The Crater; or, Vulcan's Peak. A Tale of the Pacific

James Fenimore Cooper

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"THUS ARISE
RACES OF LIVING THINGS, GLORIOUS IN STRENGTH,
AND PERISH, AS THE QUICKENING BREATH OF GOD
FILLS THEM, OR IS WITHDRAWN."

BRYANT.

PREFACE.

The reader of this book will very naturally be disposed to ask the question, why the geographies, histories, and other works of a similar character, have never made any mention of the regions and events that compose its subject. The answer is obvious enough, and ought to satisfy every mind, however "inquiring." The fact is, that the authors of the different works to which there is any allusion, most probably never heard there were any such places as the Reef, Rancocus Island, Vulcan's Peak, the Crater, and the other islands of which so much is said in our pages. In other words, they knew nothing about them.

We shall very freely admit that, under ordinary circumstances, it would be *prima facie* evidence against the existence of any spot on the face of this earth, that the geographies took no notice of it. It will be remembered, however, that the time was, and that only three centuries and a half since, when the geographies did not contain a syllable about the whole of the American continent; that it is not a century since they began to describe New Zealand, New Holland, Tahiti, Oahu, and a vast number of other places, that are now constantly alluded to, even

in the daily journals. Very little is said in the largest geographies, of Japan, for instance; and it may be questioned if they might not just as well be altogether silent on the subject, as for any accurate information they do convey. In a word, much as is now known of the globe, a great deal still remains to be told, and we do not see why the "inquiring mind" should not seek for information in our pages, as well as in some that are ushered in to public notice by a flourish of literary trumpets, that are blown by presidents, vice−presidents and secretaries of various learned bodies.

One thing we shall ever maintain, and that in the face of all who may be disposed to underrate the value of our labours, which is this: there is not a word in these volumes which we now lay before the reader, *as grave matter of fact*, that is not entitled to the most implicit credit. We scorn deception. Lest, however, some cavillers may be found, we will present a few of those reasons which occur to our mind, on the spur of the moment, as tending to show that everything related here *might* be just as true as Cook's voyages themselves. In the first place, this earth is large, and has sufficient surface to contain, not only all the islands mentioned in our pages, but a great many more. Something is established when the possibility of any hypothetical point is placed beyond dispute. Then, not one half as much was known of the islands of the Pacific, at the close of the last, and at the commencement of the present century, as is known to−day. In such a dearth of precise information, it may very well have happened that many things occurred touching which we have not said even one word. Again, it should never be forgotten that generations were born, lived their time, died, and have been forgotten, among those remote groups, about which no civilized man ever has, or ever will hear anything. If such be admitted to be the facts, why may not *all* that is here related have happened, and equally escape the knowledge of the rest of the civilized world? During the wars of the French revolution, trifling events attracted but little of the general attention, and we are not to think of interests of this nature, in that day, as one would think of them now.

Whatever may be thought of the authenticity of its incidents, we hope this book will be found not to be totally without a moral. Truth is not absolutely necessary to the illustration of a principle, the imaginary some times doing that office quite as effectually as the actual.

The reader may next wish to know why the wonderful events related in these volumes have so long been hidden from the world. In answer to this we would ask if any one can tell how many thousands of years the waters have tumbled down the cliffs at Niagara, or why it was that civilized men heard of the existence of this wonderful cataract so lately as only three centuries since. The fact is, there must be a beginning to everything; and now there is a beginning to the world's knowing the history of Vulcan's Peak, and the Crater. Lest the reader, however, should feel disposed to reproach the past age with having been negligent in its collection of historical and geological incidents, we would again remind him of the magnitude of the events that so naturally occupied its attention. It is scarcely possible, for instance, for one who did not live forty years ago to have any notion how completely the world was engaged in wondering at Napoleon and his marvellous career, which last contained even more extraordinary features than anything related here; though certainly of a very different character. All wondering, for near a quarter of a century, was monopolized by the French Revolution and its consequences.

There are a few explanations, however, which are of a very humble nature compared with the principal events of our history, but which may as well be given here. The Woolston family still exists in Pennsylvania, and that, by the way, is something towards corroborating the truth of our narrative. Its most distinguished member is recently dead, and his journal has been the authority for most of the truths here related. He died at a good old age, having seen his three−score years and ten, leaving behind him, in addition to a very ample estate, not only a good character, which means neither more nor less than what "the neighbours," amid their ignorance, envy, love of detraction, jealousy and other similar qualities, might think proper to say of him, but the odour of a well−spent life, in which he struggled hard to live more in favour with God, than in favour with man. It was remarked in him, for the last forty years of his life, or after his return to Bucks, that he regarded all popular demonstrations with distaste, and, as some of his enemies pretended, with contempt. Nevertheless, he strictly acquitted himself of all his public duties, and never neglected to vote. It is believed that his hopes for the future, meaning in a social and earthly sense, were not very vivid, and he was often heard to repeat that warning text of Scripture which tells us,

"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

The faithful, and once lovely partner of this principal personage of our history is also dead. It would seem that it was not intended they should be long asunder. But their time was come, and they might almost be said to have departed in company. The same is true of Friends Robert and Martha, who have also filled their time, and gone hence, it is to be hoped to a better world. Some few of the younger persons of our drama still exist, but it has been remarked of them, that they avoid conversing of the events of their younger days. Youth is the season of hope, and hope disappointed has little to induce us to dwell on its deceptive pictures.

If those who now live in this republic, can see any grounds for a timely warning in the events here recorded, it may happen that the mercy of a divine Creator may still preserve that which he has hitherto cherished and protected.

It remains only to say that we have endeavoured to imitate the simplicity of Captain Woolston's journal, in writing this book, and should any homeliness of style be discovered, we trust it will be imputed to that circumstance.

CHAPTER I.

"'T was a commodity lay fretting by you;
'T will bring you gain, or perish on the seas."

Taming of the Shrew.

There is nothing in which American Liberty, not always as much restrained as it might be, has manifested a more decided tendency to run riot, than in the use of names. As for Christian names, the Heathen Mythology, the Bible, Ancient History, and all the classics, have long since been exhausted, and the organ of invention has been at work with an exuberance of imagination that is really wonderful for such a matter−of−fact people. Whence all the strange sounds have been derived which have thus been pressed into the service of this human nomenclature, it would puzzle the most ingenious philologist to say. The days of the Kates, and Dollys, and Pattys, and Bettys, have passed away, and in their stead we hear of Lowinys, and Orchistrys, Philenys, Alminys, Cythérys, Sarahlettys, Amindys, Marindys, &c. &c. &c. All these last appellations terminate properly with an a, but this unfortunate vowel, when a final letter, being popularly pronounced like y, we have adapted our spelling to the sound, which produces a complete bathos to all these flights in taste.

The hero of this narrative was born fully sixty years since, and happily before the rage for modern appellations, though he just escaped being named after another system which we cannot say we altogether admire; that of using a family, for a christian name. This business of names is a sort of science in itself and we do believe that it is less understood and less attended to in this country than in almost all others. When a Spaniard writes his name as Juan de Castro y Muños, we know that his father belonged to the family of Castro and his mother to that of Muños. The French, and Italian, and Russian woman, &c., writes on her card Madame this or that, *born* so and so; all which tells the whole history of her individuality. Many French women, in signing their names, prefix those of their own family to those of their husbands, a sensible and simple usage that we are glad to see is beginning to obtain among ourselves. The records on tomb−stones, too, might be made much more clear and useful than they now are, by stating distinctly who the party was, on both sides of the house, or by father and mother; and each married woman ought to be commemorated in some such fashion as this: "Here lies Jane Smith, wife of John Jones," &c., or, "Jane, daughter of Thomas Smith and wife of John Jones." We believe that, in some countries, a woman's name is not properly considered to be changed by marriage, but she becomes a Mrs. only in connection with the name of her husband. Thus Jane Smith becomes Mrs. *John* Jones, but not Mrs. Jane Jones. It is on this idea we suppose that our ancestors the English every Englishman, as a matter of course, being every American's

ancestor thus it is, we suppose, therefore, that our ancestors, who pay so much more attention to such matters than we do ourselves, in their table of courtesy, call the wife of Lord John Russell, Lady *John*, and not Lady whatever her christian name may happen to be. We suppose, moreover, it is on this principle that Mrs. General This, Mrs. Dr. That, and Mrs. Senator T'other, are as inaccurate as they are notoriously vulgar.

Mark Woolston came from a part of this great republic where the names are still as simple, unpretending, and as good Saxon English, as in the county of Kent itself. He was born in the little town of Bristol, Bucks county, Pennsylvania. This is a portion of the country that, Heaven be praised! still retains some of the good old−fashioned directness and simplicity. Bucks is full of Jacks, and Bens, and Dicks, and we question if there is such a creature, of native growth, in all that region, as an Ithusy, or a Seneky, or a Dianthy, or an Antonizetty, or a Deidamy. The Woolstons, in particular, were a plain family, and very unpretending in their external appearance, but of solid and highly respectable habits around the domestic hearth. Knowing perfectly how to spell, they never dreamed any one would suspect them of ignorance. They called themselves as their forefathers were called, that is to say, Wooster, or just as Worcester is pronounced; though a Yankee schoolmaster tried for a whole summer to persuade our hero, when a child, that he ought to be styled Wool−ston. This had no effect on Mark, who went on talking of his uncles and aunts, "Josy Wooster," and "Tommy Wooster," and "Peggy Wooster," precisely as if a New England academy did not exist on earth; or as if Webster had not actually put Johnson under his feet!

The father of Mark Woolston (or Wooster) was a physician, and, for the country and age, was a well−educated and skilful man. Mark was born in 1777, just seventy years since; and only ten days before the surrender of Burgoyne. A good deal of attention was paid to his instruction, and fortunately for himself, his servitude under the eastern pedagogue was of very short duration, and Mark continued to speak the English language as his fathers had spoken it before him. The difference on the score of language, between Pennsylvania and New Jersey and Maryland, always keeping in the counties that were not settled by Germans or Irish, and the New England states, and *through* them, New York, is really so obvious as to deserve a passing word. In the states first named, taverns, for instance, are still called the Dun Cow, the Indian Queen, or the Anchor; whereas such a thing would be hard to find, at this day, among the six millions of people who dwell in the latter. We question if there be such a thing as a coffee−house in all Philadelphia, though we admit it with grief, the respectable town of Brotherly Love has, in some respects, become infected with the spirit of innovation. Thus it is that good old "State House *Yard*" has been changed into "Independence Square." This certainly is not as bad as the *tour de force* of the aldermen of Manhattan when they altered "Bear Market" into " *Washington* Market!" for it is not a prostitution of the name of a great man, in the first place, and there is a direct historical allusion in the new name that everybody can understand. Still, it is to be regretted; and we hope this will be the last thing of the sort that will ever occur, though we confess our confidence in Philadelphia stability and consistency is a good deal lessened, since we have learned, by means of a late law−suit, that there are fifty or sixty aldermen in the place; a number of those worthies that is quite sufficient to upset the proprieties, in Athens itself!

Dr. Woolston had a competitor in another physician, who lived within a mile of him, and whose name was Yardley. Dr. Yardley was a very respectable person, had about the same degree of talents and knowledge as his neighbour and rival, but was much the richest man of the two. Dr. Yardley, however, had but one child, a daughter, whereas Dr. Woolston, with much less of means, had sons and daughters. Mark was the oldest of the family, and it was probably owing to this circumstance that he was so well educated, since the expense was not yet to be shared with that of keeping his brothers and sisters at schools of the same character.

In 1777 an American college was little better than a high school. It could not be called, in strictness, a grammar school, inasmuch as all the sciences were glanced at, if not studied; but, as respects the classics, more than a grammar school it was not, nor that of a very high order. It was a consequence of the light nature of the studies, that mere boys graduated in those institutions. Such was the case with Mark Woolston, who would have taken his degree as a Bachelor of Arts, at Nassau Hall, Princeton, had not an event occurred, in his sixteenth year, which produced an entire change in his plan of life, and nipped his academical honours in the bud.

Although it is unusual for square−rigged vessels of any size to ascend the Delaware higher than Philadelphia, the river is, in truth, navigable for such craft almost to Trenton Bridge. In the year 1793, when Mark Woolston was just sixteen, a full−rigged ship actually came up, and lay at the end of the wharf in Burlington, the little town nearly opposite to Bristol, where she attracted a great deal of the attention of all the youths of the vicinity. Mark was at home, in a vacation, and he passed half his time in and about that ship, crossing the river in a skiff of which he was the owner, in order to do so. From that hour young Mark affected the sea, and all the tears of his mother and eldest sister, the latter a pretty girl only two years his junior, and the more sober advice of his father, could not induce him to change his mind. A six weeks' vacation was passed in the discussion of this subject, when the Doctor yielded to his son's importunities, probably foreseeing he should have his hands full to educate his other children, and not unwilling to put this child, as early as possible, in the way of supporting himself.

The commerce of America, in 1793, was already flourishing, and Philadelphia was then much the most important place in the country. Its East India trade, in particular, was very large and growing, and Dr. Woolston knew that fortunes were rapidly made by many engaged in it. After turning the thing well over in his mind, he determined to consult Mark's inclinations, and to make a sailor of him. He had a cousin married to the sister of an East India, or rather of a Canton ship−master, and to this person the father applied for advice and assistance. Captain Crutchely very willingly consented to receive Mark in his own vessel, the Rancocus, and promised "to make a man and an officer of him."

The very day Mark first saw the ocean he was sixteen years old. He had got his height, five feet eleven, and was strong for his years, and active. In fact, it would not have been easy to find a lad every way so well adapted to his new calling, as young Mark Woolston. The three years of his college life, if they had not made him a Newton, or a Bacon, had done him no harm, filling his mind with the germs of ideas that were destined afterwards to become extremely useful to him. The young man was already, indeed, a sort of factotum, being clever and handy at so many things and in so many different ways, as early to attract the attention of the officers. Long before the vessel reached the capes, he was at home in her, from her truck to her keelson, and Captain Crutchely remarked to his chief mate, the day they got to sea, that "young Mark Woolston was likely to turn up a trump."

As for Mark himself, he did not lose sight of the land, for the first time in his life, altogether without regrets. He had a good deal of feeling in connection with his parents, and his brothers and sisters; but, as it is our aim to conceal nothing which ought to be revealed, we must add there was still another who filled his thoughts more than all the rest united. This person was Bridget Yardley, the only child of his father's most formidable professional competitor.

The two physicians were obliged to keep up a sickly intercourse, not intending a pun. They were too often called in to consult together, to maintain an open war. While the heads of their respective families occasionally met, therefore, at the bed−side of their patients, the families themselves had no direct communications. It is true, that Mrs. Woolston and Mrs. Yardley were occasionally to be seen seated at the same tea−table, taking their hyson in company, for the recent trade with China had expelled the bohea from most of the better parlours of the country; nevertheless, these good ladies could not get to be cordial with each other. They themselves had a difference on religious points, that was almost as bitter as the differences of opinions between their husbands on the subject of alteratives. In that distant day, homoeopathy, and allopathy, and hydropathy, and all the opathies, were nearly unknown; but men could wrangle and abuse each other on medical points, just as well and as bitterly then, as they do now. Religion, too, quite as often failed to bear its proper fruits, in 1793, as it proves barren in these, our own times. On this subject of religion, we have one word to say, and that is, simply, that it never was a meet matter for self−gratulation and boasting. Here we have the Americo−Anglican church, just as it has finished a blast of trumpets, through the medium of numberless periodicals and a thousand letters from its confiding if not confident clergy, in honour of its quiet, and harmony, and superior polity, suspended on the very brink of the precipice of separation, if not of schism, and all because it has pleased certain ultra−sublimated divines in the other hemisphere, to write a parcel of tracts that nobody understands, themselves included. How many even of the ministers of the altar fall, at the very moment they are beginning to fancy themselves saints, and are ready to

thank God they are "not like the publicans!"

Both Mrs. Woolston and Mrs. Yardley were what is called `pious;' that is, each said her prayers, each went to her particular church, and very *particular* churches they were; each fancied she had a sufficiency of saving faith, but neither was charitable enough to think, in a very friendly temper, of the other. This difference of religious opinion, added to the rival reputations of their husbands, made these ladies anything but good neighbours, and, as has been intimated, years had passed since either had entered the door of the other.

Very different was the feeling of the children. Anne Woolston, the oldest sister of Mark, and Bridget Yardley, were nearly of an age, and they were not only school−mates, but fast friends. To give their mothers their due, they did not lessen this intimacy by hints, or intimations of any sort, but let the girls obey their own tastes, as if satisfied it was quite sufficient for "professors of religion" to hate in their own persons, without entailing the feeling on posterity. Anne and Bridget consequently became warm friends, the two sweet, pretty young things both believing, in the simplicity of their hearts, that the very circumstance which in truth caused the alienation, not to say the hostility of the elder members of their respective families, viz. professional identity, was an additional reason why *they* should love each other so much the more. The girls were about two and three years the juniors of Mark, but well grown for their time of life, and frank and affectionate as innocence and warm hearts could make them. Each was more than pretty, though it was in styles so very different, as scarcely to produce any of that other sort of rivalry, which is so apt to occur even in the gentler sex. Anne had bloom, and features, and fine teeth, and, a charm that is so very common in America, a good mouth; but Bridget had all these added to expression. Nothing could be more soft, gentle and feminine, than Bridget Yardley's countenance, in its ordinary state of rest; or more spirited, laughing, buoyant or pitying than it became, as the different passions or feelings were excited in her young bosom. As Mark was often sent to see his sister home, in her frequent visits to the madam's house, where the two girls held most of their intercourse, he was naturally enough admitted into their association. The connection commenced by Mark's agreeing to be Bridget's brother, as well as Anne's. This was generous, at least; for Bridget was an only child, and it was no more than right to repair the wrongs of fortune in this particular. The charming young thing declared that she would "rather have Mark Woolston for her brother than any other boy in Bristol; and that it was delightful to have the same person for a brother as Anne!" Notwithstanding this flight in the romantic, Bridget Yardley was as natural as it was possible for a female in a reasonably civilized condition of society to be. There was a vast deal of excellent, feminine self−devotion in her temperament, but not a particle of the exaggerated, in either sentiment or feeling. True as steel in all her impulses and opinions, in adopting Mark for a brother she merely yielded to a strong natural sympathy, without understanding its tendency or its origin. She would talk by the hour, with Anne, touching *their* brother, and what they must make him do, and where he must go with them, and in what they could oblige him most. The real sister was less active than her friend, in mind and body, and she listened to all these schemes and notions with a quiet submission that was not entirely free from wonder.

The result of all this intercourse was to awaken a feeling between Mark and Bridget, that was far more profound than might have been thought in breasts so young, and which coloured their future lives. Mark first became conscious of the strength of this feeling when he lost sight of the Capes, and fancied the dear little Bucks county girl he had left behind him, talking with his sister of his own absence and risks. But Mark had too much of the true spirit of a sailor in him, to pine, or neglect his duty; and, long ere the ship had doubled the Cape of Good Hope, he had become an active and handy lad aloft. When the ship reached the China seas, he actually took his trick at the helm.

As was usual in that day, the voyage of the Rancocus lasted about a twelvemonth. If John Chinaman were only one−half as active as Jonathan Restless, it might be disposed of in about one−fourth less time; but teas are not transported along the canals of the Celestial Empire with anything like the rapidity with which wheat was sent to market over the rough roads of the Great Republic, in the age of which we are writing.

When Mark Woolston re−appeared in Bristol, after the arrival of the Rancocus below had been known there about twenty−four hours, he was the envy of all the lads in the place, and the admiration of most of the girls. There he was, a tall, straight, active, well−made, well−grown and decidedly handsome lad of seventeen, who had doubled the Cape of Good Hope, seen foreign parts, and had a real India handkerchief hanging out of each pocket of a blue round−about of superfine cloth, besides one around his halfopen well−formed throat, that was carelessly tied in a true sailor knot! The questions he had to answer, and *did* answer, about whales, Chinese feet, and "mountain waves!" Although Bristol lies on a navigable river, up and down which frigates had actually been seen to pass in the revolution, it was but little that its people knew of the ocean. Most of the worthy inhabitants of the place actually fancied that the waves of the sea were as high as mountains, though their notions of the last were not very precise, there being no elevations in that part of the country fit even for a windmill.

But Mark cared little for these interrogatories. He was happy; happy enough, at being the object of so much attention; happier still in the bosom of a family of which he had always been the favourite and was now the pride; and happiest of all when he half ravished a kiss from the blushing cheek of Bridget Yardley. Twelve months had done a great deal for each of the young couple. If they had not quite made a man of Mark, they had made him manly, and his *soi−disant* sister wondered that any one could be so much improved by a sea−faring life. As for Bridget, herself, she was just bursting into young womanhood, resentbling the bud as its leaves of green are opening to permit those of the deepest rose−coloured tint to be seen, before they expand into the full−blown flower. Mark was more than delighted, he was fascinated; and young as they were, the month he passed at home sufficed to enable him to tell his passion, and to obtain a half−ready, half−timid acceptance of the offer of his hand. All this time, the parents of these very youthful lovers were as profoundly ignorant of what was going on, as their children were unobservant of the height to which professional competition had carried hostilities between their respective parents. Doctors Woolston and Yardley no longer met even in consultations; or, if they did meet in the house of some patient whose patronage was of too much value to be slighted, it was only to dispute, and sometimes absolutely to quarrel.

At the end of one short month, however, Mark was once more summoned to his post on board the Rancocus, temporarily putting an end to his delightful interviews with Bridget. The lovers had made Anne their confidant, and she, well−meaning girl, seeing no sufficient reason why the son of one respectable physician should not be a suitable match for the daughter of another respectable physician, encouraged them in their vows of constancy, and pledges to become man and wife at a future, but an early day. To some persons all this may seem exceedingly improper, as well as extremely precocious; but the truth compels us to say, that its impropriety was by no means as obvious as its precocity. The latter it certainly was, though Mark had shot up early, and was a man at a time of life when lads, in less genial climates, scarcely get tails to their coats; but its impropriety must evidently be measured by the habits of the state of society in which the parties were brought up, and by the duties that had been inculcated. In America, then, as now, but little heed was taken by parents, more especially in what may be called the middle classes, concerning the connections thus formed by their children. So long as the parties were moral, bore good characters, had nothing particular against them, and were of something near the same social station, little else was asked for; or, if more were actually required, it was usually when it was too late, and after the young people had got themselves too deeply in love to allow ordinary prudential reasons to have their due force.

Mark went to sea this time, dragging after him a "lengthening chain," but, nevertheless, filled with hope. His years forbade much despondency, and, while he remained as constant as if he had been a next door neighbour, he was buoyant, and the life of the whole crew, after the first week out. This voyage was not direct to Canton, like the first; but the ship took a cargo of sugar to Amsterdam, and thence went to London, where she got a freight for Cadiz. The war of the French Revolution was now blazing in all the heat of its first fires, and American bottoms were obtaining a large portion of the carrying trade of the world. Captain Crutchely had orders to keep the ship in Europe, making the most of her, until a certain sum in Spanish dollars could be collected, when he was to fill up with provisions and water, and again make the best of his way to Canton. In obeying these instructions, he went from port to port; and, as a sort of consequence of having Quaker owners, turning his peaceful character to great profit, thus giving Mark many opportunities of seeing as much of what is called the world, as can be found in

sea−ports. Great, indeed, is the difference between places that are merely the marts of commerce, and those that are really political capitals of large countries! No one can be aware of, or can fully appreciate the many points of difference that, in reality, exist between such places, who has not seen each, and that sufficiently near to be familiar with both. Some places, of which London is the most remarkable example, enjoy both characters; and, when this occurs, the town gets to possess a tone that is even less provincial and narrow, if possible, than that which is to be found in a place that merely rejoices in a court. This it is which renders Naples, insignificant as its commerce comparatively is, superior to Vi enna, and Genoa to Florence. While it would be folly to pretend that Mark, in his situation, obtained the most accurate notions imaginable of all he saw and heard, in his visits to Amsterdam, London, Cadiz, Bordeaux, Marseilles, Leghorn, Gibraltar, and two or three other ports that might be mentioned and to which he went, he did glean a good deal, some of which was useful to him in after−life. He lost no small portion of the provincial rust of home, moreover, and began to understand the vast difference between "seeing the world" and "going to meeting and going to mill." In addition to these advantages, Mark was transferred from the forecastle to the cabin before the ship sailed for Canton. The practice of near two years had made him a very tolerable sailor, and his previous education made the study of navigation easy to him. In that day there was a scarcity of officers in America, and a young man of Mark's advantages, physical and moral, was certain to get on rapidly, provided he only behaved well. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that our young sailor got to be the second−mate of the Rancocus before he had quite completed his eighteenth year.

The voyage from London to Canton, and thence home to Philadelphia, consumed about ten months. The Rancocus was a fast vessel, but she could not impart her speed to the Chinamen. It followed that Mark wanted but a few weeks of being nineteen years old the day his ship passed Cape May, and, what was more, he had the promise of Captain Crutchely, of sailing with him, as his first officer, in the next voyage. With that promise in his mind, Mark hastened up the river to Bristol, as soon as he was clear of the vessel.

Bridget Yardley had now fairly budded, to pursue the figure with which we commenced the description of this blooming flower, and, if not actually expanded into perfect womanhood, was so near it as to show beyond all question that the promises of her childhood were to be very amply redeemed. Mark found her in black, however; or, in mourning for her mother. An only child, this serious loss had thrown her more than ever in the way of Anne, the parents on both sides winking at an association that could do no harm, and which might prove so useful. It was very different, however, with the young sailor. He had not been a fortnight at home, and getting to be intimate with the roof−tree of Doctor Yardley, before that person saw fit to pick a quarrel with him, and to forbid him his house. As the dispute was wholly gratuitous on the part of the Doctor, Mark behaving with perfect propriety on the occasion, it may be well to explain its real cause. The fact was, that Bridget was an heiress; if not on a very large scale, still an heiress, and, what was more, unalterably so in right of her mother; and the thought that a son of his competitor, Doctor Woolston, should profit by this fact, was utterly insupportable to him. Accordingly he quarrelled with Mark, the instant he was apprised of the character of his attentions, and forbade him the house. To do Mark justice, he knew nothing of Bridget's worldly possessions. That she was beautiful, and warm−hearted, and frank, and sweet−tempered, and feminine, and affectionate, he both saw and felt; but beyond this he neither saw anything, nor cared about seeing anything. The young sailor was as profoundly ignorant that Bridget was the actual owner of certain three per cents. that brought twelve hundred a year, as if she did not own a `copper,' as it was the fashion of that period to say, `*cents*' being then very little, if at all, used. Nor did he know anything of the farm she had inherited from her mother, or of the store in town, that brought three hundred and fifty more in rent. It is true that some allusions were made to these matters by Doctor Yardley, in his angry comments on the Wool−ston family generally, Anne always excepted, and in whose favour he made a salvo, even in the height of his denunciations. Still, Mark thought so much of that which was really estimable and admirable in Bridget, and so little of anything mercenary, that even after these revelations he could not comprehend the causes of Doctor Yardley's harsh treatment of him. During the whole scene, which was purposely enacted in the presence of his wondering and trembling daughter, Mark behaved perfectly well. He had a respect for the Doctor's years, as well as for Bridget's father, and would not retort. After waiting as long as he conceived waiting could be of any use, he seized his hat, and left the room with an air of resentment that Bridget construed into the expression of an intention never to speak to any of them again. But Mark Woolston was governed by no such design, as the

sequel will show.

CHAPTER II.

"She 's not fourteen."
"I 'll lay fourteen of my teeth,
And yet, to my teen be it spoken, I have but four,
She is not fourteen."

Romeo and Juliet.

Divine wisdom has commanded us to "Honour your father and your mother." Observant travellers affirm that less respect is paid to parents in America, than is usual in Christian nations we say *Christian* nations; for many of the heathen, the Chinese for instance, worship them, though probably with an allegorical connection that we do not understand. That the parental tie is more loose in this country than in most others we believe, and there is a reason to be found for it in the migratory habits of the people, and in the general looseness in all the ties that connect men with the past. The laws on the subject of matrimony, moreover, are so very lax, intercourse is so simple and has so many facilities, and the young of the two sexes are left so much to themselves, that it is no wonder children form that connection so often without reflection and contrary to the wishes of their friends. Still, the law of God is there, and we are among those who believe that a neglect of its mandates is very apt to bring its punishment, even in this world, and we are inclined to think that much of that which Mark and Bridget subsequently suffered, was in consequence of acting directly in the face of the wishes and injunctions of their parents.

The scene which had taken place under the roof of Doctor Yardley was soon known under that of Doctor Woolston. Although the last individual was fully aware that Bridget was what was then esteemed rich, at Bristol, he cared not for her money. The girl he liked well enough, and in secret even admired her as much as he could find it in his heart to admire anything of Doctor Yardley's; but the indignity was one he was by no means inclined to overlook, and, in his turn, he forbade all intercourse between the girls. These two bitter pills, thus administered by the village doctors to their respective patients, made the young people very miserable. Bridget loved Anne almost as much as she loved Mark, and she began to pine and alter in her appearance, in a way to alarm her father. In order to divert her mind, he sent her to town, to the care of an aunt, altogether forgetting that Mark's ship lay at the wharves of Philadelphia, and that he could not have sent his daughter to any place, out of Bristol, where the young man would be so likely to find her. This danger the good doctor entirely overlooked, or, if he thought of it at all, he must have fancied that his sister would keep a sharp eye on the movements of the young sailor, and forbid him *her* house, too.

Everything turned out as the Doctor ought to have expected. When Mark joined his ship, of which he was now the first officer, he sought Bridget and found her. The aunt, however, administered to him the second potion of the same dose that her brother had originally dealt out, and gave him to understand that his presence in Front street was not desired. This irritated both the young people, Bridget being far less disposed to submit to her aunt than to her father, and they met clandestinely in the streets. A week or two of this intercourse brought matters to a crisis, and Bridget consented to a private marriage. The idea of again going to sea, leaving his betrothed entirely in the hands of those who disliked him for his father's sake, was intolerable to Mark, and it made him so miserable, that the tenderness of the deeply enamoured girl could not withstand his appeals. They agreed to get married, but to keep their union a secret until Mark should become of age, when it was hoped he would be in a condition, in every point of view, openly to claim his wife.

A thing of this sort, once decided on, is easily enough put in execution in America. Among Mark's college friends was one who was a few years older than himself, and who had entered the ministry. This young man was then

acting as a sort of missionary among the seamen of the port, and he had fallen in the way of the young lover the very first day of his return to his ship. It was an easy matter to work on the good nature of this easy−minded man, who, on hearing of the ill treatment offered to his friend, was willing enough to perform the ceremony. Everything being previously arranged, Mark and Bridget were married, early one morning, during the time the latter was out, in company with a female friend of about her own age, to take what her aunt believed was her customary walk before breakfast. Philadelphia, in 1796, was not the town it is to−day. It then lay, almost entirely, on the shores of the Delaware, those of the Schuylkill being completely in the country. What was more, the best quarters were still near the river, and the distance between the Rancocus meaning Mark's ship, and not the creek of that name and the house of Bridget's aunt, was but trifling. The ceremony took place in the cabin of the vessel just named, which, now that the captain was ashore in his own house, Mark had all to himself, no second−mate having been shipped, and which was by no means an inappropriate place for the nuptials of a pair like that which our young people turned out to be, in the end.

The Rancocus, though not a large, was a very fine, Philadelphia−built ship, then the best vessels of the country. She was of a little less than four hundred tons in measurement, but she had a very neat and commodious poop−cabin. Captain Crutchely had a thrifty wife, who had contributed her full share to render her husband comfortable, and Bridget thought that the room in which she was united to Mark was one of the prettiest she had ever seen. The reader, however, is not to imagine it a cabin ornamented with marble columns, rose−wood, and the maples, as so often happens now−a−days. No such extravagance was dreamed of fifty years ago; but, as far as judicious arrangements, neat joiner's work, and appropriate furniture went, the cabin of the Rancocus was a very respectable little room. The circumstance that it was on deck, contributed largely to its appearance and comfort, sunken cabins, or those below decks, being necessarily much circumscribed in small ships, in consequence of being placed in a part of the vessel that is contracted in its dimensions under water, in order to help their sailing qualities.

The witnesses of the union of our hero and heroine were the female friend of Bridget named, the officiating clergyman, and one seaman who had sailed with the bridegroom in all his voyages, and who was now retained on board the vessel as a ship−keeper, intending to go out in her again, as soon as she should be ready for sea. The name of this mariner was Betts, or Bob Betts as he was commonly called; and as he acts a conspicuous part in the events to be recorded, it may be well to say a word or two more of his history and character. Bob Betts was a Jerseyman; or, as he would have pronounced the word himself, a Jarseyman in the American meaning of the word, however, and not in the English. Bob was born in Cape May county, and in the *State* of New Jersey, United States of America. At the period of which we are now writing, he must have been about five−and−thirty, and seemingly a confirmed bachelor. The windows of Bob's father's house looked out upon the Atlantic Ocean, and he snuffed sea air from the hour of his birth. At eight years of age he was placed, as cabin−boy, on board a coaster; and from that time down to the moment when he witnessed the marriage ceremony between Mark and Bridget, he had been a sailor. Throughout the whole war of the revolution Bob had served in the navy, in some vessel or other, and with great good luck, never having been made a prisoner of war. In connection with this circumstance was one of the besetting weaknesses of his character. As often happens to men of no very great breadth of views, Bob had a notion that that which he had so successfully escaped, viz. captivity, other men too might have escaped had they been equally as clever. Thus it was that he had an ill−concealed, or only half−concealed contempt for such seamen as suffered themselves, at any time or under any circumstances, to fall into the enemies' hands. On all other subjects Bob was not only rational, but a very discreet and shrewd fellow, though on that he was often harsh, and sometimes absurd. But the best men have their weakness, and this was Bob Bett's.

Captain Crutchely had picked up Bob, just after the peace of 1783, and had kept him with him ever since. It was to Bob that he had committed the instruction of Mark, when the latter first joined the ship, and from Bob the youth had got his earliest notions of seamanship. In his calling Bob was full of resources, and, as often happens with the American sailor, he was even handy at a great many other things, and particularly so with whatever related to practical mechanics. Then he was of vast physical force, standing six feet two, in his stockings, and was round−built and solid. Bob had one sterling quality he was as fast a friend as ever existed. In this respect he was

a model of fidelity, never seeing a fault in those he loved, or a good quality in those he disliked. His attachment to Mark was signal, and he looked on the promotion of the young man much as he would have regarded preferment that befel himself. In the last voyage he had told the people in the forecastle "That young Mark Woolston would make a thorough sea−dog in time, and now he had got to be *Mr.* Woolston, he expected great things of him. The happiest day of my life will be that on which I can ship in a craft commanded by *Captain* Mark Woolston. I teached him, myself, how to break the first sea−biscuit he ever tasted, and next day he could do it as well as any on us! You see how handy and quick he is about a vessel's decks, shipmates; a ra'al rouser at a weather earin' well, when he first come aboard here, and that was little more than two years ago, the smell of tar would almost make him swound away." The latter assertion was one of Bob's embellishments, for Mark was never either lackadaisical or very delicate. The young man cordially returned Bob's regard, and the two were sincere friends without any phrases on the subject.

Bob Betts was the only male witness of the marriage between Mark Woolston and Bridget Yardley, with the exception of the officiating clergyman; as Mary Bromley was the only female. Duplicate certificates, however, were given to the young couple, Mark placing his in his writing−desk, and Bridget hers in the bosom of her dress. Five minutes after the ceremony was ended, the whole party separated, the girls returning to their respective residences, and the clergyman going his way, leaving the mate and the ship−keeper together on the vessel's deck. The latter did not speak, so long as he saw the bridegroom's eyes fastened on the light form of the bride, as the latter went swiftly up the retired wharf where the ship was lying, on her way to Front street, accompanied by her young friend. But, no sooner had Bridget turned a corner, and Bob saw that the attraction was no longer in view, than he thought it becoming to put in a word.

"A trim−built and light−sailing craft, Mr. Woolston," he said, turning over the quid in his mouth; "one of these days she 'll make a noble vessel to command."

"She is my captain, and ever will be, Bob," returned Mark. "But you 'll be silent concerning what has passed."

"Ay, ay, sir. It is not my business to keep a log for all the women in the country to chatter about, like so many monkeys that have found a bag of nuts. But what was the meaning of the parson's saying, `with all my worldly goods I thee endow' does that make you any richer, or any poorer, sir?"

"Neither," answered Mark, smiling. "It leaves me just where I was, Bob, and where I am likely to be for some time to come, I fear."

"And has the young woman nothing herself, sir? Sometimes a body picks up a comfortable chest−full with these sort of things, as they tell me, sir."

"I believe Bridget is as poor as I am myself, Bob, and that is saying all that can be said on such a point. However, l 've secured her now, and two years hence I 'll claim her, if she has not a second gown to wear. I dare say the old man will be for turning her adrift with as little as possible."

All this was a proof of Mark's entire disinterestedness. He did not know that his young bride had quite thirty thousand dollars in reversion, or in one sense in possession, although she could derive no benefit from it until she was of age, or married, and past her eighteenth year. This fact her husband did not learn for several days after his marriage, when his bride communicated it to him, with a proposal that he should quit the sea and remain with her for life. Mark was very much in love, but this scheme scarce afforded him the satisfaction that one might have expected. He was attached to his profession, and scarce relished the thought of being dependent altogether on his wife for the means of subsistence. The struggle between love and pride was great, but Mark, at length, yielded to Bridget's blandishments, tenderness and tears. They could only meet at the house of Mary Bromley, the bride's−maid, but then the interviews between them were as frequent as Mark's duty would allow. The result was that Bridget prevailed, and the young husband went up to Bristol and candidly related all that had passed, thus

revealing, in less than a week, a secret which it was intended should remain hid for at least two years.

Doctor Woolston was sorely displeased, at first; but the event had that about it which would be apt to console a parent. Bridget was not only young, and affectionate, and beautiful, and truthful; but, according to the standard of Bristol, she was rich. There was consolation in all this, notwithstanding professional rivalry and personal dislikes. We are not quite certain that he did not feel a slight gratification at the thought of his son's enjoying the fortune which his rival had received from his wife, and which, but for the will of the grandfather, would have been enjoyed by that rival himself. Nevertheless, the good Doctor did his duty in the premises. He communicated the news of the marriage to Doctor Yardley in a very civilly−worded note, which left a fair opening for a settlement of all difficulties, had the latter been so pleased. The latter did not so please, however, but exploded in a terrible burst of passion, which almost carried him off in a fit of apoplexy.

