for one minute falter and lose courage, for surely you will then have your reward."

Jim slowly shook his head but said nothing. But he thought how tender, how good she was, and when the last day comes surely those words, so sacred, will be said to her, "Well done."

Sisie tenderly looked at him, and then, turning around, began to play the music from the "Elijah." What soothing effect it had on him, bringing back tender remembrances of days long past.

So another week went by, and in a week or two he was strong enough to go out of doors. There in the sunshine you would see him and Sisie, and sometimes his mother and father with him, sitting in the garden, or quietly strolling through the park. But he never looked happy, although his color had come back again and people who were not very intimate with him would think he looked quite himself again, still there was a sadness that had taken the place of the bright, happy look. One day they were all together, sitting in his favorite garden seat, shaded with the large pine trees, which tenderly spread their branches covered with thick foliage over it, sheltering them from the fierce rays of the midsummer sun. A cooling breeze was wafted by, rustling the leaves above, and filling the atmosphere with sweet, fragrant smells.

"Mother!" said Jim, after they had been silent for some time.

"Yes, love."

"I have been thinking that I ought to go to sea again soon."

"Very well, love, when you are quite strong enough."

"But what do you say about it, dear Sisie?" asked he.

Tears filled her eyes, but she hastily wiped them away. She thought how hard it would be to part with him, but it was for his good to go. "When my

dear boy is quite well again," she answered, "then he can go."

"God bless you, Sisie, I will go then."

Mrs. Miles inwardly sighed. She thought of that which had often filled her mind lately, that how happy she would be, and how when on her deathbed she would lie in peace if her son, whom she doted on, would ever marry Sis. She looked thoughtfully at her and then at Jim, and thought that would never be. And little did she know that Sis had offered her love years ago, and had been rejected on account of Jim's love for Ethel.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LONGTOWN HALL was all astir again, for Jim was going back to sea. Feeling strong and fit, he had enlisted as second mate on one of the P. & O. liners, but although he felt well he was still sad, and thought then that he would never be happy again. He did, however, not feel so dejected, so forlorn now, as he had done, thanks to Sisie's goodness and patient tact. She with her tender sympathy and kind words had roused his feelings, changing those bitter thoughts, that awful despair that had set in within him, into a purer tone of mind, so that the curtain before his eyes seemed to lift, carrying away before it his despondency and melancholy thoughts, and leaving in its place a nobler and purer frame of mind.

Mrs. Miles was packing his sea-chest, a thing that she was very fond of doing. For she said that she always felt in a contented state of mind after she had done it, knowing that everything was packed, and if anybody else did it, even Jim, she would be in a constant fidget, thinking that something, most likely that which he would need the most, would be sure to have been left out. And

then you would see her, with the help of her servant, folding his clothes and putting them snugly in the box, and filling it with every little thing that she thought would come in useful to him on his lonely way.

In the meantime Jim and Sisie were out riding on their horses. They galloped through the park, along the long stretch of ragged country, up and down their hillocks and hollows, over streams and hedges, till they pulled up by the river and trotted slowly along its sunny banks, that led them through bright green meadowland and beautiful tinted woods thick with its autumnal foliage. A keen, bracing breeze was blowing from the east, filling the atmosphere with stimulating effects and sending a healthy glow vibrating through and through one's whole being.

For a long time they rode on in silence, absorbed in their own reflections. Poor Sisie was feeling very sad over the thought of Jim's going away. She knew how she would miss him, but it is for his good that he should go, she thought. As she glanced half sadly, half wonderingly at him, there came a quick, sudden change over her, a swift revelation that shook her frame with emotion. She had never thought of it till now, how that now he was free, he might change his great brotherly love he had for her into another love, that which she would readily give him. But she determined to bear her

burden patiently, no matter how sad, how lonely it made her, never for one moment betraying her thoughts to him, but always loving him with a sisterly affection, until he would love her with another love. But that, thought she, may never be.

Jim was thinking similarly as he now and again glanced at her lovely face, which was lit up with a bright and tender expression, that to him seemed beautified with an immortal loveliness. His mind wandered back to the time when she told her love to him, thoughts which had never entered his mind, since he had lost his dear Ethel. Now they came surging before him, bewildering him, causing, but only for a time, a distressful shadow to cross over his face, and then, as it were, the scales from before his eyes fell, and he saw clearly how that now he might love her with another love, that which she had once offered him. What awakening thoughts were these? Would she give back that love that he had cast away? Could she love him now after the great sacrifice she must have made to be his sister only? All these he asked himself.

"Poor Sisie! poor child!" he said half aloud and half to himself.

A slight flush rose to her face, as she looked with her blue eyes, so like Ethel's, wonderingly into his face, and their eyes met.

"Oh, why have I been so ungrateful, why have I been so blind, my love," said he, with trembling lips, and that word spoke volumes.

Her eyes filled, and tears springing in them flowed freely.

"Sisie! my guide, my comforter, my all. Ah! when I loved Ethel," he breathed, "even then, as you know, darling, I always relied on your sympathy, and God knows I could not have done without it."

"Jim! do not say that," she cried, still weeping, but for joy.

"And now, Sisie, I have lost her," he said, sorrowfully, with bowed head, "will you, dearest—will you take her place? Not that I am worthy of your love, far from it; but, dear, I love you. Do not say nay, for without you I cannot live."

"Oh! Jim, Jim," she sobbed. "God knows I have loved you all my life."

And then, as the glorious tints of early dawn fade away, we see them riding towards home, both happy, she with her sweet blue eyes raised towards his, shining, through tears, for very joy.

And Jim in his happiness remembered the promise he made Alge, "Promise me, Jim, if anything happens to me, that you will marry Sis." "Thank God," he breathed, "thank God that sacred promise will be fulfilled, Alge."

It was years after they were married when he told Sisie about the promise he had made to his dear friend Alge, when on the deep.