

TOM TRUEMAN, THE SAILOR;

OR,

LIFE AT SEA IN A MERCHANT VESSEL.



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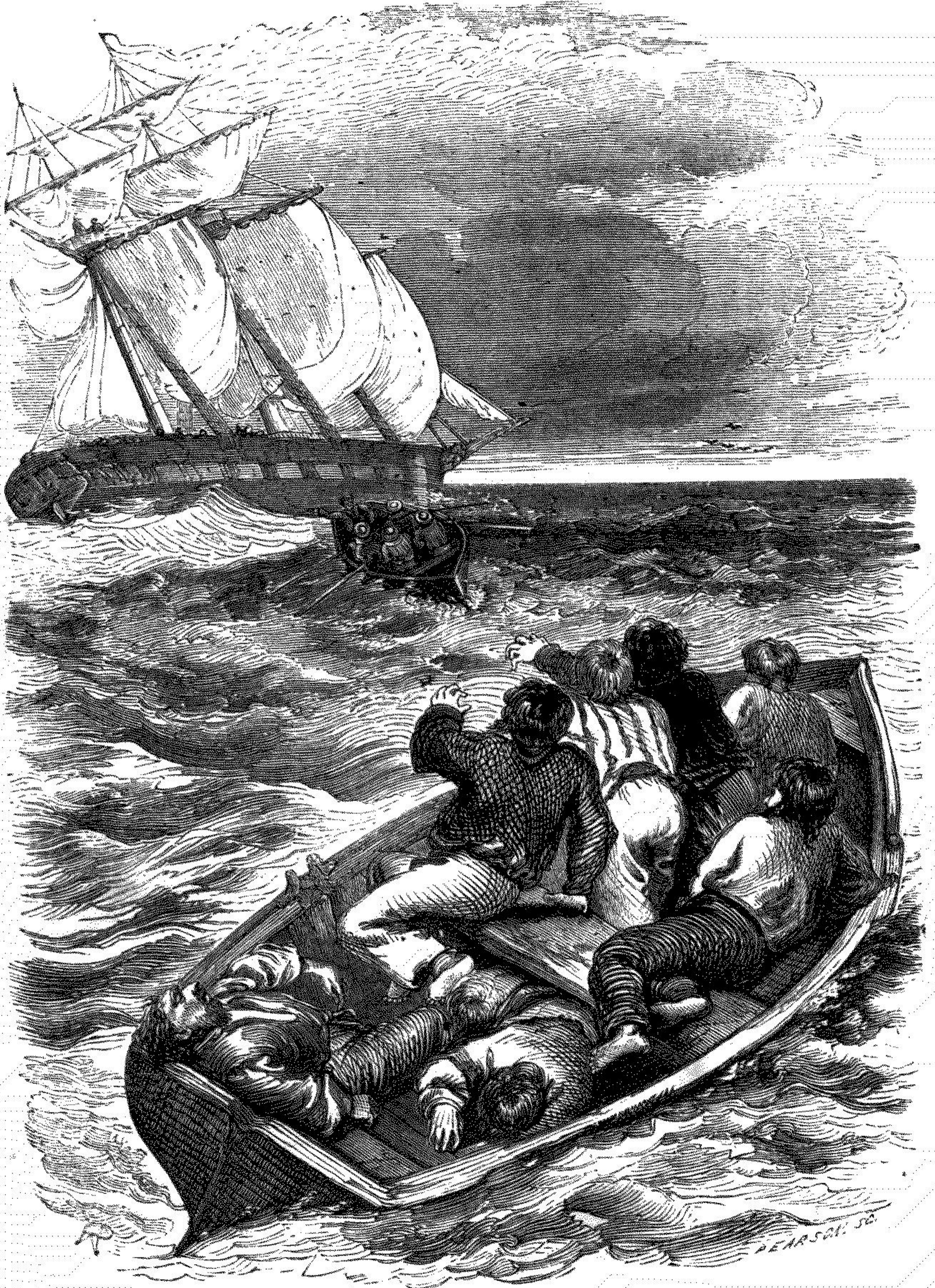
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TOM TRUEMAN, THE SAILOR;

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CHAPTER I.

IT was a sad, sad day for poor mother and all of us, when father was brought home on a hurdle, the life crushed out of him by a tree which fell right down where he stood.

He never spoke again. We lived in Dorsetshire, not far from the town of Poole. Father was a day labourer; he had never saved a sixpence. His club buried him, and we were left to live as we could, or to go to the workhouse. Mother said that she would never do that, and with God's help she'd try to feed and clothe us. She found it very hard work though.

There were ten of us. Jane, who was sixteen, and just going into service, was the eldest, and little Bill, who was in arms, was the youngest. I was the fourth child.

Farmer Denn took Sam, who was a strong lad, and Jack went to Mr. Sweet, the grocer in the village, who wanted an errand boy. Jane got a place as maid-of-all-work—and very hard work it was.

was the only one besides who had the chance of gaining a penny, except little Ben, and as he was a sharp chap, he used to be set to scare away the birds, with a clapper in his hands, and such-like work ; but to be sure he did not make much.

So mother had six children to feed and clothe, we may say, and all of us more or less to clothe, for even sister Jane could not do without help.

When father was alive we elder ones went to school ; so I knew about the sea, and a few things in foreign parts, which I had read of in books. One evening when Sam and Jack came home, I said to them, “ This will never do ; mother mustn’t work as she does, it will kill her. I’ve made up my mind to go to sea. May be I shall be able to make money, and send her home some. I’ve read of lands where people, just with a spade and pick, dig up gold as we should potatoes. I’ll see what I can do.”

Sam, who was just a quiet, steady lad, and did his tasks as well as any boy at school, laughed, and said that I might dig a long time before I should get gold enough to fill my pocket.

Still I thought and thought over the matter, till at last I told mother that I had made up my mind to go to sea, and hoped soon she would have one mouth less to feed.

She looked very sad when she heard me say this, but I told her not to grieve, and that I would soon be back, and that it would be all for the best.

That’s what father used to say, “ It’s all for the best,—God knows what’s best for us.” I’ve stuck to

the same ever since. Blow high or blow low, when the ship has been driven by the wind towards the rocks, and all on board have thought we were going to be lost, I've said the same, "Trust in God, He knows what is best for us." What's more, I've always found it come true.

Mother saw things in the same way at last, and gave me her blessing, and told me to go into Poole and see what I could do for myself.

I found a number of vessels alongside the quays on the banks of the river. I went on board one and then another and another, but the men I saw laughed at me. Some said that boys were more trouble than use, that they were always in the way when they were not wanted, and out of it when they were wanted, and that I had not a chance of being taken. At last I thought I must go back to mother and see if Farmer Denn can give me work. I had got to the very end of the quay, and was turning back when I met a gentleman, whom I had seen several times as I was coming on shore from the vessels. He asked me in a kind voice what I was looking for. I told him.

"Come in here, and we will see what can be done for you, my lad," he said.

He took me into an office or sort of shop, full of all sorts of ship's stores. In it were seated three or four men, who were, I found, captains of vessels. My new friend having talked to them about me, one of them asked, "Would you like to go to sea with me, boy?"

“ Yes, sir,” said I, for I liked the look of his face.

“ You don’t ask who I am, nor where I am going,” he said.

“ For that I don’t care, sir ; but I think you are a good man, and will be a kind master,” I answered boldly.

“ Ah, well ; you must not be too sure of that,” said the captain. “ I do not sail from here, but from a place on the other side of England, called Liverpool, and I am going a long, long voyage, to last two or three years, may be.”

I said that I should like that, because I should then be a good sailor before I came back again. He then told me that Liverpool, next to London, is the largest place for trade in England, and that thousands and thousands of vessels sail from it every year to all parts of the world. He was going back there in a few days, where his ship was getting ready for a voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and very likely round the world.

The Pacific, he told me, is a very large spread of water on the other side of America, many thousands of miles long and wide. First we should have to cross the Atlantic ocean, off there where the sun sets. That is also many thousands of miles long and wide. On the farther side is America. We should have to go round the south point of America, called Cape Horn, to get into the Pacific. The Pacific is full of islands, generally a number of small ones together, then a wide open space, and then more islands. A ship may sail on, though, for days together and not see land.

Some of these islands are very low, only just above the water, and are made of coral, and others have high mountains in them. Some of these throw up fire and ashes, and are called volcanoes.

I was much taken with all Captain Bolton told me (for that was the gentleman's name), and as he was not to leave Poole for two days, there was time for me to go back and see mother and brothers and sisters.

Mother and the rest cried very much when they found I was really going, but when she heard what a nice man Captain Bolton was, she cheered up a bit. One lady sent her three shirts for me, and another a pair of shoes, and Farmer Denn, who had a son who was lost overboard at sea, sent me a whole suit of the lad's clothes. People were very kind.

To my mind there are a good many kind people in the world, if we did but know where to find them.

I won't tell about the leave-taking. I don't like, even now, to think about it.

Captain Bolton took me with him round in a brig to Liverpool. The little vessel was tossed and tumbled about, and as I had nothing to do except to think of myself, I was very sick. If I could have left the ship and gone back home when I once got on shore, I would have done so. Captain Bolton told me that I was only getting my inside to rights, and that I should think nothing of such work when I had been a few weeks at sea.