Escaping all physical dangers, in the end, Doctor Yardley went immediately to Philadelphia, and brought his daughter home. Both Mark and Bridget now felt that they had offended against one of the simplest commands of God. They had *not* honoured their father and their mother, and even thus early came the consciousness of their offence. It was in Mark's power, however, to go and claim his wife, and remove her to his father's house, notwithstanding his minority and that of Bridget. In this last respect, the law offered no obstacle; but the discretion of Doctor Woolston did. This gentleman, through the agency of a common friend, had an interview with his competitor, and they talked the matter over in a tolerably composed and reasonable temper. Both the parents, as medical men, agreed that it would be better that the young couple should not live together for two or three years, the very tender age of Bridget, in particular, rendering this humane, as well as discreet. Nothing was said of the fortune, which mollified Doctor Yardley a good deal, since he would be left to manage it, or at least to receive the income so long as no legal claimant interfered with his control. Elderly gentlemen submit very easily to this sort of influence. Then, Doctor Woolston was exceedingly polite, and spoke to his rival of a difficult case in his own practice, as if indirectly to ask an opinion of his competitor. All this contributed to render the interview more amicable than had been hoped, and the parties separated, if not friends, at least with an understanding on the subject of future proceedings.

It was decided that Mark should continue in the Rancocus for another voyage. It was known the ship was to proceed to some of the islands of the Pacific, in quest of a cargo of sandal−wood and bêche−lê−mar, for the Chinese market, and that her next absence from home would be longer, even, than her last. By the time the vessel returned, Mark would be of age, and fit to command a ship himself, should it be thought expedient for him to continue in his profession. During the period the vessel still remained in port, Mark was to pay occasional visits to his wife, though not to live with her; but the young couple might correspond by letter, as often as they pleased. Such was an outline of the treaty made between the high contracting parties.

In making these arrangements, Doctor Yardley was partly influenced by a real paternal interest in the welfare of his daughter, who he thought altogether too young to enter on the duties and cares of the married life. Below the surface, however, existed an indefinite hope that something might yet occur to prevent the consummation of this most unfortunate union, as he deemed the marriage to be, and thus enable him to get rid of the hateful connection altogether. How this was to happen, the worthy doctor certainly did not know. This was because he lived in 1796, instead of in 1847. Now−a−days, nothing is easier than to separate a man from his wife, unless it be to obtain civic honours for a murderer. Doctor Yardley, at the present moment, would have coolly gone to work to get up a lamentable tale about his daughter's fortune, and youth, and her not knowing her own mind when she married, and a ship's cabin, and a few other embellishments of that sort, when the worthy and benevolent statesmen who compose the different legislatures of this vast Union would have been ready to break their necks, in order to pass a bill of divorce. Had there been a child or two, it would have made no great difference, for means would have been devised to give the custody of them to the mother. This would have been done, quite likely, for the first five years of the lives of the dear little things, because the children would naturally require a mother's care; and afterwards, because the precocious darlings, at the mature age of seven, would declare, in open court, that they really loved `ma' more than they did `pa!' To write a little plainly on a very important subject, we are of opinion

that a new name ought to be adopted for the form of government which is so fast creeping into this country. New things require new names; and, were Solomon now living, we will venture to predict two things of him, viz. he would change his mind on the subject of novelties, and he would never go to congress. As for the new name, we would respectfully suggest that of Gossipian, in lieu of that of Republican, gossip fast becoming the lever that moves everything in the land. The newspapers, true to their instincts of consulting the ruling tastes, deal much more in gossip than they deal in reason; the courts admit it as evidence; the juries receive it as fact, as well as the law; and as for the legislatures, let a piteous tale but circulate freely in the lobbies, and bearded men, like Juliet when a child, as described by her nurse, will "stint and cry, ay!" In a word, principles and proof are in much less esteem than assertions and numbers, backed with enough of which, anything may be made to appear as legal, or even constitutional.

But neither of our doctors entered into all these matters. It was enough for them that the affair of the marriage was disposed of, for a time at least, and things were permitted to drop into their ancient channels. The intercourse between Bridget and Anne was renewed, just as if nothing had happened, and Mark's letters to his virgin bride were numerous, and filled with passion. The ship was `taking in,' and he could only leave her late on Saturday afternoons, but each Sunday he contrived to pass in Bristol. On such occasions he saw his charming wife at church, and he walked with her in the fields, along with Anne and a facoured admirer of hers, of an afternoon, returning to town in season to be at his post on the opening of the hatches, of a Monday morning.

In less than a month after the premature marriage between Mark Woolston and Bridget Yardley, the Rancocus cleared for the Pacific and Canton. The bridegroom found one day to pass in Bristol, and Doctor Yardley so far pitied his daughter's distress, as to consent that the two girls should go to town, under his own care, and see the young man off. This concession was received with the deepest gratitude, and made the young people momentarily very happy. The doctor even consented to visit the ship, which Captain Crutchely, laughing, called St. Mark's chapel, in consequence of the religious rite which had been performed on board her. Mrs. Crutchely was there, on the occasion of this visit, attending to her husband's comforts, by fitting curtains to his berth, and looking after matters in general in the cabin; and divers jokes were ventured by the honest ship−master, in making his comments on, and in giving his opinion of the handy−work of his own consort. He made Bridget blush more than once, though her enduring tenderness in behalf of Mark induced her to sit out all the captain's wit, rather than shorten a visit so precious, one moment.

The final parting was an hour of bitter sorrow. Even Mark's young heart, manly, and much disposed to do his duty as he was, was near breaking; while Bridget almost dissolved in tears. They could not but think how long that separation was to last, though they did not anticipate by what great and mysterious events it was to be prolonged. It was enough for them that they were to live asunder two whole years; and two whole years appear like an age, to those who have not yet lived their four lustrums. But the final moment must and did arrive, and the young people were compelled to tear themselves asunder, though the parting was like that of soul and body. The bride hung on the bridegroom's neck, as the tendril clings to its support, until removed by gentle violence.

Bridget did not give up her hold upon Mark so long as even his vessel remained in sight. She went with Anne, in a carriage, as low as the Point, and saw the Rancocus pass swiftly down the river, on this its fourth voyage, bearing those in her who as little dreamed of their fate, as the unconscious woods and metals, themselves, of which the ship was constructed. Mark felt his heart beat, when he saw a woman's handkerchief waving to him from the shore, and a fresh burst of tenderness nearly unmanned him, when, by the aid of the glass, he recognised the sweet countenance and fairy figure of Bridget. Ten minutes later, distance and interposing objects separated that young couple for many a weary day!

A few days at sea restored the equanimity of Mark's feelings, while the poignant grief of Bridget did not fail to receive the solace which time brings to sorrows of every degree and nature. They thought of each other often, and tenderly; but, the pain of parting over, they both began to look forward to the joys of meeting, with the buoyancy and illusions that hope is so apt to impart to the bosoms of the young and inexperienced. Little did either dream of

what was to occur before their eyes were to be again gladdened with the sight of their respective forms.

Mark found in his state−room for, in the Rancocus, the cabin was fitted with four neat little state−rooms, one for the captain, and two for the mates, with a fourth for the supercargo many proofs of Bridget's love and care. Mrs. Crutchely, herself, though so much longer experienced, had scarcely looked after the captain's comfort with more judgment, and certainly not with greater solicitude, than this youthful bride had expended on her bridegroom's room. In that day, artists were not very numerous in America, nor is it very probable that Doctor Yardley would have permitted his daughter to take so decided a step as to sit for her miniature for Mark's possession; but she had managed to get her profile cut, and to have it framed, and the mate discovered it placed carefully among his effects, when only a week out. From this profile Mark derived the greatest consolation. It was a good one, and Bridget happened to have a face that would tell in that sort of thing, so that the husband had no difficulty in recognising the wife, in this little image. There it was, with the very pretty slight turn of the head to one side, that in Bridget was both natural and graceful. Mark spent hours in gazing at and in admiring this inanimate shadow of his bride, which never failed to recall to him all her grace, and nature, and tenderness and love, though it could not convey any direct expression of her animation and spirit.

It is said ships have no Sundays. The meaning of this is merely that a vessel must perform her work, week−days and sabbaths, day and night, in fair or foul. The Rancocus formed no exception to the rule, and on she travelled, having a road before her that it would require months ere the end of it could be found. It is not our intention to dwell on the details of this long voyage, for two reasons. One is the fact that most voyages to the southern extremity of the American continent are marked by the same incidents; and the other is, that we have much other matter to relate, that must be given with great attention to minuti æ, and which we think will have much more interest with the reader.

Captain Crutchely touched at Rio for supplies, as is customary; and, after passing a week in that most delightful of all havens, went his way. The passage round the Horn was remarkable neither way. It could not be called a very boisterous one, neither was the weather unusually mild. Ships do double this cape, occasionally, under their top−gallant−sails, and we have heard of one vessel that did not furl her royals for several days, while off that formidable head−land; but these cases form the exception and not the rule. The Rancocus was under close−reefed topsails for the better part of a fortnight, in beating to the southward and westward, it blowing very fresh the whole time; and she might have been twice as long struggling with the south−westerly gales, but for the fortunate circumstance of the winds veering so far to the southward as to permit her to lay her course, when she made a great run to the westward. When the wind again hauled, as haul it was almost certain to do, Captain Crutchely believed himself in a meridian that would admit of his running with an easy bowline, on the larboard tack. No one but a sailor can understand the effect of checking the weather−braces, if it be only for a few feet, and of getting a weather−leach to stand without `swigging out' on its bowline. It has much the same influence on the progress of a ship, that an eloquent speech has on the practice of an advocate, a great cure or a skilful operation on that of a medical man, or a lucky hit in trade on the fortunes of the young merchant. Away all go alike, if not absolutely with flowing sheets, easily, swiftly, and with less of labour than was their wont. Thus did it now prove with the good ship Rancocus. Instead of struggling hard with the seas to get three knots ahead, she now made her six, and kept all, or nearly all, she made. When she saw the land again, it was found there was very little to spare, but that little sufficed. The vessel passed to windward of everything, and went on her way rejoicing, like any other that had been successful in a hard and severe struggle. A fortnight later, the ship touched at Valparaiso.

The voyage of the Rancocus may now be said to have commenced in earnest. Hitherto she had done little but make her way across the endless waste of waters; but now she had the real business before her to execute. A considerable amount of freight, which had been brought on account of the Spanish government, was discharged, and the vessel filled up her water. Certain supplies of food that was deemed useful in cases of scurvy, were obtained, and after a delay of less than a fortnight, the ship once more put to sea.

In the year 1796 the Pacific Ocean was by no means as familiar to navigators as it is to−day. Cooke had made his celebrated voyages less than twenty years before, and the accounts of them were then before the world; but even Cooke left a great deal to be ascertained, more especially in the way of details. The first inventor, or discoverer of anything, usually gains a great name, though it is those who come after him that turn his labours to account. Did we know no more of America to−day than was known to Columbus, our knowledge would be very limited, and the benefits of his vast enterprise still in their infancy.

Compared with its extent, perhaps, and keeping in view its ordinary weather, the Pacific can hardly be considered a dangerous sea; but he who will cast his eyes over its chart, will at once ascertain how much more numerous are its groups, islands, rocks, shoals and reefs, than those of the Atlantic. Still, the mariners unhesitatingly steered out into its vast waters, and none with less reluctance and fewer doubts than those of America.

For nearly two months did Captain Crutchely, after quitting Valparaiso, hold his way into the depths of that mighty sea, in search of the islands he had been directed to find. Sandal−wood was his aim, a branch of commerce, by the way, which ought never to be pursued by any Christian man, or Christian nation, if what we hear of its uses in China be true. There, it is said to be burned as incense before idols, and no higher offence can be committed by any human being than to be principal, or accessary, in any manner or way, to the substitution of any created thing for the ever−living God. In after−life Mark Woolston often thought of this, when reflection succeeded to action, and when he came to muse on the causes which may have led to his being the subject of the wonderful events that occurred in connection with his own fortunes. We have now reached a part of our narrative, however, when it becomes necessary to go into details, which we shall defer to the commencement of a new chapter.

CHAPTER III.

"God of the dark and heavy deep!
The waves lie sleeping on the sands,
Till the fierce trumpet of the storm
Hath summon'd up their thundering bands;
Then the white sails are dashed like foam,
Or hurry trembling o'er the seas,
Till calmed by thee, the sinking gale
Serenely breathes, Depart in peace." Peabody.

The day that preceded the night of which we are about to speak, was misty, with the wind fresh at east−south−east. The Rancocus was running off, south−west, and consequently was going with the wind free. Captain Crutchely had one failing, and it was a very bad one for a ship−master; he would drink rather too much grog, at his dinner. At all other times he might have been called a sober man; but, at dinner, he would gulp down three or four glasses of rum and water. In that day rum was much used in America, far more than brandy; and every dinner−table, that had the smallest pretension to be above that of the mere labouring man, had at least a bottle of one of these liquors on it. Wine was not commonly seen at the cabin−table; or, if seen, it was in those vessels that had recently been in the vine−growing countries, and on special occasions. Captain Crutchely was fond of the pleasures of the table in another sense. His eating was on a level with his drinking; and for pigs, and poultry, and vegetables that would keep at sea, his ship was always a little remarkable.

On the day in question, it happened to be the birthday of Mrs. Crutchely, and the captain had drunk even a little more than common. Now, when a man is in the habit of drinking rather more than is good for him, an addition of a little more than common is very apt to upset him. Such, in sober truth, was the case with the commander of the Rancocus, when he left the dinner−table, at the time to which there is particular allusion. Mark, himself, was

perfectly sober. The taste of rum was unpleasant to him, nor did his young blood and buoyant spirits crave its effects. If he touched it at all, it was in very small quantities, and greatly diluted with water. He saw the present condition of his superior, therefore, with regret; and this so much the more, from the circumstance that an unpleasant report was prevailing in the ship, that white water had been seen ahead, during a clear moment, by a man who had just come from aloft. This report the mate repeated to the captain, accompanying it with a suggestion that it might be well to shorten sail, round−to, and sound. But Captain Crutchely treated the report with no respect, swearing that the men were always fancying they were going ashore on coral, and that the voyage would last for ever, did he comply with all their conceits of this nature. Unfortunately, the second−mate was an old sea−dog, who owed his present inferior condition to his being a great deal addicted to the practice in which his captain indulged only a little, and he had been sharing largely in the hospitality of the cabin that afternoon, it being his watch below. This man supported the captain in his contempt for the rumours and notions of the crew, and between them Mark found himself silenced.

Our young officer felt very uneasy at the account of the sailor who had reported white water ahead, for he was one of the best men in the ship, and altogether unlikely to say that which was not true. It being now six o'clock in the evening, and the second−mate having taken charge of the watch, Mark went up into the fore−top−gallant cross−trees himself, in order to get the best look ahead that he could before the night set in. It wanted but half an hour, or so, of sunset, when the young man took his station in the cross−trees, the royal not being set. At first, he could discern nothing ahead, at a distance greater than a mile, on account of the mist; but, just as the sun went below the waters it lighted up to the westward, and Mark then plainly saw what he was perfectly satisfied must be breakers, extending for several miles directly across the vessel's track!

Such a discovery required decision, and the young man shouted out

"Breakers ahead!"

This cry, coming from his first officer, startled even Captain Crutchely, who was recovering a little from the effect of his potations, though it was still treated with contempt by the second−mate, who had never forgiven one as young as Mark, for getting a berth that he fancied due to his own greater age and experience. He laughed openly at this second report of breakers, at a point in the ocean where the chart laid down a clear sea; but the captain knew that the charts could only tell him what was known at the time they were made, and he felt disposed to treat his first officer, young as he was, with more respect than the second−mate. All hands were called in consequence, and sail was shortened. Mark came down to assist in this duty, while Captain Crutchely himself went aloft to look out for the breakers. They passed each other in the top, the latter desiring his mate to bring the ship by the wind, on the larboard tack, or with her head to the southward, as soon as he had the sail sufficiently reduced to do so with safety.

For a few minutes after he reached the deck, Mark was fully employed in executing his orders. Sail was shortened with great rapidity, the men working with zeal and alarm, for they believed their messmate when the captain had not. Although the vessel was under top−mast studding−sails when the command to take in the canvas was given, it was not long before Mark had her under her three topsails, and these with two reefs in them, and the ship on an easy bowline, with her head to the southward. When all this was done the young man felt a good deal of relief, for the danger he had seen was ahead, and this change of course brought it nearly abeam. It is true, the breakers were still to leeward, and insomuch most dangerously situated; but the wind did not blow strong enough to prevent the ship from weathering them, provided time was taken by the forelock. The Rancocus was a good, weatherly ship, nor was there sufficient sea on to make it at all difficult for her to claw off a lee shore. Desperate indeed is the situation of the vessel that has rocks or sands under her lee, with the gale blowing in her teeth, and heavy seas sending her bodily, and surely, however slowly, on the very breakers she is struggling to avoid! Captain Crutchely had not been aloft five minutes before he hailed the deck, and ordered Mark to send Bob Betts up to the cross−trees. Bob had the reputation of being the brightest look−out in the vessel, and was usually employed when land was about to be approached, or a sail was expected to be made. He went up the fore−rigging like a squirrel,

and was soon at the captain's side, both looking anxiously to leeward. A few minutes after the ship had hauled by the wind, both came down, stopping in the top, however, to take one more look to leeward.

The second−mate stood waiting the further descent of the captain, with a sort of leering look of contempt on his hard, well−dyed features, which seemed to anticipate that it would soon be known that Mark's white water had lost its colour, and become blue water once more. But Captain Crutchely did not go as far as this, when he got down. He admitted that he had seen nothing that he could very decidedly say was breakers, but that, once or twice, when it lighted up a little, there had been a gleaming along the western horizon which a good deal puzzled him. It might be white water, or it might be only the last rays of the setting sun tipping the combs of the regular seas. Bob Betts, too, was as much at fault as his captain, and a sarcastic remark or two of Hillson, the second−mate, were fast bringing Mark's breakers into discredit.

"Jest look at the chart, Captain Crutchely," put in Hillson "a regular Tower Hill chart as ever was made, and you 'll see there *can* be no white water hereabouts. If a man is to shorten sail and haul his wind, at every dead whale he falls in with, in these seas, his owners will have the balance on the wrong side of the book at the end of the v'y'ge!"

This told hard against Mark, and considerably in Hillson's favour.

"And could *you* see nothing of breakers ahead, Bob?" demanded Mark, with an emphasis on the `*you*' which pretty plainly implied that the young man was not so much surprised that the captain had not seen them.

"Not a bit of it, Mr. Woolston," answered Bob, hitching up his trowsers, "and I 'd a pretty good look ahead, too."

This made still more against Mark, and Captain Crutchely sent for the chart. Over this map he and the second−mate pondered with a sort of muzzy sagacity, when they came to the conclusion that a clear sea *must* prevail around them, in all directions, for a distance exceeding a thousand miles. A great deal is determined in any case of a dilemma, when it is decided that this or that fact *must* be so. Captain Crutchely would not have arrived at this positive conclusion so easily, had not his reasoning powers been so much stimulated by his repeated draughts of rum and water, that afternoon; all taken, as he said and believed, not so much out of love for the beverage itself, as out of love for Mrs. John Crutchely. Nevertheless, our captain was accustomed to take care of a ship, and he was not yet in a condition to forget all his duties, in circumstances so critical. As Mark solemnly and steadily repeated his own belief that there were breakers ahead, he so far yielded to the opinions of his youthful chief−mate as to order the deep−sea up, and to prepare to sound.

This operation of casting the deep−sea lead is not done in a moment, but, on board a merchant vessel, usually occupies from a quarter of an hour to twenty minutes. The ship must first be hove−to, and her way ought to be as near lost as possible before the cast is made. Then the getting along of the line, the stationing of the men, and the sounding and hauling in again, occupy a good many minutes. By the time it was all over, on this occasion, it was getting to be night. The misty, drizzling weather threatened to make the darkness intense, and Mark felt more and more impressed with the danger in which the ship was placed.

The cast of the lead produced no other result than the certainty that bottom was not to be found with four hundred fathoms of line out. No one, however, not even the muzzy Hillson, attached much importance to this fact, inasmuch as it was known that the coral reefs often rise like perpendicular walls, in the ocean, having no bottom to be found within a cable's−length of them. Then Mark did not believe the ship to be within three leagues of the breakers he had seen, for they had seemed, both to him and to the seaman who had first reported them, to be several leagues distant. One on an elevation like that of the top−gallant cross−trees, could see a long way, and the white water had appeared to Mark to be on the very verge of the western horizon, even as seen from his lofty look−out.

After a further consultation with his officers, during which Hillson had not spared his hits at his less experienced superior, Captain Crutchely came to a decision, which might be termed semi−prudent. There is nothing that a seaman more dislikes than to be suspected of extranervousness on the subject of doubtful dangers of this sort. Seen and acknowledged, he has no scruples about doing his best to avoid them; but so long as there is an uncertainty connected with their existence at all, that miserable feeling of vanity which renders us all so desirous to be more than nature ever intended us for, inclines most men to appear indifferent even while they dread. The wisest thing Captain Crutchely could have done, placed in the circumstances in which he now found himself, would have been to stand off and on, under easy canvas, until the return of light, when he might have gone ahead on his course with some confidence, and a great deal more of safety. But there would have been an air of concession to the power of an unknown danger that conflicted with his pride, in such a course, and the old and well−tried ship−master did not like to give the `uncertain' this advantage over him. He decided therefore to stand on, with his topsails reefed, keeping bright look−outs ahead, and having his courses in the brails, ready for getting the tacks down to claw off to windward, should it prove to be necessary. With this plan Mark was compelled to comply, there being no appeal from the decrees of the autocrat of the quarter−deck.

As soon as the decision of Captain Crutchely was made, the helm was put up, and the ship kept off to her course. It was true, that under double−reefed topsails, and jib, which was all the canvas set, there was not half the danger there would have been under their former sail; and, when Mark took charge of the watch, as he did soon after, or at eight o'clock, he was in hopes, by means of vigilance, still to escape the danger. The darkness, which was getting to be very intense, was now the greatest and most immediate source of his apprehensions. Could he only get a glimpse of the sea a cable's−length ahead, he would have felt vast relief; but even that small favour was denied him. By the time the captain and second−mate had turned in, which each did after going below and taking a stiff glass of rum and water in his turn, it was so dark our young mate could not discern the combing of the waves a hundred yards from the ship, in any direction. This obscurity was owing to the drizzle that filled the atmosphere, as well as to the clouds that covered the canopy above that lone and wandering ship.

As for Mark, he took his station between the knight−heads, where he remained most of the watch, nearly straining the eyes out of his head, in the effort to penetrate the gloom, and listening acutely to ascertain if he might not catch some warning roar of the breakers, that he felt so intimately persuaded must be getting nearer and nearer at each instant. As midnight approached, came the thought of Hillson's taking his place, drowsy and thick−headed as he knew he must be at that hour. At length Mark actually fancied he heard the dreaded sounds; the warning, however, was not ahead, but well on his starboard beam. This he thought an ample justification for departing from his instructions, and he instantly issued an order to put the helm hard a−starboard, so as to bring the vessel up to the wind, on the contrary tack. Unfortunately, as the result proved, it now became his imperative duty to report to Captain Crutchely what he had done. For a minute or two the young man thought of keeping silence, to stand on his present course, to omit calling the second−mate, and to say nothing about what he had done, keeping the deck himself until light should return. But reflection induced him to shrink from the execution of this plan, which would have involved him in a serious misunderstanding with both his brother officers, who could not fail to hear all that had occurred in the night, and who must certainly know, each in his respective sphere, that they themselves had been slighted. With a slow step, therefore, and a heavy heart, Mark went into the cabin to make his report, and to give the second−mate the customary call.

It was not an easy matter to awaken either of those, who slept under the influence of potations as deep as the night−caps taken by Captain Crutchely and Mr. Hillson. The latter, in particular, was like a man in a state of lethargy, and Mark had half a mind to leave him, and make his condition an excuse for not having persisted in the call. But he succeeded in arousing the captain, who soon found the means to bring the second−mate to a state of semi−consciousness.

"Well, sir," cried the captain, as soon as fairly awake himself, "what now?"

"I think I heard breakers abeam, sir, and I have hauled up to the southward."

A grunt succeeded, which Mark scarce knew how to interpret. It might mean dissatisfaction, or it might mean surprise. As the captain, however, was thoroughly awake, and was making his preparations to come out on deck, he thought that he had done all that duty required, and he returned to his own post. The after−part of the ship was now the best situation for watching, and Mark went up on the poop, in order to see and hear the better. No lower sail being in the way, he could look ahead almost as well from that position as if he were forward; and as for hearing, it was much the best place of the two, in consequence of there being no wash of the sea directly beneath him, as was the case when stationed between the knight−heads. To this post he soon summoned Bob Betts, who belonged to his watch, and with whom he had ever kept up as great an intimacy as the difference in their stations would allow.

"Bob, your ears are almost as good as your eyes," said Mark; "have you heard nothing of breakers?"

"I have, Mr. Woolston, and now own I did see something that may have been white water, this arternoon, while aloft; but the captain and second−mate seemed so awarse to believing in sich a thing, out here in the open Pacific, that I got to be awarse, too."

"It was a great fault in a look−out not to let what he had seen be known," said Mark, gravely.

"I own it, sir; I own how wrong I was, and have been sorry for it ever since. But it 's going right in the wind's eye, Mr. Woolston, to go ag'in captain and dickey!"

"But, you now think you have *heard* breakers where away?"

"Astarn first; then ahead; and, just as you called me up on the poop, sir, I fancied they sounded off here, on the weather bow."

"Are you serious, Bob?"

"As I ever was in my life, Mr. Mark. This oversight of the arternoon has made me somewhat conscientious, if I can be conscientious, and my sight and hearing are now both wide awake. It 's my opinion, sir, that the ship is in the *midst* of breakers at this instant, and that we may go on 'em at any moment!"

"The devil it is!" exclaimed Captain Crutchely, who now appeared on the poop, and who caught the last part of Bob Betts's speech. "Well, for my part, I hear nothing out of the way, and I will swear the keenest−sighted man on earth can see nothing."

These words were scarcely out of the captain's mouth, and had been backed by a senseless, mocking laugh from Hillson, who was still muzzy, and quite as much asleep as awake, when the deep and near roar of breakers was most unequivocally heard. It came from to windward, too, and abeam! This was proof that the ship was actually among the breakers when Mark hauled up, and that she was now passing a danger to leeward, that she must have previously gone by, in running down on her course. The captain, without waiting to consult with his cool and clear−headed young mate, now shouted for all hands to be called, and to "stand by to ware ship." These orders came out so fast, and in so peremptory a manner, that remonstrance was out of the question, and Mark set himself at work to obey them, in good earnest. *He* would have tacked in preference to waring, and it would have been much wiser to do so; but it was clearly expedient to get the ship on the other tack, and he lent all his present exertions to the attainment of that object. Waring is much easier done than tacking, certainly; when it does not blow too fresh, and there is not a dangerous sea on, no nautical manoeuvre can be more readily effected, though room is absolutely necessary to its success. This room was now wanting. Just as the ship had got dead before the wind, and was flying away to leeward, short as was the sail she was under, the atmosphere seemed to be suddenly filled with a strange light, the sea became white all around them, and a roar of tumbling waters arose, that resembled the sound of a small cataract. The ship was evidently in the midst of breakers, and the next moment she

struck!

The intense darkness of the night added to the horrors of that awful moment. Nevertheless, the effect was to arouse all that there was of manliness and seamanship in Captain Crutchely, who from that instant appeared to be himself again. His orders were issued coolly, clearly and promptly, and they were obeyed as experienced mariners will work at an instant like that. The sails were all clewed up, and the heaviest of them were furled. Hillson was ordered to clear away an anchor, while Mark was attending to the canvas. In the mean time, the captain watched the movements of the ship. He had dropped a lead alongside, and by that he ascertained that they were still beating ahead. The thumps were not very hard, and the white water was soon left astern, none having washed on deck. All this was so much proof that the place on which they had struck must have had nearly water enough to float the vessel, a fact that the lead itself corroborated. Fifteen feet aft was all the Rancocus wanted, in her actual trim, and the lead showed a good three fathoms, at times. It was when the ship settled in the troughs of the sea that she felt the bottom. Satisfied that his vessel was likely to beat over the present difficulty, Captain Crutchely now gave all his attention to getting her anchored as near the reef and to leeward of it, as possible. The instant she went clear, a result he now expected every moment, he was determined to drop one of his bower anchors, and wait for daylight, before he took any further steps to extricate himself from the danger by which he was surrounded.

On the forecastle, the work went on badly, and thither Captain Crutchely proceeded. The second−mate scarce knew what he was about, and the captain took charge of the duty himself. At the same time he issued an order to Mark to get up tackles, and to clear away the launch, preparatory to getting that boat into the water. Hillson had bent the cable wrong, and much of the work had to be done over again. As soon as men get excited, as is apt to be the case when they find serious blunders made at critical moments, they are not always discreet. The precise manner in which Captain Crutchely met with the melancholy fate that befel him, was never known. It is certain that he jumped down on the anchor−stock, the anchor being a cock−bill, and that he ordered Mr. Hillson off of it. While thus employed, and at an instant when the cable was pronounced bent, and the men were in the act of getting inboard, the ship made a heavy roll, breakers again appeared all around her, the white foam rising nearly to the level of her rails. The captain was seen no more. There is little doubt that he was washed from the anchor−stock, and carried away to leeward, in the midst of the darkness of that midnight hour.

Mark was soon apprised of the change that had occurred, and of the heavy responsibility that now rested on his young shoulders. A feeling of horror and of regret came over him, at first; but understanding the necessity of self−command, he aroused himself, at once, to his duty, and gave his orders coolly and with judgment. The first step was to endeavour to save the captain. The jolly−boat was lowered, and six men got in it, and passed ahead of the ship, with this benevolent design. Mark stood on the bowsprit, and saw them shoot past the bows of the vessel, and then, almost immediately, become lost to view in the gloomy darkness of the terrible scene. The men never re−appeared, a common and an unknown fate thus sweeping away Captain Crutchely and six of his best men, and all, as it might be, in a single instant of time!

Notwithstanding these sudden and alarming losses, the work went on. Hillson seemed suddenly to become conscious of the necessity of exertion, and by giving his utmost attention to hoisting out the launch, that boat was got safely into the water. By this time the ship had beaten so far over the reef, as scarcely to touch at all, and Mark had everything ready for letting go his anchors, the instant he had reason to believe she was in water deep enough to float her. The thumps grew lighter and lighter, and the lead−line showed a considerable drift; so much so, indeed, as to require its being hauled in and cast anew every minute. Under all the circumstances, Mark expected each instant, to find himself in four fathoms' water, and he intended to let go the anchor the moment he was assured of that fact. In the mean time, he ordered the carpenter to sound the pumps. This was done, and the ship was reported with only the customary quantity of water in the well. As yet her bottom was not injured, materially at least.

While Mark stood with the lead−line in his hand, anxiously watching the drift of the vessel and the depth of water, Hillson was employed in placing provisions in the launch. There was a small amount of specie in the cabin,

and this, too, was transferred to the launch; everything of that sort being done without Mark's knowledge, and by the second−mate's orders. The former was on the forecastle, waiting the proper moment to anchor; while all of the after−part of the ship was at the mercy of the second−mate, and a gang of the people, whom that officer had gathered around him.

At length Mark found, to his great delight, that there were four good fathoms of water under the ship's bows, though she still hung abaft. He ascertained this fact by means of Bob Betts, which true−hearted tar stood by him, with a lantern, by swinging which low enough, the marks were seen on the lead−line. Foot by foot the ship now surged ahead, the seas being so much reduced in size and power, by the manner in which they had been broken to windward, as not to lift the vessel more than an inch or two at a time. After waiting patiently a quarter of an hour, Mark believed that the proper time had come, and he gave the order to `let run.' The seaman stationed at the stopper obeyed, and down went the anchor. It happened, opportunely enough, that the anchor was thus dropped, just as the keel cleared the bottom, and the cable being secured at a short range, after forging ahead far enough to tighten the latter, the vessel tended. In swinging to her anchor, a roller came down upon her, however; one that had crossed the reef without breaking, and broke on board her. Mark afterwards believed that the rush and weight of this sea, which did no serious harm, frightened the men into the launch, where Hillson was already in person, and that the boat either struck adrift under the power of the roller, or that the painter was imprudently cast off in the confusion of the moment. He had got in as far as the windlass himself, when the sea came aboard; and, as soon as he recovered his sight after the ducking he received, he caught a dim view of the launch, driving off to leeward, on the top of a wave. Hailing was useless, and he stood gazing at the helpless boat until it became lost, like everything else that was a hundred yards from the ship, in the gloom of night. Even then Mark was by no means conscious of the extent of the calamity that had befallen him. It was only when he had visited cabin, steerage and forecastle, and called the crew over by name, that he reached the grave fact that there was no one left on board the Rancocus but Bob Betts and himself!

As Mark did not know what land was to be found to leeward, he naturally enough hoped and expected that the people in both boats might reach the shore, and be recovered in the morning; but he had little expectation of ever seeing Captain Crutchely again. The circumstances, however, afforded him little time to reflect on these things, and he gave his whole attention, for the moment, to the preservation of the ship. Fortunately, the anchor held, and, as the wind, which had never blown very heavily, sensibly began to lessen, Mark was sanguine in the belief it would continue to hold. Captain Crutchely had taken the precaution to have the cable bitted at a short range, with a view to keep it, as much as possible, off the bottom; coral being known to cut the hempen cables that were altogether in use, in that day, almost as readily as axes. In consequence of this bit of foresight, the Rancocus lay at a distance of less than forty fathoms from her anchor, which Mark knew had been dropped in four fathoms' water. He now sounded abreast of the main−mast, and ascertained that the ship itself was in nine fathoms. This was cheering intelligence, and when Bob Betts heard it, he gave it as his opinion that all might yet go well with them, could they only recover the six men who had gone to leeward in the jolly−boat. The launch had carried off nine of their crew, which, previously to this night, had consisted of nineteen, all told. This suggestion relieved Mark's mind of a load of care, and he lent himself to the measures necessary to the continued safety of the vessel, with renewed animation and vigour.

The pump−well was once more sounded, and found to be nearly empty. Owing to the nature of the bottom on which they had struck, the lightness of the thumps, or the strength of the ship herself, it was clear that the vessel had thus far escaped without any material injury. For this advantage Mark was deeply grateful, and could he only recover four or five of the people, and find his way out into open water, he might hope to live again to see America, and to be re−united to his youthful and charming bride.

The weather continued to grow more and more moderate, and some time before the day returned the clouds broke away, the drizzle ceased, and a permanent change was to be expected. Mark now found new ground for apprehensions, even in these favourable circumstances. He supposed that the ship must feel the influence of the tides, so near the land, and was afraid she might tail the other way, and thus be brought again over the reef. In

order to obviate this difficulty, he and Bob set to work to get another cable bent, and another anchor clear for letting go. As all our readers may not be familiar with ships, it may be well to say that vessels, as soon as they quit a coast on a long voyage, unbend their cables and send them all below, out of the way, while, at the same time, they stow their anchors, as it is called; that is to say, get them from under the cat−heads, from which they are usually suspended when ready to let go, and where they are necessarily altogether on the outside of the vessel, to positions more inboard, where they are safer from the force of the waves, and better secured. As all the anchors of the Rancocus had been thus stowed, until Captain Crutchely got the one that was down, off the gunwale, and all the cables below, Mark and Bob had labour enough before them to occupy several hours, in the job thus undertaken.

CHAPTER IV.

"Deep in the wave is a coral grove,
Where the purple mullet and gold fish rove,
Where the sea−flower spreads its leaves of blue,
That never are wet with falling dew,
But in bright and changeful beauty shine,
Far down in the green and grassy brine."

Percival.

Our young mate, and his sole assistant, Bob Betts, had set about their work on the stream−cable and anchor, the lightest and most manageable of all the ground−tackle in the vessel. Both were strong and active, and both were expert in the use of blocks, purchases, and handspikes; but the day was seen lighting the eastern sky, and the anchor was barely off the gunwale, and ready to be stoppered. In the meanwhile the ship still tended in the right direction, the wind had moderated to a mere royal−breeze, and the sea had so far gone down as nearly to leave the vessel without motion. As soon as perfectly convinced of the existence of this favourable state of things, and of its being likely to last, Mark ceased to work, in order to wait for day, telling Bob to discontinue his exertions also. It was fully time, for both of those vigorous and strong−handed men were thoroughly fatigued with the toil of that eventful morning.

The reader may easily imagine with what impatience our two mariners waited the slow return of light. Each minute seemed an hour, and it appeared to them as if the night was to last for ever. But the earth performed its usual revolution, and by degrees sufficient light was obtained to enable Mark and Bob to examine the state of things around them. In order to do this the better, each went into a top, looking abroad from those elevations on the face of the ocean, the different points of the reef, and all that was then and there to be seen. Mark went up forward, while Bob ascended into the main−top. The distance between them was so small, that there was no difficulty in conversing, which they continued to do, as was natural enough to men in their situation.

The first look that each of our mariners bestowed, after he was in his top, was to leeward, which being to the westward, was of course yet in the darkest point of the horizon. They expected to obtain a sight of at least one island, and that quite near to them, if not of a group. But no land appeared! It is true, that it was still too dark to be certain of a fact of this sort, though Mark felt quite assured that if land was finally seen, it must be of no great extent, and quite low. He called to Bob, to ascertain what *he* thought of appearances to leeward, his reputation as a look−out being so great.

"Wait a few minutes, sir, till we get a bit more day," answered his companion. "There is a look on the water, about a league off here on the larboard quarter, that seems as if something would come out of it. But, one thing can be seen plain enough, Mr. Mark, and that 's the breakers. There 's a precious line on 'em, and that too one within

another, as makes it wonderful how we ever got through 'em as well as we did!"

This was true enough, the light on the ocean to windward being now sufficient to enable the men to see, in that direction, to a considerable distance. It was that solemn hour in the morning when objects first grow distinct, ere they are touched with the direct rays from the sun, and when everything appears as if coming to us fresh and renovated from the hands of the Creator. The sea had so far gone down as to render the breakers much less formidable to the eye, than when it was blowing more heavily; but this very circumstance made it impossible to mistake their positions. In the actual state of the ocean, it was certain that wherever water broke, there must be rocks or shoals beneath; whereas, in a blow, the combing of an ordinary sea might be mistaken for the white water of some hidden danger. Many of the rocks, however, lay so low, that the heavy, sluggish rollers that came undulating along, scarce did more than show faint, feathery lines of white, to indicate the character of the places across which they were passing. Such was now the case with the reef over which the ship had beaten, the position of which could hardly have been ascertained, or its danger discovered, at the distance of half a mile. Others again were of a very different character, the water still tumbling about them like so many little cataracts. This variety was owing to the greater depth at which some of the rocks lay than others.