Ships are named after people and all sort of things. Captain Bolton's ship was called the *Rose*. She had

three masts, and a crew of thirty men, with six big guns, for we were going to some curious, out-of-the-way places, and might have to fight the savages, I was told. She had three mates besides the captain, and another officer called a boatswain, who had a good deal to do with managing the men. As soon as I got on board, the captain told me to go to him, and that he would look after me. His name was Alder.

The ship was nearly ready for sea, with most of her cargo on board, so that we had not long to wait till we bid good-bye to Old England.

I wish that I could make those who have never seen a ship understand what one is like. Sailors call a ship she, and often speak of her as the old girl. Our ship was built of wood, longer than most houses, and covered in by what we call a deck. At the fore end there was a place for the crew to live in, called the fore-peak, and at the after-end rooms or cabins for the captain and officers. All the rest of the ship was filled with cargo and stores. To the masts were hung across spars, or poles, as big as large larches, and on these were stretched the sails, made of stout canvas. It required the strength of all the crew to hoist one of these yards, and that of eight or ten men to roll up, or furl, one of the larger sails. Then there were so many ropes to keep up the masts, and so many more to haul the sails here and there, that I thought I should never learn their names or their uses.

From the day the captain put me under charge of

Mr. Alder, he seemed never so much as even to look at me, but I know that he really did not forget me.

I had learned something about sea-life, going round from Poole to Liverpool, so that I was not quite raw when I went on board the *Rose*. There were two other boys who had never before been on board ship, and as I had been a week at sea they looked on me as an old sailor. The rest of the crew did not though, and I was told to run here and there and everywhere by any man who wanted a job done for him. Still I had no cause to complain. The captain was strict but just, made each man do his duty, and the ship was thus kept in good order. I set to work from the first to learn my duty, and found both Mr. Alder and many of the men ready to teach me. In a short time I went aloft, that is climbed up the masts, and lay out on the yards to reef sails as well as many older seamen. At first it seemed a fearful thing to be high up on the yards with only a rope to hold on by, or may be only my elbows, when my hands were wanted and to look down and see only the hard deck and the foaming water, and to know that if I fell on the deck I should have my brains knocked out, or into the water that I should be drowned, for at that time I could not swim. Climbing the highest tree you ever saw is nothing to it, for a tree is steady, and there are branches above and below, and if you fall you may drop on the soft ground. Still I did not think very much about it, and soon it was just the same to me, whether I was on deck or aloft.

No man can be idle on board ship, and if a man

thinks that he can sit on a cask all day at sea, kicking his heels against it, he will soon find out his mistake. There is always work to be done about the masts or spars or rigging, while there is no end of ropeyarn to be spun at all odd hours.

The two boys I have spoken of were Toby Potts and Bill Sniggs. Toby was a sharp little chap, Bill a big, stupid fellow, the butt of the crew. Toby made them laugh by his fun, while they laughed at Bill for his stupid mistakes. Bill was stronger than either Toby or me, and could thrash us both together, so that we did not often play him tricks. When we did, the men used to stand our friends against Bill.

Sometimes all three of us used to be sent aloft to furl the royals, which are the highest sails on the masts.

One evening there was the cry of "All hands shorten sail," which means all the sailors are to help take in the sails. Each man has his proper post, so that all know where to go. We three boys ran up the rigging, up we went in the gloom of coming night, the wind whistling, the sea roaring, the ship pitching. We had rope ladders, shrouds they are called, to help us for most of the way. We could just make out the men hanging on the yards below as we lay out on our yard. As Bill was a strong chap we soon had the sail rolled up and ready to send on deck. Toby and I had done our work, when Bill, who was clinging round the mast, caught hold of us both.

"Now, lads, I'm going to have my revenge. You

promise never to chaff me again, or I'll let you both drop down on deck, or into the sea, may be. In either case you'll be killed, and no one will know it."

His voice did not sound as if he was in joke.

"Which is to go first," I asked.

"You'll let us say our prayers, Bill," said Toby, who always had a word to say.

"Will you chaff me?" cried Bill, in a fierce voice.

"Of course we will—only let us go," said Toby.

Bill thought that Toby meant that he would not chaff him, for he let us both go, and we lost no time in slipping down the rigging.

This was the beginning of a storm, the first I had been in.

I did not think that any thing made by man's hands could have stuck together as the big ship did, tossed and tumbled about as she was.

We told no one of what Bill had said, but we did not play him any more tricks for some time to come.

CHAPTER II.

You all know what a storm on shore is when it seems as if the windows must be blown in, or the roof taken off, when the walls shake, and big trees are torn up by the roots and thrown down. At sea the wind blows up the water into large hills with foaming tops, which seem to rise and leap on every side, or to come rolling on towards the ship as if

they would knock her to pieces, or drive her under them. Instead, she mounts up the hills of water, and a deep valley is seen far below her.

All sail was taken in, and our big ship ran before the wind, tossed about as if she were a mere wash-tub. Above our heads were the dark driving clouds, on every side the rolling, foaming, roaring waves. Not another sail did we see, while the nearest land, we knew, was hundreds of miles away. Often and often I thought that the waves would catch us, and send us all to the bottom. Then I remembered what father used to say, "Trust in God; He knows what is best for us. If he thinks that it is best for us all to be drowned, His will be done." So when I was ordered to turn in, I went into the little narrow cupboard sort of place, which was my berth, and slept as soundly as if the ship was in harbour. Our crew was divided into two watches, that is to say, one half of us were on deck at one time, and one half at another, except when all hands were called. When it was again my watch on deck, I found the ship flying on as before, with the same dark sky above and tossing waves around me. On she drove, rolling from side to side, and pitching into the seas as if she was going down under them. I could not stand on the deck for a moment without holding on to a rope or the bulwarks. Still I liked to watch the big, dark, green waves, as they rose and tumbled about. Even the old sailors could do very little, and it was hard work for the cook to keep the pots on the fire to cook our food.

Things had got somewhat worse when Toby crawled up to me.

“I say, Tom, don't you think that we be all going to be drowned?” he asked, his teeth chattering with fear and cold.

“I hope not, but I do not like the look of matters,” I answered.

“No, they are very bad, depend on it,” he said. “I heard some of the men telling Bill Sniggs that he'd better repent of his sins, for that may be in a few hours he wouldn't have much chance.”

“Perhaps they were only joking him,” said I.

“Oh no, they looked too grave for that,” said Toby. “It's very awful.”

While we were speaking a fierce squall struck the ship. There was a loud crash, and a cry of “Stand from under.” And down came the fore-topmast and all its rigging; the ropes flying about our heads, and the spars nearly striking us. I thought that it was all over with us, and looked to see if Toby had been carried away, but there he stood clearing himself, as I was doing, from the ropes.

The men, led by the mates, had work enough to clear the wreck of the masts, and to get the spars stowed away. I should have thought that we were in a bad state, but the officers and men took matters very coolly, so I hoped that all was right.

Not long after this a ship was seen ahead. They said that she was a large ship with some of her masts gone, and that a flag was flying which showed that she was in distress—that is, in a bad way—like to sink.

We soon drove down to her. There she lay in the trough of the sea. I heard Mr. Alder say that she was twice as big as we were, that there were soldiers on board with their wives and children, but that we could give her no help. As we drew near, we saw a number of men at the pumps, working away for their lives. Some fifty soldiers or more stood ready drawn up to take their places. There were many more people on deck. They stretched out their hands as they saw us come near. It made my heart bleed to think that we could give them no help, but if we had tried to lower a boat, our own people would have been lost.

For the first time I saw some of our men change colour. They had good reason to do so, for it seemed as if we should drive right against the ship and send her to the bottom and ourselves also. As it was, we passed so near that we could see the look of fear in the faces of the people, and could hear their piteous cries.

She had not a boat remaining, and had a raft been formed, the people would have been swept off in that raging sea.

No, there was no hope for a single being on board. Still they might live on in that state for hours.

I was thinking how sad it was for them when I heard a cry, and saw on a sudden the big ship lift up her bows out of the water. The people rushed forward; many were caught by the sea and swept away. It mattered little even for those who gained the fore-castle,—down, down went the ship; and then I rubbed

my eyes. The tops of her masts were seen above the waves; they too sunk, and for some minutes there was not a sign of her left. In those few short moments all the men and women and children who were on board had lost their lives, and were called to stand before God.

Here and there a spar, or a plank, or a hencoop, or grating floated up, but not one person could we see.

On we flew. We could have given no help; none was wanted.

“Many a tall ship has gone down in the same way when no one has been near to see it, many another will thus go down,” said Mr. Alder, who was standing near me. “It should teach us sailors to be ready to go up to God at a moment’s call; ay, and landsmen too, for who knows who may next be called.”

I often after that thought of Mr. Alder’s words.

The storm lasted six days. After that we got light winds, and soon crossed what sailors call the line. Not that there is any line or mark on the earth or sea; but as the world is round, and turns round and round the sun, as an orange with a stick through it might be made to turn round a candle, it is that part which is nearest the sun. The sun at noon, in that part, all round the world, is overhead, and so it is just the hottest part of the world. It was hot, indeed. The pitch bubbled out of the seams in the decks, one calm day, and we could have fried a beefsteak, if we had had one, on any iron plates on the deck. I was glad when, after running for a thousand miles or so, we got cooler weather, though the sun was still hot

enough at noon. Our ship was very well found, the men said, and we had no lack of food—salt beef, and peas, and rice, and flour, and sometimes suet and raisins for puddings. They said we were much better off than many ship's companies; we had enough of good food, and our officers were just, and did not overwork us.