As to the number of the reefs, and the difficulty in getting through them, Bob was right enough. It often happens that there is an inner and an outer reef to the islands of the Pacific, particularly to those of coral formation; but Mark began to doubt whether there was any coral at all in the place where the Rancocus lay, in consequence of the entire want of regularity in the position of these very breakers. They were visible in all directions; not in continuous lines, but in detached parts; one lying within another, as Bob had expressed it, until the eye could not reach their outer limits. How the ship had got so completely involved within their dangerous embraces, without going to pieces on a dozen of the reefs, was to him matter of wonder; though it sometimes happens at sea, that dangers are thus safely passed in darkness and fog, that no man would be bold enough to encounter in broad daylight, and with a full consciousness of their hazards. Such then had been the sort of miracleby which the Rancocus had escaped; though it was no more easy to see how she was to be got out of her present position, than it was to see how she had got into it. Bob was the first to make a remark on this particular part of the subject.

"It will need a reg'lar branch here, Mr. Mark, to carry the old Rancocus clear of all them breakers to sea again," he cried. "Our Delaware banks is just so many fools to 'em, sir!"

"It is a most serious position for a vessel to be in, Bob," answered Mark, sighing "nor do I see how we *are* ever to get clear of it, even should we get back men enough to handle the ship."

"I 'm quite of your mind, sir," answered Bob, taking out his tobacco−box, and helping himself to a quid. "Nor would I be at all surprised should there turn out to be a bit of land to leeward, if you and I was to Robinson Crusoe it for the rest of our days. My good mother was always most awarse to my following the seas on account of that very danger; most especially from a fear of the savages from the islands round about."

"We will look for our boats," Mark gravely replied, the image of Bridget, just at that instant, appearing before his mind with a painful distinctness.

Both now turned their eyes again to leeward, the first direct rays of the sun beginning to illumine the surface of the ocean in that quarter. Something like a misty cloud had been settled on the water, rather less than a league from the ship, in the western board, and had hitherto prevented a close examination in that part of the horizon. The power of the sun, however, almost instantly dispersed it, and then, for the first time, Bob fancied he did discover something like land. Mark, however, could not make it out, until he had gone up into the cross−trees, when he, too, got a glimpse of what, under all the circumstances, he did not doubt was either a portion of the reef that rose above the water, or was what might be termed a low, straggling island. Its distance from the ship, they estimated at rather more than two leagues.

Both Mark and Bob remained aloft near an hour longer, or until they had got the best possible view of which their position would allow, of everything around the ship. Bob went down, and took a glass up to his officer, Mark sweeping the whole horizon with it, in the anxious wish to make out something cheering in connection with the boats. The drift of these unfortunate craft must have been towards the land, and that he examined with the utmost care. Aided by the glass, and his elevation, he got a tolerable view of the spot, which certainly promised as little in the way of supplies as any other bit of naked reef he had ever seen. The distance, however, was so great as to prevent his obtaining any certain information on that point. One thing, however, he did ascertain, as he feared, with considerable accuracy. After passing the glass along the whole of that naked rock, he could see nothing on it in motion. Of birds there were a good many, more indeed than from the extent of the visible reef he might have expected; but no signs of man could be discovered. As the ocean, in all directions, was swept by the glass, and this single fragment of a reef, which was less than a mile in length, was the only thing that even resembled land, the melancholy conviction began to force itself on Mark and Bob, that all their shipmates had perished! They might have perished in one of several ways; as the naked reef did not lie precisely to leeward of the ship, the boats may have driven by it, in the deep darkness of the past night, and gone far away out of sight of the spot where they had left the vessel, long ere the return of day. There was just the possibility that the spars of the ship might be seen by the wanderers, if they were still living, and the faint hope of their regaining the vessel, in the course of the day, by means of their oars. It was, however, more probable that the boats had capsized in some of the numerous fragments of breakers, that were visible even in the present calm condition of the ocean, and that all in them had been drowned. The best swimmer must have hopelessly perished, in such a situation, and in such a night, unless carried by a providential interference to the naked rock to leeward. That no one was living on that reef, the glass pretty plainly proved.

Mark and Bob Betts descended to the deck, after passing a long time aloft making their observations. Both were pretty well assured that their situation was almost desperate, though each was too resolute, and too thoroughly inbued with the spirit of a seaman, to give up while there was the smallest shadow of hope. As it was now getting past the usual breakfast hour, some cold meat was got out, and, for the first time since Mark had been transferred to the cabin, they sat down on the windlass and ate the meal together. A little, however, satisfied men in their situation; Bob Betts fairly owning that he had no appetite, though so notorious at the ship's beef and a biscuit, as to be often the subject of his messmates' jokes. That morning even he could eat but little, though both felt it to be a duty they owed to themselves to take enough to sustain nature. It was while these two forlorn and desolate mariners sat there on the windlass, picking, as it might be, morsel by morsel, that they first entered into a full and frank communication with each other, touching the realities of their present situation. After a good deal had passed between them, Mark suddenly asked

"Do you think it possible, Bob, for us two to take care of the ship, should we even manage to get her into deep water again?"

"Well, that is not so soon answered, Mr. Woolston," returned Bob. "We 're both on us stout, and healthy, and of good courage, Mr. Mark; but 't would be a desperate long way for two hands to carry a wessel of four hundred tons, to take the old 'Cocus from this here anchorage, all the way to the coast of America; and short of the coast there 's no ra'al hope for us. Howsever, sir, *that* is a subject that need give us no consarn."

"I do not see that, Bob; we shall have to do it, unless we fall in with something at sea, could we only once get the vessel out from among these reefs."

"Ay, ay, sir could we get her out from among these reefs, indeed! There 's the rub, Mr. Woolston; but I fear 't will never be `rub and *go*.'"

"You think, then, we are too fairly in for it, ever to get the ship clear?"

"Such is just my notion, Mr. Woolston, on that subject, and I 've no wish to keep it a secret. In my judgment, was poor Captain Crutchely alive and back at his post, and all hands just as they was this time twenty−four hours since, and the ship where she is now, that *here* she would have to stay. Nothing short of kedging can ever take the wessel clear of the reefs to windward on us, and man−of−war kedging could hardly do it, then."

"I am sorry to hear you say this," answered Mark, gloomily, "though I feared as much myself."

"Men is men, sir, and you can get no more out on 'em than is in 'em. I looked well at these reefs, sir, when aloft, and they 're what I call as hopeless affairs as ever I laid eyes on. If they lay in any sort of way, a body might have some little chance of getting through 'em, but they don't lay, no how. 'T would be `luff' and `keep her away' every half minute or so, should we attempt to beat up among 'em; and who is there aboard here to brace up, and haul aft, and ease off, and to swing yards sich as our'n?"

"I was not altogether without the hope, Bob, of getting the ship into clear water; though I have thought it would be done with difficulty. I am still of opinion we had better try it, for the alternative is a very serious matter."

"I don't exactly understand what you mean by attorneytives, Mr. Mark; though it 's little harm, or little good that any attorney can do the old 'Cocus, now! But, as for getting this craft through them reefs, to windward, and into clear water, it surpasses the power of man. Did you just notice the tide−ripples, Mr. Mark, when you was up in the cross−trees?"

"I saw them, Bob, and am fully aware of the difficulty of running as large a vessel as this among them, even with a full crew. But what will become of us, unless we get the ship into open water?"

"Sure enough, sir. I see no other hope for us, Mr. Mark, but to Robinson Crusoe it awhile, until our times come; or, till the Lord, in his marcy, shall see fit to have us picked up."

"Robinson Crusoe it!" repeated Mark, smiling at the quaintness of Bob's expression, which the well−meaning fellow uttered in all simplicity, and in perfect good faith "where are we to find even an uninhabited island, on which to dwell after the mode of Robinson Crusoe?"

"There 's a bit of a reef to leeward, where I dare say a man might pick up a living, arter a fashion," answered Bob, coolly; "then, here is the ship."

"And how long would a hempen cable hold the ship in a place like this, where every time the vessel lifts to a sea, the clench is chafing on a rock? No, no, Bob the ship cannot long remain where she is, depend on *that*. We must try and pass down to leeward, if we cannot beat the ship through the dangers to windward."

"Harkee, Mr. Mark; I thought this matter over in my mind, while we was aloft, and this is my idee as to what is best to be done, for a start. There 's the dingui on the poop, in as good order as ever a boat was. She will easily carry two on us, and, on a pinch, she might carry half a dozen. Now, my notion is to get the dingui into the water, to put a breaker and some grub in her, and to pull down to that bit of a reef, and have a survey of it. I 'll take the sculls going down, and you can keep heaving the lead, by way of finding out if there be sich a thing as a channel in that direction. If the ship is ever to be moved by us two, it must be by going to leeward, and not by attempting to turn up ag'in wind and tide among them 'ere rocks, out here to the eastward. No, sir; let us take the dingui, and surwey the reef, and look for our shipmates; a'ter which we can best tell what to undertake, with some little hope of succeeding. The weather seems settled, and the sooner we are off the better."

This proposal struck Mark's young mind as plausible, as well as discreet. To recover even a single man would be a great advantage, and he had lingering hopes that some of the people might yet be found on the reef. Then Bob's idea about getting the ship through the shoal water, by passing to leeward, in preference to making the attempt

against the wind, was a sound one; and, on a little reflection, he was well enough disposed to acquiesce in it. Accordingly, when they quitted the windlass, they both set about putting this project in execution.

The dingui was no great matter of a boat, and they had not much difficulty in getting it into the water. First by slinging, it was swayed high enough to clear the rail, when Bob bore it over the side, and Mark lowered away. It was found to be tight, Captain Crutchely having kept it half full of water ever since they got into the Pacific, and in other respects it was in good order. It was even provided with a little sail, which did very well before the wind. While Bob saw to provisioning the boat, and filling its breakers with fresh water, Mark attended to another piece of duty that he conceived to be of the last importance. The Rancocus carried several guns, an armament prepared to repel the savages of the sandal−wood islands, and these guns were all mounted and in their places. There were two old−fashioned sixes, and eight twelve−pound carronades. The first made smart reports when properly loaded. Our young mate now got the keys of the magazine, opened it, and brought forth three cartridges, with which he loaded three of the guns. These guns he fired, with short intervals between them, in hopes that the reports would be carried to the ears of some of the missing people, and encourage them to make every effort to return. The roar of artillery sounded strangely enough in the midst of that vast solitude; and Bob Betts, who had often been in action, declared that he was much affected by it. As no immediate result was expected from the firing of these guns, Mark had no sooner discharged them, than he joined Betts, who by this time had everything ready, and prepared to quit the ship. Before he did this, however, he made an anxious and careful survey of the weather, it being all−important to be certain no change in this respect was likely to occur in his absence. All the omens were favourable, and Bob reporting for the third time that everything was ready, the young man went over the side, and descended, with a reluctance he could not conceal, into the boat. Certainly, it was no trifling matter for men in the situation of our two mariners, to leave their vessel all alone, to be absent for a large portion of the day. It was to be done, however; though it was done reluctantly, and not without many misgivings, in spite of the favourable signs in the atmosphere.

When Mark had taken his seat in the dingui, Bob let go his hold of the ship, and set the sail. The breeze was light, and fair to go, though it was by no means so certain how it would serve them on the return. Previously to quitting the ship, Mark had taken a good look at the breakers to leeward, in order to have some general notion of the course best to steer, and he commenced his little voyage, but entirely without a plan for his own government. The breakers were quite as numerous to leeward as to windward, but the fact of there being so many of them made smooth water between them. A boat, or a ship, that was once fairly a league or so within the broken lines of rocks, was like a vessel embayed, the rollers of the open ocean expending their force on the outer reefs, and coming in much reduced in size and power. Still the uneasy ocean, even in its state of rest, is formidable at the points where its waters meet with rocks, or sands, and the breakers that did exist, even as much embayed as was the dingui, were serious matters for so small a boat to encounter. It was necessary, consequently, to steer clear of them, lest they should capsize, or fill, this, the only craft of the sort that now belonged to the vessel, the loss of which would be a most serious matter indeed.

The dingui slided away from the ship with a very easy movement. There was just about as much wind as so small a craft needed, and Bob soon began to sound, Mark preferring to steer. It was, however, by no means easy to sound in so low a boat, while in such swift motion; and Bob was compelled to give it up. As they should be obliged to return with the oars, Mark observed that then he would feel his way back to the ship. Nevertheless, the few casts of the lead that did succeed, satisfied our mariners that there was much more than water enough for the Rancocus, between the reefs. *On* them, doubtless it would turn out to be different.

Mark met with more difficulty than he had anticipated in keeping the dingui out of the breakers. So very smooth was the sort of bay he was in a bay by means of the reefs to windward, though no rock in that direction rose above the surface of the sea so very smooth, then, was the sort of bay he was in, that the water did not break, in many places, except at long intervals; and then only when a roller heavier than common found its way in from the outer ocean. As a consequence, the breakers that did suddenly show themselves from a cause like this, were the heaviest of all, and the little dingui would have fared badly had it been caught on a reef, at the precise moment

when such a sea tumbled over in foam. This accident was very near occurring once or twice, but it was escaped, more by providential interference than by any care or skill in the adventurers.

It is very easy to imagine the intense interest with which our two mariners drew near to the visible reef. Their observations from the cross−trees of the ship, had told them this was all the land anywhere very near them, and if they did not find their lost shipmates here, they ought not to expect to find them at all. Then this reef, or island, was of vast importance in other points of view. It might become their future home; perhaps for years, possibly for life. The appearances of the sunken reefs, over and among which he had just passed, had greatly shaken Mark's hope of ever getting the ship from among them, and he even doubted the possibility of bringing her down, before the wind, to the place where he was then going. All these considerations, which began to press more and more painfully on his mind, each foot as he advanced, served to increase the intensity of the interest with which he noted every appearance on, or about, the reef, or island, that he was now approaching. Bob had less feeling on the subject. He had less imagination, and foresaw consequences and effects less vividly than his officer, and was more accustomed to the vicissitudes of a seaman's life. Then he had left no virgin bride at home, to look for his return; and had moreover made up his mind that it was the will of Providence that he and Mark were to `Robinson Crusoe it' awhile on `that bit of a reef.' Whether they should ever be rescued from so desolate a place, was a point on which he had not yet begun to ponder.

The appearances were anything but encouraging, as the dingui drew nearer and nearer to the naked part of the reef. The opinions formed of this place, by the examination made from the cross−trees, turned out to be tolerably accurate, in several particulars. It was just about a mile in length, while its breadth varied from half a mile to less than an eighth of a mile. On its shores, the rock along most of the reef rose but a very few feet above the surface of the water, though at its eastern, or the weather extremity, it might have been of more than twice the usual height; its length lay nearly east and west. In the centre of this island, however, there was a singular formation of the rock, which appeared to rise to an elevation of something like sixty or eighty feet, making a sort of a regular circular mound of that height, which occupied no small part of the widest portion of the island. Nothing like tree, shrub, or grass, was visible, as the boat drew near enough to render such things apparent. Of aquatic birds there were a good many; though even they did not appear in the numbers that are sometimes seen in the vicinity of uninhabited islands. About certain large naked rocks, at no great distance however from the principal reef, they were hovering in thousands.

At length the little dingui glided in quite near to the island. Mark was at first surprised to find so little surf beating against even its weather side, but this was accounted for by the great number of the reefs that lay for miles without it; and, particularly, by the fact that one line of rock stretched directly across this weather end, distant from it only two cables' lengths, forming a pretty little sheet of perfectly smooth water between it and the island. Of course, to do this, the line of reef just mentioned must come very near the surface; as in fact was the case, the rock rising so high as to be two or three feet out of water on the ebb, though usually submerged on the flood. The boat was obliged to pass round one end of this lastnamed reef, where there was deep water, and then to haul its wind a little in order to reach the shore.

It would be difficult to describe the sensations with which Mark first landed. In approaching the place, both he and Bob had strained their eyes in the hope of seeing some proof that their shipmates had been there; but no discovery rewarded their search. Nothing was seen, on or about the island, to furnish the smallest evidence that either of the boats had touched it. Mark found that he was treading on naked rock when he had landed, though the surface was tolerably smooth. The rock itself was of a sort to which he was unaccustomed: and he began to suspect, what in truth turned out on further investigation to be the fact, that instead of being on a reef of coral, he was on one of purely volcanic origin. The utter nakedness of the rock both surprised and grieved him. On the reefs, in every direction, considerable quantities of sea−weed had lodged, temporarily at least; but none of it appeared to have found its way to this particular place. Nakedness and dreariness were the two words which best described the island; the only interruption to its solitude and desolation being occasioned by the birds, which now came screaming and flying above the heads of the intruders, showing both by their boldness and their cries, that

they were totally unacquainted with men.

The mound, in the centre of the reef, was an object too conspicuous to escape attention, and our adventurers approached it at once, with the expectation of getting a better look−out from its summit, than that they had on the lower level of the surface of the ordinary reef. Thither then they proceeded, accompanied by a large flight of the birds Neither Mark nor Bob, however, had neglected to turn his eyes towards the now distant ship, which was apparently riding at its anchor, in exactly the condition in which it had been left, half an hour before. In that quarter all seemed right, and Mark led the way to the mount, with active and eager steps.

On reaching the foot of this singular elevation, our adventurers found it would not be so easy a matter as they had fancied, to ascend it. Unlike the rest of the reef which they had yet seen, it appeared to be composed of a crumbling rock, and this so smooth and perpendicular as to render it extremely difficult to get up. A place was found at length, however, and by lending each other a hand, Mark and Bob finally got on the summit. Here a surprise was ready for them, that drew an exclamation from each, the instant the sight broke upon him. Instead of finding an elevated bit of table−rock, as had been expected, a circular cavity existed within, that Mark at once recognised to be the extinct crater of a volcano! After the first astonishment was over, Mark made a close examination of the place.

The mound, or barrier of lava and scoriæ that composed the outer wall of this crater, was almost mathematically circular. Its inner precipice was in most places absolutely perpendicular, though overhanging in a few; there being but two or three spots where an active man could descend in safety. The area within might contain a hundred acres, while the wall preserved a very even height of about sixty feet, falling a little below this at the leeward side, where there existed one narrow hole, or passage, on a level with the bottom of the crater; a sort of gateway, by which to enter and quit the cavity. This passage had no doubt been formed by the exit of lava, which centuries ago had doubtless broken through at this point, and contributed to form the visible reef beyond. The height of this hole was some twenty feet, having an arch above it, and its width may have been thirty. When Mark got to it, which he did by descending the wall of the crater, not without risk to his neck, he found the surface of the crater very even and unbroken, with the exception of its having a slight descent from its eastern to its western side; or from the side opposite to the outlet, or gateway, to the gateway itself. This inclination Mark fancied was owing to the circumstance that the water of the ocean had formerly entered at the hole, in uncommonly high tides and tempests, and washed the ashes which had once formed the bottom of the crater, towards the remote parts of the plain. These ashes had been converted by time into a soft, or friable rock, composing a stone that is called tufa. If there had ever been a cone in the crater, as was probably the case, it had totally disappeared under the action of time and the wear of the seasons. Rock, however, the bed of the crater could scarcely be yet considered, though it had a crust which bore the weight of a man very readily, in nearly every part of it. Once or twice Mark broke through, as one would fall through rotten ice, when he found his shoes covered with a light dust that much resembled ashes. In other places he broke this crust on purpose, always finding beneath it a considerable depth of ashes, mingled with some shells, and a few small stones.

That the water sometimes flowed into this crater was evident by a considerable deposit of salt, which marked the limits of the latest of these floods. This salt had probably prevented vegetation. The water, however, never could have entered from the sea, had not the lava which originally made the outlet left a sort of channel that was lower than the surface of the outer rocks. It might be nearer to the real character of the phenomenon were we to say, that the lava which had broken through the barrier at this point, and tumbled into the sea, had not quite filled the channel which it rather found than formed, when it ceased to flow. Cooling in that form, an irregular crevice was left, through which the element no doubt still occasionally entered, when the adjacent ocean got a sufficient elevation. Mark observed that, from some cause or other, the birds avoided the crater. It really seemed to him that their instincts warned them of the dangers that had once environed the place, and that, to use the language of sailors, "they gave it a wide berth," in consequence. Whatever may have been the cause, such was the fact; few even flying over it, though they were to be seen in hundreds, in the air all round it.

CHAPTER V.

"The king's son have I landed by himself;
Whom I left cooling of the air with sighs
In an odd angle of the isle, and sitting,
His arms in this sad knot."

Tempest.

Having completed this first examination of the crater, Mark and Bob next picked their way again to the summit of its wall, and took their seats directly over the arch. Here they enjoyed as good a look−out as the little island afforded, not only of its own surface, but of the surrounding ocean. Mark now began to comprehend the character of the singular geological formation, into the midst of which the Rancocus had been led, as it might almost be by the hand of Providence itself. He was at that moment seated on the topmost pinnacle of a submarine mountain of volcanic origin submarine as to all its elevations, heights and spaces, with the exception of the crater where he had just taken his stand, and the little bit of visible and venerable lava, by which it was surrounded. It is true that this lava rose very near the surface of the ocean, in fifty places that he could see at no great distance, forming the numberless breakers that characterized the place; but, with the exception of Mark's Reef, as Bob named the principal island on the spot, two or three detached islets within a cable's−length of it, and a few little more remote, the particular haunts of birds, no other land was visible, far or near.

As Mark sat there, on that rock of concrete ashes, he speculated on the probable extent of the shoals and reefs by which he was surrounded. Judging by what he then saw, and recalling the particulars of the examination made from the cross−trees of the ship, he supposed that the dangers and difficulties of the navigation must extend, in an east and west direction, at least twelve marine leagues; while, in a north and south, the distance seemed to be a little, and a very little less. There was necessarily a good deal of conjecture in this estimate of the extent of the volcanic mountain which composed these extensive shoals; but, from what he saw, from the distance the ship was known to have run amid the dangers before she brought up, her present anchorage, the position of the island, and all the other materials before him to make his calculation on, Mark believed himself rather to have lessened than to have exaggerated the extent of these shoals. Had the throes of the earth, which produced this submerged rock, been a little more powerful, a beautiful and fertile island, of very respectable dimensions, would probably have been formed in its place.

From the time of reaching the reef, which is now to bear his name in all future time, our young seaman had begun to admit the bitter possibility of being compelled to pass the remainder of his days on it. How long he and his companion could find the means of subsistence in a place so barren, was merely matter of conjecture; but so long as Providence should furnish these means, was it highly probable that solitary and little−favoured spot was to be their home. It is unnecessary to state with what bitter regrets the young bridegroom admitted this painful idea; but Mark was too manly and resolute to abandon himself to despair, even at such a moment. He kept his sorrows pent up in the repository of his own bosom, and endeavoured to imitate the calm exterior of his companion. As for Bob, he was a good deal of a philosopher by nature; and, having made up his mind that they were doomed to `Robinson Crusoe it,' for a few years at least, he was already turning over in his thoughts the means of doing so to the best advantage. Under such circumstances, and with such feelings, it is not at all surprising that their present situation and their future prospects soon became the subject of discourse, between these two solitary seamen.

"We are fairly in for it, Mr. Mark," said Bob, "and differ from Robinson only in the fact that there are two of us; whereas he was obliged to set up for himself, and by himself, until he fell in with Friday!"

"I wish I could say *that* was the only difference in our conditions, Betts, but it is very far from being so. In the

first place he had an island, while we have little more than a reef; he had soil, while we have naked rock; he had fresh water, and we have none; he had trees, while we have not even a spear of grass. All these circumstances make out a case most desperately against us."

"You speak truth, sir; yet is there light ahead. We have a ship, sound and tight as the day she sailed; while Robinson lost his craft under his feet. As long as there is a plank afloat, a true salt never gives up."

"Ay, Bob, I feel that, as strongly as you can yourself; nor do I mean to give up, so long as there is reason to think God has not entirely deserted us. But that ship is of no use, in the way of returning to our friends and home; or, of no use as a ship. The power of man could scarcely extricate her from the reefs around her."

"It 's a bloody bad berth," said Bob, squirting the saliva of his tobacco half−way down the wall of the crater, "that I must allow. Howsomever, the ship will be of use in a great many ways, Mr. Mark, if we can keep her afloat, even where she is. The water that 's in her will last us two a twelvemonth, if we are a little particular about it; and when the rainy season sets in, as the rainy season will be sure to do in this latitude, we can fill up for a fresh start. Then the ship will be a house for us to live in, and a capital good house, too. You can live aft, sir, and I 'll take my swing in the forecastle, just as if nothing had happened."

"No, no, Bob; there is an end of all such distinctions now. Misery, like the grave, brings all upon a level. You and I commenced as messmates, and we are likely to end as messmates. There is a use to which the ship may be put, however, that you have not mentioned, and to which we must look forward as our best hope for this world. She may be broken up by us, and we may succeed in building a craft large enough to navigate these mild seas, and yet small enough to be taken through, or over the reefs. In *that* way, favoured by Divine Providence, we may live to see our friends again."

"Courage, Mr. Mark, courage, sir. I know it must be hard on the feelin's of a married man, like yourself, that has left a perfect pictur' behind him, to believe he is never to return to his home again. But I don't believe that such is to be our fate. I never heard of such an end to a Crusoe party. Even Robinson, himself, got off at last, and had a desperate hard journey of it, after he hauled his land−tacks aboard. I like that idee of the new craft 'specially well, and will lend a hand to help you through with it with all my heart. I 'm not much of a carpenter, it 's true; nor do I suppose you are anything wonderful with the broad−axe and adze; but two willing and stout men, who has got their lives to save, can turn their hands to almost anything. For my part, sir, since I *was* to be wrecked and to Robinson it awhile, I 'm gratefully thankful that I 've got you for a companion, that 's all!"

Mark smiled at this oblique compliment, but he felt well assured that Bob meant all for the best. After a short pause, he resumed the discourse by saying

"I have been thinking, Bob, of the possibility of getting the ship safely down as far as this island. Could we but place her to leeward of that last reef off the weather end of the island, she might lie there years, or until she fell to pieces by decay. If we are to attempt building a decked boat, or anything large enough to ride out a gale in, we shall want more room than the ship's decks to set it up in. Besides, we could never get a craft of those dimensions off the ship's decks, and must, of necessity, build it in some place where it may be launched. Our dingui would never do to be moving backward and forward, so great a distance, for it will carry little more than ourselves. All things considered, therefore, I am of opinion we can do nothing better to begin with, than to try to get the ship down here, where we have room, and may carry out our plans to some advantage."

Bob assented at once to this scheme, and suggested one or two ideas in approbation of it, that were new even to Mark. Thus, it was evident to both, that if the ship herself were ever to get clear of the reef, it must be by passing out to leeward; and by bringing her down to the island so much would be gained on the indispensable course. Thus, added Bob, she might be securely moored in the little bay to windward of the island; and, in the course of time it was possible that by a thorough examination of the channels to the westward, and by the use of buoys, a

passage might be found, after all, that would carry them out to sea. Mark had little hope of ever getting the Rancocus extricated from the maze of rocks into which she had so blindly entered, and where she probably never could have come but by driving over some of them; but he saw many advantages in this plan of removing the ship, that increased in number and magnitude the more he thought on the subject. Security to the fresh water was one great object to be attained. Should it come on to blow, and the ship drift down upon the rocks to leeward of her, she would probably go to pieces in an hour or two, when not only all the other ample stores that she contained, but every drop of sweet water at the command of the two seamen, would inevitably be lost. So important did it appear to Mark to make sure of a portion of this great essential, at least, that he would have proposed towing down to the reef, or island, a few casks, had the dingui been heavy enough to render such a project practicable. After talking over these several points still more at large, Mark and Bob descended from the summit of the crater, made half of its circuit, and returned to their boat.

As the day continued calm, Mark was in no hurry, but passed half an hour in sounding the little bay that was formed by the sunken rocks that lay off the eastern, or weather end of the Crater Reef, as, in a spirit of humility, he insisted on calling that which everybody else now calls Mark's Reef. Here he not only found abundance of water for all he wanted, but to his surprise he also found a sandy bottom, formed no doubt by the particles washed from the surrounding rocks under the never−ceasing abrasion of the waves. On the submerged reef there were only a few inches of water, and our mariners saw clearly that it was possible to secure the ship in this basin, in a very effectual manner, could they only have a sufficiency of good weather in which to do it.

After surveying the basin, itself, with sufficient care, Bob pulled the dingui back towards the ship, Mark sounding as they proceeded. But two difficulties were found between the points that it was so desirable to bring in communication with each other. One of these difficulties consisted in a passage between two lines of reef, that ran nearly parallel for a quarter of a mile, and which were only half a cable's−length asunder. There was abundance of water between these reefs, but the difficulty was in the course, and in the narrowness of the passage. Mark passed through the latter four several times, sounding it, as it might be, foot by foot, and examining the bottom with the eye; for, in that pellucid water, with the sun near the zenith, it was possible to see two or three fathoms down, and nowhere did he find any other obstacle than this just mentioned. Nor was any buoy necessary, the water breaking over the southern end of the outer, and over the northern end of the inner ledge, and nowhere else near by, thus distinctly noting the very two points where it would be necessary to alter the course.

The second obstacle was much more serious than that just described. It was a reef with a good deal of water over most of it; so much, indeed, that the sea did not break unless in heavy gales, but not enough to carry a ship like the Rancocus over, except in one, and that a very contracted pass, of less than a hundred feet in width. This channel it would be indispensably necessary to buoy, since a variation from the true course of only a few fathoms would infallibly produce the loss of the ship. All the rest of the distance was easily enough made by a vessel standing down, by simply taking care not to run into visible breakers.

Mark and Bob did not get back to the Rancocus until near three o'clock. They found everything as they had left it, and the pigs, poultry and goat, glad enough to see them, and beginning to want their victuals and drink. The two first are to be found on board of every ship, but the last is not quite so usual. Captain Crutchely had brought one along to supply milk for his tea, a beverage that, oddly enough, stood second only to grog in his favour. After Bob had attended to the wants of the brute animals, he and Mark again sat down on the windlass to make another cold repast on broken meat as yet, they had not the hearts to cook anything. As soon as this homely meal was taken Mark placed a couple of buoys in the dingui, with the pig−iron that was necessary to anchor them, and proceeded to the spot on the reef, where it was proposed to place them.

Our mariners were quite an hour in searching for the channel, and near another in anchoring the buoys in a way to render the passage perfectly safe. As soon as this was done, Bob pulled back to the ship, which was less than a mile distant, as fast as he could, for there was every appearance of a change of weather. The moment was one, now, that demanded great coolness and decision. Not more than an hour of day remained, and the question was

whether to attempt to move the ship that night, when the channel and its marks were all fresh in the minds of the two seamen, and before the foul weather came, or to trust to the cable that was down to ride out any blow that might happen. Mark, young as he was, thought justly on most professional subjects. He knew that heavy rollers would come in across the reef where the vessel then lay, and was fearful that the cable would chafe and part, should it come on to blow hard for four−and−twenty hours continually. These rollers, he also knew by the observation of that day, were completely broken and dispersed on the rocks, before they got down to the island, and he believed the chances of safety much greater by moving the ship at once, than by trying the fortune of another night out where she then lay. Bob submitted to this decision precisely as if Mark was still his officer, and no sooner got his orders than he sprang from sail to sail, and rope to rope, like a cat playing among the branches of some tree. In that day, spensers were unknown, staysails doing their duty. Thus Bob loosed the jib, main−topmast and mizen−staysails, and saw the spanker clear for setting. While he was thus busied, Mark was looking to the stopper and shank−painter of the sheet−anchor, which had been got ready to let go, before Captain Crutchely was lost. He even succeeded in getting that heavy piece of metal a cock−bill, without calling on Bob for assistance.

It was indeed time for them to be in a hurry; for the wind began to come in puffs, the sun was sinking into a bank of clouds, and all along the horizon to windward the sky looked dark and menacing. Once Mark changed his mind, determining to hold on, and let go the sheet−anchor where he was, should it become necessary; but a lull tempted him to proceed. Bob shouted out that all was ready, and Mark lifted the axe with which he was armed, and struck a heavy blow on the cable. That settled the matter; an entire strand was separated, and three or four more blows released the ship from her anchor. Mark now sprang to the jib−halliards, assisting Bob to hoist the sail. This was no sooner done than he went aft to the wheel, where he arrived in time to help the ship to fall off. The spanker was next got out as well as two men could do it in a hurry, and then Bob went forward to tend the jib−sheet, and to look out for the buoys.

It was indispensable in such a navigation to make no mistake, and Mark enjoined the utmost vigilance on his friend. Twenty times did he hail to inquire if the buoys were to be seen, and at last he was gratified by an answer in the affirmative.

"Keep her away, Mr. Mark keep her away, you may, sir; we are well to windward of the channel. Ay, that 'll do, Mr. Woolston that 's your beauty, sir. Can't you get a sight of them b'ys yourself, sir?"

"Not just yet, Bob, and so much the greater need that you should look out the sharper. Give the ship plenty of room, and I 'll let her run down for the passage, square for the channel."

Bob now ran aft, telling the mate he had better go on the forecastle himself and conn the ship through the passage, which was a place he did not like. Mark was vexed that the change should be made just at that critical instant, but bounding forward, he was between the knight−heads in half a minute, looking out for the buoys. At first, he could not see them; and then he most felt the imprudence of Bob's quitting his post in such a critical instant. In another minute, however, he found one; and presently the other came in sight, fearfully close, as it now appeared to our young mariner, to its neighbour. The position of the ship, nevertheless, was sufficiently to windward, leaving plenty of room to keep off in. As soon as the ship was far enough ahead, Mark called out to Bob to put his helm hard up. This was done, and away the Rancocus went, Mark watching her with the utmost vigilance, lest she should sheer a little too much to the one side or to the other. He hardly breathed as the vessel glided down upon these two black sentinels, and, for an instant, he fancied the wind or the current had interfered with their positions. It was now too late, however, to attempt any change, and Mark saw the ship surging onward on the swells of the ocean, which made their way thus far within the reefs, with a greater intensity of anxiety than he had ever before experienced in his life. Away went the ship, and each time she settled in the water, our young man expected to hear her keel grating on the bottom, but it did not touch. Presently the buoys were on her quarters, and then Mark knew that the danger of this one spot was passed!

The next step was to find the southern end of the outer ledge that formed the succeeding passage. This was not done until the ship was close aboard of it. A change had come over the spot within the last few hours, in consequence of the increase of wind, the water breaking all along the ledge, instead of on its end only; but Mark cared not for this, once certain he had found that end. He was now half−way between his former anchorage and the crater, and he could distinguish the latter quite plainly. But sail was necessary to carry the ship safely through the channel ahead, and Mark called to Bob to lash the helm a−midships after luffing up to his course, and to spring to the main−topmast staysail halliards, and help him hoist the sail. This was soon done, and the new sail was got up, and the sheet hauled aft. Next followed the mizen staysail, which was spread in the same manner. Bob then flew to the wheel, and Mark to his knight−heads again. Contrary to Mark's apprehensions, he saw that the ship was luffing up close to the weather ledge, leaving little danger of her going on to it. As soon as met by the helm, however, she fell off, and Mark no longer had any doubt of weathering the northern end of the inner ledge of this passage. The wind coming in fresher puffs, this was soon done, when the ship was kept dead away for the crater. There was the northern end of the reef, which formed the inner basin of all, to double, when that which remained to do was merely to range far enough within the reef to get a cover, and to drop the anchor. In order to do this with success, Mark now commenced hauling down the jib. By the time he had that sail well in, the ship was off the end of the sunken reef, when Bob put his helm a−starboard and rounded it. Down came the main−topmast staysail, and Mark jumped on the forecastle, while he called out to Bob to lash the helm a−lee. In an instant Bob was at the young man's side, and both waited for the ship to luff into the wind, and to forge as near as possible to the reef. This was successfully done also, and Mark let go the stopper within twenty feet of the wall of the sunken reef, just as the ship began to drive astern. The canvas was rolled up and secured, the cable payed out, until the ship lay just mid−channel between the island and the sea−wall without, and the whole secured. Then Bob took off his tarpaulin and gave three cheers, while Mark walked aft, silently returning thanks to God for the complete success of this important movement.

Important most truly was this change. Not only was the ship anchored, with her heaviest anchor down, and her best cable out, in good holding ground, and in a basin where very little swell ever penetrated, and that entering laterally and diminished in force; but there she was within a hundred and fifty feet of the island, at all times accessible by means of the dingui, a boat that it would not do to trust in the water at all outside when it blew in the least fresh. In short, it was scarcely possible to have a vessel in a safer berth, so long as her spars and hull were exposed to the gales of the ocean, or one that was more convenient to those who used the island. By getting down her spars and other hamper, the power of the winds would be much lessened, though Mark felt little apprehension of the winds at that season of the year, so long as the sea could not make a long rake against the vessel. He believed the ship safe for the present, and felt the hope of still finding a passage, through the reef to leeward, reviving in his breast.

Well might Mark and Bob rejoice in the great feat they had just performed. That night it blew so heavily as to leave little doubt that the ship never could have been kept at her anchor, outside; and had she struck adrift in the darkness, nothing could have saved them from almost immediate destruction. The rollers came down in tremendous billows, breaking and roaring on all sides of the island, rendering the sea white with their foam, even at midnight; but, on reaching the massive, natural wall that protected the Rancocus, they dashed themselves into spray against it, wetting the vessel from her truck down, but doing her no injury. Mark remained on deck until past twelve o'clock, when finding that the gale was already breaking, he turned in and slept soundly until morning. As for Bob, he had taken his watch below early in the evening, and there he remained undisturbed until the appearance of day, when he turned out of his own accord.

Mark took another look at the sea, reefs and islands, from the main−topmast cross−trees of the ship, as she lay in her new berth. Of course, the range of his vision was somewhat altered by this change of position, and especially did he see a greater distance to the westward, or towards the lee side of the reefs. Nothing encouraging was made out, however; the young man rather inclining more to the opinion than he had ever done before, that the vessel could not be extricated from the rocks which surrounded her. With this conviction strongly renewed, he descended to the deck, to share in the breakfast Bob had set about preparing, the moment he quitted his cat−tails;

for Bob insisted on sleeping in the forecastle, though Mark had pressed him to take one of the cabin state−rooms. This time the meal, which included some very respectable ship's coffee, was taken on the cabin−table, the day being cloudless, and the sun's rays possessing a power that made it unpleasant to sit long anywhere out of a shade. While the meal was taken, another conversation was held touching their situation.

"By the manner in which it blew last night," Mark observed, "I doubt if we should have had this comfortable cabin to eat in this morning, and these good articles to consume, had we left the ship outside until morning."

"I look upon it as a good job well done, Mr. Mark," answered Bob. "I must own I had no great hopes of our ever getting here, but was willing to try it; for them rollers didn't mind half−a−dozen reefs, but came tumbling in over them, in a way to threaten the old 'Cocus with being ground into powder. For my part, sir, I thank God, from the bottom of my heart, that we are here."

"You have reason to do so, Bob; and while we may both regret the misfortune that has befallen us, we had need remember how much better off we are than our shipmates, poor fellows! or how much better we are off than many a poor mariner who loses his vessel altogether."

"Yes, the saving of the ship is a great thing for us. We can hardly call this a shipwreck, Mr. Mark, though we have been ashore once; it is more like being docked, than anything else!"