I heard tales of what happens on board some ships, where the food is bad and scanty; the men are worked well-nigh to death, often struck by the master and the mates, and treated like dogs. I was thankful that I hadn't gone to sea in one of those ships.

At last I found we were going round Cape Horn, which is the south point of America. We had a fair wind, and not much of it; but a gale had been blowing somewhere, for there was a swell, such as I had never thought to see. The water was just like smooth up-and-down chalk downs, only as regular as furrows in a field. The big ship just seemed nothing among them, as she now sunk down in the hollow, and then rose to the top of the smooth hill of water. To our right was seen Cape Horn itself; it is a high head of land, sticking out into the sea, all by itself. Very few people have ever been on shore there, and no one lives there, as there is no ground to grow anything, and the climate is cold and bleak. You know that the two ends of the earth, or poles, as they are called, the north and south, are very cold; ice and snow all the year round, and Cape Horn is near the south end.

After we passed it, for some time we steered north.

and soon got into warm weather again. You see the hot part of the world is midway between the north and south pole, so sailing north from the south pole we find it hotter and hotter, and so we do sailing south from the north pole. We find our way over the sea, far away from land night or day, just as well as on shore. Besides the sun and stars to guide us, we have the compass. It is a wonderful thing, though it is so simple-looking; just a round card, resting on a spike in a brass basin. In the card is a long steel needle, and the point of it is rubbed with a stuff called loadstone, and it takes the card round and round, and always points to the north. The north, and all the other points, are marked on the card; so when we look at it we see what way the ship's head is. The ship is guided by a rudder, and a compass is placed just before the man who steers, that is, turns the rudder—this way or that—so that he can look at it, and know which way to turn the rudder, and so to keep the ship on her course.

Then the shape of all parts of the world is mapped down on paper, and the distances, that is to say, an inch on the paper, may be, stands for fifty miles, and so the captain knows where he is going, and how far he has to go, though he has never been there before. We have a log line, with marks on it, and by letting that run out astern we judge how fast the ship is going; then the compass tells us the course she is steering, that is, the way she is going, and that we call "dead reckoning." But the captain has besides wonderful instruments of brass and glasses, and he

looks through them at the sun, or stars, and moon, and then he makes sums on paper; and then he has some curious watches, which never go wrong, and with them and his sums he can tell just where the ship is, though we haven't seen land for six or eight weeks, or more. It is curious to sail on day after day, and week after week, and not to see land, and yet to know that it is all right, and that we shall reach the very port we are bound for, unless we fall in with a storm, and lose our masts, and get cast away, or spring a leak and founder; but then when we come to think of the thousands of ships at sea, and that not one in a hundred gets lost, we needn't count on that. So you understand, what with the "dead reckoning," and the curious instruments I told you of—one of them is called a sextant—the captain can take his ship right across the pathless ocean, just as easily as a coachman does his coach along a high-road. You see sailors on shore, and they seem often harum-scarum, idle fellows, but at sea everything is done with the greatest order, and every man and boy has his proper duty, just as the servants in a large country-house. The crew are divided into watches, called the starboard and larboard, or port, watches; the chief mate commands one, the second mate the other. While one watch is on duty the other goes below to sleep, or take their meals, except when all hands are wanted on deck. Every hour a bell is struck to show how time goes. Every four hours the watch is changed, except in the evening, from four to eight o'clock, when there are two watches,

called dog-watches, that is to say, from four to six, one; and from six to eight, another. The reason of this is that the people who are on watch at one time one night, may not be on watch the same time the next night, which they would be if there were six instead of seven watches, which you will find there are in the twenty-four hours. I used to be very glad when my first watch was over, and I was able to turn in from twelve to four, when I had to be up again to keep the morning watch. That was no idle time, for as soon as it was daylight we had to scrub and wash down decks, and to put everything in order for the day, just as housemaids put the house in order.

Night and day, fine weather or foul, a man is stationed either at the mast-head, or yard-arm, or forward, to keep a look-out ahead for any ship, or land, or shoals, or rocks, which may be near. Many a ship has been lost when a good look-out has not been kept; one ship has run into another, and both have sunk, or the ship has run on rocks not seen till too late.

When we get near the land we use a lead and line, to learn the depth of water. This is called heaving the lead, as the lead is swung round with the arm to fall far a-head. There are knots on the line a fathom apart, which we can tell by the feel.

When a ship gets in shallow water, she can anchor; but in storms the waves are so high, and the wind so strong, that she may be torn from her anchors and driven ashore.

When a ship gets into harbour, the sails are furled,

and the anchors dropped, but even then a watch is kept on deck.

When we got to the south of the line, we saw that the stars overhead were all different to those we see in England. I marked one set of stars more than all the rest. It is called the Southern Cross. The world is round, and there are thousands of stars and other worlds round us, on every side, all made and kept in their places and governed by God. I often thought of that as I stood on deck at night, and felt that the same great God was loving and caring for me, a poor sailor-boy.

CHAPTER III.

“LAND HO! land ho!” I heard the man at the fore-topmast-head shout out. He pointed to the east. There, as the sun rose, we saw quite clear a long line of blue mountains, some of the highest on the face of the globe, so I should think, for we were then well-nigh fifty miles off them.

It seemed curious after sailing west so long, to see land on the east; but then you will understand that we had gone also south, and then west, and then north again, round a point—a pretty big point to be sure—I mean Cape Horn.

We had had a fresh breeze all day, but it was almost dark before we dropped anchor in the bay of Valparaiso, or the Vale of Paradise, as it is called. It is the chief port in the country of Chili, and

some way inland is the capital, called Santiago. As soon as the anchor was down we were divided into three watches, which gave us all a longer time in bed, no small boon to us, who had been watch and watch so long.

The next morning I was on deck early, to have a look at the land. It is very hilly and rocky close to the sea; and away inland, the high mountains I spoke of run up towards the sky. This is a very hot country, and so the land looked parched and dry; but I was told that in winter it is green and fresh. The country once belonged to Spain, and all the chief people in it are born of Spanish fathers and mothers. The people all talk Spanish, though the poorer classes



have come from the native Indians, and many have had Spanish fathers. They were very civil; and some of the boatmen talked enough English to make us know what they wished to say. They brought us plenty of fruits, which they sold cheap— oranges, and grapes, and figs, and melons, and water-melons. The water-melon they eat a great deal of, and it is very nice in a hot country as theirs is. It is as big as a man's head, with a hard, green rind, and in the inside is what looks like pink snow, with a sweetish taste, and black seeds.

The people wear all sorts of curious dresses, but what I remember best were their cloaks, called *ponchos*, which are square pieces of coloured cloth, with a round hole in the middle for the head to go through; and their leggings and their high straw hats.

They are Roman Catholics; that is, they call the Pope of Rome the head of their Church. I saw several processions of priests, in gold, and scarlet, and purple, and yellow dresses, and figures as big as life carried on men's shoulders, and flags, and crosses. The priests walked under a piece of coloured silk, stretched out at the ends of four gilt poles, carried by men in red and white dresses. And some rang bells and chanted, and others swung to and fro carved silver baskets, with sweet-smelling stuff burning in them, and others long, wax, lighted candles; and when the people saw the chief priest, who carried what I was told was the Host in his hand, they fell down on their knees, and they did the same when

the figures passed, and crossed themselves, and some of them beat their breasts and cried out. There were also a number of boys, dressed up in silk of many colours, with silver wings, to look like angels; but some of the young monkeys made faces at me and Toby, and laughed, and seemed to think the thing a joke. I thought that we had got into a Christian country, but I now found that they were little better than idolaters, for I remembered the commandment, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image. . . . Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them."

I read not long ago of what happened in the largest church in the capital city, Santiago, not far from this. Nearly two thousand of the principal ladies, and other women of the place, and many children, and a few men, were collected to worship the Virgin Mary and her image, and the whole church was lighted with paraffine oil—the roof, the pillars, the sides. Suddenly some hangings near the figure of the Virgin took fire, and soon the whole church was in a blaze. Some of the priests ran off through a small side-door with their trumpery ornaments, leaving the poor women and children inside. On the heads of these the burning oil came pouring down. A few, but very few, were got out at the front door; but those trying to get out trampled down each other, and blocked up the door. The greater number were burned to death. I never tell of my visit to Chili, without thinking of the fearful scene in that burning church.

The watermen in the bay go out to sea in a curious sort of way. Two skins of seals, or some other large animal, filled full of air, are lashed together at one end, the other ends open like a man's legs stretched out; and the waterman, who sits astride on the ends lashed together, which forms the bow of the boat, works himself on with a paddle, which has a blade at each end. He holds it in the middle, and dips first one end and then the other into the water. These skin boats, if boats they are, are called *balsas*. Sometimes the watermen quarrel, and one sticks his knife into another's *balsa*, and as soon as he does so, the man whose *balsa* has been cut has to strike out for his life towards the shore, for the wind soon gets out of it.