"I have heard, before, of vessels being carried over reefs, and bars of rivers, into berths they could not quit," answered Mark. "But, reflect a moment, Bob, how much better our condition is, than if we had been washed down on this naked reef, with only such articles to comfort us, as could be picked up along shore from the wreck!"

"I 'm glad to hear you talk in this rational way, Mr. Mark; for it 's a sign you do not give up, or take things too deeply to heart. I was afeard that you might be thinking too much of Miss Bridget, and make yourself more unhappy than is necessary for a man who has things so comfortable around him."

"The separation from my wife causes me much pain, Betts, but I trust in God. It has been in his pleasure to place us in this extraordinary situation, and I hope that something good will come of it."

"That's the right sentiments, sir only keep such feelings uppermost, and we shall do right down well. Why, we have water, in plenty, until after the rainy season shall be along, when we can catch a fresh supply. Then, there is beef and pork enough betwixt decks to last you and me five or six years; and bread and flour in good quantities, to say nothing of lots of small stores, both forward and aft."

"The ship is well found, and, as you say, we might live a long time, years certainly, on the food she contains There is, however, one thing to be dreaded, and to provide against which shall be my first care. We are now fifty days on salted provisions, and fifty more will give us both the scurvy."

"The Lord in his mercy protect me from that disease!" exclaimed Bob. "I had it once, in an old v'y'ge round the Horn, and have no wish to try it ag'in. But there must be fish in plenty among these rocks, Mr. Mark, and we have a good stock of bread. By dropping the beef and pork, for a few days at a time, might we not get shut of the danger?"

"Fish will help us, and turtle would be a great resource, could we meet with any of *that*. But, man requires mixed food, meats and vegetables, to keep him healthy; and nothing is so good for the scurvy as the last. The worst of our situation is a want of soil, to grow any vegetables in. I did not see so much as a rush, or the coarsest sea−plant, when we were on the island yesterday. If we had soil, there is seed in plenty on board, and this climate would bring forward vegetation at a rapid rate."

"Ay, ay, sir, and I'll tell you what I've got in the way of seeds, myself. You may remember the delicious musk and water−melons we fell in with last v'y'ge, in the east. Well, sir, I saved some of the seed, thinking to give it to my brother, who is a Jarsey farmer, you know, sir; and, sailor−like, I forgot it altogether, when in port. If a fellow could get but a bit of earth to put them melon−seeds in, we might be eating our fruit like gentlemen, two months hence, or three months, at the latest."

"That is a good thought, Betts, and we will turn it over in our minds. If such a thing is to be done at all, the sooner it is done the better, that the melons may be getting ahead while we are busy with the other matters. This is just the season to put seed into the ground, and I think we might make soil enough to sustain a few hills of melons. If I remember right, too, there are some of the sweet potatoes left."

Bob assented, and during the rest of the meal they did nothing but pursue this plan of endeavouring to obtain half−a−dozen or a dozen hills of melons. As Mark felt all the importance of doing everything that lay in his power to ward off the scurvy, and knew that time was not to be lost, he determined that the very first thing he would now attend to, would be to get all the seed into as much ground as he could contrive to make. Accordingly, as soon as the breakfast was ended, Mark went to collect his seeds, while Bob set the breakfast things aside, after properly cleaning them.

There were four shoats on board, which had been kept in the launch, until that boat was put into the water, the night the Rancocus ran upon the rocks. Since that time they had been left to run about the decks, producing a good deal of dirt, and some confusion. These shoats Bob now caught, and dropped into the bay, knowing that their instinct would induce them to swim for the nearest land. All this turned out as was expected, and the pigs were soon seen on the island, snuffing around on the rocks, and trying to root. A small quantity of the excrement of these animals still lay on the deck, where it had been placed when the launch was cleaned for service, no one thinking at such a moment of cleaning the decks. It had been washed by the sea that came aboard quite across the deck, but still formed a pile, and most of it was preserved. This manure Mark was about to put in a half−barrel, in order to carry it ashore, for the purpose of converting it into soil, when Bob suddenly put an end to what he was about, by telling him that he knew where a manure worth two of that was to be found. An explanation was asked and given. Bob, who had been several voyages on the western coast of America, told Mark that the Peruvians and Chilians made great use of the dung of aquatic birds, as a manure, and which they found on the rocks that lined their coast. Now two or three rocks lay near the reef, that were covered with this deposit, the birds still hovering about them, and he proposed to take the dingui, and go in quest of a little of that fertilizing manure. A very little, he said, would suffice, the Spaniards using it in small quantities, but applying it at different stages in the growth of the plant. It is scarcely necessary to say that Bob had fallen on a knowledge of the use of the article which is now so extensively known under the name of guano, in the course of his wanderings, and was enabled to communicate the fact to his companion. Mark knew that Betts was a man of severe truth, and he was so much the more disposed to listen to his suggestion. While our young mate was getting the boat ready, therefore, Bob collected his tools, provided himself with a bucket, passed the half−barrel, into which Mark had thrown the sweepings of the decks, into the dingui, and descended himself and took the sculls. The two then proceeded to Bob's rock, where, amid the screams of a thousand sea−birds, the honest fellow filled his bucket with as good guano as was ever found on the coast of Peru.

While the boat was at the rock, Mark saw that the pigs had run round to the western end of the island, snuffing at everything that came in their way, and trying in vain to root wherever one of them could insert his nose. As a hog is a particularly sagacious animal, Mark kept his eyes on them while Bob was picking out his guano, in the faint hope that they might discover fresh water, by means of their instinct. In this way he saw them enter the gate way of the crater, pigs being pretty certain to run their noses into any such place as that.

On landing, Mark took a part of the tools and the bucket of guano, while Bob shouldered the remainder, and they went up to the hole, and entered the crater together, having landed as near to the gate−way as they could get, with that object. To Mark's great delight he found that the pigs were now actually rooting with some success, so far as

stirring the surface was concerned, though getting absolutely nothing for their pains. There were spots on the plain of the crater, however, where it was possible, by breaking a sort of crust, to get down into coarse ashes that were not entirely without some of the essentials of soil. Exposure to the air and water, with mixing up with sea−weed and such other waste materials as he could collect, the young man fancied would enable him to obtain a sufficiency of earthy substances to sustain the growth of plants. While on the summit of the crater−wall, he had seen two or three places where it had struck him sweet−potatoes and beans might be made to grow, and he determined to ascend to those spots, and make his essay there, as being the most removed from the inroads of the pigs. Could he only succeed in obtaining two or three hundred melons, he felt that a great deal would be done in providing the means of checking any disposition to scurvy that might appear in Bob or himself. In this thoughtful manner did one so young look ahead, and make provision for the future.

CHAPTER VI.

" that done, partake
The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs;
Then commune how that day they best may ply
Their growing work; for much their work outgrew
The hands dispatch of two gard'ning so wide."

Milton.

Our two mariners had come ashore well provided with the means of carrying out their plans. The Rancocus was far better provided with tools suited to the uses of the land, than was common for ships, her voyage contemplating a long stay among the islands she was to visit. Thus, axes and picks were not wanting, Captain Crutchely having had an eye to the possible necessity of fortifying himself against savages. Mark now ascended the crater−wall with a pick on his shoulder, and a part of a coil of ratlin−stuff around his neck. As he went up, he used the pick to make steps, and did so much in that way, in the course of ten minutes, as greatly to facilitate the ascent and descent at the particular place he had selected. Once on the summit, he found a part of the rock that overhung its base, and dropped one end of his line into the crater. To this Bob attached the bucket, which Mark hauled up and emptied. In this manner everything was transferred to the top of the crater−wall that was needed there, when Bob went down to the dingui to roll up the half−barrel of sweepings that had been brought from the ship.

Mark next looked about for the places which had seemed to him, on his previous visit, to have most of the character of soil. He found a plenty of these spots, mostly in detached cavities of no great extent, where the crust had not yet formed; or, having once formed, had been disturbed by the action of the elements. These places he first picked to pieces with his pick; then he stirred them well up with a hoe, scattering a little guano in the heaps, according to the directions of Betts. When this was done, he sent down the bucket, and hauled up the sweepings of the deck, which Bob had ready for him, below. Nor was this all Bob had done, during the hour Mark was at work, in the sun, on the summit of the crater. He had found a large deposit of sea−weed, on a rock near the island, and had made two or three trips with the dingui, back and forth, to transfer some of it to the crater. After all his toil and trouble, the worthy fellow did not get more than a hogshead full of this new material, but Mark thought it well worth while to haul it up, and to endeavour to mix it with his compost. This was done by making it up in bundles, as one would roll up hay, of a size that the young man could manage.

Bob now joined his friend on the crater−wall, and assisted in carrying the sea−weed to the places prepared to receive it, when both of the mariners next set about mixing it up with the other ingredients of the intended soil. After working for another hour in this manner, they were of opinion that they might make the experiment of putting in the seed. Melons, of both sorts, and of the very best quality, were now put into the ground, as were also beans, peas, and Indian−corn, or maize. A few cucumber−seeds, and some onions were also tried, Captain

Crutchely having brought with him a considerable quantity of the common garden seeds, as a benefit conferred on the natives of the islands he intended to visit, and through them on future navigators. This care proceeded from his owners, who were what is called `Friends,' and who somewhat oddly blended benevolence with the practices of worldly gain.

Mark certainly knew very little of gardening, but Bob could turn his hand to almost anything. Several mistakes were made, notwithstanding, more particularly in the use of the seed, with which they were not particularly acquainted. Mark's Reef lay just within the tropics, it is true (in 21° south latitude), but the constant sea−breeze rendered its climate much cooler than would otherwise have been the case. Thus the peas, and beans, and even the onions, did better, perhaps, on the top of the crater, than they would have done in it; but the ochre, egg−plants, melons, and two or three other seeds that they used, would probably have succeeded better had they been placed in the warmest spots which could be found. In one respect Mark made a good gardener. He knew that moisture was indispensable to the growth of most plants, and had taken care to put all his seeds into cavities, where the rain that fell (and he had no reason to suppose that the dry season had yet set in) would not run off and be wasted. On this point he manifested a good deal of judgment, using his hoe in a way to avoid equally the danger of having too much or too little water.

It was dinner−time before Mark and Betts were ready to quit the `Summit,' as they now began to term the only height in their solitary domains. Bob had foreseen the necessity of a shade, and had thrown an old royal into the boat. With this, and two or three light spars, he contrived to make a sort of canopy, down in the crater, beneath which he and Mark dined, and took their siestas. While resting on a spare studding−sail that had also been brought along, the mariners talked over what they had done, and what it might be best to undertake next.

Thus far Mark had been working under a species of excitement, that was probably natural enough to his situation, but which wanted the coolness and discretion that are necessary to render our efforts the most profitable to ourselves, or to others. Now, that the feverish feeling which set him at work so early to make a provision against wants which, at the worst, were merely problematical, had subsided, Mark began to see that there remained many things to do, which were of even more pressing necessity than anything yet done. Among the first of these there was the perfect security of the ship. So long as she rode at a single anchor, she could not be considered as absolutely safe; for a shift of wind would cause her to swing against the `sea−wall,' as he called the natural breakwater outside of her, where, if not absolutely wrecked, she might receive material damage. Prudence required, therefore, that the ship should be moored, as well as anchored. Nevertheless, there was a good deal of truth in what Mark had said touching the plants growing while he and Bob were busy at other matters; and this thought, of itself, formed a sufficient justification for what he had just done, much as it had been done under present excitement. As they lay under the shade of the royal, our mariners discussed these matters, and matured some plans for the future.

At two o'clock Mark and Bob resumed their work. The latter suggested the necessity of getting food and water ashore for the pigs, as an act that humanity imperiously demanded of them; not humanity in the sense of feeling for our kind, but in the sense in which we all ought to feel for animal suffering, whether endured by man or beast. Mark assented as to the food, but was of opinion a thunder shower was about to pass over the reef. The weather certainly did wear this aspect, and Bob was content to wait the result, in order to save himself unnecessary trouble. As for the pigs, they were still in the crater rooting, as it might be for life or death, though nothing edible had as yet rewarded them for their toil. Perhaps they found it pleasant to be thrusting their noses into something that resembled soil, after so long a confinement to the planks of a ship. Seeing them at work in this manner, suggested to Mark to try another experiment, which certainly looked far enough ahead, as if he had no great hopes of getting off the island for years to come. Among the seeds of Captain Crutchely were those of oranges, lemons, limes, shaddocks, figs, and grapes; all plants well enough suited to the place, if there were only soil to nourish them. Now, one of the hogs had been rooting, as best he might, just under the wall, on the northern side of the crater, making a long row of little hillocks, of earthy ashes, at unequal distances it is true, but well enough disposed for the nature of the different fruits, could they only be got to grow. Along this irregular row of hillocks

did Mark bury his seeds, willing to try an experiment which might possibly benefit some other human being, if it never did any good to himself. When this was done, he and Betts left the crater, driving the hogs out before them.

Having made his plantation, Mark felt a natural desire to preserve it. He got the royal, therefore, and succeeded in fastening it up as a substitute for a gate, in their natural gate−way. Had the pigs met with any success in rooting, it is not probable this slight obstacle would have prevented their finding their way, again, into the cavity of the crater; but, as it was, it proved all−sufficient, and the sail was permitted to hang before the hole, until a more secure gate was suspended in its stead.

The appearances of the thunder−shower were so much increased by this time, that our mariners hastened back to the ship in order to escape a ducking. They had hardly got on board before the gust came, a good deal of water falling, though not in the torrents in which one sometimes sees it stream down within the tropics. In an hour it was all over, the sun coming out bright and scorching, after the passage of the gust. One thing occurred, however, which at first caused both of the seamen a good deal of uneasiness, and again showed them the necessity there was for mooring the ship. The wind shifted from the ordinary direction of the trades, during the squall, to a current of air that was nearly at right angles to the customary course. This caused the ship to swing, and brought her so near the sea−wall, that once or twice her side actually rubbed against it. Mark was aware, by his previous sounding, that this wall rather impended over its base, being a part of an old crater, beyond a question, and that there was little danger of the vessel's hitting the bottom, or taking harm in any other way than by friction against the upper part; but this friction might become too rude, and finally endanger the safety of the vessel.

As soon as the weather became fine, however, the trades returned, and the ship swung round to her old berth. Bob now suggested the expediency of carrying out their heaviest kedge ashore, of planting it in the rocks, and of running out to it two or three parts of a hawser, to which a line of planks might be lashed, and thus give them the means of entering and quitting the ship, without having recourse to the dingui. Mark approved of this plan, and, it requiring a raft to carry ashore the kedge, the dingui being so light they were afraid to trust it, it was decided to commence that work in the morning. For the rest of the present day nothing further was done, beyond light and necessary jobs, and continuing the examination of the island. Mark was curious to look at the effect of the shower, both in reference to his plantations, and to the quantity of fresh water that might have lodged on the reef. It was determined, therefore, to pass an hour or two ashore before the night shut in again.

Previously to quitting the ship, Bob spoke of the poultry. There were but six hens, a cock, and five ducks, left. They were all as low in flesh and spirits, as it was usual to find birds that have been at sea fifty days, and the honest tar proposed turning them all adrift on the reef, to make their own living in the best way they could. Now and then a little food might be put in their way, but let them have a chance for their lives. Mark assented at once, and the coops were opened. Each fowl was carried to the taffrail, and tossed into the air, when it flew down upon the reef, a distance of a couple of hundred feet, almost as a matter of course. Glad enough were the poor things to be thus liberated. To Mark's surprise, no sooner did they reach the reef, than to work they went, and commenced picking up something with the greatest avidity, as if let loose in the best supplied poultry−yard. Confident there was nothing for even a hen to glean on the rocks when he left there, the young man could not account for this, until turning his eyes inboard, he saw the ducks doing the same thing on deck. Examining the food of these last−mentioned animals, he found there were a great number of minute mucilaginous particles on the deck, which no doubt had descended with the late rain, and which all the birds, as well as the hogs, seemed eager to devour. Here, then, was a supply, though a short−lived one, of a manna suited to those creatures, which might render them happy for a few hours, at least. Bob caught the ducks, and tossed them overboard, when they floundered about and enjoyed themselves in a way that communicated a certain pleasure even to the desolate and shipwrecked men who had set them at liberty. Nothing with life now remained in the ship but the goat, and Mark thought it best not to turn her ashore until they had greater facilities for getting the necessary food to her than the dingui afforded. As she was not likely to breed, there was no great use in keeping this animal at all, to say nothing of the means of feeding her, for any length of time; but Mark was unwilling to take her life, since Providence had brought them all to that place in company. Then he thought she might be a pretty object leaping about the cliffs of the crater, giving

the island a more lively and inhabited appearance, though he foresaw she might prove very destructive to his plantations, did his vegetables grow. As there was time enough to decide on her final fate, it was finally settled she should be put ashore, and have a comfortable fortnight, even though condemned to die at the end of that brief period.

On landing, every hole in the face of the cliff was found filled with fresh water. Betts was of opinion that the water−casks might all be filled with the water which was thus collected, the fluid having seemingly all flowed into these receptacles, while little had gone into the sea. This was encouraging for the future, at any rate; the want of water, previously to this shower, appearing to Mark to be a more probable occurrence than the want of food. The sea might furnish the last, on an emergency, while it could do nothing with the first. But the manner in which the ducks were enjoying themselves, in these fresh pools, can scarcely be imagined! As Mark stood looking at them, a doubt first suggested itself to his mind concerning the propriety of men's doing anything that ran counter to their instincts, with any of the creatures of God. Pet−birds in cages, birds that were created to fly, had always been disagreeable to him; nor did he conceive it to be any answer to say that they were born in cages, and had never known liberty. They were created with an instinct for flight, and intense must be their longings to indulge in the power which nature had bestowed on them. In the cage in which he now found himself, though he could run, walk, leap, swim, or do aught that nature designed him to do, in the way of mere animal exploits, young Mark felt how bitter were the privations he was condemned to suffer.

The rain had certainly done no harm, as yet, to the planting. All the hills were entire, as Mark and Bob had left them, though well saturated with water. In a few, there might be even too much of the element, perhaps, but Mark observed that a tropical sun would soon remove that objection. His great apprehension was that he had commenced his gardening too late, and that the dry weather might set in too soon for the good of his vegetables; if any of them, indeed, ever came up at all. Here was one good soaking secured, at all events; and, knowing the power of a tropical sun, Mark was of opinion that the fate of the great experiment he had tried would soon be known. Could he succeed in producing vegetation among the *débris* of the crater, he and Bob might find the means of subsistence during their natural lives; but, should that resource fail them, all their hopes would depend on being able to effect their escape in a craft of their own construction. In no case, however, but that of the direst necessity, did Mark contemplate the abandonment of his plan for getting back to the inhabited world, his country, and his bride!

That night our mariners had a sounder sleep than they had yet been blest with since the loss of their shipmates, and the accident to the vessel itself. The two following days they passed in securing the ship. Bob actually made a very respectable catamaran, or raft, out of the spare spars, sawing the topmasts and lower yards in two, for that purpose, and fastening them together with ingenuity and strength, by means of lashings. But Mark hit upon an expedient for getting the two kedges ashore, that prevented the necessity of having recourse to the raft on that occasion. These kedges lay on the poop, where they were habitually kept, and two men had no great difficulty in getting them over the stern, suspended by stoppers. Now Mark had ascertained that the rock of the Reef rose like a wall, being volcanic, like all the rest of the formation, and that the ship could float almost anywhere alongside of it. Aided by the rake of the stern of an old−fashioned Philadelphia−built ship, nothing was easier than to veer upon the cable, let the vessel drop in to the island, until the kedges actually hung over the rocks, and then lower the last down. All this was done, and the raft was reserved for other purposes. Notwithstanding the facility with which the kedges were got ashore, it took Mark and Bob quite half a day to plant them in the rock precisely where they were wanted. When this was accomplished, however, it was so effectually done as to render the hold even greater than that of the sheet−anchor. The stocks were not used at all, but the kedges were laid flat on the rock, quite near to each other, and in such a manner that the flukes were buried in crevices of the lava, giving a most secure hold, while the shanks came out through natural grooves, leading straight towards the ship. Six parts of a hawser were bent to the kedges, three to each, and these parts were held at equal distances by pieces of spars ingeniously placed between them, the whole being kept in its place by regular stretchers that were lashed along the hawsers at distances of ten feet, giving all the parts of the ropes the same level. Before these stretchers were secured, the ship was hove ahead by her cable, and the several parts of the hawser brought to an equal strain. This

left the vessel about a hundred feet from the island, a convenient, and if the anchor held, a *safe* position; though Mark felt little fear of losing the ship against rocks that were so perpendicular and smooth. On the stretchers planks were next laid and lashed, thus making a clear passage between the vessel and the shore, that might be used at all times, without recourse to the dingui; besides mooring the ship head and stern, thereby keeping her always in the same place, and in the same position.

The business of securing the ship occupied nearly two days, and was not got through with until about the middle of the afternoon of the second day. It was Saturday, and Mark had determined to make a good beginning, and keep all their Sabbaths, in future, as holy times, set apart for the special service of the Creator. He had been born and educated an Episcopalian, but Bob claimed to be a Quaker, and what was more he was a little stiff in some of his notions on the opinion of his sect. The part of New Jersey in which Betts was born, had many persons of this religious persuasion, and he was not only born, but, in one sense, educated in their midst; though the early age at which he went to sea had very much unsettled his practice, much the most material part of the tenets of these good persons. When the two knocked off work, Saturday afternoon, therefore, it was with an understanding that the next day was to be one of rest in the sense of Christians, and, from that time henceforth, that the Sabbath was to be kept as a holy day. Mark had ever been inclined to soberness of thought on such subjects. His early engagement to Bridget had kept him from falling into the ways of most mariners, and, time and again, had a future state of being been the subject of discourse between him and his betrothed. As the seasons of adversity are those in which men are the most apt to bethink them of their duties to God, it is not at all surprising that one of this disposition, thus situated, felt renewed demands on his gratitude and repentance.

While Mark, in this frame of mind, went rambling around his narrow domains, Bob got the dingui, and proceeded with his fishing−tackle towards some of the naked rocks, that lifted their caps above the surface of the sea, in a north−westerly direction from the crater. Of these naked rocks there were near twenty, all within a mile of the crater, and the largest of them not containing more than six or eight acres of dry surface. Some were less than a hundred feet in diameter. The great extent and irregular formation of the reefs all around the island, kept the water smooth, for some distance, on all sides of it; and it was only when the rollers were sent in by heavy gales, that the dingui could not move about, in this its proper sphere, in safety.

Betts was very fond of fishing, and could pass whole days, at a time, in that quiet amusement, provided he had a sufficient supply of tobacco. Indeed, one of the greatest consolations this man possessed, under the present misfortune, was the ample store of this weed which was to be found in the ship. Every man on board the Rancocus, Mark alone excepted, made use of tobacco; and, for so long a voyage, the provision laid in had been very abundant. On this occasion, Bob enjoyed his two favourite occupations to satiety, masticating the weed while he fished.

With Mark it was very different. He was fond of his fowling−piece, but of little use was that weapon in his present situation. Of all the birds that frequented the adjacent rocks, not one was of a sort that would be eaten, unless in cases of famine. As he walked over the island, that afternoon, his companion was the goat, which had been driven ashore on the new gangway, and was enjoying its liberty almost as much as the ducks. As the animal frisked about him, accompanying him everywhere in his walks. Mark was reminded of the goats of Crusoe, and his mind naturally adverted to the different accounts of shipwrecks of which he had read, and to a comparison between his own condition and those of other mariners who had been obliged to make their homes, for a time, on otherwise uninhabited islands.

In this comparison, Mark saw that many things made greatly against him, on the one hand; while, on the other, there were many others for which he had every reason to be profoundly grateful. In the first place, this island was, as yet, totally without vegetation of every kind. It had neither plant, shrub, nor tree. In this he suffered a great privation, and it even remained to be proved by actual experiment, whether he was master of what might be considered the elements of soil. It occurred to him that something like vegetation must have shown itself, in or about the crater, did its *débris* contain the fertilizing principle, Mark not being sufficiently versed in the new

science of chemical agriculture, to understand that the admixtures of certain elements might bring to life forces that then were dormant. Then the Reef had no water. This was a very, very great privation, the most serious of all, and might prove to be a terrible calamity. It is true that, just at that moment, there was a shower every day, and sometimes two or three of them; but it was then spring, and there could be little reason to doubt that droughts would come in the hot and dry season. As a last objection, the Reef had no great extent, and no variety, the eye taking it all in at a glance, while the crater was its sole relief against the dullest monotony. Nor was there a bit of wood, or fuel of any sort to cook with, after the supply now in the ship should be exhausted. Such were the leading disadvantages of the situation in which our mariners were placed, as compared with those into which most other shipwrecked seamen had been thrown.

The advantages, on the other hand, Mark, in humble gratitude to God, admitted to be very great. In the first place, the ship and all she contained was preserved, giving them a dwelling, clothes, food and water, as well as fuel, for a long time to come; possibly, aided by what might be gleaned on even that naked reef, sufficient to meet all their wants for the duration of a human life. The cargo of the Rancocus was of no great extent, and of little value in a civilized country; but Mark knew that it included many articles that would be of vast service where he was. The beads and coarse trinkets with which it had been intended to trade with the savages, were of no use whatever, it is true; but the ship's owners were pains−taking and thoughtful Quakers, as has been already intimated, who blended with great shrewdness in the management of their worldly affairs, a certain regard to benevolence in general, and a desire to benefit their species. On this principle, they had caused a portion of their cargo to be made up, sending, in addition to all the ruder and commoner tools, that could be used by a people without domestic animals, a small supply of rugs, coarse clothes, coarse earthen−ware, and a hundred similar things, that would be very serviceable to any who knew how to use them. Most of the seeds came from these thoughtful merchants.

If fresh water were absolutely wanting on the reef, it rained a good deal; in the rainy season it must rain for a few weeks almost incessantly, and the numerous cavities in the ancient lava, formed natural cisterns of great capacity. By taking the precaution of filling up the water−casks of the ship, periodically, there was little danger of suffering for the want of this great requisite. It is true, the sweet, cool, grateful draught, that was to be got from the gushing spring, must be forgotten; but rain−water collected in clean rock, and preserved in well−sweetened casks, was very tolerable drinking for seamen. Captain Crutchely, moreover, had a filterer for the cabin, and through it all the water used there was habitually passed.

In striking the balance between the advantages and disadvantages of his own situation, as compared with that of other shipwrecked mariners, Mark confessed that he had quite as much reason to be grateful as to repine. The last he was resolved not to do, if possible; and he pursued his walk in a more calm and resigned mood than he had been in since the ship entered among the shoals.

Mark, naturally enough, cast his eyes around him, and asked himself the question what was to be done with the domestic animals they had now all landed. The hogs might, or might not be of the greatest importance to them, as their residence on the island was or was not protracted, and as they found the means of feeding them. There was still food enough in the ship to keep these creatures for some months, and food that had been especially laid in for that purpose; but that food would serve equally well for the fowls, and our young man was of opinion, that eggs would be of more importance to himself and Betts, than hog's flesh. Then there was the goat; she would soon cease to be of any use at all, and green food was not to be had for her. A little hay, however, remained; and Mark was fully determined that Kitty, as the playful little thing was called, should live at least as long as that lasted. She was fortunate in being content with a nourishment that no other animal wanted.

Mark could see absolutely nothing on the rocks for a bird to live on, yet were the fowls constantly picking up something. They probably found insects that escaped his sight; while it was certain that the ducks were revelling in the pools of fresh water, of which there might, at that moment, have been a hundred on the reef. As all these creatures were, as yet, regularly fed from the supplies in the ship, each seemed to be filled with the joy of existence; and Mark, as he walked among them, felt how profound ought to be his own gratitude, since he was

still in a state of being which admitted of a consciousness of happiness so much beyond anything that was known to the inferior animals of creation. He had his mind, with all its stores gathered from study and observation, his love for God, and his hopes of a blessed future, ever at command. Even his love for Bridget had its sweets, as well as its sorrows. It was grateful to think of her tenderness to himself, her beauty, her constancy, of which he would not for a moment doubt, and of all the innocent and delightful converse they had had during a courtship that occupied so much of their brief lives.

Just as the sun was setting, Bob returned from his fishing excursion. To Mark's surprise, he saw that the dingui floated almost with her gunwale−to, and he hastened down to meet his friend, who came ashore in a little bay, quite near the gate−way, and in which the rock did not rise as much like a wall as it did on most of the exterior of the reef. Bob had caught about a dozen fish, some of which were of considerable size, though all were of either species or varieties that were unknown to them both. Selecting two of the most promising−looking, for their own use, he threw the others on the rocks, where the pigs and poultry might give them a trial. Nor was it long before these creatures were hard at work on them, disregarding the scales and fins. At first the hens were a little delicate, probably from having found animal food enough for their present wants in the insects; but, long before the game was demolished, they had come in for their full share. This experiment satisfied the mariners that there would be no difficulty in furnishing plenty of food for all their stock, and for any length of time, Kitty excepted. It is true, the pork and the poultry would be somewhat fishy; but that would be a novelty, and should it prove disagreeable on tasting it, a little clean feeding, at the proper moment, would correct the flavour.

But the principal cargo of the dingui was not the dozen fish mentioned. Bob had nearly filled the boat with a sort of vegetable loam, that he had found lodged in the cavity of one of the largest rocks, and which, from the signs around the place, he supposed to have been formed by deposits of sea−weed. By an accident of nature, this cavity in the rock received a current, which carried large quantities of floating weed *into* it, while every storm probably had added to its stores since the mass had risen above the common level of the sea, by throwing fresh materials on to the pile, by means of the waves, nothing quitting it. Bob reported that there were no signs of vegetation around the rock, which circumstance, however, was easily enough accounted for by the salt water that was incessantly moistening the surface, and which, while it took with it the principle of future, was certain to destroy all present, vegetable life; or, all but that which belongs exclusively to aquatic plants.

"How much of this muck do you suppose is to be found on your rock, Bob?" asked Mark, after he had examined the dingui's cargo, by sight, taste, and smell. "It is surprisingly like a rich earth, if it be not actually so."

"Lord bless you, Mr. Mark, there is enough on't to fill the old 'Cocus, ag'in and ag'in. How deep it is, I don't pretend to know; but it 's a good hundred paces across it, and the spot is as round as that there chimbly, that you call a cr'ature."

"If that be the case, we will try our hands at it next week, and see what can be done with an importation. I do not give up the blessed hope of the boat, Bob that you will always bear in mind but it is best to keep an eye on the means of living, should it please God to prevent our getting to sea again."

"To sea, Mr. Mark, neither you nor I, nor any mortal man will ever get, in the old 'Cocus ag'in, as I know by the looks of things outside of us. 'T will never do to plant in my patch, however, for the salt water must wash it whenever it blows; though a very little work, too, might keep it out, when I come to think on it. Sparrowgrass would grow there, as it is, desperately well; and Friend Abraham White had both seeds and roots put up for the use of the savages, if a body only know'd whereabouts to look for them, among the lot of rubbish of that sort, that he sent aboard."

"All the seeds and roots are in two or three boxes, in the steerage," answered Mark. "I 'll just step up to the crater and bring a shovel, to throw this loam out of the boat with, while you can clean the fish and cook the supper. A little fresh food, after so much salt, will be both pleasant and good for us."

Bob assented, and each went his way. Mark threw the loam into a wheelbarrow, of which Friend Abraham had put no less than three in the ship, as presents to the savages, and he wheeled it, at two or three loads, into the crater, where he threw it down in a pile, intending to make a compost heap of all the materials of the sort he could lay his hands on.

As for Bob he cleaned both fish, taking them on board the ship to do so. He put the largest and coarsest into the coppers, after cutting it up, mixing with it onions, pork, and ship's bread, intending to start a fire beneath it early in the morning, and cook a sort of chowder. The other he fried, Mark and he making a most grateful meal on it, that evening.

CHAPTER VII.

Be thou at peace! Th' all−seeing eye,
Pervading earth, and air, and sky,
The searching glance which none may flee,
Is still, in mercy, turn'd on thee."

Mrs. Hemans.

The Sabbath ever dawns on the piously−inclined, with hope and a devout gratitude to the Creator for all his mercies. This is more apt to be the case in genial seasons, and rural abodes, perhaps, than amidst the haunts of men, and when the thoughts are diverted from the proper channels by the presence of persons around us. Still greater is the influence of absolute solitude, and that increased by the knowledge of a direct and visible dependence on the Providence of God, for the means of even prolonging existence. In the world, men lose sight of this dependence, fancying themselves and their powers of more account than the truth would warrant, and even forgetting whence these very boasted powers are derived; but man, when alone, and in critical circumstances, is made to feel that he is not sufficient for his own wants, and turns with humility and hope to the divine hand that upholds him.

With feelings of this character, did Mark and Betts keep their first Sabbath on the reef. The former read the morning service, from beginning to end, while the latter sat by, an attentive listener. The only proof given of any difference in religious faith between our mariners, was of so singular a nature as to merit notice. Notwithstanding Bob's early familiarity with Mark, his greater age, and the sort of community of feeling and interest created by their common misfortune, the former had not ceased to treat the last with the respect due to his office. This deference never deserted him, and he had not once since the ship was embayed, entered the cabin without pulling off his hat. As soon as church commenced, however, Bob resumed his tarpaulin, as a sort of sign of his own orthodoxy in the faith of his fathers; making it a point to do as they had done in meeting, and slightly concerned lest his companion might fall into the error of supposing he was a man likely to be converted. Mark also observed that, in the course of that Sabbath, Bob used the pronouns `thee' and `thou,' on two or three occasions, sounding oddly enough in the mouth of the old salt.

Well did both our mariners prove the efficacy of the divine provision of a day of rest, in a spiritual sense, on the occasion of this their first Sabbath on the reef. Mark felt far more resigned to his fate than he could have believed possible, while Betts declared that he should be absolutely happy, had he only a better boat than the dingui; not that the dingui was at all a bad craft of its kind, but it wanted size. After the religious services, for which both our mariners had shaved and dressed, they took a walk together, on the reef, conversing of their situation and future proceedings. Bob then told Mark, for the first time, that, in his opinion, there was the frame and the other materials of a pinnace, or a large boat, somewhere in the hold, which it was intended to put together, when the ship reached the islands, as a convenience for cruising about among them to trade with the savages, and to

transport sandal−wood. The mate had never heard of this boat, but acknowledged that a part of the hold had been stowed while he was up at Bristol, and it might have been taken in then. Bob confessed that he had never seen it, though he had worked in the stevedore's gang; but was confident he had heard Friend Abraham White and Captain Crutchely talking of its dimensions and uses. According to his recollection it was to be a boat considerably larger than the launch, and to be fitted with masts and sails, and to have a half−deck. Mark listened to all this patiently, though he firmly believed that the honest fellow was deceiving himself the whole time. Such a craft could scarcely be in the ship, and he not hear of it, if he did not actually see it; though he thought it possible that the captain and owners may have had some such plan in contemplation, and conversed together on it, in Betts's presence. As there were plenty of tools on board, however, by using stuff of one sort or another, that was to be found in the ship, Mark had strong hopes of their being able, between them, to construct, in the course of time though he believed a long time might be necessary a craft of some sort, that should be of sufficient stability to withstand the billows of that ordinarily mild sea, and enable them to return to their homes and friends. In conversing of things of this sort, in religious observances, and in speculating on the probable fate of their shipmates, did our mariners pass this holy day. Bob was sensibly impressed with the pause in their ordinary pursuits, and lent himself to the proper feelings of the occasion with a zeal and simplicity that gave Mark great satisfaction; for, hitherto, while aware that his friend was as honest a fellow as ever lived, in the common acceptation of such a phrase, he had not supposed him in the least susceptible of religious impressions. But the world had suddenly lost its hold on Betts, the barrier offered by the vast waters of the Pacific, being almost as impassable, in his actual circumstances, as that of the grave; and the human heart turns to God in its direst distress, as to the only being who can administer relief. It is when men are prosperous that they vainly imagine they are sufficient for their own wants, and are most apt to neglect the hand that alone can give durable support.

The following morning our mariners resumed their more worldly duties with renewed powers. While the kettle was boiling for their tea, they rolled ashore a couple of empty water−casks, and filled them with fresh water, at one of the largest natural reservoirs on the reef; it having rained hard in the night. After breakfast, Mark walked round to examine his piles of loam, in the crater, while Bob pulled away in the dingui, to catch a few fish, and to get a new cargo of the earth; it being the intention of Mark to join him at the next trip, with the raft, which required some little arranging, however, previously to its being used for such a purpose. The rain of the past night had thoroughly washed the pile of earth, and, on tasting it, Mark was convinced that much of the salt it contained had been carried off. This encouraged him to persevere in his gardening projects. As yet, the spring had only just commenced, and he was in hopes of being able to prepare one bed, at least, in time to obtain useful vegetables from it.

The Rancocus had a great many planks and boards in her hold, a part of the ample provision made by her owners for the peculiar voyage on which she had been sent. Of real cargo, indeed, she had very little, the commerce between the civilized man and the savage being ordinarily on those great principles of Free Trade, of which so much is said of late years, while so little is understood, and which usually give the lion's share of the profit to them who need it least. With some of these planks, Mark made a staging for his raft. By the time he was ready, Bob returned with a load of loam, and, on the next outward voyage, the raft was taken as well as the dingui. Mark had fitted pins and grummets, by which the raft was rowed, he and Bob impelling it, when light, very easily at the rate of two miles in the hour.

Mark found Bett's deposit of decayed vegetable matter even larger and more accessible than he had hoped for. A hundred loads might be got without even using a wheelbarrow; and to all appearances there was enough of it to give a heavy dressing to many acres, possibly to the whole area of the crater. The first thing the young man did was to choose a suitable place, dig it well up, mixing a sufficiency of guano with it, agreeably to Betts's directions, and then to put in some of his asparagus roots. After this he scattered a quantity of the seed, raking the ground well after sowing. By the time this was done, Bob had both dingui and raft loaded, when they pulled the last back to the reef, towing the boat. In this manner our two mariners continued to work most of the time, for the next fortnight, making, daily, more or less trips to the `loam−rock,' as they called the place where this precious deposit had been made; though they neglected none of their other necessary duties. As the distance was short,

they could come and go many times in a day, transporting at each trip about as much of the loam as would make an ordinary American cart−load of manure. In the whole, by Mark's computation, they got across about fifty of these cargoes, in the course of their twelve days' work. The entire day, however, was on no occasion given up wholly to this pursuit. On the contrary, many little odd tasks were completed, which were set by their necessities, or by forethought and prudence. All the empty water−casks, for one thing, were rolled ashore, and filled at the largest pool; the frequency of the rains admonishing them of the wisdom of making a provision for the dry season. The Rancocus had a good deal of water still left in her, some of it being excellent Delaware river water, though she had filled up at Valparaiso, after passing the Horn. Mark counted the full casks, and allowing ten gallons a day for Bob and himself, a good deal more than could be wanted, there remained in the ship fresh water enough to last them two years. It is true, it was not such water as the palate often craved of a warm day; but they were accustomed to it, and it was sweet. By keeping it altogether between decks, the sun had no power on it, and it was even more palatable than might have been supposed. Mark occasionally longed for one good drink at some gushing spring that he remembered at home, it is true; and Bob was a little in the habit of extolling a particular well that, it would seem, his family were reputed to have used for several generations. Notwithstanding these little natural backslidings on this subject, our mariners might be thought well off on the score of water, having it in great abundance, and with no reasonable fear of ever losing it altogether. The casks taken ashore were filled for their preservation, as well as for convenience, an old sail being spread over them, after they were rolled together and chocked. As yet, no water was given to any of the stock, all the animals finding it in abundance, in the cavities of the lava.

Some of the time, moreover, Betts passed in fishing, supplying not only Mark and himself, but the pigs and the poultry, with as much food as was desired. Several of the fish caught turned out to be delicious, while others were of a quality that caused them to be thrown into the compost heap. A cargo of guano was also imported, the rich manure being mixed up in liberal quantities with the loam. At the end of the first week of these voyages to `loam−rock, ' Betts went out to fish in a new direction, passing to windward of the `sea−wall,' as they called the reef that protected the ship, and pulling towards a bit of naked rock, a short distance beyond it, where he fancied he might find a particular sort of little fish, that greatly resembled the Norfolk Hog−fish, one of the most delicious little creatures for the pan that is to be found in all the finny tribe. He had been gone a couple of hours, when Mark, who was at work within the crater, picking up the encrusted ashes that formed its surface, heard Bob's shout outside, as if he wished assistance. Throwing down the pick, our young man ran out, and was not a little surprised to see the sort of cargo with which Bob was returning to port. It would seem that a great collection of sea−weed had formed to windward of the rock where Bob had gone to fish, at which spot it ordinarily gathered in a pile until the heap became too large to lodge any longer, when, owing to the form of the rock, it invariably broke adrift, and passed to the southward of the Reef, floating to leeward, to fetch up on some other rock, or island, in that direction. Bob had managed to get this raft round a particular point in the reef, when the wind and current carried it, as near as might be, directly towards the crater. He was calling to Mark to come to his assistance, to help get the raft into a sort of bay, ahead of him, where it might be lodged; else would there be the danger of its drifting past the Reef, after all his pains. Our young man saw, at once, what was wanted, got a line, succeeded in throwing it to Bob, and by hauling upon it brought the whole mass ashore in the very spot Betts wished to see it landed.

This sea−weed proved to be a great acquisition on more accounts than one. There was as much of it in quantity as would have made two good−sized loads of hay. Then, many small shell−fish were found among it, which the pigs and poultry ate with avidity. It also contained seeds, that the fowls picked up as readily as if it had been corn. The hogs moreover masticated a good deal of the weed, and poor Kitty, the only one of the domestic animals on the Reef that was not now living to its heart's content, nibbled at it, with a species of half−doubting faith in its salubrity. Although it was getting to be late in the afternoon, Mark and Bob got two of Friend Abraham White's pitchforks (for the worthy Quaker had sent these, among other implements of husbandry, as a peace−offering to the Fejee savages), and went to work with a hearty good−will, landed all this weed, loaded it up, and wheeled it into the crater, leaving just enough outside to satisfy the pigs and the poultry. This task concluded the first week of the labour already mentioned.

At the termination of the second week, Mark and Betts held a council on the subject of their future proceedings. At this consultation it was decided that it would be better to finish the picking up of a considerable plot of ground, one of at least half an acre in extent, that was already commenced, within the crater, scatter their compost over it, and spade all up together, and plant, mixing in as much of the sea−weed as they could conveniently spade under. Nothwithstanding their success in finding the loam, and this last discovery of a means of getting sea−weed in large supplies to the Reef, Mark was not very sanguine of success in his gardening. The loam appeared to him to be cold and sour, as well as salt, though a good deal freshened by the rain since it was put in the crater; and he knew nothing of the effects of guano, except through the somewhat confused accounts of Bob. Then the plain of the crater offered nothing beside a coarse and shelly ashes. These ashes were deep enough for any agricultural purpose, it is true, for Mark could work a crowbar down into them its entire length; but they appeared to him to be totally wanting in the fertilizing principle. Nor could he account for the absence of everything like vegetation, on or about the reef, if the elements of plants of any sort were to be found in the substances of which it was composed. He had read, however, that the territory around active volcanoes, and which was far enough removed from the vent to escape from the destruction caused by lava, scoriæ and heat, was usually highly fertile, in consequence of the ashes and impalpable dust that was scattered in the air; but seeing no proofs of any such fertility here, he supposed that the adjacent sea had swallowed up whatever there might have been of these bountiful gifts. With these impressions, it is not surprising that Mark was disposed to satisfy himself with a moderate beginning, in preference to throwing away time and labour in endeavouring to produce resources which after all would fail them.

Mark's plan, as laid before his companion, on the occasion of the council mentioned, was briefly this: He proposed to pass the next month in preparing the half−acre they had commenced upon, and in getting in seed; after which they could do no more than trust their husbandry to Providence and the seasons. As soon as done with the tillage, it was his idea that they ought to overhaul the ship thoroughly, ascertain what was actually in her, and, if the materials of the boat mentioned by Betts were really to be found, to set that craft up as soon as possible, and to get it into the water. Should they not find the frame and planks of the pinnace, as Betts seemed to think they would, they must go to work and get out the best frame they could themselves, and construct such a craft as their own skill could contrive. After building such a boat, it was Mark's opinion that he and Bob could navigate her across that tranquil ocean, until they reached the coast of South America, or some of the islands that were known to be friendly to the white man; for, fifty years ago, it will be remembered, we did not possess the same knowledge of the Pacific that we possess to−day, and mariners did not trust themselves always with confidence among the natives of its islands. With this plan pretty well sketched out, then, our mariners saw the first month of their captivity among the unknown reefs of this remote quarter of the world, draw to its close.

Mark was a little surprised by a proposal that he received from Bob, next morning, which was the Sabbath, of course. "Friends have monthly meetings," Betts observed, "and he thought they ought to set up some such day on the Reef. He was willing to keep Christmas, if Mark saw fit, but rather wished to pay proper respect to all the festivals and observances of Friends." Mark was secretly amused with this proposition, even while it pleased him. The monthly meeting of the Quakers was for the secular part of church business, as much as for the purposes of religious worship; and Bob having all those concerns in his own hands, it was not so easy to see how a stated day was to aid him any in carrying out his church government. But Mark understood the feeling which dictated this request, and was disposed to deal gently by it. Betts was becoming daily more and more conscious of his dependence on a Divine Providence, in the situation in which he was thrown; and his mind, as well as his feelings, naturally enough reverted to early impressions and habits, in their search for present relief. Bob had not the clearest notions of either the theory or practice of his sect, but he remembered much of the last, and believed he should be acting right by conforming as closely as possible to the `usages of Friends.' Mark promised to take the matter into consideration, and to come to some decision on it, at an early day.

The following Monday it rained nearly the whole morning, confining our mariners to the ship. They took that occasion to overhaul the `'twixt−deck' more thoroughly than had yet been done, and particularly to give the seed−boxes a close examination. Much of the lumber, and most of the tools too, were stowed on this deck, and

something like a survey was also made of them. The frame and other materials of the pinnace were looked for, in addition, but without any success. If in the ship at all, they were certainly not betwixt decks. Mark was still of opinion no such articles would ever be found; but Betts insisted on the conversation he had overheard, and on his having rightly understood it. The provision of tools was very ample, and, in some respects, a little exaggerated in the way of Friend White's expectations of civilizing the people of Fejee. It may be well, here, to say a word concerning the reason that the Rancocus contained so many of these tributes to civilization. The voyage of the ship, it will be remembered, was in quest of sandal−wood. This sandal−wood was to be carried to Canton and sold, and a cargo of teas taken in with the avails. Now, sandal−wood was supposed to be used for the purposes of idolatry, being said to be burned before the gods of that heathenish people. Idolatry being one of the chiefest of all sins, Friend Abraham White had many compunctions and misgivings of conscience touching the propriety of embarking in the trade at all. It was true, that our knowledge of the Chinese customs did not extend far enough to render it certain that the wood was used for the purpose of burning before idols, some pretending it was made into ornamental furniture; but Friend Abraham White had heard the first, and was disposed to provide a set−off, in the event of the report's being true, by endeavouring to do something towards the civilization of the heathen. Had he been a Presbyterian merchant, of a religious turn, it is probable a quantity of tracts would have been made to answer the purpose; but, belonging to a sect whose practice was generally as perfect as its theory is imperfect, Friend Abraham White's conscience was not to be satisfied with any such shallow contrivance. It is true that he expected to make many thousands of dollars by the voyage, and doubtless would so have done, had not the accident befallen the ship, or had poor Captain Crutchely drank less in honour of his wedding−day; but the investment in tools, seeds, pigs, wheelbarrows, and other matters, honestly intended to better the condition of the natives of Vanua Levu and Viti Levu, did not amount to a single cent less than one thousand dollars, lawful money of the republic.

In looking over the packages, Mark found white clover seed, and Timothy seed, among other things, in sufficient quantity to cover most of the mount of the crater. The weather temporarily clearing off, he called to Bob, and they went ashore together, Mark carrying some of the grass seed in a pail, while Betts followed with a vessel to hold guano. Providing a quantity of the last from a barrel that had been previously filled with it, and covered to protect it from the rain, they clambered up the side of the crater. This was the first time either had ascended since the day they finished planting there, and Mark approached his hills with a good deal of freshly−revived interest in their fate. From *them* he expected very little, having had no loam to mix with the ashes; but, by dwelling so much of late on the subject of tillage, he was not without faint hopes of meeting with some little reward for the pains he had taken. The reader will judge of the rapture then, as well as of the surprise, with which he first saw a hill of melons, already in the fourth leaf. Here, then, was the great problem successfully solved. Vegetation had actually commenced on that hitherto barren mount, and the spot which had lain

how long, Mark knew not, but probably for a thousand years, if not for thousands of years, in its nakedness was about to be covered with verdure, and blest with fruitfulness. The inert principles which, brought to act together, had produced this sudden change from barrenness to fertility, had probably been near neighbours to each other all that time, but had failed of bringing forth their fruits, for the want of absolute contact. So Mark reasoned, for he nothing doubted that it was Betts's guano that had stimulated the otherwise barren deposit of the volcano, and caused his seed to germinate. The tillage may have aided, as well as the admission of air, light and water; but something more than this, our young gardener fancied, was wanting to success. That something the manure of birds, meliorated and altered by time, had supplied, and lo! the glorious results were before his eyes.

It would not be easy to pourtray to the reader all thedelight which these specks of incipient verdure conveyed to the mind of Mark Woolston. It far exceeded the joy that would be apt to be awakened by a relief from an apprehension of wanting food at a distant day, for it resembled something of the character of a new creation. He went from hill to hill, and everywhere did he discover plants, some just peeping through the ashes, others already in leaf, and all seemingly growing and thriving. Fortunately, Kitty had not been on the mount for the last fortnight, her acquired habits, and the total nakedness of the hills, having kept her below with the other animals, since her first visits. Mark saw the necessity of keeping her off the elevation, which she would certainly climb the

instant anything like verdure caught her eyes from below. He determined, therefore, to confine her to the ship, until he had taken the precautions necessary to prevent her ascending the mount. This last was easily enough done. On the exterior of the hills there were but three places where even a goat could get up. This was owing to the circumstance that the base of the ascent rose like a wall, for some ten or twelve feet, everywhere but at the three points mentioned. It appeared to Mark as if the sea had formerly washed around the crater, giving this form to its bottom, for so wall−like was the rock for these ten or twelve feet, that it would have defied the efforts of a man for a long time, to overcome the difficulties of the ascent. At two of the places where the *débris* had made a rough footing, half an hour's work would remove the material, and leave these spots as impassable as the others. At the third point, it might require a good deal of labour to effect the object. At this last place, Mark told Betts it would be necessary, for the moment, to make some sort of a fence. Within the crater, it was equally difficult to ascend, except at one or two places; but these ascents our mariners thought of improving, by making steps, as the animals were effectually excluded from the plain within by means of the sail which served for a curtain at the gateway, or hole of entrance.

As soon as Mark had recovered a little from his first surprise, he sent Bob below to bring up some buckets filled with the earth brought from Loam Rock, or island. This soil was laid carefully around each of the plants, the two working alternately at the task, until a bucket−full had been laid in each hill. Mark did not know it at the time, but subsequent experience gave him reason to suspect, that this forethought saved most of his favourites from premature deaths. Seed might germinate, and the plants shoot luxuriantly from out of the ashes of the volcano, under the united influence of the sun and rains, in that low latitude; but it was questionable whether the nourishment to be derived from such a soil, if soil it could yet be called, would prove to be sufficient to sustain the plants, when they got to be of an age and size to demand all the support they wanted. So convinced did Mark become, as the season advanced, of the prudence of what he then did out of a mere impulse, that he passed hours, subsequently, in raising loam to the summit of the mount, in order to place it in the different hills. For this purpose, Bob rigged a little derrick, and fitted a whip, so that the buckets were whipped up, sailor−fashion, after two or three experiments made in lugging them up by hand had suggested to the honest fellow that there might be a cheaper mode of attaining their wishes.

When Mark was temporarily satisfied with gazing at his new−found treasures, he went to work to scatter the grass−seed over the summit and sides of the crater. Inside, there was not much motive for sowing anything, the rock being so nearly perpendicular; but on the outside of the hill, or `mountain,' as Bob invariably called it, the first ten or twelve feet excepted, there could be no obstacle to the seeds taking; though from the want of soil much of it, Mark knew, must be lost; but, if it only took in spots, and gave him a few green patches for the eye to rest on, he felt he should be amply rewarded for his trouble. Bob scattered guano wherever he scattered grass−seed, and in this way they walked entirely round the crater, Mark using up at least half of Friend Abraham White's provision in behalf of the savages of Fejee, in the way of the grasses. A genial, soft rain soon came to moisten this seed, and to embed it with whatever there was of soil on the surface, giving it every chance to take root that circumstances would allow.

This preliminary step taken towards covering the face of the mount with verdure, our mariners went to work to lay out their garden, regularly, within the crater. Mark manifested a good deal of ingenuity in this matter. With occasional exceptions the surface of the plain, or the bottom of the crater, was an even crust of no great thickness, composed of concrete ashes, scoriæ, &c., but which might have borne the weight of a loaded wagon. This crust once broken, which it was not very difficult to do by means of picks and crows, the materials beneath were found loose enough for the purposes of agriculture, almost without using the spade. Now, space being abundant, Mark drew lines, in fanciful and winding paths, leaving the crust for his walks, and only breaking into the loose materials beneath, wherever he wished to form a bed. This variety served to amuse him and Betts, and they worked with so much the greater zeal, as their labours produced objects that were agreeable to the eye, and which amused them now, while they promised to benefit them hereafter. As each bed, whether oval, winding or straight, was dug, the loam and sea−weed was mixed up in it, in great abundance, after which it was sown, or planted.

Mark was fully aware that many of Friend Abraham White's seeds, if they grew and brought their fruits to maturity, would necessarily change their properties in that climate; some for the worse, and others for the better. From the Irish potato, the cabbage, and most of the more northern vegetables, he did not expect much, under any circumstances; but, he thought he would try all, and having several regularly assorted boxes of garden−seeds, just as they had been purchased out of the shops of Philadelphia, his garden scarce wanted any plant that was then known to the kitchens of America.

Our mariners were quite a fortnight preparing, manuring, and sowing their *parterre*, which, when complete, occupied fully half an acre in the very centre of the crater, Mark intending it for the nucleus of future similar works, that might convert the whole hundred acres into a garden. By the time the work was done, the rains were less frequent, though it still came in showers, and those that were still more favourable to vegetation. In that fortnight the plants on the mount had made great advances, showing the exuberance and growth of a tropical climate. It sometimes, nay, it often happens, that when the sun is the most genial for vegetation, moisture is wanting to aid its power, and, in some respects, to counteract its influence. These long and periodical droughts, however, are not so much owing to heat as to other and local causes. Mark now began to hope, as the spring advanced, that his little territory was to be exempt, in a great measure, from the curse of droughts, the trades, and some other causes that to him were unknown, bringing clouds so often that not only shed their rain upon his garden, but which served in a great measure to mitigate a heat that, without shade of some sort or other, would be really intolerable.

With a view to the approaching summer, our mariners turned their attention to the constructing of a tent within the crater. They got some old sails and some spars ashore, and soon had a spacious, as well as a comfortable habitation of this sort erected. Not only did they spread a spacious tent for themselves, within the crater, but they erected another, or a sort of canopy rather, on its outside, for the use of the animals, which took refuge beneath it, during the heats of the day, with an avidity that proved how welcome it was. This outside shed, or canopy, required a good deal of care in its construction, to resist the wind; while that inside scarce ever felt the breeze. This want of wind, or of air in motion, indeed, formed the most serious objection to the crater, as a place of residence, in the hot months; and the want of breeze that was suffered in the tent, set Mark to work to devise expedients for building some sort of tent, or habitation, on the mount itself, where it would be always cool, provided one could get a protection from the fierce rays of the sun.

After a good deal of search, Mark selected a spot on the `Summit,' as he began to term the place, and pitched his tent on it. Holes were made in the soft rocks, and pieces of spars were inserted, to answer for posts. With a commencement as solid as this, it was not difficult to make the walls of the tent (or marquee would be the better word, since both habitations had nearly upright sides) by means of an old fore−course. In order to get the canvas up there, however, it was found necessary to cut out the pieces below, when, by means of the purchase at the derrick, it was all hoisted to the Summit.

These several arrangements occupied Mark and Bob another fortnight, completing the first quarter of a year they had passed on the Reef. By this time they had got accustomed to their situation, and had fallen into regular courses of duty, though the increasing heats admonished both of the prudence of not exposing themselves too much beneath the fiery sun at noon−day.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Now, from the full−grown day a beamy shower
Gleams on the lake, and gilds each glossy flower,
Gay insects sparkle in the genial blaze,
Various as light, and countless as its rays

Now, from yon range of rocks, strong rays rebound,
Doubling the day on flow'ry plains around."

Savage.

After the tent on the Summit was erected, Mark passed much of his leisure time there. Thither he conveyed many of his books, of which he had a very respectable collection, his flute, and a portion of his writing materials. There he could sit and watch the growth of the different vegetables he was cultivating. As for Bob, he fished a good deal, both in the way of supplies and for his amusement. The pigs and poultry fared well, and everything seemed to thrive but poor Kitty. She loved to follow Mark, and cast many a longing look up at the Summit, whenever she saw him strolling about among his plants.

The vegetables on the Summit, or those first put into the ground, flourished surprisingly. Loam had been added repeatedly, and they wanted for nothing that could bring forward vegetation. The melons soon began to run, as did the cucumbers, squashes, and pumpkins; and by the end of the next month, there were a dozen large patches on the mount that were covered by a dense verdure. Nor was this all; Mark making a discovery about this time, that afforded him almost as much happiness as when he first saw his melons in leaf. He was seated one day, with the walls of his tent brailed up, in order to allow the wind to blow through, when something dark on the rock caught his eye. This spot was some little distance from him, and going to it, he found that large quantities of his grass−seed had actually taken! Now he might hope to convert that barren−looking, and often glaring rock, into a beautiful grassy hill, and render that which was sometimes painful to the eyes, a pleasure to look upon. The young man understood the laws of vegetation well enough to be certain that could the roots of grasses once insinuate themselves into the almost invisible crevices of the crust that covered the place, they would of themselves let in light, air and water enough for their own wants, and thus increase the very fertility on which they subsisted. He did not fail, however, to aid nature, by scattering a fresh supply of guano all over the hill.

While Mark was thus employed at home, Bob rowed out to the reef, bringing in his fish in such quantities that it occurred to Mark to convert them also into manure. A fresh half−acre was accordingly broken up, within the crater, the cool of the mornings and of the evenings being taken for the toil; and, as soon as a bed was picked over, quantities of fish were buried in it, and left there to decay. Nor did Betts neglect the sea−weed the while. On several occasions he floated large bodies of it in, from the outer reefs, which were all safely landed and wheeled into the crater, where a long pile of it was formed, mingled with loam from Loam Island, and guano. This work, however, gradually ceased, as the season advanced, and summer came in earnest. That season, however, did not prove by any means as formidable as Mark had anticipated, the sea−breezes keeping the place cool and refreshed. Our mariners now missed the rain, which was by no means as frequent as it had been, though it fell in larger quantities when it did come. The stock had to be watered for several weeks, the power of the sun causing all the water that lodged in the cavities of the rocks to evaporate almost immediately.

During the time it was too warm to venture out in the dingui, except for half an hour of a morning, or for as long a period of an evening, Mark turned his attention to the ship again. Seizing suitable moments, each sail was loosened, thoroughly dried, unbent, and got below. An awning was got out, and spread, and the decks were wet down, morning and evening, both for the purposes of cleanliness, and to keep them from cheeking. The hold was now entered, and overhauled, for the first time since the accident. A great many useful things were found in it, and among other articles two barrels of good sharp vinegar, which Friend Abraham White had caused to be put on board to be used with anything that could be pickled, as an anti−scorbutic. The onions and cucumbers both promising so well, Mark rejoiced at this discovery, determining at once to use some of the vinegar on a part of his expected crop of those two vegetables.

One day as Bob was rummaging about in the hold, and Mark was looking on, that being the coolest place on the whole reef, the former got hold of a piece of wood, and began to tug at it to draw it out from among a pile that lay in a dark corner. After several efforts, the stick came, when Mark, struck with a glimpse he got of its form, bade

Bob bring it under the light of the hatchway. The instant he got a good look at it, Woolston knew that Bob's `foolish, crooked stick, which was fit to stow nowhere,' as the honest fellow had described it when it gave him so much trouble, was neither more nor less than one of the ribs of a boat of larger size than common.

"This is providential, truly!" exclaimed Mark. "Your crooked stick, Bob, is a part of the frame of the pinnace of which you spoke, and which we had given up, as a thing not to be found on board!"

"You 're right, Mr. Mark, you 're right!" answered Bob "and I must have been oncommon stupid not to have thought of it, when it came so hard. And if there 's one of the boat's bones stowed in that place, there must be more to be found in the same latitude."

This was true enough. After working in that dark corner of the hold for several hours, all the materials of the intended craft were found and collected in the steerage. Neither Mark nor Betts was a boat−builder, or a shipwright; but each had a certain amount of knowledge on the subject, and each well knew where every piece was intended to be put. What a revolution this discovery made in the feelings of our young husband! He had never totally despaired of seeing Bridget again, for that would scarce have comported with his youth and sanguine temperament; but the hope had, of late, become so very dim, as to survive only as that feeling will endure in the bosoms of the youthful and inexperienced. Mark had lived a long time for his years; had seen more and performed far more than usually falls to persons of his age, and he was, by character, prudent and practical; but it would have been impossible for one who had lived as long and as well as himself, to give up every expectation of being restored to his bride, even in circumstances more discouraging than those in which he was actually placed. Still, he had been slowly accustoming himself to the idea of a protracted separation, and had never lost sight of the expediency of making his preparations for passing his entire life in the solitary place where he and Betts had been cast by a mysterious and unexpected dispensation of a Divine Providence. When Bob, from time to time, insisted on his account of the materials for the pinnace being in the ship, Mark had listened incredulously, unconscious himself how much his mind had been occupied by Bridget when this part of the cargo had been taken in, and unwilling to believe such an acquisition could have been made without his knowledge. Now that he saw it, however, a tumultuous rushing of all the blood in his body towards his heart, almost overpowered him, and the future entirely changed its aspects. He did not doubt an instant, of the ability of Bob and himself to put these blessed materials together, or of their success in navigating the mild sea around them, for any necessary distance, in a craft of the size this must turn out to be. A bright vista, with Bridget's brighter countenance at its termination, glowed before his imagination, and a great deal of wholesome philosophy and Christian submission were unsettled, as it might be, in the twinkling of an eye, by this all−important discovery. Mark had never abandoned the thought of constructing a little vessel with materials torn from the ship; but that would have been a most laborious, as well as a doubtful experiment, while here was the problem solved, with a certainty and precision almost equal to one in mathematics!

The agitation and revulsion of feeling produced in Mark by the discovery of the materials of the pinnace, were so great as to prevent him from maturing any plan for several days. During that time he could perceive in himself an alteration that amounted almost to an entire change of character. The vines on the Summit were now in full leaf, and they covered broad patches of the rock with their luxuriant vegetation, while the grass could actually be seen from the ship, converting the drab−coloured concretions of the mount into slopes and acclivities of verdure. But, all this delighted him no longer. Home and Bridget met him even in the fanciful and now thriving beds within the crater, where everything appeared to push forward with a luxuriance and promise of return, far exceeding what had once been his fondest expectations. He could see nothing, anticipate nothing, talk of nothing, think of nothing, but these new−found means of quitting the Reef, and of returning to the abodes of men, and to the arms of his young wife.

Betts took things more philosophically. He had made up his mind to `Robinson Crusoe it' a few years, and, though he had often expressed a wish that the dingui was of twice its actual size, he would have been quite as well content with this new boat could it be cut down to one−fourth of its real dimensions. He submitted to Mark's

superior information, however; and when the latter told him that he could wait no longer for the return of cooler weather, or for the heat of the sun to become less intense before he began to set up the frame of his craft, as had been the first intention, Bob acquiesced in the change of plan, without remonstrance, bent on taking things as they came, in humility and cheerfulness.

Nevertheless, it was far easier bravely to determine in this matter, than to execute. The heat was now so intense, for the greater part of the day, that it would have far exceeded the power of our two mariners to support it, on a naked rock, and without shade of any sort. The frame of the pinnace must be set up somewhere near the water, regular ways being necessary to launch her; and nowhere, on the shore, was the smallest shade to be found, without recourse to artificial means of procuring it. As Mark's impatience would no longer brook delay, this artificial shade, therefore, was the first thing to be attended to.

The leeward end of the reef was chosen for the new ship−yard. Although this choice imposed a good deal of additional labour on the two workmen, by compelling them to transport all the materials rather more than a mile, reflection and examination induced Mark to select the spot he did. The formation of the rock was more favourable there, he fancied, than in any other place he could find; offering greater facilities for launching. This was one motive; but the principal inducement was connected with an apprehension of floods. By the wall−like appearance of the exterior base of the mount, by the smoothness of the surface of the Reef in general, which, while it had many inequalities, wore the appearance of being semi−polished by the washing of water over it; and by the certain signs that were to be found on most of the lower half of the plain of the crater itself, Mark thought it apparent that the entire reef, the crater excepted, had been often covered with the water of the ocean, and that at no very distant day. The winter months were usually the tempestuous months in that latitude, though hurricanes might at any time occur. Now, the winter was yet an untried experiment with our two `reefers,' as Bob sometimes laughingly called himself and Mark, and hurricanes were things that often raised the seas in their neighbourhood several feet in an hour or two. Should the water be actually driven upon the Reef, so as to admit of a current to wash across it, or the waves to roll along its surface, the pinnace would be in the greatest danger of being carried off before it could be even launched. All these things Mark bore in mind, and he chose the spot he did, with an eye to these floods, altogether. It might be six or eight months before they could be ready to get the pinnace into the water, and it now wanted but six to the stormy season. At the western, or leeward, extremity of the island, the little craft would be under the lee of the crater, which would form a sort of breakwater, and might be the means of preventing it from being washed away. Then the rock, just at that spot, was three or four feet higher than at any other point, sufficiently near the sea to admit of launching with ease; and the two advantages united, induced our young `reefer' to incur the labour of transporting the materials the distance named, in preference to foregoing them. The raft, however, was put in requisition, and the entire frame, with a few of the planks necessary for a commencement, was carried round at one load.

Previously to laying the keel of the pinnace, Mark named it the Neshamony, after a creek that was nearly opposite to the Rancocus, another inlet of the Delaware, that had given its name to the ship from the circumstance that Friend Abraham White had been born on its low banks. The means of averting the pains and penalties of working in the sun, were also attended to, as indeed the great preliminary measure in this new enterprise. To this end, the raft was again put in requisition; an old main−course was got out of the sail−room, and lowered upon the raft; spare spars were cut to the necessary length, and thrown into the water, to be towed down in company; ropes, &c., were provided, and Bob sailed anew on this voyage. It was a work of a good deal of labour to get the raft to windward, towing having been resorted to as the easiest process, but a trip to leeward was soon made. In twenty minutes after this cargo had left the ship, it reached its point of destination.

The only time when our men could work at even their awning, were two hours early in the morning, and as many after the sun had got very low, or had absolutely set. Eight holes had to be drilled into the lava, to a depth of two feet each. Gunpowder, in very small quantities, was used, or these holes could not have been made in a twelvemonth. But by drilling with a crowbar a foot or two into the rock, and charging the cavity with a very small portion of powder, the lava was cracked, when the stones rather easily were raised by means of the picks and

crows. Some idea may be formed of the amount of labour that was expended on this, the first step in the new task, by the circumstance that a month was passed in setting those eight awning−posts alone. When up, however, they perfectly answered the purpose, everything having been done in a thorough, seaman−like manner. At the top of each post, itself a portion of solid spar, a watch−tackle was lashed, by means of which the sail was bowsed up to its place. To prevent the bagging unavoidable in an awning of that size, several uprights were set in the centre, on end, answering their purpose sufficiently without boring into the rocks.

Bob was in raptures with the new `ship−yard.' It was as large as the mainsail of a ship of four hundred tons, was complete as to shade, with the advantage of letting the breeze circulate, and had a reasonable chance of escaping from the calamities of a flood. Mark, too, was satisfied with the result, and the very next day after this task was completed, our shipwrights set to work to lay their keel. That day was memorable on another account. Bob had gone to the Summit in quest of a tool left there, in fitting up the boat of Mark, and while on the mount, he ascertained the important fact that the melons were beginning to ripen. He brought down three or four of these delicious fruits, and Mark had the gratification of tasting some of the bounties of Providence, which had been bestowed, as a reward of his own industry and forethought. It was necessary to eat of these melons in moderation, however; but it was a great relief to get them at all, after subsisting for so long a time on salted meats, principally, with no other vegetables but such as were dry, and had been long in the ship. It was not the melons alone, however, that were getting to be ripe; for, on examining himself, among the vines which now covered fully an acre of the Summit, Mark found squashes, cucumbers, onions, sweet−potatoes, tomatoes, string−beans, and two or three other vegetables, all equally fit to be used. From that time, some of these plants were put into the pot daily, and certain slight apprehensions which Woolston had begun again to entertain on the subject of scurvy, were soon dissipated. As for the garden within the crater, which was much the most extensive and artistical, it was somewhat behind that on the Summit, having been later tilled; but everything, there, looked equally promising, and Mark saw that one acre, well worked, would produce more than he and Betts could consume in a twelvemonth.

It was an important day on the Reef when the keel of the pinnace was laid. On examining his materials, Mark ascertained that the boat−builders had marked and numbered each portion of the frame, each plank, and everything else that belonged to the pinnace. Holes were bored, and everything had been done in the boat−yard that could be useful to those who, it was expected, were to put the work together in a distant part of the world. This greatly facilitated our new boat−builders' labours in the way of skill, besides having done so much of the actual toil to their hands. As soon as the keel was laid, Mark set up the frame, which came together with very little trouble. The wailes were then got out, and were fitted, each piece being bolted in its allotted place. As the work had already been put together, there was little or no dubbing necessary. Aware that the parts had once been accurately fitted to each other, Mark was careful not to disturb their arrangement by an unnecessary use of the adze, or broad−axe, experimenting and altering the positions of the timbers and planks; but, whenever he met with any obstacle, in preference to cutting and changing the materials themselves, he persevered until the parts came together as had been contemplated. By observing this caution, the whole frame was set up, the wailes were fitted and bolted, and the garboard−streak got on and secured, without taking off a particle of the wood, though a week was necessary to effect these desired objects.

Our mariners now measured their new frame. The keel was just four−and−twenty feet long, the distance between the knight−heads and the taffrail being six feet greater; the beam, from outside to outside, was nine feet, and the hold might be computed at five feet in depth. This gave something like a measurement of eleven tons; the pinnace having been intended for a craft a trifle smaller than this. As a vessel of eleven tons might make very good weather in a sea−way, if properly handled, the result gave great satisfaction, Mark cheering Bob with accounts of crafts, of much smaller dimensions, that had navigated the more stormy seas, with entire safety, on various occasions.

The planking of the Neshamony was no great matter, being completed the week it was commenced. The caulking, however, gave more trouble, though Bob had done a good deal of that sort of work in his day. It took a fortnight

for the honest fellow to do the caulking to his own mind, and before it was finished another great discovery was made by rummaging in the ship's hold, in quest of some of the fastenings which had not at first been found. A quantity of old sheet−copper, that had run its time on a vessel's bottom, was brought to light, marked "copper for the pinnace." Friend Abraham White had bethought him of the worms of the low latitudes, and had sent out enough of the refuse copper of a vessel that had been broken up to cover the bottom of this little craft fairly up to her bends To work, then, Mark and Bob went to put on the sheathing−paper and copper that had thus bountifully been provided for them, as soon as the seams were well payed. This done, and it was no great job, the paint−brush was set to work, and the hull was completed! In all, Mark and Betts were eight weeks, hard at work, putting their pinnace together. When she was painted, the summer was more than half gone. The laying of the deck had given more trouble than any other portion of the work on the boat, and this because it was not a plain, full deck, or one that covered the whole of the vessel, but left small stern−sheets aft, which was absolutely necessary to the comfort and safety of those she was to carry. The whole was got together, however, leaving Mark and Bob to rejoice in their success thus far, and to puzzle their heads about the means of getting their craft into the water, now she was built. In a word, it was far easier to put together a vessel of ten tons, that had been thus ready fitted to their hands, than it was to launch her.

As each of our mariners had necessarily seen many vessels in their cradles, each had some idea of what it was now necessary to do. Mark had laid the keel as near the water as he could get it, and by this precaution had saved himself a good deal of labour. It was very easy to find materials for the ways, many heavy planks still remaining; but the difficulty was to lay them so that they would not spread. Here the awning−posts were found of good service, plank being set on their edges against them, which, in their turn, were made to sustain the props of the ways. In order to save materials in the cradle, the ways themselves were laid on blocks, and they were secured as well as the skill of our self−formed shipwrights could do it. They had some trouble in making the cradle, and had once to undo all they had done, in consequence of a mistake. At length Mark was of opinion they had taken all the necessary precautions, and told Betts that he thought they might venture to attempt launching the next day. But Bob made a suggestion which changed this plan, and caused a delay that was attended with very serious consequences.

The weather had become cloudy, and a little menacing, for the last few days, and Bob proposed that they should lower the awning, get up shears on the rock, and step the mast of the pinnace before they launched her, as a means of saving some labour. The spar was not very heavy, it was true, and it might be stepped by crossing a couple of the oars in the boat itself; but a couple of light spars top−gallant studding−sail booms for instance would enable them to do it much more readily, before the craft was put into the water, than it could be done afterwards. Mark listened to the suggestion, and acquiesced. The awning was consequently lowered, and got out of the way. To prevent the hogs from tearing the sail, it was placed on two of the wheelbarrows and wheeled up into the crater, whither those animals had never yet found their way. Then the shears were got up, and the mast was stepped and rigged; the boat's sails were found and bent. Mark now thought enough had been done, and that, the next day, they might undertake the launch. But another suggestion of Bob's delayed the proceedings.

The weather still continued clouded and menacing. Betts was of opinion, therefore, that it might be well to stow the provisions and water they intended to use in the pinnace, while she was on the stocks, as they could work round her so much the more easily then than afterwards. Accordingly, the breakers were got out, on board the ship, and filled with fresh water. They were then struck into the raft. A barrel of beef, and one of pork followed, with a quantity of bread. At two trips the raft carried all the provisions and stores that were wanted, and the cargoes were landed, rolled up to the side of the pinnace, hoisted on board of her, by means of the throat−halliard, and properly stowed. Two grapnels, or rather one grapnel, and a small kedge, were found among the pinnace's materials, everything belonging to her having been stowed in the same part of the ship. These, too, were carried round to the ship−yard, got on board, and their hawsers bent. In a word, every preparation was made that might be necessary to make sail on the pinnace, and to proceed to sea in her, at once.

It was rather late in the afternoon of the third clouded day, that Betts himself admitted no more could be done to the Neshamony, previously to putting her into the water. When our two mariners ceased the business of the day, therefore, it was with the understanding that they would turn out early in the morning, wedge up, and launch. An hour of daylight remaining, Mark went up to the Summit to select a few melons, and to take a look at the state of the plantations and gardens. Before ascending the hill, the young man walked through his garden in the crater, where everything was flourishing and doing well. Many of the vegetables were by this time fit to eat, and there was every prospect of there being a sufficient quantity raised to meet the wants of two or three persons for a long period ahead. The sight of these fruits of his toil, and the luxuriance of the different plants, caused a momentary feeling of regret in Mark at the thought of being about to quit the place for ever. He even fancied he should have a certain pleasure in returning to the Reef; and once a faint outline of a plan came over his mind, in which he fancied that he might bring Bridget to this place, and pass the rest of his life with her, in the midst of its peace and tranquillity. This was but a passing thought, however, and was soon forgotten in the pictures that crowded on his mind, in connection with the great anticipated event of the next day.

While strolling about the little walks of his garden, the appearance of verdure along the edge of the crater, or immediately beneath the cliff, caught Mark's eye. Going hastily to the spot, he found that there was a long row of plants of a new sort, not only appearing above the ground, but already in leaf, and rising several inches in height. These were the results of the seeds of the oranges, lemons, limes, shaddocks, figs, and other fruits of the tropics, that he had planted there as an experiment, and forgotten. While his mind was occupied with other things, these seeds had sent forth their shoots, and the several trees were growing with the rapidity and luxuriance that distinguish vegetation within the tropics. As Mark's imagination pictured what might be the effects of cultivation and care on that singular spot, a sigh of regret mingled with his hopes for the future, as he recollected he was so soon to abandon the place for ever; while on the Summit, too, this feeling of regret was increased, rather than diminished. So much of the grass−seed had taken, and the roots had already so far extended, that acres were beginning to look verdant and smiling. Two or three months had brought everything forward prodigiously, and the frequency of the rains in showers, added to the genial warmth of the sun, gave to vegetation a quickness and force that surprised, as much as it delighted our young man.