The captain got through the business which took us to Valparaiso, and once more we were at sea, bound for Callao, the chief port in Peru. Near it, inland, is Lima, the capital. Peru reaches nearly all the way from Chili, along the coast, to the north part of South America. All the upper classes are Spaniards; that is, born of Spanish parents, while the rest are native Indians, or children of Indians, of a yellowish-brown colour. The natives had once their own kings and princes, and were a prosperous and wealthy people. They had cities and roads, and tanks for water, and well-cultivated fields.

Rather more than three hundred years ago the Spaniards arrived in the country, and cruelly killed most of their chiefs, and enslaved the people, and have ruled the country ever since. At last the

Spaniards born in the country, rose on the Spaniards who had come from Spain, and drove them away. It is now free, that is, governed only by people born in the country, and has nothing to do with Spain.

We had been three days at sea, when a strong gale from the east drove us off the land some hundred miles. The crew grumbled very much, for it would take us, they said, a fortnight or more to beat up to Callao, and they were eager to have fresh meat and fruit and vegetables, instead of salt beef and hard biscuits, which was now our food.

A sailor's food on a long voyage is salt beef and pork, and biscuits, and tea, and cocoa, and sugar, and sometimes flour, with raisins and suet for a pudding, which is called "duff." If, however, they live too long on salt food, they get a dreadful complaint, called scurvy, which fresh vegetables only can cure. I was far better fed than I had ever been on shore, yet often I longed for a cabbage and a dish of potatoes, and would gladly have given up the beef and pork to get them.

I had now become a pretty fair seaman, and was placed aloft to keep a look-out for strange vessels, or land, or rocks, or shoals. I had my eyes to the north, when I saw what I first thought was a cask. I hailed the deck, and then the second mate came up and said that it was a boat. The ship was steered towards it. I could see no one moving, and thought that it must be empty; but the mate said that he saw some men's heads above the gunwale. He was right, for suddenly, as if he was just awoke, a man

stood up and waved a shirt, and then others lifted up their heads and waved their hats ; but the first soon sunk down again, as if too weak to stand. As we drew near they again waved their hats, and we saw their mouths moving, as if they were trying to cheer, but their voices were too weak to reach us. We made out five men, who had just strength to sit up and lean over the side. We hove to ; that is, we placed the sails so as to stop the way of the ship, and lowered a boat, for the waves were too high to make it safe to take the ship alongside of the boat. I jumped into our boat. Never shall I forget the thin, miserable faces of the poor fellows in the boat. Besides the five sitting up, there were three others lying on the bottom, so far gone that they scarcely seemed to know that help had come to them. There was not a morsel of food, nor a drop of water on board. Their boat, too, was so battered and rotten, that it was a wonder it was still afloat. One or two of the strongest tried to speak, but couldn't, and burst into tears as we got alongside ; some of the rest groaned, and pointed to their mouths, as if we wanted to be told that they were starving. As we didn't like to try even to tow their boat, we lifted them out gently into ours. Some of them, though pretty big men, were as light as young boys. We left their boat, and pulled back to the ship as fast as we could, for there was no time to lose. Two of these poor fellows, indeed, must have died in the boat, for they were corpses when we got them on deck. If we had been left to ourselves, we should

have killed them all with over-feeding; but Captain Bolton would allow them at first only a spoonful or two of weak brandy and water, and then a little arrowroot, and afterwards some soup; but not for some hours would he give them any heavy food, and even then a very little at a time. The result of this wise treatment was that in a few days two of them—the second mate and another man—were able to crawl about the deck, and that they all in time recovered.

They were part of the crew of a whaler, the *Helen*, which with nearly a full cargo of oil had caught fire, some six hundred miles to the westward of where we found them. They had remained by the ship to the last, and then taken to the boats. But scarcely had they lost sight of her, when a fearful gale sprang up, and the second mate's boat lost sight of the rest. They had, as soon as the gale was over, steered for a certain island, which they missed, then for another, which they missed also. Then they had tried to reach the coast of Peru, but they had had calms and foul winds, and their water and food came to an end. Four had died before we found them, and the rest would not have lived many hours longer. Such is one of the many dangers to which sailors are exposed. I little thought at that time that I should one day be in the same sad plight. This makes sailors ready to help each other, for they know that some day they may themselves be in a like state.

The evening after this we sighted two sail, that is, we saw two vessels just as the sun was going down.

The weather at the time looked threatening, but the wind was more fair than it had been for some time, and the captain did not like to shorten sail, as he was in a hurry to get to Callao. Toby Potts and I were in the first watch. The captain was on deck. On a sudden he sang out sharply, "All hands, shorten sail! Two reefs in the topsails. Furl top-gallant sails."

This last work was to be done by Toby and me. Up the rigging we ran. "Let's see which will have done it first!" cried Toby.

I had given the last turn round my sail, and looked up to try if I could see through the gloom what Toby was doing, and thought I saw something fall from aloft. Toby was not on the yard. Just then I heard the cry from the deck of "A man overboard!" The ship had given a sudden lurch or roll to leeward. I slid down a backstay to the deck. Without a moment's thought I seized a hencoop loose on deck, and threw it overboard. The gale which the captain had seen was coming, at that instant struck the ship. Over she heeled, till it seemed that she would never rise again. Like a mad horse she rushed through the water. Sails were flapping, ropes flying and lashing, and blocks swinging round here and there.

It was impossible to heave-to to lower a boat, and poor Toby was left to his fate. I felt very sad when I found this. I wondered why it was that I was not taken instead of Toby, but just then I had not much time for thinking. All on board had work enough to do. The captain gave his orders in a clear voice, and rope after rope was hauled taut, and the sails

were furled, that is rolled up, except the fore-topsail, which was closely reefed. With that alone set, we ran before the hurricane. I had heard that it is always smooth in the Pacific Ocean, but I now found out my mistake ; though perhaps there is more fine weather there than in any part of the world. I could not tell where we were running to all in the dark, for we could not see ten yards ahead of the ship, but I supposed the captain knew ; still, after hearing of the many islands and rocks and shoals in those parts, I couldn't help thinking what would become of us. The truth was that the captain could do nothing else ; he could not heave-to, and he could not see the dangers ahead, so he had to trust to God's mercy ; and that's what, in many of the affairs of life, not only sailors but people on shore have to do. I heard him say to Mr. Marston, the first mate, " We've done our best ; we are in God's hands, and He will never desert those who trust in Him."

No one went below that night, for all knew the danger we were in. On we flew, hour after hour, the wind in no way falling. I was thankful when daylight appeared.

Day came on quickly. A hand was now sent aloft to look out for dangers ; the first mate followed him up. Scarcely had he got to the masthead than he cried out, " Breakers ahead ! breakers on the starboard bow ! "

The helm was put to starboard, and the mizen-topsail was set close reefed ; the yards braced up, and the ship's head turned to port, away from the

threatened danger. On she dashed, the sea breaking over the bows and sweeping across the decks, so that we had to lash ourselves to the rigging to prevent being carried away. The breakers seemed terribly close. I could see that if the ship once got among them, she would soon break to pieces, and not one of us could escape.

The captain stood by the helm quite calm, watching the masts and spars, and giving a look every now and then at the reef, parts of which we could see between the white foaming breakers. Slowly it seemed we passed the reef. He took a long breath when it was at last seen over our quarter. The helm was put up, the mizen-topsail furled, the yards squared away, and once more we ran before the gale. The wind fell at night, though the sea ran very high and the ship tumbled about more than ever.

Not till ten days after this did we enter the bay of Callao, the port of Lima. We could see in the distance, as the sun sank towards the west, the tall spires of the city of Lima high up on the hills, while far above it rose the lofty mountains called the Andes, on the tops of which snow ever rests. More than a hundred years ago, an earthquake threw down a great part of Lima, and a large wave rolling in, swept over Callao and utterly destroyed it. The new town we saw is at a distance from where the old one stood, and has three castles to defend the bay. I heard a great deal of the silver mines of Chili and Peru, and the quantities of silver which used to be sent from them to Spain. Each bar of silver was, however,

gained by the tears and groans, and often the death, of the poor natives, who were forced by the cruel Spaniards to toil in those mines. Many hundred thousand Peruvians have died in them since the Spaniards discovered the country. Spain, I have read, has never been the better for her ill-gained wealth, and now she does not own an inch of land in all America.

CHAPTER IV.

WE had now landed all the goods we had brought from England, and found that we were to sail for Canton, in China, to procure a cargo of tea, which, it was understood, we were to take to Sidney, in New South Wales, and there to receive on board a cargo of wool to carry home.

That we might not go empty to Canton, we were to visit some islands, where seals were to be caught, for the sake of their skins; and also some others farther west, where we were to collect sandal-wood. We had no reason to complain of the treatment we received on shore; but, though the climate is a fine one, and food plentiful, I am thankful that Old England is my home.

Once more we were steering west, but we went greatly out of our proper course to look for the island where seals were to be procured. It was not exactly marked down in the chart, and we were some time looking for it, having twice passed without seeing it.

About three hundred miles away was another island, where a party of men had been left by another ship belonging to our owners, to catch seals, and we had received orders to take all the skins they had prepared, and to carry them to Canton, but the men were to be left another year.