That night Mark and Betts both slept in the ship. They had a fancy it might be the last in which they could ever have any chance of doing so, and attachment to the vessel induced both to return to their old berths; for latterly they had slept in hammocks, swung beneath the ship−yard awning, in order to be near their work. Mark was awoke at a very early hour, by the howling of a gale among the rigging and spars of the Rancocus, sounds that he had not heard for many a day, and which, at first, were actually pleasant to his ears. Throwing on his clothes, and going out on the quarter−deck, he found that a tempest was upon them. The storm far exceeded anything that he had ever before witnessed in the Pacific. The ocean was violently agitated, and the rollers came in over the reef, to windward, with a force and majesty that seemed to disregard the presence of the rocks. It was just light, and Mark called Bob, in alarm. The aspect of things was really serious, and, at first, our mariners had great apprehensions for the safety of the ship. It was true, the sea−wall resisted every shock of the rollers that reached it, but even the billows after they were broken by this obstacle, came down upon the vessel with a violence that brought a powerful strain on every rope−yarn in the sheet−cable. Fortunately, the ground−tackle, on which the safety of the vessel depended, was of the very best quality, and the anchor was known to have an excellent hold. Then, the preservation of the ship was no longer a motive of the first consideration with them; that of the pinnace being the thing now most to be regarded. It might grieve them both to see the Rancocus thrown upon the rocks, and broken up; but of far greater account was it to their future prospects that the Neshamony should not be injured. Nor were the signs of the danger that menaced the boat to be disregarded. The water of the ocean appeared to be piling in among these reefs, the rocks of which resisted its passage to leeward, and already was washing up on the surface of the Reef, in places, threatening them with a general inundation. It was necessary to look after the security of various articles that were scattered about on the outer plain, and our mariners went ashore to do so.

Although intending so soon to abandon the Reef altogether, a sense of caution induced Mark to take everything he could within the crater. All the lower portions of the outer plain were already covered with water, and those

sagacious creatures, the hogs, showed by their snuffing and disturbed manner of running about, that they had internal as well as external warnings of danger. Mark pulled aside the curtain, and let all the animals into the crater. Poor Kitty was delighted to get on the Summit, whither she soon found her way, by ascending the steps commonly used by her masters. Fortunately for the plants, the grass was in too great abundance, and too grateful to her, not to be her choice in preference to any other food. As for the pigs, they got at work in a pile of sea−weed, and overlooked the garden, which was at some distance, until fairly glutted, and ready to lie down.

In the meanwhile the tempest increased in violence, the sea continued to pile among the rocks, and the water actually covered the whole of the outer plain of the Reef. Now it was that Mark comprehended how the base of the crater had been worn by water, the waves washing past it with tremendous violence. There was actually a strong current running over the whole of the reef, without the crater; the water rushing to leeward, as if glad to get past the obstacle of the island on any terms, in order to hasten away before the tempest. Mark was fully half an hour engaged in looking to his marquee and its contents, all of which were exposed, more or less, to the power of the gale. After securing his books, furniture, &c., and seeing that the stays of the marquee itself were likely to hold out, he cast an eye to the ship, which was on that side of the island, also. The staunch old 'Cocus, as Bob called her, was rising and falling with the waves that now disturbed her usually placid basin; but, as yet, her cable and anchor held her, and no harm was done. Fortunately, our mariners, when they unbent the sails, had sent down all the upper and lighter spars, and had lowered the fore and main yards on the gunwale, measures of precaution that greatly lessened the strain on her ground−tackle. The top−gallant−masts had also been lowered, and the vessel was what seamen usually term `snug.' Mark would have been very, very sorry to see her lost, even though he did expect to have very little more use out of her; for he loved the craft from habit.

After taking this look at the ship, our mate passed round the Summit, having two or three tumbles on his way in consequence of puffs of wind, until he reached the point over the gate−way, which was that nearest to the ship−yard. It now occurred to him that possibly it might become necessary to look a little to the security of the Neshamony, for by this time the water on the reef was two or three feet deep. To his surprise, on looking round for Bob, whom he thought to be at work securing property near the gate−way, he ascertained that the honest fellow had waded down to the ship−yard, and clambered on board the pinnace, with a view to take care of her. The distance between the point where Mark now stood and the Neshamony exceeded half a mile, and communication with the voice would have been next to impossible, had the wind not blown as it did. With the roaring of the seas, and the howling of the gale, it was of course entirely out of the question. Mark, however, could see his friend, and see that he was gesticulating, in the most earnest manner, for himself to join him. Then it was he first perceived that the pinnace was in motion, seeming to move on her ways. Presently the blockings were washed from under her, and the boat went astern half her length at a single surge. Mark made a bound down the hill, intending to throw himself into the raging surf, and to swim off to the aid of Betts; but, pausing an instant to choose a spot at which to get down the steep, he looked towards the ship−yard, and saw the pinnace lifted on a sea, and washed fairly clear of the land!

CHAPTER IX.

"Man 's rich with little, were his judgments true;
Nature is frugal, and her wants are few;
These few wants answered bring sincere delights,
But fools create themselves new appetites."

Young.

It would have been madness in Mark to pursue his intention. A boat, or craft of any sort, once adrift in such a gale, could not have been overtaken by even one of those islanders who are known to pass half their lives in the

water; and the young man sunk down on the rock, almost gasping for breath in the intensity of his distress. He felt more for Bob than he did for himself, for escape with life appeared to him to be a forlorn hope for his friend. Nevertheless, the sturdy old sea−dog who was cast adrift, amid the raging of the elements, comported himself in a way to do credit to his training. There was nothing like despair in his manner of proceeding; but so coolly and intelligently did he set about taking care of his craft, that Mark soon found himself a curious and interested observer of all he did, feeling quite as much of admiration for Bob's steadiness and skill, as concern for his danger.

Betts knew too well the uselessness of throwing over his kedge to attempt anchoring. Nor was it safe to keep the boat in the trough of the sea, his wisest course being to run before the gale until he was clear of the rocks, when he might endeavour to lie−to, if his craft would bear it. In driving off the Reef the Neshamony had gone stern foremost, almost as a matter of course, vessels usually being laid down with their bows towards the land. No sooner did the honest old salt find he was fairly adrift, therefore, than he jumped into the stern−sheets and put the helm down. With stern−way on her, this caused the bows of the craft to fall off; and, as she came broadside to the gale, Mark thought she would fall over, also. Some idea could be formed of the power of the wind, in the fact that this sloop−rigged craft, without a rag of sail set, and with scarce any hamper aloft, no sooner caught the currents of air abeam, than she lay down to it, as one commonly sees such craft do under their canvas in stiff breezes.

It was a proof that the Neshamony was well modelled, that she began to draw ahead as soon as the wind took her fairly on her broadside, when Betts shifted the helm, and the pinnace fell slowly off. When she had got nearly before the wind, she came up and rolled to−windward like a ship, and Mark scarce breathed as he saw her plunging down upon the reefs, like a frantic steed that knows not whither he is rushing in his terror. From the elevated position he occupied, Mark could see the ocean as far as the spray, which filled the atmosphere, would allow of anything being seen at all. Places which were usually white with the foam of breakers, could not now be distinguished from any of the raging cauldron around them, and it was evident that Bob must run at hazard. Twenty times did Mark expect to see the pinnace disappear in the foaming waves, as it drove furiously onward; but, in each instance, the light and buoyant boat came up from cavities where our young man fancied it must be dashed to pieces, scudding away to leeward like the sea−fowl that makes its flight with wings nearly dipping. Mark now began to hope that his friend might pass over the many reefs that lay in his track, and gain the open water to leeward. The rise in the ocean favoured such an expectation, and no doubt was the reason why the Neshamony was not dashed to pieces within the first five minutes after she was washed off her ways. Once to leeward of the vast shoals that surrounded the crater, there was the probability of Bob's finding smoother water, and the chance of his riding out the tempest by bringing his little sloop up head to sea. The water through which the boat was then running was more like a cauldron, bubbling and boiling under some intense heat produced by subterranean fires, than the regular, rolling billows of the ocean when piled up by gales. Under the lee of the shoals this cauldron would disappear, while the mountain waves of the open ocean could not rise until a certain distance from the shallow water enabled them to `get up,' as sailors express it. Mark saw the Neshamony for about a quarter of an hour after she was adrift, though long before the expiration of even that brief period she was invisible for many moments at a time, in consequence of the distance, her want of sail, her lowness in the water, and the troubled state of the element through which she was driving. The last look he got of her was at an instant when the spray was filling the atmosphere like a passing cloud; when it had driven away, the boat could no longer be seen!

Here was a sudden and a most unexpected change for the worse in the situation of Mark Woolston! Not only had he lost the means of getting off the island, but he had lost his friend and companion. It was true, Bob was a rough and an uncultivated associate; but he was honest as human frailty could leave a human being, true as steel in his attachments, strong in body, and of great professional skill. So great, indeed, was the last, that our young man was not without the hope he would be able to keep under the lee of the shoals until the gale broke, and then beat up through them, and still come to his rescue. There was one point, in particular, on which Mark felt unusual concern. Bob knew nothing whatever of navigation. It was impossible to teach him anything on that subject. He knew the points of the compass, but had no notion of the variations, of latitude or longitude, or of anything

belonging to the purely mathematical part of the business. Twenty times had he asked Mark to give him the latitude and longitude of the crater; twenty times had he been told what they were, and just as often had he forgotten them. When questioned by his young friend, twenty−four hours after a lesson of this sort, if he remembered the figures at all, he was apt to give the latitude for the longitude, or the longitude for the latitude, the degrees for the minutes, or the minutes for the degrees. Ordinarily, however, he forgot all about the numbers themselves. Mark had in vain endeavoured to impress on his mind the single fact that any number which exceeded ninety must necessarily refer to longitude, and not to latitude; for Bob could not be made to remember even this simple distinction. He was just as likely to believe the Reef lay in the hundred and twentieth degree of latitude, as he was to fancy it lay in the twentieth. With such a head, therefore, it was but little to be expected Bob could give the information to others necessary to find the reef, even in the almost hopeless event of his ever being placed in circumstances to do so. Still, while so completely ignorant of mathematics and arithmetic, in all their details, few mariners could find their way better than Bob Betts by the simple signs of the ocean. He understood the compass perfectly, the variations excepted; and his eye was as true as that of the most experienced artist could be, when it became necessary to judge of the colour of the water. On many occasions had Mark known him intimate that the ship was in a current, and had a weatherly or a lee set, when the fact had escaped not only the officers, but the manufacturers of the charts. He judged by ripples, and sea−weed, and the other familiar signs of the seas, and these seldom failed him. While, therefore, there was not a seaman living less likely to find the Reef again, when driven off from its vicinity, by means of observations and the charts, there was not a seaman living more likely to find it, by resorting to the other helps of the navigator. On this last peculiarity Mark hung all his hopes of seeing his friend again, when the gale should abate.

Since the moment when all the charge of the ship fell upon his shoulders, by the loss of Captain Crutchely, Mark had never felt so desolate, as when he lost sight of Bob and the Neshamony. Then, indeed, did he truly feel himself to be alone, with none between him and his God with whom to commune. It is not surprising, therefore, that one so much disposed to cherish his intercourse with the Divine Spirit, knelt on the naked rock and prayed. After this act of duty and devotion, the young man arose, and endeavoured to turn his attention to the state of things around him.

The gale still continued with unabated fury. Each instant the water rose higher and higher on the Reef, until it began to enter within the crater, by means of the gutters that had been worn in the lava, covering two or three acres of the lower part of its plain. As for the Rancocus, though occasionally pitching more heavily than our young man could have believed possible behind the sea−wall, her anchor still held, and no harm had yet come to her. Finding it impossible to do any more, Mark descended into the crater, where it was a perfect lull, though the wind fairly howled on every side, and got into one of the South American hammocks, of which there had been two or three in the ship, and of which he had caused one to be suspended beneath the sort of tent he and poor Bob had erected near the garden. Here Mark remained all the rest of that day, and during the whole of the succeeding night. But for what he had himself previously seen, the roar of the ocean on the other side of his rocky shelter, and the scuffling of the winds about the Summit, he might not have been made conscious of the violence of the tempest that was raging so near him. Once and awhile, however, a puff of air would pass over him; but, on the whole, he was little affected by the storm, until near morning, when it rained violently. Fortunately, Mark had taken the precaution to give a low ridge to all his awnings and tent−coverings, which turned the water perfectly. When, therefore, he heard the pattering of the drops on the canvas, he did not rise, but remained in his hammock until the day returned. Previously to that moment, however, he dropped into a deep sleep, in which he lay several hours.

When consciousness returned to Mark, he lay half a minute trying to recall the past. Then he listened for the sounds of the tempest. All was still without, and, rising, he found that the sun was shining, and that a perfect calm reigned in the outer world. Water was lying in spots, in holes on the surface of the crater, where the pigs were drinking and the ducks bathing. Kitty stood in sight, on the topmost knoll of the Summit, cropping the young sweet grass that had so lately been refreshed by rain, disliking it none the less, probably, from the circumstance that a few particles of salt were to be found among it, the deposit of the spray. The garden looked smiling, the

plants refreshed, and nothing as yet touched in it, by the visiters who had necessarily been introduced.

Our young man washed himself in one of the pools, and then crossed the plain to drive out the pigs and poultry, the necessity of husbanding his stores pressing even painfully on his mind. As he approached the gate−way, he saw that the sea had retired; and, certain that the animals would take care of themselves, he drove them through the hole, and dropped the sail before it. Then he sought one of the ascents, and was soon on the top of the hill. The trades had returned, but scarce blew in zephyrs; the sea was calm; the points in the reefs were easily to be seen; the ship was at rest and seemingly uninjured, and the whole view was one of the sweetest tranquillity and security. Already had the pent and piled waters diffused themselves, leaving the Reef as before, with the exception that those cavities which contained rain−water, during most of the year, now contained that which was not quite so palatable. This was a great temporary inconvenience, though the heavy showers of the past night had done a good deal towards sweetening the face of the rock, and had reduced most of the pools to a liquid that was brackish rather than salt. A great many fish lay scattered about, on the island, and Mark hastened down to examine their qualities.

The pigs and poultry were already at work on the game that was so liberally thrown in their way, and Mark felt indebted to these scavengers for aiding him in what he perceived was now a task indispensable to his comfort. After going to the ship, and breaking his fast, he returned to the crater, obtained a wheelbarrow, and set to work in earnest to collect the fish, which a very few hours' exposure to the sun of that climate would render so offensive as to make the island next to intolerable. Never in his life did our young friend work harder than he did all that morning. Each load of fish, as it was wheeled into the crater, was thrown into a trench already prepared for that purpose, and the ashes were hauled over it, by means of the hoe. Feeling the necessity of occupation to lessen his sorrow, as well as that of getting rid of pestilence, which he seriously apprehended from this inroad of animal substances, Mark toiled two whole days at this work, until fairly driven from it by the intolerable effluvium which arose, notwithstanding all he had done, on every side of the island. It is impossible to say what would have been the consequences had not the birds come, in thousands, to his relief. They made quick work of it, clearing off the fish in numbers that would be nearly incredible. As it was, however, our young hermit was driven into the ship, where he passed a whole week, the steadiness of the trades driving the disagreeable odours to leeward. At the end of that time he ventured ashore, where he found it possible to remain, though the Reef did not get purified for more than a month. Finding a great many fish still remaining that neither hog nor bird would touch, Mark made a couple of voyages to Loam Island, whence he brought two cargoes of the deposit, and landed at the usual place. This he wheeled about the Reef, throwing two or three shovels full on each offensive creature, thus getting rid of the effluvium and preparing a considerable store of excellent manure for his future husbandry. It may be as well said here, that, at odd times, he threw these little deposits into large heaps, and subsequently wheeled them into the crater, where they were mixed with the principal pile of compost that had now been, for months, collecting there.

It is a proof of the waywardness of human nature that we bear great misfortunes better than small ones. So it proved with Mark, on this occasion; for, much as he really regarded Bob, and serious as was the loss of his friend to himself, the effects of the inundation occupied his thoughts, and disturbed him more, just at that time, than the disappearance of the Neshamony. Nevertheless, our young man had not forgotten to look out for the missing boat, in readiness to hail its return with joy. He passed much of the week he was shut up in the ship in her topmast−crosstrees, vainly examining the sea to leeward, in the hope of catching a distant view of the pinnace endeavouring to bear up through the reefs. Several times he actually fancied he saw her; but it always turned out to be the wing of some gull, or the cap of a distant breaker. It was when Mark had come ashore again, and commenced the toil of covering the decayed fish, and of gathering them into piles, that these smaller matters supplanted the deep griefs of his solitude.

One of the annoyances to which our solitary man found himself most subject, was the glare produced by a burning sun on rocks and ashes of the drab colour of the crater. The spots of verdure that he had succeeded in producing on the Summit, not only relieved and refreshed his eyes, but they were truly delightful as aids to the

view, as well as grateful to Kitty, which poor creature had, by this time, cropped them down to a pretty short herbage. This Mark knew, however, was an advantage to the grass, making it finer, and causing it to thicken at the roots. The success of this experiment, the annoyance to his eyes, and a feverish desire to be doing, which succeeded the disappearance of Betts, set Mark upon the project of sowing grass−seed over as much of the plain of the crater as he thought he should not have occasion to use for the purposes of tillage. To work he went then, scattering the seed in as much profusion as the quantity to be found in the ship would justify. Friend Abraham White had provided two barrels of the seed, and this went a good way. While thus employed a heavy shower fell, and thinking the rain a most favourable time to commit his grass−seeds to the earth, Mark worked through the whole of it, or for several hours, perspiring with the warmth and exercise.

This done, a look at the garden, with a free use of the hoe, was the next thing undertaken. That night Mark slept in his hammock, under the crater−awning, and when he awoke in the morning it was to experience a weight like that of lead in his forehead, a raging thirst, and a burning fever. Now it was that our poor solitary hermit felt the magnitude of his imprudence and the weight of the evils of his peculiar situation. That he was about to be seriously ill he knew, and it behoved him to improve the time that remained to him, to the utmost. Everything useful to him was in the ship, and thither it became indispensable for him to repair, if he wished to retain even a chance for life. Opening an umbrella, then, and supporting his tottering legs by a cane, Mark commenced a walk of very near a mile, under an almost perpendicular sun, at the hottest season of the year. Twenty times did the young man think he should be compelled to sink on the bare rock, where there is little question he would soon have expired, under the united influence of the fever within and the burning heat without. Despair urged him on, and, after pausing often to rest, he succeeded in entering the cabin, at the end of the most perilous hour he had ever yet passed.

No words of ours can describe the grateful sense of coolness, in spite of the boiling blood in his veins, that Mark Woolston experienced when he stepped beneath the shade of the poop−deck of the Rancocus. The young man knew that he was about to be seriously ill, and his life might depend on the use he made of the next hour, or half−hour, even. He threw himself on a settee, to get a little rest, and while there he endeavoured to reflect on his situation, and to remember what he ought to do. The medicine−chest always stood in the cabin, and he had used its contents too often among the crew, not to have some knowledge of their general nature and uses. Potions were kept prepared in that depository, and he staggered to the table, opened the chest, took a ready−mixed dose of the sort he believed best for him, poured water on it from the filterer, and swallowed it. Our mate ever afterwards believed that draught saved his life. It soon made him deadly sick, and produced an action in his whole system. For an hour he was under its influence, when he was enabled to get into his berth, exhausted and literally unable any longer to stand. How long he remained in that berth, or near it rather for he was conscious of having crawled from it in quest of water, and for other purposes, on several occasions but, how long he was confined to his cabin, Mark Woolston never knew. The period was certainly to be measured by days, and he sometimes fancied by weeks. The first probably was the truth, though it might have been a fortnight. Most of that time his head was light with fever, though there were intervals when reason was, at least partially, restored to him, and he became painfully conscious of the horrors of his situation. Of food and water he had a sufficiency, the filterer and a bread−bag being quite near him, and he helped himself often from the first, in particular; a single mouthful of the ship's biscuit commonly proving more than he could swallow, even after it was softened in the water. At length he found himself indisposed to rise at all, and he certainly remained eight−and−forty hours in his berth, without quitting it, and almost without sleeping, though most of the time in a sort of doze.

At length the fever abated in its violence, though it began to assume, what for a man in Mark Woolston's situation was perhaps more dangerous, a character of a low type, lingering in his system and killing him by inches. Mark was aware of his condition, and thought of the means of relief. The ship had some good Philadelphia porter in her, and a bottle of it stood on a shelf over his berth. This object caught his eye, and he actually longed for a draught of that porter. He had sufficient strength to raise himself high enough to reach it, but it far exceeded his powers to draw the cork, even had the ordinary means been at hand, which they were not. There was a hammer on the shelf, however, and with that instrument he did succeed in making a hole in the side of the bottle, and in filling a

tumbler. This liquor he swallowed at a single draught. It tasted deliciously to him, and he took a second tumbler full, when he lay down, uncertain as to the consequences. That his head was affected by these two glasses of porter, Mark himself was soon aware, and shortly after drowsiness followed. After lying in an uneasy slumber for half an hour, his whole person was covered with a gentle perspiration, in which condition, after drawing the sheet around him, the sick man fell asleep.

Our patient never knew how long he slept, on this all−important occasion. The period certainly included part of two days and one entire night; but, afterwards, when Mark endeavoured to correct his calendar, and to regain something like a record of the time, he was inclined to think he must have lain there two nights with the intervening day. When he awoke, Mark was immediately sensible that he was free from disease. He was not immediately sensible, nevertheless, how extremely feeble disease had left him. At first, he fancied he had only to rise, take nourishment, and go about his ordinary pursuits. But the sight of his emaciated limbs, and the first effort he made to get up, convinced him that he had a long state of probation to go through, before he became the man he had been a week or two before. It was well, perhaps, that his head was so clear, and his judgment so unobscured at this, his first return to consciousness.

Mark deemed it a good symptom that he felt disposed to eat. How many days he had been altogether without nourishment he could not say, but they must have been several; nor had he received more than could be obtained from a single ship's biscuit since his attack. All this came to his mind, with a distinct recollection that he must be his own physician and nurse. For a few minutes he lay still, during which he addressed himself to God, with thanks for having spared his life until reason was restored. Then he bethought him, well as his feeble state would allow, of the course he ought to pursue. On a table in the cabin, and in sight of his berth, through the state−room door, was a liquor−case, containing wines, brandy, and gin. Our sick man thought all might yet go well, could he get a few spoonsfull of an excellent port wine which that case contained, and which had been provided expressly for cases of sickness. To do this, however, it was necessary to obtain the key, to open the case, and to pour out the liquor; three things, of which he distrusted his powers to perform that which was the least difficult.

The key of the liquor−case was in the draw of an open secretary, which, fortunately, stood between him and the table. Another effort was made to rise, which so far succeeded as to enable the invalid to sit up in his bed. The cool breeze which aired the cabin revived him a little, and he was able to stretch out a hand and turn the cock of the filterer, which he had himself drawn near his berth, while under the excitement of fever, in order to obtain easy access to water. Accidentally this filterer stood in a draught, and the quart or two of water that had not yet evaporated was cool and palatable; that is, cool for a ship and such a climate. One swallow of the water was all Mark ventured on, but it revived him more than he could believe possible. Near the glass into which he had drawn the water, lay a small piece of pilot bread, and this he dropped into the tumbler. Then he ventured to try his feet, when he found a dizziness come over him, that compelled him to fall back on his berth. Recovering from this in a minute or two, a second attempt succeeded better, and the poor fellow, by supporting himself against the bulkheads, and by leaning on chairs, was enabled to reach the desk. The key was easily obtained, and the table was next reached. Here Mark sunk into a chair, as much exhausted as he would have been, previously to his illness, by a desperate effort to defend life.

The invalid was in his shirt, and the cool sea−breeze had the effect of an air−bath on him. It revived him in a little while, when he applied the key, opened the case, got out the bottle by using both hands, though it was nearly empty, and poured out a wine−glass of the liquor. With these little exertions he was so much exhausted as almost to faint. Nothing saved him, probably, but a sip of the wine which he took from the glass as it stood on the table. It has been much the fashion, of late years, to decry wine, and this because it is a gift of Providence that has been greatly abused. In Mark Woolston's instance it proved, what it was designed to be, a blessing instead of a curse. That single sip of wine produced an effect on him like that of magic. It enabled him soon to obtain his tumbler of water, into which he poured the remainder of the liquor. With the tumbler in his hand, the invalid next essayed to cross the cabin, and to reach the berth in the other state−room. He was two or three minutes in making this passage, sustained by a chair, into which he sunk not less than three times, and revived by a few more sips of the

wine and water. In this state−room was a bed with clean cool linen, that had been prepared for Bob, but which that worthy fellow had pertinanciously refused to use, out of respect to his officer. On these sheets Mark now sank, almost exhausted. He had made a happy exchange, however, the freshness and sweetness of the new bed, of itself, acting as delicious restoratives.

After resting a few minutes, the solitary invalid formed a new plan of proceeding. He knew the importance of not over−exerting himself, but he also knew the importance of cleanliness and of a renovation of his strength. By this time the biscuit had got to be softened in the wine and water, and he took a piece, and after masticating it well, swallowed it. This was positively the first food the sick and desolate young man had received in a week. Fully aware of this, he abstained from taking a second mouthful, though sorely pressed to it by hunger. So strong was the temptation, and so sweet did that morsel taste, that Mark felt he might not refrain unless he had something to occupy his mind for a few minutes. Taking a small swallow of the wine and water, he again got on his feet, and staggered to the drawer in which poor Captain Crutchely had kept his linen. Here he got a shirt, and tottered on as far as the quarter−deck. Beneath the awning Mark had kept the section of a hogshead, as a bathing−tub, and for the purpose of catching the rain−water that ran from the awning, Kitty often visiting the ship and drinking from this reservoir.

The invalid found the tub full of fresh and sweet water, and throwing aside the shirt in which he had lain so long, he rather fell than seated himself in the water. After remaining a sufficient time to recover his breath, Mark washed his head, and long matted beard, and all parts of his frame, as well as his strength would allow. He must have remained in the water several minutes, when he managed to tear himself from it, as fearful of excess from this indulgence as from eating. The invalid now felt like a new man! It is scarcely possible to express the change that came over his feelings, when he found himself purified from the effects of so long a confinement in a feverish bed, without change, or nursing of any sort. After drying himself as well as he could with a towel, though the breeze and the climate did that office for him pretty effectually, Mark put on the clean, fresh shirt, and tottered back to his own berth, where he fell on the mattress, nearly exhausted. It was half−an−hour before he moved again, though all that time experiencing the benefits of the nourishment taken, and the purification undergone. The bath, moreover, had acted as a tonic, giving a stimulus to the whole system. At the end of the half hour, the young man took another mouthful of the biscuit, half emptied the tumbler, fell back on his pillow, and was soon in a sweet sleep.

It was near sunset when Mark lost his consciousness on this occasion, nor did he recover it until the light of day was once more cheering the cabin. He had slept profoundly twelve hours, and this so much the more readily from the circumstance that he had previously refreshed himself with a bath and clean linen. The first consciousness of his situation was accompanied with the bleat of poor Kitty. That gentle animal, intended by nature to mix with herds, had visited the cabin daily, and had been at the sick man's side, when his fever was at its height; and had now come again, as if to inquire after his night's rest. Mark held out his hand, and spoke to his companion, for such she was, and thought she was rejoiced to hear his voice again, and to be allowed to lick his hand. There was great consolation in this mute intercourse, poor Mark feeling the want of sympathy so much as to find a deep pleasure in this proof of affection even in a brute.

Mark now arose, and found himself sensibly improved by his night's rest, the washing, and the nourishment received, little as the last had been. His first step was to empty the tumbler, bread and all. Then he took another bath, the last doing quite as much good, he fancied, as his breakfast. All that day, the young man managed his case with the same self−denial and prudence, consuming a ship's biscuit in the course of the next twenty−four hours, and taking two or three glasses of the wine, mixed with water and sweetened with sugar. In the afternoon he endeavoured to shave, but the first effort convinced him he was getting well too fast.

It was thrice twenty−four hours after his first bath, before Mark Woolston had sufficient strength to reach the galley and light a fire. In this he then succeeded, and he treated himself to a cup of good warm tea. He concocted some dishes of arrow−root and cocoa, too, in the course of that and the next day, continuing his baths, and

changing his linen repeatedly. On the fifth day, he got off his beard, which was a vast relief to him, and by the end of the week he actually crawled up on the poop, where he could get a sight of his domains.

The Summit was fast getting to be really green in considerable patches, for the whole rock was now covered with grass. Kitty was feeding quietly enough on the hillside, the gentle creature having learned to pass the curtain at the gate, and go up and down the ascents at pleasure. Mark scarce dared to look for his hogs, but there they were rooting and grunting about the Reef, actually fat and contented. He knew that this foreboded evil to his garden, for the creatures must have died for want of food during his illness, had not some such relief been found. As yet, his strength would not allow him to go ashore, and he was obliged to content himself with this distant view of his estate. The poultry appeared to be well, and the invalid fancied he saw chickens running at the side of one of the hens.

It was a week later before Mark ventured to go as far as the crater. On entering it, he found that his conjectures concerning the garden were true. Two−thirds of it had been dug over by the snouts of his pigs, quite as effectually as he could have done it, in his vigour, with the spade. Tops and roots had been demolished alike, and about as much wasted as had been consumed. Kitty was found, *flagrante delictu*, nibbling at the beans, which, by this time, were dead ripe. The peas, and beans, and Indian corn had made good picking for the poultry; and everything possessing life had actually been living in abundance, while the sick man had lain unconscious of even his own existence, in a state as near death as life.

Mark found his awning standing, and was glad to rest an hour or two in his hammock, after looking at the garden. While there the hogs entered the crater, and made a meal before his eyes. To his surprise, the sow was followed by ten little creatures, that were already getting to be of the proper size for eating. A ravenous appetite was now Mark's greatest torment, and the coarse food of the ship was rather too heavy for him. He had exhausted his wit in contriving dishes of flour, and pined for something more grateful than salted beef, or pork. Although he somewhat distrusted his strength, yet longing induced him to make an experiment. A fowling−piece, loaded with ball, was under the awning; and freshening the priming, the young man watched his opportunity when one of the grunters was in a good position, and shot it in the head. Then cutting its throat with a knife, he allowed it to bleed, when he cleaned, and *skinned it*. This last operation was not very artistical, but it was necessary in the situation of our invalid. With the carcase of this pig, which was quite as much as he could even then carry back to the ship, though the animal was not yet six weeks old, Mark made certain savoury and nourishing dishes, that contributed essentially to the restoration of his strength. In the course of the ensuing month three more of the pigs shared the same fate, as did half−a−dozen of the brood of chickens already mentioned, though the last were not yet half−grown. But Mark felt, now, as if he could eat the crater, though as yet he had not been able to clamber to the Summit.

CHAPTER X.

"Yea! long as nature's humblest child
Hath kept her temple undefiled
By sinful sacrifice,
Earth's fairest scenes are all his own,
He is a monarch, and his throne
Is built amid the skies."

Wilson.

Our youthful hermit was quite two months in regaining his strength, though, by the end of one he was able to look about him, and turn his hand to many little necessary jobs. The first thing he undertook was to set up a gate that

would keep the animals on the outside of the crater. The pigs had not only consumed much the largest portion of his garden truck, but they had taken a fancy to break up the crust of that part of the crater where the grass was showing itself, and to this inroad upon his meadows, Mark had no disposition to submit. He had now ascertained that the surface of the plain, though of a rocky appearance, was so far shelly and porous that the seeds had taken very generally; and as soon as their roots worked their way into the minute crevices, he felt certain they would of themselves convert the whole surface into a soil sufficiently rich to nourish the plants he wished to produce there. Under such circumstances he did not desire the assistance of the hogs. As yet, however, the animals had done good, rather than harm to the garden, by stirring the soil up, and mixing the sea−weed and decayed fish with it; but among the grass they threatened to be more destructive than useful. In most places the crust of the plain was just thick enough to bear the weight of a man, and Mark, no geologist, by the way, came to the conclusion that it existed at all more through the agency of the salt deposited in ancient floods, than from any other cause. According to the great general law of the earth, soil should have been formed from rock, and not rock from soil; though there certainly are cases in which the earths indurate, as well as become disintegrated. As we are not professing to give a scientific account of these matters, we shall simply state the facts, leaving better scholars than ourselves to account for their existence.

Mark made his gate out of the fife−rail, at the foot of the mainmast, sawing off the stanchions for that purpose. With a little alteration it answered perfectly, being made to swing from a post that was wedged into the arch, by cutting it to the proper length. As this was the first attack upon the Rancocus that had yet been made, by axe or saw, it made the young man melancholy; and it was only with great reluctance that he could prevail on himself to begin what appeared like the commencement of breaking up the good craft. It was done, however, and the gate was hung; thereby saving the rest of the crop. It was high time; the hogs and poultry, to say nothing of Kitty, having already got their full share. The inroads of the first, however, were of use in more ways than one, since they taught our young cultivator a process by which he could get his garden turned up at a cheap rate. They also suggested to him an idea that he subsequently turned to good account. Having dug his roots so early, it occurred to Mark that, in so low a climate, and with such a store of manure, he might raise two crops in a year, those which came in the cooler months varying a little in their properties from those which came in the warmer. On this hint he endeavoured to improve, commencing anew beds that, without it, would probably have lain fallow some months longer.

In this way did our young man employ himself until he found his strength perfectly restored. But the severe illness he had gone through, with the sad views it had given him of some future day, when he might be compelled to give up life itself, without a friendly hand to smooth his pillow, or to close his eyes, led him to think far more seriously than he had done before, on the subject of the true character of our probationary condition here on earth, and on the unknown and awful future to which it leads us. Mark had been carefully educated on the subject of religion, and was well enough disposed to enter into the inquiry in a suitable spirit of humility; but, the grave circumstances in which he was now placed, contributed largely to the clearness of his views of the necessity of preparing for the final change. Cut off, as he was, from all communion with his kind; cast on what was, when he first knew it, literally a barren rock in the midst of the vast Pacific Ocean, Mark found himself, by a very natural operation of causes, in much closer communion with his Creator, than he might have been in the haunts of the world. On the Reef, there was little to divert his thoughts from their true course; and the very ills that pressed upon him, became so many guides to his gratitude by showing, through the contrasts, the many blessings which had been left him by the mercy of the hand that had struck him. The nights in that climate and season were much the pleasantest portions of the four−and−twenty hours. There were no exhalations from decayed vegetable substances or stagnant pools, to create miasma, but the air was as pure and little to be feared under a placid moon as under a noon−day sun. The first hours of night, therefore, were those in which our solitary man chose to take most of his exercise, previously to his complete restoration to strength; and then it was that he naturally fell into an obvious and healthful communion with the stars.

So far as the human mind has as yet been able to penetrate the mysteries of our condition here on earth, with the double connection between the past and the future, all its just inferences tend to the belief in an existence of a vast

and beneficent design. We have somewhere heard, or read, that the gipsies believe that men are the fallen angels, toiling their way backward on the fatal path along which they formerly rushed to perdition. This may not be, probably is not true, in its special detail; but that men are placed here to prepare themselves for a future and higher condition of existence, is not only agreeable to our consciousness, but is in harmony with revelation. Among the many things that have been revealed to us, where so many are hid, we are told that our information is to increase, as we draw nearer to the millennium, until "The whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." We may be far from that blessed day; probably are; but he has lived in vain, who has dwelt his half century in the midst of the civilization of this our own age, and does not see around him the thousand proofs of the tendency of things to the fulfilment of the decrees, announced to us ages ago by the pens of holy men. Rome, Greece, Egypt, and all that we know of the past, which comes purely of man and his passions; empires, dynasties, heresies and novelties, come and go like the changes of the seasons; while the only thing that can be termed stable, is the slow but sure progress of prophecy. The agencies that have been employed to bring about the great ends foretold so many centuries since, are so very natural, that we often lose sight of the mighty truth in its seeming simplicity. But, the signs of the times are not to be mistaken. Let any man of fifty, for instance, turn his eyes toward the East, the land of Judea, and compare its condition, its promises of to−day, with those that existed in his own youth, and ask himself how the change has been produced. That which the Richards and Sts. Louis of the middle ages could not effect with their armed hosts, is about to happen as a consequence of causes so obvious and simple that they are actually overlooked by the multitude. The Ottoman power and Ottoman prejudices are melting away, as it might be under the heat of divine truth, which is clearing for itself a path that will lead to the fulfilment of its own predictions.

Among the agents that are to be employed, in impressing the human race with a sense of the power and benevolence of the Deity, we think the science of astronomy, with its mechanical auxiliaries, is to act its full share. The more deeply we penetrate into the arcana of nature, the stronger becomes the proofs of design; and a deity thus obviously, tangibly admitted, the more profound will become the reverence for his character and power. In Mark Woolston's youth, the great progress which has since been made in astronomy, more especially in the way of its details through observations, had but just commenced. A vast deal, it is true, had been accomplished in the way of pure science, though but little that came home to the understandings and feelings of the mass. Mark's education had given him an outline of what Herschel and his contemporaries had been about, however; and when he sat on the Summit, communing with the stars, and through those distant and still unknown worlds, with their Divine First Cause, it was with as much familiarity with the subject as usually belongs to the liberally educated, without carrying a particular branch of learning into its recesses. He had increased his school acquisitions a little, by the study and practice of Navigation, and had several works that he was fond of reading, which may have made him a somewhat more accurate astronomer than those who get only leading ideas on the subject. Hours at a time did Mark linger on the Summit, studying the stars in the clear, transparent atmosphere of the tropics, his spirit struggling the while to get into closer communion with that dread Being which had produced all these mighty results; among which the existence of the earth, its revolutions, its heats and colds, its misery and happiness, are but specks in the incidents of a universe. Previously to this period, he had looked into these things from curiosity and a love of science; now, they impressed him with the deepest sense of the power and wisdom of the Deity, and caused him the better to understand his own position in the scale of created beings.

Not only did our young hermit study the stars with his own eyes, but he had the aid of instruments. The ship had two very good spy−glasses, and Mark himself was the owner of a very neat reflecting telescope, which he had purchased with his wages, and had brought with him as a source of amusement and instruction. To this telescope there was a brass stand, and he conveyed it to the tent on the Summit, where it was kept for use. Aided by this instrument, Mark could see the satellites of Jupiter and Saturn, the ring of the latter, the belts of the former, and many of the phenomena of the moon. Of course, the spherical forms of all the nearer planets, then known to astronomers, were plainly to be seen by the assistance of this instrument; and there is no one familiar fact connected with our observations of the heavenly bodies, that strikes the human mind, through the senses, as forcibly as this. For near a month, Mark almost passed the nights gazing at the stars, and reflecting on their origin and uses. He had no expectations of making discoveries, or of even adding to his own stores of knowledge: but

his thoughts were brought nearer to his Divine Creator by investigations of this sort; for where a zealous mathematician might have merely exulted in the confirmation of some theory by means of a fact, he saw the hand of God instead of the solution of a problem. Thrice happy would it be for the man of science, could he ever thus hold his powers in subjection to the great object for which they were brought into existence; and, instead of exulting in, and quarrelling about the pride of human reason, be brought to humble himself and his utmost learning, at the feet of Infinite Knowledge and power, and wisdom, as they are thus to be traced in the path of the Ancient of Days!

By the time his strength returned, Mark had given up, altogether, the hope of ever seeing Betts again. It was just possible that the poor fellow might fall in with a ship, or find his way to some of the islands; but, if he did so, it would be the result of chance and not of calculations. The pinnace was well provisioned, had plenty of water, and, tempests excepted, was quite equal to navigating the Pacific; and there was a faint hope that Bob might continue his course to the eastward, with a certainty of reaching some part of South America in time. If he should take this course, and succeed, what would be the consequence? Who would put sufficient faith in the story of a simple seaman, like Robert Betts, and send a ship to look for Mark Woolston? In these later times, the government would doubtless despatch a vessel of war on such an errand, did no other means of rescuing the man offer; but, at the close of the last century, government did not exercise that much of power. It scarcely protected its seamen from the English press−gang and the Algerine slave−driver; much less did it think of rescuing a solitary individual from a rock in the midst of the Pacific. American vessels did then roam over that distant ocean, but it was comparatively in small numbers, and under circumstances that promised but little to the hopes of the hermit. It was a subject he did not like to dwell on, and he kept his thoughts as much diverted from it as it was in his power so to do.

The season had now advanced into as much of autumn as could be found within the tropics, and on land so low. Everything in the garden had ripened, and much had been thrown out to the pigs and poultry, in anticipation of its decay. Mark saw that it was time to re−commence his beds, selecting such seed as would best support the winter of that climate, if winter it could be called. In looking around him, he made a regular survey of all his possessions, inquiring into the state of each plant he had put into the ground, as well as into that of the ground itself. First, then, as respects the plants.

The growth of the oranges, lemons, cocoa−nuts, limes, figs, &c., placed in rows beneath the cliffs, had been prodigious. The water had run off the adjacent rocks and kept them well moistened most of the season, though a want of rain was seldom known on the Reef. Of the two, too much, rather than too little water fell; a circumstance that was of great service, however, in preserving the stock, which had used little beside that it found in the pools, for the last ten months. The shrubs, or little trees, were quite a foot high, and of an excellent colour. Mark gave each of them a dressing with the hoe, and manured all with a sufficient quantity of the guano. About half he transplanted to spots more favourable, putting the cocoa−nuts, in particular, as near the sea as he could get them.

With respect to the other plants, it was found that each had flourished precisely in proportion to its adaptation to the climate. The products of some were increased in size, while those of others had dwindled. Mark took note of these facts, determining to cultivate those most which succeeded best. The melons of both sorts, the tomatoes, the egg−plants, the peppers, cucumbers, onions, beans, corn, sweet−potatoes, &c. &c., had all flourished; while the Irish potato, in particular, had scarce produced a tuber at all.

As for the soil, on examination Mark found it had been greatly improved by the manure, tillage and water it had received. The hogs were again let in to turn it over with their snouts, and this they did most effectually in the course of two or three days. By this time, in addition to the three grown porkers our young man possessed, there were no less than nine young ones. This number was getting to be formidable, and he saw the necessity of killing off, in order to keep them within reasonable limits. One of the fattest and best he converted into pickled pork, not from any want of that article, there being still enough left in the ship to last him several years, but because he preferred it corned to that which had been in the salt so long a time. He saw the mistake he had made in allowing

the pigs to get to be so large, since the meat would spoil long before he could consume even the smallest−sized shoats. For their own good, however, he was compelled to shoot no less than five, and these he buried entire, in deep places in his garden, having heard that earth which had imbibed animal substances, in this way, was converted into excellent manure.

Mark now made a voyage to Loam Island, in quest of a cargo, using the raft, and towing the dingui. It was on this occasion that our young man was made to feel how much he had lost, in the way of labour, in being deprived of the assistance of Bob. He succeeded in loading his raft, however, and was just about to sail for home again, when it occurred to him that possibly the seeds and roots of the asparagus he had put into a corner of the deposit might have come to something. Sure enough, on going to the spot, Mark found that the seed had taken well, and hundreds of young plants were growing flourishingly, while plants fit to eat had pushed their tops through the loam, from the roots. This was an important discovery, asparagus being a vegetable of which Mark was exceedingly fond, and one easily cultivated. In that climate, and in a soil sufficiently rich, it might be made to send up new shoots the entire year; and there was little fear of scurvy so long as he could obtain plenty of this plant to eat. The melons and other vegetables, however, had removed all Mark's dread of that formidable disease; more especially as he had now eggs, chickens, and fresh fish, the latter in quantities that were almost oppressive. In a word, the means of subsistence now gave the young man no concern whatever. When he first found himself on a barren rock, indeed, the idea had almost struck terror into his mind; but, now that he had ascertained that his crater could be cultivated, and promised, like most other extinct volcanoes, unbounded fertility, he could no longer apprehend a disease which is commonly owing to salted provisions.

When Mark found his health completely re−established, he sat down and drew up a regular plan of dividing his time between work, contemplation, and amusement. Fortunately, perhaps, for one who lived in a climate where vegetation was so luxuriant when it could be produced at all, work was pressed into his service as an amusement. Of the last, there was certainly very little, in the common acceptation of the word; but our hermit was not without it altogether. He studied the habits of the sea−birds that congregated in thousands around so many of the rocks of the Reef, though so few scarce ever ventured on the crater island. He made voyages to and fro, usually connecting business with pleasure. Taking favourable times for such purposes, he floated several cargoes of loam to the Reef, as well as two enormous rafts of sea−weed. Mark was quite a month in getting these materials into his compost heap, which he intended should lie in a pile during the winter, in order that it might be ready for spading in the spring. We use these terms by way of distinguishing the seasons, though of winter, strictly speaking, there was none. Of the two, the grass grew better at mid−winter than at mid−summer, the absence of the burning heat of the last being favourable to its growth. As the season advanced, Mark saw his grass very sensibly increase, not only in surface, but in thickness. There were now spots of some size, where a turf was forming, nature performing all her tasks in that genial climate, in about a fourth of the time it would take to effect the same object in the temperate zone. On examining these places, Mark came to the conclusion that the roots of his grasses acted as cultivators, by working their way into the almost insensible crevices of the crust, letting in air and water to places whence they had hitherto been excluded. This seemed, in particular, to be the case with the grass that grew within the crater, which had increased so much in the course of what may be termed the winter, that it was really fast converting a plain of a light drab colour, that was often painful to the eyes, into a plot of as lovely verdure as ever adorned the meadows of a Swiss cottage. It became desirable to keep this grass down, and Kitty being unable to crop a meadow of so many acres, Mark was compelled to admit his pigs and poultry again. This he did at stated times only, however; or when he was at work himself in the garden, and could prevent their depredations on his beds. The rooting gave him the most trouble; but this he contrived in a great measure to prevent, by admitting his hogs only when they were eager for grass, and turning them out as soon as they began to generalize, like an epicure picking his nuts after dinner.

It was somewhere near mid−winter, by Mark's calculations, when the young man commenced a new task that was of great importance to his comfort, and which *might* affect his future life. He had long determined to lay down a boat, one of sufficient size to explore the whole reef in, if not large enough to carry him out to sea. The dingui was altogether too small for labour; though exceedingly useful in its way, and capable of being managed even in

pretty rough water by a skilful hand, it wanted both weight and room. It was difficult to float in, even a raft of sea−weed, with so light a boat; and as for towing the raft, it was next to impossible. But the raft was unwiedly, and when loaded down, besides carrying very little for its great weight, it was very much at the mercy of the currents and waves. Then the construction of a boat was having an important purpose in view, and, in that sense, was a desirable undertaking.

Mark had learned so much in putting the pinnace together, that he believed himself equal to this new undertaking. Materials enough remained in the ship to make half−a−dozen boats, and in tumbling over the lumber he had found a quantity of stuff that had evidently been taken in with a view to repair boats, if not absolutely to construct them. A ship's hold is such an omnium gatherum, stowage being necessarily so close, that it usually requires time for one who does not know where to put his hand on everything, to ascertain how much or how little is to be found in it. Such was the fact with Mark, whose courtship and marriage had made a considerable inroad on his duties as a mate. As he overhauled the hold, he daily found fresh reasons for believing that Friend Abraham White had made provisions, of one sort and another, of which he was profoundly ignorant, but which, as the voyage had terminated, proved to be of the greatest utility. Thus it was, that just as he was about to commence getting out these great requisites from new planks, he came across a stem, stern−frame, and keel of a boat, that was intended to be eighteen feet long. Of course our young man profited by this discovery, getting the materials of all sorts, including these, round to the ship−yard by means of the raft.

For the next two months, or until he had reason to believe spring had fairly set in, Mark toiled faithfully at his boat. Portions of his work gave him a great deal of trouble; some of it on account of ignorance of the craft, and some on account of his being alone. Getting the awning up anew cost poor Mark the toil of several days, and this because his single strength was not sufficient to hoist the corners of that heavy course, even when aided by watch−tackles. He was compelled to rig a crab, with which he effected his purpose, reserving the machine to aid him on other occasions. Then the model of the boat cost him a great deal of time and labour. Mark knew a good bottom when he saw it, but that was a very different thing from knowing how to make one. Of the rules of draughting he was altogether ignorant, and his eye was his only guide. He adopted a plan that was sufficiently ingenious, though it would never do to build a navy on the same principle.

Having a great plenty of deal, Mark got out in the rough about twice as many timbers for one side of his boat as would be required, in this thin stuff, when he set them up in their places. Aided by this beginning, the young man began to dub and cut away, until he got each piece into something very near the shape his eye told him it ought to be. Even after he had got as far as this, our boat−builder passed a week in shaving, and planing, and squinting, and in otherwise reducing his lines to fair proportions. Satisfied, at length, with the bottom he had thus fashioned, Mark took out just one half of his pieces, leaving the other half standing. After these moulds did he saw and cut his boat's timbers, making, in each instance, duplicates. When the ribs and floors of his craft were ready, he set them up in the vacancies, and secured them, after making an accurate fit with the pieces left standing. On knocking away the deal portions of his work, Mark had the frame of his boat complete. This was much the most troublesome part of the whole job; nor was it finished, when the young man was obliged, by the progress of the seasons, to quit the ship−yard for the garden.

Mark had adopted a system of diet and a care of his person, that kept him in perfect health, illness being the evil that he most dreaded. His food was more than half vegetable, several plants having come forward even in the winter; and the asparagus, in particular, yielding at a rate that would have made the fortune of a London gardener. The size of the plants he cut was really astounding, a dozen stems actually making a meal. The hens laid all winter, and eggs were never wanting. The corned pork gave substance, as well as a relish, to all the dishes the young man cooked; and the tea, sugar and coffee, promising to hold out years longer, the table still gave him little concern. Once in a month, or so, he treated himself to a bean−soup, or a pea−soup, using the stores of the Rancocus for that purpose, foreseeing that the salted meats would spoil after a time, and the dried vegetables get to be worthless, by means of insects and worms. By this time, however, there were fresh crops of both those vegetables, which grew better in the winter than they could in the summer, in that hot climate. Fish, too, were

used as a change, whenever the young man had an inclination for that sort of food, which was as often as three or four times a week; the little pan−fish already mentioned, being of a sort of which one would scarcely ever tire.

It being a matter of some moment to save unnecessary labour, Mark seldom cooked more than once in twenty−four hours, and then barely enough to last for that day. In consequence of this rule, he soon learned how little was really necessary for the wants of one person, it being his opinion that a quarter of an acre of such soil as that which now composed his garden, would more than furnish all the vegetables he could consume. The soil, it is true, was of a very superior quality. Although it had lain so long unproductive and seemingly barren, now that it had been stirred, and air and water were admitted, and guano, and sea−weed, and loam, and dead fish had been applied, and all in quantities that would have been deemed very ample in the best wrought gardens of christendom, the acre he had under tillage might be said to have been brought to the highest stage of fertility. It wanted a little in consistency, perhaps; but the compost heap was very large, containing enough of all the materials just mentioned to give the garden another good dressing. As for the grass, Mark was convinced the guano was all−sufficient for that, and this he took care to apply as often as once in two or three months.

Our young man was never tired, indeed, with feasting his eyes with the manner in which the grass had spread over the mount. It is true, that he had scattered seed, at odd and favourable moments, over most of it, by this time; but he was persuaded the roots of those first sown would have extended themselves, in the course of a year or two, over the whole Summit. Nor were these grasses thin and sickly, threatening as early an extinction as they had been quick in coming to maturity. On the contrary, after breaking what might be called the crust of the rock with their vigorous though nearly invisible roots, they made a bed for themselves, on which they promised to repose for ages. The great frequency of the rains favoured their growth, and Mark was of opinion after the experience of one summer, that his little mountain might be green the year round.

We have called the mount of the crater little, but the term ought not to be used in reference to such a hill, when the extent of the island itself was considered. By actual measurement, Mark had ascertained that there was one knoll on the Summit which was just seventy−two feet above the level of the rock. The average height, however, might be given as somewhat less than fifty. Of surface, the rocky barrier of the crater had almost as much as the plain within it, though it was so broken and uneven as not to appear near as large. Kitty had long since determined that the hill was more than large enough for all her wants; and glad enough did she seem when Mark succeeded, after a great deal of difficulty, in driving the hogs up a flight of steps he had made within the crater, to help her crop the herbage. As for the rooting of the last, so long as they were on the Summit, it was so much the better; since, in that climate, it was next to impossible to kill grass that was once fairly in growth, and the more the crust of the ashes was broken, the more rapid and abundant would be the vegetation.

Mark had, of course, abandoned the idea of continuing to cultivate his melons, or any other vegetables, on the Summit, or he never would have driven his hogs there. He was unwilling, notwithstanding, to lose the benefit of the deposits of soil and manure which he and Bob had made there with so much labour to themselves. After reflecting what he could do with them, he came to the conclusion that he would make small enclosures around some fifteen or twenty of the places, and transplant some of the fig−trees, orange−trees, limes, lemons, &c., which still stood rather too thick within the crater to ripen their fruits to advantage. In order to make these little enclosures, Mark merely drove into the earth short posts, passing around them old rope, of which there was a superabundance on board the ship. This arrangement suggested the idea of fencing in the garden, by the same means, in order to admit the pigs to eat the grass, when he was not watching them. By the time these dispositions were made, it was necessary to begin again to put in the seeds.

On this occasion Mark determined to have a succession of crops, and not to bring on everything at once, as he had done the first year of his tillage. Accordingly, he would manure and break up a bed, and plant or sow it, waiting a few days before he began another. Experience had told him that there was never an end to vegetation in that climate, and he saw no use in pushing his labours faster than he might require their fruits. It was true, certain plants did better if permitted to come to maturity in particular periods, but the season was so long as very well to

allow of the arrangement just mentioned. As this distribution of his time gave the young man a good deal of leisure, he employed it in the ship−yard. Thus the boat and the garden were made to advance together, and when the last was sown and planted, the first was planked. When the last bed was got in, moreover, those first set in order were already giving forth their increase. Mark had abundance of delicious salad, young onions, radishes that seemed to grow like mushrooms, young peas, beans, &c., in quantities that enabled him to turn the hogs out on the Reef, and keep them well on the refuse of his garden, assisted a little by what was always to be picked up on the rocks.

By this time Mark had settled on a system which he thought to pursue. There was no use in his raising more pigs than he could use. Taking care to preserve the breed, therefore, he killed off the pigs, of which he had fresh litters, from time to time; and when he found the old hogs getting to be troublesome, as swine will become with years, he just shot them, and buried their bodies in his compost heap, or in his garden, where one commonsized hog would render highly fertile several yards square of earth, or ashes. This practice he continued ever after, extending it to his fowls and ducks, the latter of which produced a great many eggs. By rigidly observing this rule, Mark avoided an evil which is very common even in inhabited countries, that of keeping more stock than is good for their owner. Six or eight hens laid more eggs than he could consume, and there was always a sufficient supply of chickens for his wants. In short, our hermit had everything he actually required, and most things that could contribute to his living in great abundance. The necessity of cooking for himself, and the want of pure, cold spring water, were the two greatest physical hardships he endured. There were moments, indeed, when Mark would have gladly yielded one−half of the advantages he actually possessed, to have a good spring of living water. Then he quelled the repinings of his spirit at this privation, by endeavouring to recall how many blessings were left at his command, compared to the wants and sufferings of many another shipwrecked mariner of whom he had read or heard.

The spring passed as pleasantly as thoughts of home and Bridget would allow, and his beds and plantations flourished to a degree that surprised him. As for the grass, as soon as it once got root, it became a most beneficial assistant to his plans of husbandry. Nor was it grass alone that rewarded Mark's labours and forethought in his meadows and pastures. Various flowers appeared in the herbage; and he was delighted at fidning a little patch of the common wild strawberry, the seed of which had doubtless got mixed with those of the grasses. Instead of indulging his palate with a taste of this delicious and most salubrious fruit, Mark carefully collected it all, made a bed in his garden, and included the cultivation of this among his other plants. He would not disturb a single root of the twenty or thirty different shoots that he found, all being together, and coming from the same cast of his hand while sowing, lest it might die; but, with the seed of the fruit, he was less chary. One thing struck Mark as singular. Thus far his garden was absolutely free from weeds of every sort. The seed that he put into the ground came up, and nothing else. This greatly simplified his toil, though he had no doubt that, in the course of time, he should meet with intruders in his beds. He could only account for this circumstance by the facts, that the ashes of the volcano contained of themselves no combination of the elements necessary to produce plants, and that the manures he used, in their nature, were free from weeds.

CHAPTER XI.

"The globe around earth's hollow surface shakes,
And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons:
O'er devastation we blind revels keep;
While buried towns support the dancer's heel."

Young.

It was again mid−summer ere Mark Woolston had his boat ready for launching. He had taken things leisurely, and

completed his work in all its parts, before he thought of putting the craft into the water. Afraid of worms, he used some of the old copper on this boat, too; and he painted her, inside and out, not only with fidelity, but with taste. Although there was no one but Kitty to talk to, he did not forget to paint the name which he had given to his new vessel, in her stern−sheets, where he could always see it. She was called the "Bridget Yardley;" and, notwithstanding the unfavourable circumstances in which she had been put together, Mark thought she did no discredit to her beautiful namesake, when completed. When he had everything finished, even to mast and sails, of the last of which he fitted her with mainsail and jib, the young man set about his preparations for getting his vessel afloat.

There was no process by which one man could move a boat of the size of the Bridget, while out of its proper element, but to launch it by means of regular ways. With a view to this contingency, the keel had been laid between the ways of the Neshamony, which were now all ready to be used. Of course it was no great job to make a cradle for a boat, and our boat−builder had `wedged up,' and got the keel of his craft off the `blocks,' within eight−and−forty hours after he had begun upon that part of his task. It only remained to knock away the spur−shores and start the boat. Until that instant, Mark had pursued his work on the Bridget as mechanically and steadily as if hired by the day. When, however, he perceived that he was so near his goal, a flood of sensations came over the young man, and his limbs trembled to a degree that compelled him to be seated. Who could tell the consequences to which that boat might lead? Who knew but the `Bridget' might prove the means of carrying him to his own Bridget, and restoring him to civilized life? At that instant, it appeared to Mark as if his existence depended on the launching of his boat, and he was fearful some unforeseen accident might prevent it. He was obliged to wait several minutes in order to recover his self−possession.

At length Mark succeeded in subduing this feeling, and he resumed his work with most of his former self−command. Everything being ready, he knocked away the spur−shores, and, finding the boat did not start, he gave it a blow with a mawl. This set the mass in motion, and the little craft slid down the ways without any interruption, until it became water−born, when it shot out from the Reef like a duck. Mark was delighted with his new vessel, now that it was fairly afloat, and saw that it sat on an even keel, according to his best hopes. Of course he had not neglected to secure it with a line, by which he hauled it in towards the rock, securing it in a natural basin which was just large enough for such a purpose. So great, indeed, were his apprehensions of losing his boat, which now seemed so precions to him, that he had worked some ringbolts out of the ship and let them into the rock, where he had secured them by means of melted lead, in order to make fast to.

The Bridget was not more than a fourth of the size of the Neshamony, though rather more than half as long. Nevertheless, she was a good boat; and Mark, knowing that he must depend on sails principally to more her, had built a short deck forward to prevent the seas from breaking aboard her, as well as to give him a place in which he might stow away various articles, under cover from the rain. Her ballast was breakers, filled with fresh water, of which there still remained several in the ship. All these, as well as her masts, sails, oars, &c., were in her when she was launched; and that important event having taken place early in the morning, Mark could not restrain his impatience for a cruise, but determined to go out on the reef at once, further than he had ever yet ventured in the dingui, in order to explore the seas around him. Accordingly, he put some food on board, loosened his fasts, and made sail.

The instant the boat moved ahead, and began to obey her helm, Mark felt as if he had found a new companion. Hitherto Kitty had, in a measure, filled this place; but a boat had been the young man's delight on the Delaware, in his boyhood, and he had not tacked his present craft more than two or three times, before he caught himself talking to it, and commending it, as he would a human being. As the wind usually blew in the same direction, and generally a good stiff breeze, Mark beat up between the Reef and Guano Island, working round the weather end of the former, until he came out at the anchorage of the Rancocus. After beating about in that basin a little while, as if merely to show off the Bridget to the ship, Mark put the former close by the wind, and stood off in the channel by which he and Bob had brought the latter into her present berth.

It was easy enough to avoid all such breakers as would be dangerous to a boat, by simply keeping out of white water; but the Bridget could pass over most of the reefs with impunity, on account of the depth of the sea on them. Mark beat up, on short tacks, therefore, until he found the two buoys between which he had brought the ship, and passing to windward of them, he stood off in the direction where he expected to find the reef over which the Rancocus had beaten. He was not long in making this discovery. There still floated the buoy of the bower, watching as faithfully as the seaman on his look−out! Mark ran the boat up to this well−tried sentinel, and caught the lanyard, holding on by it, after lowering his sails.

The boat was now moored by the buoy−rope of the ship's anchor, and it occurred to our young man that a certain use might be made of this melancholy memorial of the calamity that had befallen the Rancocus. The anchor lay quite near a reef, on it indeed in one sense; and it was in such places that fish most abounded. Fishing−tackle was in the boat, and Mark let down a line. His success was prodigious. The fish were hauled in almost as fast as he could bait and lower his hook, and what was more they proved to be larger and finer than those taken at the old fishing−grounds. By the experience of the half hour he passed at the spot, Mark felt certain that he could fill his boat there in a day's fishing. After hauling in some twenty or thirty, however, he cast off from the lanyard, hoisted his sails, and crossed the reef, still working to windward.

It was Mark's wish to learn something of the nature and extent of the shoals in this direction. With this object in view, he continued beating up, sometimes passing boldly through shallow water, at others going about to avoid that which he thought might be dangerous, until he believed himself to be about ten miles to windward of the island. The ship's masts were his beacon, for the crater had sunk below the horizon, or if visible at all, it was only at intervals, as the boat was lifted on a swell, when it appeared a low hummock, nearly awash. It was with difficulty that the naked spars could be seen at that distance; nor could they be, except at moments, and that because the compass told the young man exactly where to look for them.

As for the appearance of the reefs, no naked rock was anywhere to be seen in this direction, though there were abundant evidences of the existence of shoals. As well as he could judge, Mark was of opinion that these shoals extended at least twenty miles in this direction, he having turned up fully five leagues without getting clear of them. At that distance from his solitary home, and out of sight of everything like land, did the young man eat his frugal, but good and nourishing dinner, with his jib−sheet to windward and the boat hove−to. The freshness of the breeze had induced him to reef, and under that short sail, he found the Bridget everything he could wish. It was now about the middle of the afternoon, and Mark thought it prudent to turn out his reef, and run down for the crater. In half an hour he caught a sight of the spars of the ship; and ten minutes later, the Summit appeared above the horizon.

It had been the intention of our young sailor to stay out all night, had the weather been promising. His wish was to ascertain how he might manage the boat, single−handed, while he slept, and also to learn the extent of the shoals. As the extraordinary fertility of the crater superseded the necessity of his labouring much to keep himself supplied with food, he had formed a plan of cruising off the shoals, for days at a time, in the hope of falling in with something that was passing, and which might carry him back to the haunts of men. No vessel would or could come in sight of the crater, so long as the existence of the reefs was known; but the course steered by the Rancocus was a proof that ships did occasionally pass in that quarter of the Pacific. Mark had indulged in no visionary hopes on this subject, for he knew he might keep in the offing a twelvemonth and see nothing; but an additional twenty−four hours might realize all his hopes.

The weather, however, on this his first experiment, did not encourage him to remain out the whole night. On the contrary, by the time the crater was in sight, Mark thought he had not seen a more portentous−looking sky since he had been on the Reef. There was a fiery redness in the atmosphere that alarmed him, and he would have rejoiced to be at home, in order to secure his stock within the crater. From the appearances, he anticipated another tempest with its flood. It is true, it was not the season when the last occurred, but the climate might admit of these changes. The difference between summer and winter was very trifling on that reef, and a hurricane, or a gale, was

as likely to occur in the one as in the other.

Just as the Bridget was passing the two buoys by which the ship−channel had been marked, her sail flapped. This was a bad omen, for it betokened a shift of wind, which rarely happened, unless it might be from six months to six months, without being the precursor of some sort of a storm. Mark was still two miles from the Reef, and the little wind there was soon came ahead. Luckily, it was smooth water, and very little air sufficed to force that light craft ahead, while there was usually a current setting from that point towards the crater. The birds, moreover, seemed uneasy, the air being filled with them, thousands flying over the boat, around which they wheeled, screaming and apparently terrified. At first Mark ascribed this unusual behaviour of his feathered neighbours to the circumstance of their now seeing a boat for the commencement of such an acquaintance; but, recollecting how often he had passed their haunts, in the dingui, when they would hardly get out of the way, he soon felt certain there must be another reason for this singular conduct.

The sun went down in a bank of lurid fire, and the Bridget was still a mile from the ship. A new apprehension now came over our hermit. Should a tempest bring the wind violently from the westward, as was very likely to be the case under actual circumstances, he might be driven out to sea, and, did the little craft resist the waves, forced so far off as to make him lose the Reef altogether. Then it was that Mark deeply felt how much had been left him, by casting his lot on that beautiful and luxuriant crater, instead of reducing him to those dregs of misery which so many shipwrecked mariners are compelled to swallow! How much, or how many of the blessings that he enjoyed on the Reef, would he not have been willing to part with, that evening, in order to secure a safe arrival at the side of the Rancocus! By the utmost care to profit by every puff of air, and by handling the boat with the greatest skill, this happy result was obtained, however, without any sacrifice.

About nine o'clock, and not sooner, the boat was well secured, and Mark went into his cabin. Here he knelt and returned thanks to God, for his safe return to a place that was getting to be as precious to him as the love of life could render it. After this, tired with his day's work, the young man got into his berth and endeavoured to sleep.

The fatigue of the day, notwithstanding the invigorating freshness of the breeze, acted as an anodyne, and our young man soon forgot his adventures and his boat, in profound slumbers. It was many hours ere Mark awoke, and when he did, it was with a sense of suffocation. At first he thought the ship had taken fire, a lurid light gleaming in at the open door of the cabin, and he sprang to his feet in recollection of the danger he ran from the magazine, as well as from being burned. But no cracking of flames reaching his ears, he dressed hastily and went out on the poop. He had just reached this deck, when he felt the whole ship tremble from her truck to her keel, and a rushing of water was heard on all sides of him, as if a flood were coming. Hissing sounds were heard, and streams of fire, and gleams of lurid light were seen in the air. It was a terrible moment, and one that might well induce any man to imagine that time was drawing to its close.

Mark Woolston now comprehended his situation, notwithstanding the intense darkness which prevailed, except in those brief intervals of lurid light. He had felt the shock of an earthquake, and the volcano had suddenly become active. Smoke and ashes certainly filled the air, and our poor hermit instinctively looked towards his crater, already so verdant and lively, in the expectation of seeing it vomit flames. Everything there was tranquil; the danger, if danger there was, was assuredly more remote. But the murky vapour which rendered breathing exceedingly difficult, also obstructed the view, and prevented his seeing where the explosion really was. For a brief space our young man fancied he must certainly be suffocated; but a shift of wind came, and blew away the oppressive vapour, clearing the atmosphere of its sulphurous and most offensive gases and odours. Never did feverish tongue enjoy the cooling and healthful draught, more than Mark rejoiced in this change. The wind had got back to its old quarter, and the air he respired soon became pure and refreshing. Had the impure atmosphere lasted ten minutes longer, Mark felt persuaded he could not have breathed it with any safety.

The light was now most impatiently expected by our young man. The minutes seemed to drag; but, at length, the usual signs of returning day became apparent to him, and he got on the bowsprit of the ship, as if to meet it in its

approach. There he stood looking to the eastward, eager to have ray after ray shoot into the firmament, when he was suddenly struck with a change in that quarter of the ocean, which at once proclaimed the power of the effort which the earth had made in its subterranean throes. Naked rocks appeared in places where Mark was certain water in abundance had existed a few hours before. The sea−wall, directly ahead of the ship, and which never showed itself above the surface more than two or three inches, in any part of it, and that only at exceedingly neap tides, was now not only bare for a long distance, but parts rose ten and fifteen feet above the surrounding sea. This proved, at once, that the earthquake had thrust upward a vast surface of the reef, completely altering the whole appearance of the shoal! In a word, nature had made another effort, and islands had been created, as it might be in the twinkling of an eye.

Mark was no sooner assured of this stupendous fact, than he hurried on to the poop, in order to ascertain what changes had occurred in and about the crater. It had been pushed upward, in common with all the rocks for miles on every side of it, though without disturbing its surface! By the computation of our young man, the Reef, which previously lay about six feet above the level of the ocean, was now fully twenty, so many cubits having been, by one single but mighty effort of nature, added to its stature. The planks which led from the stern of the vessel to the shore, and which had formed a descent, were now nearly level, so much water having left the basin as to produce this change. Still the ship floated, enough remaining to keep her keel clear of the bottom.

Impatient to learn all, Mark ran ashore, for by this time it was broad daylight, and hastened into the crater, with an intention to ascend at once to the Summit. As he passed along, he could detect no change whatever on the surface of the Reef; everything lying just as it had been left, and the pigs and poultry were at their usual business of providing for their own wants. Ashes, however, were strewn over the rocks to a depth that left his footprints as distinct as they could have been made in a light snow. Within the crater the same appearances were observed, fully an inch of ashes covering its verdant pastures and the whole garden. This gave Mark very little concern, for he knew that the first rain would wash this drab−looking mantle into the earth, where it would answer all the purposes of a rich dressing of manure.

On reaching the Summit, our young man was enabled to form a better opinion of the vast changes which had been wrought around him, by this sudden elevation of the earth's crust. Everywhere sea seemed to be converted into land, or, at least, into rock. All the white water had disappeared, and in its place arose islands of rock, or mud, or sand. A good deal of the last was to be seen, and some quite near the Reef, as we shall still continue to call the island of the crater. Island, however, it could now hardly be termed. It is true that ribands of water approached it on all sides, resembling creeks, and rivers and small sounds; but, as Mark stood there on the Summit, it seemed to him that it was now possible to walk for leagues, in every direction, commencing at the crater and following the lines of reefs, and rocks, and sands, that had been laid bare by the late upheaving. The extent of this change gave him confidence in its permanency, and the young man had hopes that what had thus been produced by the Providence of God would be permitted to remain, to answer his own benevolent purposes. It certainly made an immense difference in his own situation. The boat could still be used, but it was now possible for him to ramble for hours, if not for days, along the necks, and banks, and hummocks, and swales that had been formed, and that with a dry foot. His limits were so much enlarged as to offer something like a new world to his enterprise and curiosity.

The crater, nevertheless, was apparently about the centre of this new creation. To the south, it is true, the eye could not penetrate more than two or three leagues. A vast, dun−looking cloud, still covered the sea in that direction, veiling its surface far and wide, and mingling with the vapours of the upper atmosphere. Somewhere within this cloud, how far or how near from him he knew not, Mark made no doubt a new outlet to the pent forces of the inner earth was to be found, forming another and an active crater for the exit of the fires beneath. Geology was a science that had not made its present progress in the day of Mark Woolston, but his education had been too good to leave him totally without a theory for what had happened. He supposed that the internal fires had produced so much gas, just beneath this spot, as to open crevices at the bottom of the ocean, through which water had flowed in sufficient quantities to create a vast body of steam, which steam had been the immediate agent of

lifting so much of the rock and land, and of causing the earthquake. At the same time, the internal fires had acted in concert; and following an opening, they had got so near the surface as to force a chimney for their own exit, in the form of this new crater, of the existence of which, from all the signs to the southward, Mark did not entertain the smallest doubt.

This theory may have been true, in whole or in part, or it may have been altogether erroneous. Such speculations seldom turn out to be minutely accurate. So many unknown causes exist in so many unexpected forms, as to render precise estimates of their effects, in cases of physical phenomena, almost as uncertain as those which follow similar attempts at an analysis of human motives and human conduct. The man who has been much the subject of the conjectures and opinions of his fellow−creatures, in this way, must have many occasions to wonder, and some to smile, when he sees how completely those around him misjudge his wishes and impulses. Although formed of the same substance, influenced by the same selfishness, and governed by the same passions, in nothing do men oftener err than in this portion of the exercise of their intellects. The errors arise from one man's rigidly judging his fellow by himself, and that which he would do he fancies others would do also. This rule would be pretty safe, could we always penetrate into the wants and longings of others, which quite as often fail to correspond closely with our own, as do their characters, fortunes, and hopes.

At first sight, Mark had a good deal of difficulty in understanding the predominant nature of the very many bodies of water that were to be seen on every side of him. On the whole, there still remained almost as much of one element as of the other, in the view; which of itself, however, was a vast change from what had previously been the condition of the shoals. There were large bodies of water, little lakes in extent, which it was obvious enough must disappear under the process of evaporation, no communication existing between them and the open ocean. But, on the other hand, many of these sheets were sounds, or arms of the sea, that must always continue, since they might be traced, far as eye could reach, towards the mighty Pacific. Such, Mark was induced to believe, was the fact with the belt of water that still surrounded, or nearly surrounded the Reef; for, placed where he was, the young man was unable to ascertain whether the latter had, or had not, at a particular point, any land communication with an extensive range of naked rock, sand, mud, and deposit, that stretched away to the westward, for leagues. In obvious connection with this broad reach of what might be termed bare ground, were Guano and Loam Islands; neither of which was an island any longer, except as it was a part of the whole formation around it. Nevertheless, our young man was not sorry to see that the channel around the Reef still washed the bases of both those important places of deposit, leaving it in his power to transport their valuable manures by means of the raft, or boat.

The situation of the ship next became the matter of Mark's most curious and interested investigation. She was clearly afloat, and the basin in which she rode had a communication on each side of it, with the sound, or inlet, that still encircled the Reef. Descending to the shore, our young mariner got into the dingui, and pulled out round the vessel, to make a more minute examination. So very limpid was the water of that sea, it was easy enough to discern a bright object on the bottom, at a depth of several fathoms. There were no streams in that part of the world to pour their deposits into the ocean, and air itself is scarce more transparent than the pure water of the ocean, when unpolluted with any foreign substances. All it wants is light, to enable the eye to reach into its mysteries for a long way. Mark could very distinctly perceive the sand beneath the Rancocus' keel, and saw that the ship still floated two or three feet clear of the bottom. It was near high water, however; and there being usually a tide of about twenty inches, it was plain enough that, on certain winds, the good old craft would come in pretty close contact with the bottom. All expectation of ever getting the vessel out of the basin must now be certainly abandoned, since she lay in a sort of cavity, where the water was six or eight feet deeper than it was within a hundred yards on each side of her.

Having ascertained these facts, Mark provided himself with a fowling−piece, provisions, &c., and set out to explore his newly acquired territories on foot. His steps were first directed to the point where it appeared to the eye, that the vast range of dry land to the westward, extending both north and south, had become connected with the Reef. If such connection existed at all, it was by two very narrow necks of rock, of equal height, both of which

had come up out of the water under the late action, which action had considerably altered and extended the shores of Crater Island. Sand appeared in various places along these shores, now; whereas, previously to the earthquake, they had everywhere been nearly perpendicular rocks.

Mark was walking, with an impatient step, towards the neck just mentioned, and which was at no great distance from the ship−yard, when his eye was attracted towards a sandy beach of several acres in extent, that spread itself along the margin of the rocks, as clear from every impurity as it was a few hours before, when it had been raised from out of the bosom of the ocean. To him, it appeared that water was trickling through this sand, coming from beneath the lava of the Reef. At first, he supposed it was merely the remains of some small portion of the ocean that had penetrated to a cavity within, and which was now trickling back through the crevices of the rocks, to find its level, under the great law of nature. But it looked so pleasant to see once more water of any sort coming upwards from the earth, that the young man jumped down upon the sands, and hastened to the spot for further inquiry. Scooping up a little of the water in the hollow of his hand, he found it sweet, soft, and deliciously cool. Here was a discovery, indeed! The physical comfort for which he most pined was thus presented to him, as by a direct gift from heaven; and no miser who had found a hoard of hidden gold, could have felt so great pleasure, or a tenth part of the gratitude, of our young hermit, if hermit we may call one who did not voluntarily seek his seclusion from the world, and who worshipped God less as a penance than from love and adoration.

Before quitting this new−found treasure, Mark opened a cavity in the sand to receive the water, placing stone around it to make a convenient and clean little basin. In ten minutes this place was filled with water almost as limpid as air, and every way as delicious as the palate of man could require. The young man could scarce tear himself away from the spot, but fearful of drinking too much he did so, after a time. Before quitting the spring, however, he placed a stone of some size at a gap in the rock, a precaution that completely prevented the hogs, should they stroll that way, from descending to the beach and defiling the limpid basin. As soon as he had leisure, Mark resolved to sink a barrel in the sand, and to build a fence around it; after which the stock might descend and drink at a pool he should form below, at pleasure.

Mark proceeded. On reaching the narrowest part of the `Neck,' he found that the rocks did not meet, but the Reef still remained an island. The channel that separated the two points of rock was only about twenty feet wide, however, though it was of fully twice that depth. The young man found it necessary to go back to the ship−yard (no great distance, by the way), and to bring a plank with which to make a bridge. This done, he passed on to the newly emerged territory. As might have been expected, the rocks were found tolerably well furnished with fish, which had got caught in pools and crevices when the water flowed into the sea; and what was of still more importance, another and a much larger spring of fresh water was found quite near the bridge, gushing through a deposit of sand of some fifteen or twenty acres in extent. The water of this spring had run down into a cavity, where it had already formed a little lake of some two acres in surface, and whence it was already running into the sea, by overflowing its banks. These two discoveries induced Mark to return to the Reef again, in quest of the stock. After laying another plank at his bridge, he called every creature he had over into the new territory; for so great was the command he had obtained over even the ducks, that all came willingly at his call. As for Kitty, she was never more happy than when trotting at his side, accompanying him in his walks, like a dog.