The captain, not finding the first island, was about giving up the search, when, as I was aloft, I saw a small blue speck a long way off, just rising out of the water. I shouted out, "Land ho! Land ho!" The first mate, who had charge of the deck, was soon up with me. The ship was steered for it; it was the island we were looking for.

We anchored in a bay on the western side, the only one which afforded any shelter. The whole island was surrounded by rocks, with here and there patches of trees and shrubs; but most part of it was barren. It would have been a sad place to be cast away on. As there was no time to be lost, we at once went on shore under charge of the second mate, with the carpenter and his crew, to cut clubs for killing the seals, and stakes on which to hang up their skins to dry. The second mate, Mr. Hudson, when a lad before the mast, had been here, and knew the best spot where the seals came on shore. It was a deep sandy bay, with rocks on either side.

We went the next day to the nearest spot to the bay at which we could land, and hauled the boats up on the beach. We then hid ourselves among the rocks, half on one side of the bay and half on the other, with our clubs in our hands, ready to rush out

among the seals at a sign from our officer. After waiting for an hour or so, the seals began to come on shore; the old males and females on either side, and the young ones in the middle, in ranks as regular as soldiers on parade. The first rank worked their way on nearly forty yards from the water, and the rest followed as close as possible. The sun was very hot, and they soon fell asleep, except the old ones, who were stationed on either side to keep guard. The mate kept us back for half an hour or more, saying that they were not sound enough asleep. A seal is a curious animal, of nearly a black colour, with a head something like a dog, with whiskers; a round, smooth back; flappers, which serve as feet, on either side; and a large tail, like that of a fish, divided in two. By the help of the tail and flappers they move quickly over the ground. At last the mate lifted up his hand as a signal for us to begin the attack. We slid gently down the rocks, and got between the seals and the water. The instant they saw us, the old watchmen roared out a signal of alarm. It was too late. We began dealing blows with our clubs on either side as the seals tried to slip past us into the water. What with the roaring of the old ones and the yelping of the young seals, the shouts of our men, and the sound of our blows, there was a fearful din and uproar. A tap on the head settled the young ones, but the old seals died hard, and there was no little danger, if a man fell, of being torn to pieces by them, as their mouths are as large as lions', with sharp tusks. A seal's eye is like that of a young

calf, and looks as gentle and sensible as that of a favourite dog. We kept on killing as long as a seal remained on shore. We then set to work to skin them, and to hang up the skins on the frames we had prepared. We had killed eight hundred seals, which was very smart work.

We skinned away till the evening, when we went on board, as the captain would not let the ship be left without us, in case of the weather changing, and being obliged to run out to sea.

The next morning we went again on shore and finished the work. As we had some hours to spare before dark, we strolled about the island, our chief object being to search for water.

We saw several bays, where the seals were likely to come on shore, and numerous bones of the sea lions, another larger sort of seal. I heard a shout ahead, "Hollo! what have we here?" Looking up, I saw a shipmate pointing to a hut at some little distance. We ran towards it, but drew back as we got near; for there, in the very doorway, were two skeletons, the head of one resting on the lap of the other. So they had died, the one trying to help the other, and too weak, after he died, to get up. By the furniture of the hut, and the implements in it, they were certainly sealers, who had been left there by their vessel, which had been probably lost. They, Mr. Hudson thought, had died of scurvy, caused by want of fresh meat and vegetables. Two or three of our men shed tears when they saw the sight. I do not think that the sight of a dozen men scattered

about dead would have drawn a tear from their eyes. It was the way these two poor fellows had died that touched us.

We had to remain five days, while the skins were drying, and then made sail for the island where we expected to find the sealers. Four days passed before we sighted it. As we drew near, a flag was seen flying from a staff on the highest point. As there was no anchorage ground, we were obliged to heave-to under the lee of the island; that is, on the side opposite to that towards which the wind blows. To heave-to is, as I have said, to place the sails so as to prevent the ship from moving much. As soon as this was done, two boats were lowered, and provisions and stores of all sorts put into them. We pulled in between two rocks, and on the beach found six men ready to welcome us. They looked a savage set, but they gave us a hearty welcome; some almost wrung our hands off, others nearly squeezed the breath out of our bodies, and then they leaped about, and clapped their hands, and laughed and cried like children. The reason was this, that, three days before, they had eaten up the very last morsel of food they had; and as no seals had come to the island for some days, they had had nothing but a few shell-fish to eat. If we had not arrived, they would have been starved. They had made up their minds that such would be their fate, when the topsails of our ship appeared above the horizon.

They had been watching our sails all day, hoping that we should come near, yet fearing that

we might pass at a distance, and not see them. They were too weak to help unload the boats; but when they had tasted of a good meal, which we quickly prepared for them, they gladly lent a hand to carry the things up to their store.

It might be supposed that, having so nearly suffered death from want of food, they would have been eager to get away; but they did not seem to think of that. They were contented to remain, now that they had got a good supply of food, till their ship should call for them. They had prepared four thousand skins, which we spent the whole of the next day in getting on board. A more desolate spot it would be hard to find; and yet these men were content to remain another six months or more on it, with the chance, after all, of their ship being lost, or, for some other cause, not coming in time for them. Two of them could read, but strange it seemed, they had no books, and were very thankful for six or seven volumes which we left them, one of them being a Bible.

We felt very sorry to leave the poor fellows all alone, more sorry than they felt for themselves. Our course was now towards some islands in the western Pacific, where we hoped to obtain sandal-wood. This sandal-wood is used by the Chinese, in their temples, to burn as incense before their idols; for they are great idolators. It seemed to me that if we took them wood to burn before their idols, we were, in a way, helping them in their idolatry; but I could not get others to see the matter in that light.

CHAPTER V.

WE now passed several coral islands. One we saw quite near was about six miles long, with a large lake in the centre, with an entrance to it from the sea. Outside the island, about a quarter of a mile off, was a narrow reef, just rising above the water. The sea breaking on this was prevented from washing over the island.

These coral islands are really made of coral; and made, too, by a little insect. It begins on the top of a rock far down under the water, where it makes a house for itself; then it builds another above that, and so on, till it reaches the surface. It cannot build out of the water; but sea-weed first grows on it, and anything floating is caught by this, and stops; and then birds rest on it, and drop seeds, which take root. Then the sea washes bits of coral up from the outer edge, and thus a firm mass is formed, which rises higher and higher, as more trees grow and decay, and more coral is washed up. A sandy beach is formed of broken coral, and tall cocoa-nut trees grow up and bear fruit, and other fruit-trees and vegetables and roots grow, and people come and live on the island. There are many islands in the Pacific Ocean which have been formed in this way, and which have long had people living on them. Some, however, are rocky, and have high mountains in them. Many of these have been thrown up by the means of fire, and are still burning mountains. Some are very beautiful, and have valleys and

streams and fountains and rocks and trees of all sorts, and shrubs, and support a large number of people.

We were becalmed near one of them; and as we wanted water and fresh provisions, and the people were said to be well-disposed, the captain determined to send on shore. Two boats were manned and armed, in case of accidents, and with a supply of goods to barter (cotton handkerchiefs and knives and hatchets), we pulled in. There was a reef outside, against which the sea broke, and, rising up, curled back in a mass of foam. We, however, found a passage through it, in which, though it was very narrow, the water was smooth.

“Give way, lads,” cried Mr. Hudson, who was in the leading boat. I was with him. We pulled hard. A large roller came on after us. The water foamed up on either side, and in an instant it seemed we were in smooth water.

Numbers of people—men, women, and children—were on the beach to receive us. They were of a light-brown colour, and wore very little clothing. The women had short petticoats, and some of the men wore cloaks, besides cloths round their loins. These clothes, I found, were like thick paper, and are made out of the bark of a tree called the paper-mulberry tree. It is steeped in water, and beat into cloth with wooden mallets by the women, and afterwards dyed of various colours. The men were armed with clubs and spears, but seemed very friendly. There were several houses near the shore, built of

poles made from young cocoa-nut trees, and thatched with large leaves. The sides were made of mats, which are drawn up in the daytime to let the wind blow through them, as the climate is very hot in winter as well as summer. As soon as the goods were landed, they were carried up to a house near the beach, which was the natives' trade-house. Here they brought all sorts of things which they thought we should want, mostly roots and fruits and vegetables and hogs, of which there seemed to be a large supply. Mr. Hudson, seeing all things ready, began a brisk trade. While it was going on, Bill Sniggs, who had come in the boat with me, asked me to take a stroll with him, as he was sure that we should be back again to go off in the boat.

"But it is against orders for any one to quit the beach without leave," said I.

"Oh, not here; the people are friendly, and nothing was said about it," he answered.

"True enough, no harm can come of it, and I don't mind going a little way," I said, though I knew well enough that the order stood good for this place and all others. Still I wanted to see the country, it looked so very tempting.

We walked on and on; now we climbed up a hill, from which we could see the ship, and then crossed a valley, and went along a clear stream up to a beautiful waterfall. We passed a good many cottages of the sort I have described, and the people came out and offered us fruits and cooked roots, like sweet potatoes and pork. We couldn't help going into

some of the houses, the people were so kind ; besides, we were tired, as we hadn't taken such a walk since we came aboard the *Rose*. We neither of us had a watch, and never thought how the time went. When we were rested, we got up, and, thanking the people of the house for their kindness, went on our way, the country seeming more and more beautiful.

At last I said to Bill that I thought we ought to go back ; so we turned our faces, as we fancied, towards the place we had come from.

We went on some way, and then I stopped Bill, and said, "Bill, I don't think we are right ; we are farther off than ever."

We looked about to find a hill to climb, to judge where we were, but the trees were so thick that we could see none. One thing we saw, that the sky was changed, and that clouds were passing quickly across it, and that the tops of the trees were bending to a strong breeze.

"Bill," I said, "we ought to be back at the boats, for they'll be going off ; we shall taste the end of a rope if we keep them waiting."

"Never fear, we shall be in time enough," answered Bill. "Why be put out ? we can't help ourselves."

That was true enough, then, but I knew that we ought not to have come at all.

We went on some way till we came to another house. The people in it were very kind, but we couldn't make out what they said, and they couldn't what we said, though we tried to let them know that

we wanted to find our way back to the boats. At last a young man seemed to understand what we wanted, for he took us by the hand and led us on.

After some time we found that we were going up a hill, and when we got to the top of it we could see the ocean. We looked, we rubbed our eyes ; a heavy sea was rolling in, and far away our ship was beating off shore. For some time I could not speak a word.

At last I said, "Bill, I fear we are left ashore, unless one of the boats has stopped for us."

"Very likely that we are left, Tom, but not at all likely that one of the boats has stopped for us," he answered. "Worse if she has ; for we shall catch it soundly when we get on board. Take my advice, let us keep out of the way and not go back at all. This is a pleasant country to live in, much better than knocking about at sea."

"No, no, I'd rather get a dozen floggings than leave the ship, and not go back to Old England and see poor mother and brothers, and sisters again. Haven't you got a mother and brothers and sisters, Bill ?"

"Yes, but they don't care for me," he answered.

"How do you know that ?" I asked. "Depend on it, Bill, they love you, and care for you, and may be this moment are praying that you may be kept free from danger. Come, at all events, let us go back to where we landed, if we can find the way."

Our new friend stood watching us while we were talking, and when we pointed to the ship he shook his head, to show that we couldn't get aboard her ;

but when we pointed down to the shore he again took our hands and led us on. We must have wandered by ourselves a long way, for we were some time getting to the beach. There was not a sign of our shipmates ; we tried to ask where they had gone, but the natives hung down their heads and looked sorrowful.

“Bill, something has happened,” I said ; “we must try to find out what it is.”

Our friend seemed to understand us better than the rest, so we asked him to learn from them what had happened. After much talking with his friends, he showed us by signs that the ship had fired a gun, and then another, and another, and that the white men had hurried to the boats and shoved off ; that the largest boat with Mr. Hudson had got out safe, but that the smaller one was upset ; some of the people in her were drowned, and others swam out, and were picked up by the large boat.

This was, indeed, sad news. Which of our shipmates have been lost ? which of them have been saved ? we asked one another. I had felt that if the boats had gone without us, Captain Bolton would not forsake us, but would put back to take us off as soon as he could. Now, however, he would suppose that we had been lost, as very likely no one would have observed that we were not with the rest, when they jumped into the smaller boat to pull on board.

“Oh, Bill ! Bill ! here we are left among savages ; may be we shall never get away, but have to spend all the days of our lives with them,” I cried out in a mournful tone. Bill began to cry, too.

“Why, not long ago you wanted to remain,” I could not help saying.

“That was when I thought that we should be flogged, and were sure to go away,” he answered.

“Do you know, Tom, I’ve heard say that some of these people are cannibals; that is, they eat human flesh. Perhaps when they find that the ship is gone, they’ll kill and eat us.”

I said I hoped not, but still I didn’t feel very comfortable; for I knew what he said was true.

There was now, however, no help for it. “Captain Bolton will believe that we are lost, and when he gets home let our mothers know, and we shall be mourned for as dead,” said I.

“They won’t mourn for me, and I don’t care,” said Bill.

“They will mourn for me, and I should be very sorry if I thought they wouldn’t,” said I. “Ay Bill, often at night, when the storm has been raging, and the sea running high, and it seemed as if the ship would go down, or might be cast on some hidden reef, I’ve gone to sleep quite happy, knowing that mother would be thinking of me, and praying for me, and that there was One who hears our prayers, watching over me.”

We were sitting down under some trees, on a hillock above the beach, from which we could still see the *Rose* beating off under close reefed topsails. After some time our friendly native came up and sat down by us. After a time, he signed to us to get up, and led us back to his house. Our friend, we found,



was the son of the greatest chief in the island. When we got back to the house we had a supper of fish and pork, and bread-fruit and other vegetables were placed before us. In the middle of the house, as soon as it was dark, a fire of dried cocoa-nut leaves was lighted, and round this the family collected. What was our surprise to see the young chief bring out of a chest a book, and begin to read. I looked at it, but though the letters were English, it was in his own language. Then they all knelt down, and prayed, and sang a psalm. I knew it by the tune.

“Why, Bill, I do believe these people are Christians,” said I.

“So I suppose, Tom, if it is the Bible they are reading,” said Bill.

“No doubt about it,” I said; “that’s the reason they treated us so kindly. I’ve heard that missionaries have been out in these parts, and they must have been here, and taught these people to be Christians.”

“If they are Christians, Tom, then, may be they won’t kill and eat us as we thought they would,” said Bill, in a more cheerful voice than he had spoken in before.

I couldn’t help almost laughing as I answered, “They would be odd sort of Christians if they did; but I’ll tell you what, they’ll think us very odd sort of Christians if we don’t kneel down, and say our prayers with them. We needn’t be afraid that any one will laugh at us, as we might have been aboard the *Rose*.”

“I can’t say prayers, never learned,” said Bill; “you never saw me saying them aboard the *Rose*.”

That was true; but mother had taught me to say mine, and I said them in my berth, or to myself on deck, or wherever I could. I thought Bill might have done the same. I felt that we were put to shame by these poor savages, as we called them. So I begged Bill to try and say a prayer, but he said he couldn’t, he didn’t know what to say. I asked him if he could say what I did, and so we knelt down, and he said prayers after me. The natives seemed pleased, and the young chief nodded his head to show that we had done what he thought right. I

don't say there would have been any use in the form, or if I had done it merely to please the natives, but I really did pray to God as truly as I ever did, but I own that, in a way, the natives shamed me into it.

There was an old chief and his wife and two daughters, and three other lads, besides our friend. They had all much more clothing on than the other people we had seen, and were more quiet in their manners. As soon as prayers were over, they hung up large pieces of native cloth from the rafters, reaching to the floor, so as to form a number of little rooms. Mats were laid on the floor to form the bedding, and pieces of cloth served as coverlids. The pillow was a curious affair, being a thick piece of bamboo, about four feet long, on little legs. We were shown into one of these rooms, and a sign made to us to go to sleep. Even the largest houses have not a nail in them, but are fastened together with sennit, which is a line made from the root of a tree. I may say that everything is fastened with sennit—canoes, as well as houses—so that large quantities are used.

We slept very soundly, having no longer any fear of being cooked and eaten. In the morning, as soon as it was daylight, the whole family was on foot, and before anything was done they had prayers, as in the evening; the young chief leading and reading more out of the Bible. As soon as that was over, they all set about their daily work. The men and boys went into the fields to cultivate the taro and other roots, on which they live; while some of the women got out their mallets and boards to make the native cloth;

others employed themselves in plaiting mats and baskets, which are so fine that they will hold water. Bill thought that he was going to be a gentleman, and do nothing, as he said ; but I said that if we didn't work we could not expect to be fed, and made signs to the young chief that we were ready to help him. He smiled ; perhaps he thought that we couldn't do much, and certainly we could not hope to do anything as well as the natives did. They seemed to me a very clever people, considering the small means they had. They have now iron tools, but they showed me those they had before the English came to the island, very neatly made of flint and shells and bones. They made fish-hooks and spears, and many other things, of bones. We soon learned from the young chief how to work in the fields, and to do a number of things, and it was a pleasure to work for him, he was always so good-natured and kind. By degrees, too, I learned his language, though Bill could not make much hand of it. I wanted to know how it was that he and his people had become Christians, and where the missionary lived who had taught them. At last I spoke well enough, with the help of signs, to ask him. I should have said that his name was Matua. He told me also, with signs and words, that the missionary lived in an island some way off, and that he, Matua, had been there several times, and was soon going again to fetch a native missionary, or a preaching man ; that one had been on the island, but that he was a very old man, and had died some

time before we came. He told me that he had a canoe preparing for the voyage. I asked him if he would let us go with him, for that I should like to see the missionary, who was a countryman of mine, and that I might, through him, write home to my friends in England.

“Would you like to go to them again, or live on with me?” he asked.

“I like you very much, but I love my mother and brothers and sisters much more, and if I have the chance, I shall try to go back to them,” I answered.

“Very right,” he said, “but I shall grieve to lose you.”

The canoe was, at the time we first saw it, nearly finished. It was built like the houses, without a single nail, but all the planks were sewed together with sennit. It was about forty feet long, and scarcely thirty inches wide. It had a gunwale, and ribs and thwarts to keep it in shape. A thick gum was put at the seams to prevent the water getting through. Being so narrow it would have upset, but it had an outrigger, which is a plank, or log, as long as the boat, pointed at the fore end. This rested on the water five or six feet from the canoe, and was kept there by poles, fastened across the canoe. This was always on the lee side, as the canoes can sail both ways, stem or stern first. At one end there was a deck, under which they kept their provisions, and on the top of which the chief sat. The men to move it had short paddles, like sharp-pointed shovels, and sitting with their faces to the bows, dug the paddles

into the water, which they sent flying behind them. We were very sorry to part from many of our friends, but still the thoughts of seeing a white man again, and hearing our native tongue spoken, made us glad; besides which, I hoped that somehow or other I should have the chance of getting home.

CHAPTER VI.

WE had got a good supply of provisions and water, in the canoe, and I understood that the voyage might take us four or five days, or perhaps more. The island looked very beautiful as we sailed away from it, and I did not wonder that Matua loved it so much. His love for it made him undertake the voyage to fetch a missionary, for what he loved more than its beauty were the souls of the people in it, over whom he ruled. For two days the sea was smooth and the wind fair, though there was very little of it. When it fell calm, we paddled on at a good rate. On the evening of the second day, the sky looked threatening. Soon after the next morning broke it began to blow very hard, and the sea soon got up, and tumbled the canoe about in a way which I thought must upset her, or send her to the bottom. The sail was lowered, and while some paddled lustily, others, helped by Bill and me, baled out the water, of which we shipped a great deal, though none came through the seams. This showed how strongly it was built. The canoe was kept

head to the seas, but we made no way, and it was very clear that we were driving before the gale,—not back to Matua's island,—though where we were going we could not tell. Matua sat steering as calm as possible. He said that he put his trust in God, and did not fear the storm. He and his people were doing all that could be done to preserve their lives, and that if it was God's will that they should die, they were ready. I should say that they had prayers and sang psalms morning and evening, and that they prayed and sang now, only of course they could not stop paddling or bailing, or kneel down. Yet many white persons would have called these people savages. It gave me an idea of the good the missionaries have done in these seas.

Though I had seen what a storm at sea is on board the *Rose*, I did not think how terrible it was in a narrow canoe of thin planks just sewn together. My wonder was and is that we did not go down, or break to pieces.

Five days we drove on before the gale. Twice we saw land in the distance, but did not dare to try and reach it, indeed we could not if we had tried. The wind then fell, and the sea went down, and then we lay floating on the water, but the men were too weary to paddle any more. Our food also had grown very short, though we had eaten only just enough to keep life in us. It seemed a doubt whether we should have enough to reach one of the islands we had seen. After sleeping for some hours, the crew seized their paddles, and we began to paddle back

the way we had come. The next day it was a dead calm, and we saw right ahead a large vessel, barque rigged. Bill and I both thought she was English and Matua agreed to go alongside. As we drew near, I saw that she was a whaler from the cut of her sails, from her being high out of the water, and the number of boats shaped stem and stern alike. We were now alongside. I told the captain, who asked us what we wanted, how we had been driven out of our course, and begged him to tell me how we could best reach Matua's island.

“As to that, you have been driven three hundred miles to the westward of it, if it's the island I fancy from your account,” he answered. “It will take you a pretty long time to get there; but I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll give the canoe a tow for a couple of hundred miles, and then take my advice,—do you ship aboard here; I shall be bound home in six months or so, and you won't have a better chance of getting there. If you wish to serve your friends, you can let your wages go in payment: I can't undertake to help these savages for nothing.”

The last part of this speech did not please me, but still I did not think we could do better for ourselves or for Matua; so, after talking it over with him, we agreed to Captain Grimes' offer. I first bargained that some food and water might be given to our friends, for had I not done so, I fear that they would have had a scant allowance. To tow is to drag a boat or vessel by a rope through the water. We now went aboard the ship, which was called the *Grampus*.

She was a very different looking craft from the *Rose*, and her officers and men were a very rough lot. The wind was fair, and the canoe towed very easily. Still Captain Grimes grumbled at having to take her so far. At last I said that I was ready to go back in the canoe if he wished to be off his bargain. I found that he really wanted us, as one of the ship's boys had died of fever, and another had been washed overboard with two of the men. "No, no; that will not do," was his answer. "I'll take the savages as far as I promised, and you two lads shall stay aboard."

On the evening of the third day, Captain Grimes said that he had towed the canoe the distance promised, and that she must be cast off. Matua and our other friends were very sorrowful when they parted from us. Captain Grimes gave them some flour and water and biscuit and bread-fruit, and told them how to steer for their island. The canoe was then cast off. From that day to this, I have never been certain whether the island the captain spoke of was Matua's own island, or whether he reached it at all. I know that numbers of canoes are blown away from the land, and that some reach strange islands far, far off, where their crews settle, but that others are lost with all on board.

The *Grampus* was a vessel of 350 tons,—much smaller than the *Rose*—but she carried a larger crew. She had six boats, and each boat had a crew of six men. Often all the boats were away together, so that, besides the thirty-six men in them, more

were required to manage the vessel. The boats are about twenty-seven feet long, and four broad, and sharp at both ends. In each boat are two lines, 200 fathoms long, coiled away in tubs. In the end of one, an harpoon is fastened. This is a short spear, and is shot out of a gun like a blunderbuss. There are several such harpoons, and two or three long lances; besides, a lantern, light-box, some small flags, and two or more "drougues," which are square bits of board to be fastened to the harpoon line, in order to hinder the whale when sinking or swimming away.

It was some time before we fell in with a sperm whale.

Men were stationed at the mast-head and yard-arm, on the look-out for whales, from sunrise to sunset; but it was two weeks before we got to our fishing-ground. One day, at noon, while those on deck had their eyes on the galley, waiting for dinner, we were aroused by a cry from the mast-head, of "There she spouts."

"Where away?" asked Captain Grimes.

The man pointed to the west, and there, not half a mile off, a thin jet of water was seen rising from a dark object, which we soon saw to be a huge whale, as long as the ship.

"There again," cried the crew, as once more the jet rose high.

Three boats were lowered; everything was kept ready in them. The crew slid into them. Away they went in chase, singing—

"Away, my boys; away, my boys: 'tis time for us to go."

We watched the chase from the deck.

“He is going down,” cried one.

“No; he spouts again, he spouts again,” we all cried, as another jet rose in the air.

“Yes; but he’ll be down again,” said an old whaler.

Still the boats dashed on, as if it was a matter of life and death. The chief mate was in the leading boat. He had reached the whale just as the monster gave a sign that it was going down. The oars were thrown up; the harpoon, shot with certain aim, sank deep into the monster’s side. A cheer rose from the men in the boats—we on board took it up. At the same moment the whale began to strike furiously with its huge tail, right and left, beating the water into foam. One of the boats was struck, and knocked to pieces, and the crew had to swim towards the other boats; another was upset, but the crew hung on to her as if they were accustomed to it, and righted her. One of them got in, and baled her out; the oars and other articles were picked up, and away they pulled in chase. The whale, meantime, had sounded; that is, gone down towards the bottom. A two-hundred-fathom line was run out, and another fastened on; a third was called for from another boat, and a fourth was about to be added, when the line became slack—the whale was rising. A whale breathes the air like a land animal, and therefore cannot remain under water many minutes at a time. Were it not for this, it could not be caught and used by man. The line was hauled in, and coiled away in the tub. Up came

the whale at some distance, and off it darted at a great rate, towing the fast boat, the others following. But he became wearied with loss of blood and the weight of the boat. One of the other boats got up, and a lance was plunged into him; then another, and another. Again he began to lash about furiously—the boats backed away from him. He made one leap, right out of the water, and then lashed his tail more furiously than before. Then he once more went down, but only for a short time. He soon appeared—swam slowly on—then the death-struggle came on. It was fearful to look at. Every part of the monster quivered and shook, and then he lay dead—our prize.

The sperm whale we had taken is very different to the Greenland whale of the North. It had a blunt nose, like the bottom of a quart bottle; thin, pointed lower jaw; the eyes very far back, and a hump on its back; the tail or flukes being set on flat with the surface of the water, and not up and down, like the Greenland whale. This one was eighty-four feet long, and thirty-six feet round the body, or, suppose it had been cast ashore, it would have been about fourteen feet high. The head was of great size; it was nearly a third of the length of the whole creature, and about nine feet deep. The head alone contained no less than a ton, or ten large barrels, of spermaceti. The dead whale was towed alongside the ship. The head was cut off, and secured astern, that the oil might be dipped out of it. Hooks were then made fast to each end of the body. Men, with

ropes round their waists, and with spades in their hands, go down on the body of the whale. A large blunt hook is then lowered at the end of a tackle. The man near the head begins cutting off a strip of the blubber, or the coating of flesh which covers the body. The hook is put into the end of the strip, and hoisted up; and as the end turns towards the tail, the body of the whale turns round and round, as the strip of blubber is wound off. When this is done, the carcase is cast loose, and the head is emptied, and let go also. On the deck are large cauldrons; the blubber is cut up into small pieces, and boiled in them. Part of the blubber serves as fuel. Taking off the blubber is called "cutting in," and boiling it, "trying out." At night, when "trying out" generally goes on, the deck of a whale-ship has a strange and wild look. The red glare of the fires is thrown on the wild, and I may say, savage-looking crew, as they stand round the cauldrons, stripped to the waist, their faces black with smoke, the large cutting-out knives in their hands, or the prongs with which they hook out the blubber, all working away with might and main; for all are interested in getting the work done. The crew of a whale-ship share in the profits of a voyage, and all therefore are anxious to kill as many whales as possible. There is no bad smell in trying out, and the work is cleaner than might be expected.

The ship was very nearly full, that is, our barrels were nearly full of oil, and the crew were beginning to talk of the voyage homeward, and of the pleasures

of the shore, when one night as the watch below, to which I belonged, was asleep, we were awakened by the fearful cry of "Breakers ahead!" followed by a grinding noise and a shock which made the whole ship quiver through every timber. We rushed on deck. She was hard and fast on a coral reef.

CHAPTER VII.

"Hold on for your lives," shouted the captain as a huge wave, dimly seen through the gloom of night, rolled on towards us. It broke with fearful force against the ship, washed several of our poor fellows overboard whose shrieks were heard as they were carried away to leeward. It threw her on her beam ends, and drove her farther on the reef, and with a crash all the masts fell together. Another and another sea followed and lifted the ship over the reef, where the water was smoother.

"Out boats!" was the cry. "The ship is sinking."

Three of the boats were launched, not without great difficulty; the rest were stove in by the falling masts. We had barely time to get into the boats before the ship settled down till her weather bulwarks alone were above water. We did not know if we were near land, and if near land whether or not it was inhabited. We stayed in the boats near the vessel, hoping that daylight would soon come to show us

where we were, and to enable us to get some provisions, if possible, out of her. It came at last. No land was in sight; only reefs and coral rocks all around, some above, some under the water.

We had no food in the boats, no water; our only hope was that the ship would break up and things float out of her. Each sea which rolled in shook her till it seemed that she must break to pieces. At last her deck was burst up, and we thankfully picked up a cask of beef, another of pork, and some flour and biscuit, and, what was of still more consequence, three casks of water. These things were divided among the boats. There was only one small boat-compass in the captain's boat. He told us to keep close to him, and that he would soon take us to a land where we should find all we wanted. With sad hearts the crew of the whaler left the ship, and the product of their labours for so many months. Bill and I were together with the second mate. We were well-nigh ready to cry, for though we had not lost anything, we were sorry for our shipmates, and we began to think that we should never get home.

For three days the weather remained fine, but on the fourth, as the sun went down, it came on to blow. The sea too got up, and it became very dark. We kept the captain's boat in sight for some time, but she seemed to be going ahead of us. On a sudden we lost sight of her. We pulled on as hard as the heavy sea would let us to catch her up, but when morning broke, neither of the other boats was to be

seen. The sky was overcast, we had no compass to steer by, the sea ran high, our stock of provisions was low, our stock of water still lower. We were in a bad way. There was no one to say, "Trust in God."

The mate was ill before the ship was cast away. He now lost all spirit, and thought that his end was coming. He told us that we were still nearly two hundred miles from land to the south-west of us, and described the stars we should steer by. The next day he died, and two other strong-looking men died within two days of him. The rest of them thought that they should never reach land.

I said at last, "Let us trust in God. Let us pray that He will send us help."

Two of the men answered that God did not care for such poor wretched fellows as they were.

I said that I was sure He cared for everybody, and that He would hear us if we prayed to Him, however poor and wretched we were. I only know that I prayed as hard as ever I did, and Bill prayed too.

Two days more passed away. At night the stars came out, and we steered the course the mate had given us. I was at the helm looking now at the stars, now ahead, when I saw a dark object right before me. It was a ship sailing across our course. I shouted loudly. The shout roused those who were asleep. They all sprang to their oars, and pulled away as hard as their remaining strength would allow, we all shouting at the top of our voices. I saw the ship heave to, and I burst into tears. We were soon

alongside, but without help we were too weak to get on deck.

I heard voices I knew giving orders. Yes, there stood Captain Bolton on the quarter-deck, and Mr. Alder seeing to the boat being hoisted up. Another person stood before me, watching the men helping us up, it was Toby Potts. Now I felt sure that I was in a dream. Toby had been lost so many months before on the other side of the Pacific. He did not know either Bill or me. No one knew us. That made it still more like a dream. I forgot how many months had passed by since we were on board the *Rose*, and that we were well-nigh starved to death.

The captain came round as we sat on the deck, and spoke very kindly to us, and told us that hammocks should be got ready, and that we should have some food as soon as it could be warmed up.

“Don’t you know me, Captain Bolton?” I asked as he came up to me.

He looked at me hard, as the light of the lantern fell on my face. “What! Tom Trueman! I should say, if I didn’t believe that he has long ago been in another world,” he exclaimed; “if it is Tom, I am right glad to see you, lad. Tell me how you escaped death.”

So I told him, and made Bill known, for he was in a fright, thinking that we should be punished for leaving the beach without leave. It did me good to see the pleasure the kind captain felt at finding that we were alive.

By this time some warm turtle soup was brought

us, and a little weak brandy and water, and then we were carried below and put into hammocks.

It was not till the next day that I was certain I was not mistaken about Toby Potts. He had floated on the very hencoop which I had thrown over to him, till the next morning, when one of the ships which we had seen, hove-to, passed close to him, and picked him up. That ship fell in with the *Rose* two or three weeks after we were supposed to have been lost, and Toby was returned on board. The *Rose* herself had suffered much damage in a gale, and had put into harbour to repair; she had also been some time in collecting sandal-wood, with which she was now on her way to Canton. This accounted for our falling in with her, for I thought that by this time she would have been far on her way home.

We had a fine passage to Canton, or rather to Whampoa, which is as far up the river of Canton as ships go. The mouth of the river is known as the Boca Tigris. The captain kindly took me to Canton; it is a most curious city. On the river are thousands of boats, the greater number not more than fourteen feet long, and twelve broad, and covered over with a bamboo roof. In these whole families live from one end of the year to the other, or rather from their births to their deaths. Then there were junks as big as men of war, with huge, carved, green dragons at their bows, and all sorts of coloured flags. But the most curious sights are on shore. The city is surrounded by walls, and the houses look as if

they were cut out of coloured paper ; the streets are so narrow that only two sedan chairs can pass, and no wheel carriage enters them. At each end of the street are gates, which are shut at night and guarded by policemen. The shops are all open in front, and all sorts of curious things are sold. The people themselves are odd looking, with their black hair in long tails hanging down their backs, and their yellow or blue silk coats, and wide trousers and slippers. The great men walk about under big coloured umbrellas, or else are carried by two men in a covered chair on poles. They are a very industrious, hard-working people, and every inch of land in the country is cultivated. Though they are so clever and neat-handed, and can do many things as well as the English, yet they are idolators. In their churches, or pagodas as they are called, there are ugly images, which they worship. They burn sandal-wood and bits of paper before them, which they fancy is like saying their prayers. The chief thing produced in the country is tea.

When we had landed the hides, seal-skins, and sandal-wood, which we had brought, we took on board a cargo of tea, in chests. With this we sailed for Sydney, New South Wales, as the captain calculated that we should arrive there about the time that the wool produced in that colony would be ready to ship to England. There are many dangers in the seas between those two places. There are typhoons, which are strong, fierce winds ; and there are rocks and shoals ; and there are pirates, mostly Chinese or

a people like them, who attack vessels, if they can take them unawares, and rob them, and sometimes murder all on board. We escaped all dangers, and arrived safely off Sydney harbour. We entered between two high headlands into a large bay or lake, in which any number of vessels might lie at anchor. The city of Sydney is a fine-looking place, with towers, and churches, and large houses, and wide streets, and carriages in great numbers driving about, and vessels of all sorts lying alongside the quays, two or three landing emigrants just arrived from England; and then there are huge warehouses close to the harbour. Into one of them the tea we had brought was hoisted, and out of another came the wool, in large packages, with which the *Rose* was to be freighted. What astonished me was to think that eighty years ago not a white man was living in all that vast country, and now there are large towns in all directions, and villages, and farms, and sheep-stations, and thousands upon thousands of sheep, some of the wool from whose backs we were now carrying home to be made up into all sorts of woollen goods in our factories.

With cheerful voices we ran round the capstan as we weighed anchor, we hoped to remain at our bows till we dropped it in the Mersey. The whaler's people had left us at Hong Kong, at the mouth of the Canton river. They said that we were too quiet for them.

I should like to tell of our voyage home, not that anything wonderful happened. We continued sailing

west till we arrived off the Cape of Good Hope, and then we steered north, for Old England. We arrived at Liverpool in two months and a half after leaving Sydney, and a little more than two years from the time we sailed from England. Captain Bolton called me into the cabin, and told me that he was so well pleased with me that he would take me another voyage if I had a mind to go ; but that I might first go down into Dorsetshire to see mother and my brothers and sisters, and friends. I thanked him very much, and said that I should be very glad to sail with him, and that I hoped to be back any day he would name.

Well, I got home, and there was mother, and Jane come home on purpose to see me, and Sam, and Jack, and little Bill grown quite a big chap, and all of them ; and I blessed God, and was so happy. I had brought all sorts of things from China for them, and others from the South Sea Islands ; and they were never tired of hearing of the wonders I had seen, nor was I tired of telling of them.

Thus ended my first voyage ; I have been many others, but this was the happiest coming home of all.

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