Glad enough were the pigs, in particular, to obtain this new range. Here was everything they could want; food in thousands, sand to root on, fresh water to drink, pools to wallow in, and a range for their migratory propensities. Mark had no sooner set them at work on the sea−weed and shell−fish that abounded there, for the time being at least, than he foresaw he should have to erect a gate at his bridge, and keep the hogs here most of the time. With such a range, and the deposits of the tides alone, they would have no great difficulty in making their own living. This would enable him to increase the number kept, which he had hitherto been obliged to keep down with the most rigid attention to the increase.

Mark now set out, in earnest, on his travels. He was absent from the Reef the entire day. At one time, he thought he was quite two leagues in a straight line from the ship, though he had been compelled to walk four to get there.

Everywhere he found large sheets of salt water, that had been left on the rocks, in consequence of the cavities in the latter. In several instances, these little lakes were near a mile in length, having the most beautifully undulating outlines. None of them were deep, of course, though their bottoms varied. Some of these bottoms were clean rock; others contained large deposits of mud; and others, again, were of a clean, dark−coloured sand. One, and one only, had a bottom of a bright, light−coloured sand. As a matter of course, these lakes, or pools, must shortly evaporate, leaving their bottoms bare, or encrusted with salt. One thing gave the young man great satisfaction. He had kept along the margin of the channel that communicated with the water that surrounded the Reef, and, when at the greatest distance from the crater, he ascended a rock that must have had an elevation of a hundred feet above the sea. Of course most of this rock had been above water previously to the late eruption, and Mark had often seen it at a distance, though he had never ventured through the white water near so far, in the dingui. When on its apex, Mark got an extensive view of the scene around him. In the first place, he traced the channel just mentioned, quite into open water, which now appeared distinctly not many leagues further, towards the north−west. There were a great many other channels, some mere ribands of water, others narrow sounds, and many resembling broad, deep, serpenting creeks, which last was their true character, being strictly inlets from the sea. The lakes, or pools, could be seen in hundreds, creating some confusion in the view; but all these must soon disappear, in that climate.

Towards the southward, however, Mark found the objects of his greatest wonder and admiration. By the time he reached the apex of the rock, the smoke in that quarter of the horizon had, in a great measure, risen from the sea; though a column of it continued to ascend towards a vast, dun−coloured cloud that overhung the place. To Mark's astonishment he had seen some dark, dense body first looming through the rising vapour. When the last was sufficiently removed, a high, ragged mountain became distinctly visible. He thought it arose at least a thousand feet above the ocean, and that it could not be less than a league in extent. This exhibition of the power of nature filled the young man's soul with adoration and reverence for the mighty Being that could set such elements at work. It did not alarm him, but rather tended to quiet his longings to quit the place; for he who lives amid such scenes feels that he is so much nearer to the arm of God than those who dwell in uniform security, as to think less of ordinary advantages than is common.

Mark knew that there must have been a dislocation of the rocks, to produce such a change as that he saw to the southward. It was well for him it occurred there at a distance, as he then thought, of ten or fifteen miles from the Reef, though in truth it was at quite fifty, instead of happening beneath him. It was possible, however, for one to have been on the top of that mountain, and to have lived through the late change, could the lungs of man have breathed the atmosphere. Not far from this mountain a column of smoke rose out of the sea, and Mark fancied that, at moments, he could discern the summit of an active crater at its base.

After gazing at these astonishing changes for a long time, our young man descended from the height and retraced his steps homeward. Kitty gladly preceded him, and some time after the sun had set, they regained the Reef. About a mile short of home, Mark passed all the hogs, snugly deposited in a bed of mud, where they had esconced themselves for the night, as one draws himself beneath his blanket.

CHAPTER XII.

"All things in common nature should produce
Without sweat or endeavour; treason, felony,
Sword, pike, gun, or need of any engine
Would I not have; but nature should bring forth,
Of its own kind, all foizen, all abundance
To feed my innocent people."

Tempest.

For the next ten days Mark Woolston did little but explore. By crossing the channel around the Reef, which he had named the `Armlet' (the young man often talked to himself), he reached the sea−wall, and, once there, he made a long excursion to the eastward. He now walked dryshod over those very reefs among which he had so recently sailed in the Bridget, though the ship−channel through which he and Bob had brought in the Rancocus still remained. The two buoys that had marked the narrow passage were found, high and dry; and the anchor of the ship, that by which she rode after beating over the rocks into deep water, was to be seen so near the surface, that the stock could be reached by the hand.

There was little difference in character between the newly−made land to windward and that which Mark had found in the opposite direction. Large pools, or lakes, of salt water, deposits of mud and sand, some of which were of considerable extent and thickness, sounds, creeks, and arms of the sea, with here and there a hummock of rock that rose fifteen or twenty feet above the face of the main body, were the distinguishing peculiarities. For two days Mark explored in this direction, or to windward, reaching as far by his estimate of the distance, as the place where he had bore up in his cruise in the Bridget. Finding a great many obstacles in the way, channels, mud, &c., he determined, on the afternoon of the second day, to return home, get a stock of supplies, and come out in the boat, in order to ascertain if he could not now reach the open water to windward.

On the morning of the fourth day after the earthquake, and the occurrence of the mighty change that had altered the whole face of the scene around him, the young man got under way in the Bridget. He shaped his course to windward, beating out of the Armlet by a narrow passage, that carried him into a reach that stretched away for several miles, to the northward and eastward, in nearly a straight line. This passage, or sound, was about half a mile in width, and there was water enough in nearly all parts of it to float the largest sized vessel. By this passage the poor hermit, small as was his chance of ever seeing such an event occur, hoped it might be possible to come to the very side of the Reef in a ship.

When about three leagues from the crater, the `Hope Channel,' as Mark named this long and direct passage, divided into two, one trending still more to the northward, running nearly due north, indeed, while the other might be followed in a south−easterly direction, far as the eye could reach. Mark named the rock at the junction `Point Fork,' and chose the latter passage, which appeared the most promising, and the wind permitting him to lay through it. The Bridget tacked in the Forks, therefore, and stood away to the south−east, pretty close to the wind. Various other channels communicated with this main passage, or the Hope; and, about noon, Mark tacked into one of them, heading about north−east, when trimmed up sharp to do so. The water was deep, and at first the passage was half a mile in width; but after standing along it for a mile or two, it seemed all at once to terminate in an oval basin, that might have been a mile in its largest diameter, and which was bounded to the eastward by a belt of rock that rose some twenty feet above the water. The bottom of this basin was a clear beautiful sand, and its depth of water, on sounding, Mark found was uniformly about eight fathoms. A more safe or convenient basin for the anchorage of ships could not have been formed by the art of man, had there been an entrance to it, and any inducement for them to come there.

Mark had beaten about `Oval Harbour,' as he named the place, for half an hour, before he was struck by the circumstance that the even character of its surface appeared to be a little disturbed by a slight undulation which seemed to come from its north−eastern extremity. Tacking the Bridget, he stood in that direction, and on reaching the place, found that there was a passage through the rock of about a hundred yards in width. The wind permitting, the boat shot through this passage, and was immediately heaving and setting in the long swells of the open ocean. At first Mark was startled by the roar of the waves that plunged into the caverns of the rocks, and trembled lest his boat might be hove up against that hard and iron−bound coast, where one toss would shatter his little craft into splinters. Too steady a seaman, however, to abandon his object unnecessarily, he stood on, and soon found he could weather the rocks under his lee, tacking in time. After two or three short stretches were made, Mark found himself half a mile to windward of a long line, or coast, of dark rock, that rose from twenty to

twenty−five feet above the level of the water, and beyond all question in the open ocean. He hove−to to sound, and let forty fathoms of line out without reaching bottom. But everywhere to leeward of him was land, or rock; while everywhere to windward, as well as ahead and astern, it was clear water. This, then, was the eastern limit of the old shoals, now converted into dry land. Here the Rancocus had, unknown to her officers, first run into the midst of these shoals, by which she had ever since been environed.

It was not easy to compute the precise distance from the outlet or inlet of Oval Harbour, to the crater. Mark thought it might be five−and−twenty miles, in a straight line, judging equally by the eye, and the time he had been in running it. The Summit was not to be seen, however, any more than the masts of the ship; though the distant Peak, and the column of dark smoke, remained in sight, as eternal land−marks. The young man might have been an hour in the open sea, gradually hauling off the land, in order to keep clear of the coast, when he bethought him of returning. It required a good deal of nerve to run in towards those rocks, under all the circumstances of the case. The wind blew fresh, so much indeed as to induce Mark to reef, but there must always be a heavy swell rolling in upon that iron−bound shore. The shock of such waves expending their whole force on perpendicular rocks may be imagined better than it can be described. There was an undying roar all along that coast, produced by these incessant collisions of the elements; and occasionally, when a sea entered a cavern, in a way suddenly to expel its air, the sound resembled that which some huge animal might be supposed to utter in its agony, or its anger. Of course, the spray was flying high, and the entire line of black rocks was white with its particles.

Mark had unwittingly omitted to take any land−marks to his inlet, or strait. He had no other means of finding it, therefore, than to discover a spot in which the line of white was broken. This inlet, however, he remembered did not open at right angles to the coast, but obliquely; and it was very possible to be within a hundred yards of it, and not see it. This fact our young sailor was not long in ascertaining; for standing in towards the point where he expected to find the entrance, and going as close to the shore as he dared, he could see nothing of the desired passage. For an hour did he search, passing to and fro, but without success. The idea of remaining out in the open sea for the night, and to windward of such an inhospitable coast, was anything but pleasant to Mark, and he determined to stand to the northward, now, while it was day, and look for some other entrance.

For four hours did Mark Woolston run along those dark rocks, whitened only by the spray of the wide ocean, without perceiving a point at which a boat might even land. As he was now running off the wind, and had turned out his reef, he supposed he must have gone at least five−and−twenty miles, if not thirty, in that time; and thus had he some means of judging of the extent of his new territories. About five in the afternoon a cape, or headland, was reached, when the coast suddenly trended to the westward. This, then, was the north−eastern angle of the entire formation, and Mark named it Cape North−East. The boat was now jibed, and ran off west, a little northerly, for another hour, keeping quite close in to the coast, which was no longer dangerous as soon as the Cape was doubled. The seas broke upon the rocks, as a matter of course; but there being a lee, it was only under the power of the ceaseless undulations of the ocean. Even the force of the wind was now much less felt, the Bridget carrying whole sail when hauled up, as Mark placed her several times, in order to examine apparent inlets.

It was getting to be too late to think of reaching home that night, for running in those unknown channels after dark was not a desirable course for an explorer to adopt. Our young man, therefore, limited his search to some place where he might lie until the return of light. It is true, the lee formed by the rocks was now such as to enable him to remain outside, with safety, until morning; but he preferred greatly to get within the islands, if possible, to trusting himself, while asleep, to the mercy of the open ocean. Just as the sun was setting, leaving the evening cool and pleasant, after the warmth of an exceedingly hot day, the boat doubled a piece of low headland; and Mark had half made up his mind to get under its lee, and heave a grapnel ashore, in order to ride by his cable during the approaching night, when an opening in the coast greeted his eyes. It was just as he doubled the cape. This opening appeared to be a quarter of a mile in width, and it had perfectly smooth water, a half−gunshot within its mouth. The helm was put down, the sheets hauled aft, and the Bridget luffed into this creek, estuary, sound, or harbour, whichever it might prove to be. For twenty minutes did Mark stand on through this passage, when suddenly it expanded into a basin, or bay, of considerable extent. This was at a distance of about a league within the coast.

This bay was a league long, and half a league in width, the boat entering it close to its weather side. A long and wide sandy beach offered on that side, and the young man stood along it a short distance, until the sight of a spring induced him to put his helm down. The boat luffed short round, and came gently upon the beach. A grapnel was thrown on the sands, and Mark leaped ashore.

The water proved to be sweet, cool, and every way delicious. This was at least the twentieth spring which had been seen that day, though it was the first of which the waters had been tasted. This new−born beach had every appearance of having been exposed to the air a thousand years. The sand was perfectly clean, and of a bright golden colour, and it was well strewed with shells of the most magnificent colours and size. The odour of their late tenants alone proclaimed the fact of their recent shipwreck. This, however, was an evil that a single month would repair; and our sailor determined to make another voyage to this bay, which he called Shell Bay, in order to procure some of its treasures. It was true he could not place them before the delighted eyes of Bridget, but he might arrange them in his cabin, and fancy that she was gazing at their beauties. After drinking at the spring, and supping on the rocks above, Mark arranged a mattress, provided for that purpose, in the boat, and went to sleep.

Early next morning the Bridget was again under way, but not until her owner had both bathed and broken his fast. Bathe he did every morning throughout the year, and occasionally at night also. A day of exertion usually ended with a bath, as did a night of sweet repose also. In all these respects no one could be more fortunate. From the first, food had been abundant; and now he possessed it in superfluity, including the wants of all dependent on him. Of clothes, also, he had an inexhaustible supply, a small portion of the cargo consisting of coarse cotton jackets and trousers, with which to purchase sandal−wood. To these means, delicious water was now added in inexhaustible quantities. The late changes had given to Mark's possession territory sufficient to occupy him months, even in exploring it thoroughly, as it was his purpose to do. God was there, also, as he is everywhere. This our secluded man found to be a most precious consolation. Again and again, each day, was he now in the practice of communing in spirit, directly with his Creator; not in cold and unmeaning forms and commonplaces, but with such yearning of the soul, and such feelings of love and reverence, as an active and living faith can alone, by the aid of the Divine Spirit, awaken in the human breast.

After crossing Shell Bay, the Bridget continued on for a couple of hours, running south, westerly, through a passage of a good width, until it met another channel, at a point which Mark at once recognized as the Forks. When at Point Fork, he had only to follow the track he had come the previous day, in order to arrive at the Reef. The crater could be seen from the Forks, and there was consequently a beacon in sight, to direct the adventurer, had he wanted such assistance; which he did not, however, since he now recognized objects perfectly well as he advanced. About ten o'clock he ran alongside of the ship, where he found everything as he had left it. Lighting the fire, he put on food sufficient to last him for another cruise, and then went up into the cross−trees in order to take a better look than he had yet obtained, of the state of things to the southward.

By this time the vast murky cloud that had so long overhung the new outlet of the volcano, was dispersed. It was succeeded by one of ordinary size, in which the thread of smoke that arose from the crater, terminated. Of course the surrounding atmosphere was clear, and nothing but distance obstructed the view. The Peak was indeed a sublime sight, issuing, as it did, from the ocean without any relief. Mark now began to think he had miscalculated its height, and that it might be *two* thousand feet, instead of one, above the water. There it was, in all its glory, blue and misty, but ragged and noble. The crater was clearly many miles beyond it, the young man being satisfied, after this look, that he had not yet seen its summit. He also increased his distance from Vulcan's Peak, as he named the mountain, to ten leagues, at least. After sitting in the cross−trees for fully an hour, gazing at this height with as much pleasure as the connoisseur ever studied picture, or statue, the young man determined to attempt a voyage to that place, in the Bridget. To him, such an expedition had the charm of the novelty and change which a journey from country to town could bring to the wearied worldling, who sighed for the enjoyment of his old haunts, after a season passed in the ennui of his country−house. It is true, great novelties had been presented to our solitary youth, by the great changes wrought immediately in his neighbourhood, and they had now kept him for a week in a condition of high excitement; but nothing they presented could equal the interest he felt in that

distant mountain, which had arisen so suddenly in a horizon that he had been accustomed to see bare of any object but clouds, for near eighteen months.

That afternoon Mark made all his preparations for a voyage that he felt might be one of great moment to him. All the symptoms of convulsions in the earth, however, had ceased; even the rumbling sounds which he had heard, or imagined, in the stillness of the night, being no longer audible. From that source, therefore, he had no great apprehensions of danger; though there was a sort of dread majesty in the exhibition of the power of nature that he had so lately witnessed, which disposed him to approach the scene of its greatest effort with secret awe. So much did he think of the morrow and its possible consequences, that he did not get asleep for two or three hours, though he awoke in the morning unconscious of any want of rest. An hour later, he was in his boat, and under way.

Mark had now to steer in an entirely new direction, believing, from what he had seen while aloft the day before, that he could make his way out into the open ocean by proceeding a due south course. In order to do this, and to get into the most promising−looking channel in that direction, he was obliged to pass through the narrow strait that separated the Reef from the large range of rock over which he had roamed the day succeeding the earthquake. Of course, the bridge was removed, in order to allow the boat's mast to pass; but for this, Mark did not care. He had seen his stock the previous evening, and saw that it wanted for nothing. Even the fowls had gone across to the new territory, on exploring expeditions; and Kitty herself had left her sweet pastures on the Summit, to see of what the world was made beyond her old range. It is true she had made one journey in that quarter, in the company of her master; but, one journey no more satisfied her than it would have satisfied the curiosity of any other female.

After passing the bridge, the boat entered a long narrow reach, that extended at least two leagues, in nearly a direct line towards Vulcan's Peak. As it approached the end of this piece of water, Mark saw that he must enter a bay of considerable extent; one, indeed, that was much larger than any he had yet seen in his island, or, to speak more accurately, his group of islands. On one side of this bay appeared a large piece of level land, or a plain, which Mark supposed might cover one or two thousand acres. Its colour was so different from anything he had yet seen, that our young man was induced to land, and to walk a short distance to examine it. On reaching its margin, it was found to be a very shallow basin, of which the bottom was mud, with a foot or two of salt water still remaining, and in which sea−weed, some ten or twelve inches in thickness, was floating. It was almost possible for Mark to walk on this weed, the green appearance of which induced him to name the place the Prairie. Such a collection of weed could only have been owing to the currents, which must have brought it into this basin, where it was probably retained even previously to the late eruption. The presence of the deposit of mud, as well as the height of the surrounding rocks, many of which were doubtless out of water previously to the phenomenon, went to corroborate this opinion.

After working her way through a great many channels, some wide and some narrow, some true and some false, the Bridget reached the southern verge of the group, about noon. Mark then supposed himself to be quite twenty miles from the Reef, and the Peak appeared very little nearer than when he left it. This startled him on the score of distance; and, after meditating on all his chances, the young man determined to pass the remainder of that day where he was, in order to put to sea with as much daylight before him as possible. He desired also to explore the coast and islands in that vicinity, in order to complete his survey of the cluster. He looked for a convenient place to anchor his boat, accordingly, ate his dinner, and set out on foot to explore, armed as usual with a fowling−piece.

In the first place, an outlet to the sea very different from that on the eastern side of the group, was found here, on its southern. The channel opened into a bay of some size, with an arm of rock reaching well off on the weather side, so that no broken water was encountered in passing into or out of it, provided one kept sufficiently clear of the point itself. As there was abundance of room, Mark saw he should have no difficulty in getting out into open water, here, or in getting back again. What was more, the arm, or promontory of rock just mentioned, had a hummock near a hundred feet in height on its extremity, that answered admirably for a land−mark. Most of this

hummock must have been above water previously to the late eruption, though it appeared to our explorer, that all the visible land, as he proceeded south, was lifted higher and on a gradually−increasing scale, as if the eruption had exerted its force at a certain point, the new crater for instance, and raised the earth to the northward of that point, on an inclined plane. This might account, in a measure, for the altitude of the Peak, which was near the great crevice that must have been left somewhere, unless materials on its opposite side had fallen to fill it up again. Most of these views were merely speculative, though the fact of the greater elevation of all the rocks, in this part of the group, over those further north, was beyond dispute. Thus the coast, here, was generally fifty or eighty feet high; whereas, at the Reef, even now, the surface of the common rock was not much more than twenty feet above the water. The rise seemed to be gradual, moreover, which certainly favoured this theory.

As a great deal of sand and mud had been brought up by the eruption, there was no want of fresh water. Mark found even a little brook, of as perfectly sweet a stream as he had ever tasted in America, running into the little harbour where he had secured the boat. He followed this stream two miles, ere he reached its source, or sources; for it came from at least a dozen copious springs, that poured their tribute from a bed of clean sand several miles in length, and which had every sign of having been bare for ages. In saying this, however, it is not to be supposed that the signs, as to time, were very apparent anywhere. Lava, known to have been ejected from the bowels of the earth thousands of years, has just as fresh an appearance, to the ordinary observer, as that which was thrown out ten years ago; and, had it not been for the deposits of moist mud, the remains of fish, sea−weed that was still undecayed, pools of salt water, and a few other peculiarities of the same sort, Mark would have been puzzled to find any difference between the rocks recently thrown up, and those which were formerly exposed to the air. Even the mud was fast changing its appearance, cracking and drying under the sun of the tropics. In a month or two, should as much rain as usual fall, it was probable the sea−weed would be far gone in decay.

It was still early when our adventurer kneeled on the sand, near his boat, to hold his last direct communication with his Creator, ere he slept. Those communications were now quite frequent with Mark, it being no unusual thing for him to hold them when sailing in his boat, on the deck of the ship, or in the soft salubrious air of the Summit. He slept none the less soundly for having commended his soul to God, asking support against temptations, and forgiveness for past sins. These prayers were usually very short. More than half the time they were expressed in the compendious and beautiful words given to man by Christ himself, the model and substance of all petitions of this nature. But the words were devoutly uttered, the heart keeping even pace with them, and the soul fully submitting to their influence.

Mark arose, next morning, two hours before the light appeared, and at once left the group. Time was now important to him; for, while he anticipated the possibility of remaining under the lee of the mountain during the succeeding night, he also anticipated the possibility of being compelled to return. In a favourable time, with the wind a little free, five knots in the hour was about the maximum of the boat's rate of sailing, though it was affected by the greater or less height of the sea that was on. When the waves ran heavily, the Bridget's low sails got becalmed in the troughs, and she consequently lost much of her way. On the whole, however, five knots might be set down as her average speed, under the pressure of the ordinary trades, and with whole canvas, and a little off the wind. Close−hauled, she scarcely made more than three; while, with the wind on the quarter, she often went seven, especially in smooth water.

The course steered was about a point to the westward of south, the boat running altogether by compass, for the first two hours. At the end of that time day returned, and the dark, frowning Peak itself became visible. The sun had no sooner risen, than Mark felt satisfied with his boat's performance. Objects began to come out of the mass of the mountain, which no longer appeared a pile of dark outline, without detail. He expected this, and was even disappointed that his eyes could not command more, for he now saw that he had materially underrated the distance between the crater and the Peak, which must be nearer sixty than fifty miles. The channel between the group and this isolated mass was, at least, twelve leagues in width. These twelve leagues were now to be run, and our young navigator thought he had made fully three of them, when light returned.

From that moment every mile made a sensible difference in the face of the mountain. Light and shadow first became visible; then ravines, cliffs, and colours, came into the view. Each league that he advanced increased Mark's admiration and awe; and by the time that the boat was on the last of those leagues which had appeared so long, he began to have a more accurate idea of the sublime nature of the phenomenon that had been wrought so near him. Vulcan's Peak, as an island, could not be less than eight or nine miles in length, though its breadth did not much exceed two. Running north and south, it offered its narrow side to the group of the crater, which had deceived its solitary observer. Yes! of the millions on earth, Mark Woolston, alone, had been so situated as to become a witness of this grand display of the powers of the elements. Yet, what was this in comparison with the thousand vast globes that were rolling about in space, objects so familiar as to be seen daily and nightly without raising a thought, in the minds of many, from the created to the creator? Even these globes come and go, and men remain indifferent to the mighty change!

The wind had been fresh in crossing the strait, and Mark was not sorry when his pigmy boat came under the shadow of the vast cliffs which formed the northern extremity of the Peak. When still a mile distant, he thought he was close on the rocks; nor did he get a perfectly true idea of the scale on which this rare mountain had been formed, until running along at its base, within a hundred yards of its rocks. Coming in to leeward, as a matter of course, Mark, found comparatively smooth water, though the unceasing heaving and setting of the ocean rendered it a little hazardous to go nearer to the shore. For some time our explorer was fearful he should not be able to land at all; and he was actually thinking of putting about, to make the best of his way back, while light remained to do so, when he came off a place that seemed fitted by art, rather than by nature, to meet his wishes. A narrow opening appeared between two cliffs, of about equal height, or some hundred feet in elevation, one of which extended further into the ocean than its neighbour. The water being quite smooth in this inlet, Mark ventured to enter it, the wind favouring his advance. On passing this gate−way, he found himself nearly becalmed, in a basin that might be a hundred yards in diameter, which was not only surrounded by a sandy beach, but which had also a sandy bottom. The water was several fathoms deep, and it was very easy to run the bows of the boat anywhere on the beach. This was done, the sails were furled, and Mark sprang ashore, taking the grapnel with him. Like Columbus, he knelt on the sands, and returned his thanks to God.

Not only did a ravine open from this basin, winding its way up the entire ascent, but a copious stream of water ran through it, foaming and roaring amid its glens. At first, Mark supposed this was sea−water, still finding its way from some lake on the Peak; but, on tasting it, he found it was perfectly sweet. Provided with his gun, and carrying his pack, our young man entered this ravine, and following the course of the brook, he at once commenced an ascent. The route was difficult only in the labour of moving upwards, and by no means as difficult in that as he had expected to find it. It was, nevertheless, fortunate that this climbing was to be done in the shade, the sun seldom penetrating into those cool and somewhat damp crevices through which the brook found its way.

Notwithstanding his great activity, Mark Woolston was just an hour in ascending to the Peak. In no place had he found the path difficult, though almost always upward; but he believed he had walked more than two miles before he came out on level ground. When he had got up about three−fourths of the way, the appearances of things around him suddenly changed. Although the rock itself looked no older than that below, it had, occasionally, a covering that clearly could never have emerged from the sea within the last few days. From that point everything denoted an older existence in the air, from which our young man inferred that the summit of Vulcan's Peak had been an island long prior to the late eruption. Every foot he advanced confirmed this opinion, and the conclusion was that the ancient island had lain too low to be visible to one on the Reef.

An exclamation of delight escaped from our explorer, as he suddenly came out on the broken plain of the Peak. It was not absolutely covered, but was richly garnished with wood; cocoa−nut, bread−fruits, and other tropical trees; and it was delightfully verdant with young grasses. The latter were still wet with a recent shower that Mark had seen pass over the mountain, while standing for the island; and on examining them more closely, the traces of the former shower of volcanic ashes were yet to be seen. The warmth in the sun, after so sharp a walk, caused the young man to plunge into the nearest grove, where he had no difficulty in helping himself to as many cocoa−nuts,

fresh from the trees, as a thousand men could have consumed. Every one has heard of the delicious beverage that the milk of the cocoa−nut, and of the delicious food that its pulp furnishes, when each is taken from the fruit before it hardens. How these trees came there, Mark did not know. The common theory is that birds convey the seeds from island to island; though some suppose that the earth contains the elements of all vegetation, and that this or that is quickened, as particular influences are brought to bear by means of climate and other agents.

After resting himself for an hour in that delicious grove, Mark began to roam around the plain, to get an idea of its beauties and extent. The former were inexhaustible, offering every variety of landscape, from the bold and magnificent to the soft and bewitching. There were birds innumerable, of the most brilliant plumage, and some that Mark imagined must be good to eat. In particular did he observe an immense number of a very small sort that were constantly pecking at a wild fig, of which there was a grove of considerable extent. The fig, itself, he did not find as palatable as he had hoped, though it was refreshing, and served to vary the diet; but the bird struck him to be of the same kind as the celebrated reed−bird, of the Philadelphia market, which we suppose to be much the same as the *becca fichi* of Italy. Being provided with mustard−seed shot, Mark loaded his piece properly, and killed at least twenty of these little creatures at one discharge. After cleaning them, he struck a light by means of the pan and some powder, and kindled a fire. Here was wood, too, in any quantity, an article of which he had feared in time he might be in want, and which he had already begun to husband, though used only in his simple cookery. Spitting half−a−dozen of the birds, they were soon roasted. At the same time he roasted a bunch of plantain, and, being provided with pepper and salt in his pack, as well as with some pilot−bread, and a pint−bottle of rum, we are almost ashamed to relate how our young explorer dined. Nothing was wanting to such a meal but the sweets of social converse. Mark fancied, as he sat enjoying that solitary repast, so delicious of itself, and which was just enough sweetened with toil to render it every way acceptable, that he could gladly give up all the rest of the world, for the enjoyment of a paradise like that before him, with Bridget for his Eve.

The elevation of the mountain rendered the air far more grateful and cool than he was accustomed to find it, at mid−summer, down on the Reef, and the young man was in a sort of gentle intoxication while breathing it. Then it was that he most longed for a companion, though little did he imagine how near he was to some of his species, at that very moment; and how soon that, the dearest wish of his heart, was to be met by an adventure altogether so unexpected to him, that we must commence a new chapter, in order to relate it.

CHAPTER XIII.

"The merry homes of England!
Around their hearths by night,
What gladsome looks of household love
Meet in the ruddy light!
There woman's voice flows forth in song,
Or childhood's tale is told,
Or lips move tunefully along
Some glorious page of old."

Mrs. Hemans.

The peak, or highest part of the island, was at its northern extremity, and within two miles of the grove in which Mark Woolston had eaten his dinner. Unlike most of the plain, it had no woods whatever, but rising somewhat abruptly to a considerable elevation, it was naked of everything but grass. On the peak itself, there was very little of the last even, and it was obvious that it must command a full view of the whole plain of the island, as well as of the surrounding sea, for a wide distance. Resuming his pack, our young adventurer, greatly refreshed by the delicious repast he had just made, left the pleasant grove in which he had first rested, to undertake this somewhat

sharp acclivity. He was not long in effecting it, however, standing on the highest point of his new discovery within an hour after he had commenced its ascent.

Here, Mark found all his expectations realized touching the character of the view. The whole plain of the island, with the exceptions of the covers made by intervening woods, lay spread before him like a map. All its beauties, its shades, its fruits, and its verdant glades, were placed beneath his eye, as if purposely to delight him with their glories. A more enchanting rural scene the young man had never beheld, the island having so much the air of cultivation and art about it, that he expected, at each instant, to see bodies of men running across its surface. He carried the best glass of the Rancocus with him, in all his excursions, not knowing at what moment Providence might bring a vessel in sight, and he had it now slung from his shoulders. With this glass, therefore, was every part of the visible surface of the island swept, in anxious and almost alarmed search for the abodes of inhabitants. Nothing of this sort, however, could be discovered. The island was unquestionably without a human being, our young man alone excepted. Nor could he see any trace of beast, reptile, or of any animal but birds. Creatures gifted with wings had been able to reach that little paradise; but to all others, since it first arose from the sea, had it probably been unapproached, if not unapproachable, until that day. It appeared to be the very Elysium of Birds!

Mark next examined the peak itself. There was a vast deposit of very ancient guano on it, the washings of which for ages, had doubtless largely contributed to the great fertility of the plain below. A stream of more size than one would expect to find on so small an island, meandered through the plain, and could be traced to a very copious spring that burst from the earth at the base of the peak. Ample as this spring was, however, it could never of itself have supplied the water of the brook, or rivulet, which received the contributions of some fifty other springs, that reached it in rills, as it wound its way down the gently inclined plane of the island. At one point, about two leagues from the Peak, there was actually a little lake visible, and Mark could even trace its outlet, winding its way beyond it. He supposed that the surplus tumbled into the sea in a cascade.

It will readily be imagined that our young man turned his glass to the northward, in search of the group he had left that morning, with a most lively interest. It was easy enough to see it from the great elevation at which he was now placed. There it lay, stretched far and wide, extending nearly a degree of latitude, north and south, and another of longitude, east and west, most truly resembling a vast dark−looking map, spread upon the face of the waters for his special examination. It reminded Mark of the moon, with its ragged outlines of imaginary continents, as seen by the naked eye, while the island he was now on, bore a fancied resemblance to the same object viewed through a telescope; not that it had the look of molten silver which is observed in the earth's satellite, but that it appeared gloriously bright and brilliant. Mark could easily see many of the sheets of water that were to be found among the rocks, though his naked eye could distinguish neither crater nor ship. By the aid of the glass, however, the first was to be seen, though the distance was too great to leave the poor deserted Rancocus visible, even with the assistance of magnifying−glasses.

When he had taken a good look at his old possessions, Mark made a sweep of the horizon with the glass, in order to ascertain if any other land were visible, from the great elevation on which he now stood. While arranging the focus of the instrument, an object first met his eye that caused his heart almost to leap into his mouth. Land was looming up, in the western board, so distinctly as to admit of no cavil about its presence. It was an island, mountainous, and Mark supposed it must be fully a hundred miles distant. Still it was land, and strange land, and might prove to be the abode of human beings. The glass told him very little more than his eye, though he could discern a mountainous form through it, and saw that it was an island of no great size. Beyond this mountain, again, the young man fancied that he could detect the haze of more land; but, if he did, it was too low, too distant, and too indistinct, to be certain of it. It is not easy to give a clear idea of the tumult of feeling with which Mark Woolston beheld these unknown regions, though it might best be compared with the emotions of the astronomer who discovers a new planet. It would scarce exceed the truth to say that he regarded that dim, blue mountain, which arose in the midst of a watery waste, with as much of admiration, mysterious awe and gratification united, as Herschel may have been supposed to feel when he established the character of Uranus. It was fully an hour before our hermit could turn his eyes in any other direction.

And when our young mariner did look aside, it was more with the intention of relieving eyes that had grown dim with gazing, than of not returning to the same objects again, as soon as restored to their power. It was while walking to and fro on the peak, with this intent, that a new subject of interest caused him almost to leap into the air, and to shout aloud. He saw a sail! For the first time since Betts disappeared from his anxious looks, his eyes now surely rested on a vessel. What was more, it was quite near the island he was on, and seemed to be beating up to get under its lee. It appeared but a speck on the blue waves of the ocean, seen from that height, it is true; but Mark was too well practised in his craft to be mistaken. It was a vessel, under more or less canvas, how much he could not then tell, or even see but it was most decidedly a vessel. Mark's limbs trembled so much that he was compelled to throw himself upon the earth to find the support he wanted. There he lay several minutes, mentally returning thanks to God for this unexpected favour; and when his strength revived, these signs of gratitude were renewed on his knees. Then he arose, almost in terror lest the vessel should have disappeared, or it should turn out that he was the subject of a cruel illusion.

There was no error. There was the little white speck, and he levelled the glass to get a better look at it. An exclamation now clearly broke from his lips, and for a minute or two the young man actually appeared to be out of his senses. "The pinnace," "the Neshamony," however, were words that escaped him, and, had there been a witness, might have given an insight into this extraordinary conduct. Mark had, in fact, ascertained that the sail beneath the peak was no other than the little craft that had been swept away, as already described, with Betts in it. Fourteen months had elapsed since that occurrence, and here it was again, seemingly endeavouring to return to the place where it had been launched! Mark adopted perhaps the best expedient in his power to attract attention to himself, and to let his presence be known. He fired both barrels of his fowling−piece, and repeated the discharges several times, or until a flag was shown on board the sloop, which was now just beneath the cliff, a certain sign that he had succeeded. A musket was also fired from the vessel.

Our young man rather flew than ran to the ravine, down which he went at a pace that several times placed his neck in jeopardy. It was a very different thing to descend from ascending such a mountain. In less than a quarter of an hour the half−distracted hermit was in his boat, nearly crazy with the apprehension that he might yet not meet with his friend; for, that it was Bob looking for the Reef and himself, he did not now entertain the least doubt. The most plausible course for him to adopt was precisely that which he followed. He pushed off in the Bridget, making sail on the boat, and getting out of the cove in the shortest time he could. On quitting his little haven, and coming out clear of all the rocks, another shout burst out of his very soul, when he saw the Neshamony, beyond all cavil, within a hundred fathoms of him, running along the shore in search of a place to land. That shout was returned, and Mark and Bob recognised each other at the next instant. As for the last, he just off tarpaulin, and gave three hearty cheers, while the former sank on a seat, literally unable to stand. The sheet of the sail got away from him, nor could he be said to know what he was about, until some little time after he was in the arms of his friend, and on board the pinnace.

It was half−an−hour before Mark was master of himself again. At length tears relieved him; nor was he ashamed to indulge in them, when he saw his old companion not only alive and well, but restored to him. He perceived another in the boat; but as he was of a dark skin, he naturally inferred this second person was a native of some neighbouring island where Bob had been, and who had consented to come with him in this, his search after the shipwrecked mariner. At length Bob began to converse.

"Well, Mr. Mark, the sight of you is the pleasantest prospect that has met my eyes this many a day," exclaimed the honest fellow. "It was with fear and trembling that I set out on the search, and little did I hope to fall in with you so early in the cruise."

"Thank you, thank you, Bob, and God be praised for this great mercy! You have been to some other island, I see, by your companion; but the miraculous part of all is, that you should find your way back to the Reef, since you are no navigator."

"The Reef! If this here mountain is the Reef, the country has greatly altered since I left it," answered Bob. Mark then briefly explained the great change that had actually occurred, and told his own story touching his boat and his late voyages of discovery. Betts listened with the greatest attention, casting occasional glances upward at the immense mass that had been so suddenly lifted out of the sea, as well as turning his head to regard the smoke of the more distant volcano.

"Well, this explains our 'arthquake," he answered, as soon as Mark was done. "I must have been as good as a hundred and fifty leagues from this very spot at the time you mention, and we had tremblings there that would scarce let a body stand on his feet. A ship came in two days arterwards, that must have been a hundred leagues further to the nor'ard when it happened, and her people reported that they thought heaven and 'arth was a coming together, out there in open water."

"It has been a mighty earthquake must have been, to have wrought these vast changes; though I had supposed that Providence had confined a knowledge of its existence to myself. But, you spoke of a ship, Bob surely we are not in the neighbourhood of vessels."

"Sartain but, I may as well tell you my adventures at once, Mr. Mark; though I own I should like to land first, as it is a long story, and take a look at this island that you praise so much, and taste them reed−birds of which you give so good an account. I 'm Jarsey−born and bred, and know what the little things be."

Mark was dying to hear Bob's story, more especially since he understood a ship was connected with it, but he could not refuse his friend's demand for sweet water and a dinner. The entrance of the cove was quite near, and the boats entered that harbour and were secured; after which the three men commenced the ascent, Mark picking up by the way the spy−glass, fowling−piece, and other articles that he had dropped in the haste of his descent. While going up this sharp acclivity, but little was said; but, when they reached the summit, or the plain rather, exclamations of delight burst from the mouths of both of Mark's companions. To the young man's great surprise, those which came from Bob's dark−skinned associate were in English, as well as those which came from Bob himself. This induced him to take a good look at the man, when he discovered a face that he knew!

"How is this, Bob?" cried Mark, almost gasping for breath "whom have you here? Is not this Socrates?"

"Ay, ay, sir; that 's Soc; and Dido, his wife, is within a hundred miles of you."

This answer, simple as it was, nearly overcame our young man again. Socrates and Dido had been the slaves of Bridget, when he left home; a part of the estate she had received from her grandmother. They dwelt in the house with her, and uniformly called her mistress. Mark knew them both very well, as a matter of course; and Dido, with the archness of a favourite domestic, was often in the habit of calling him her `young master.' A flood of expectations, conjectures and apprehensions came over our hero, and he refrained from putting any questions immediately, out of pure astonishment. He was almost afraid indeed to ask any.

Nearly unconscious of what he was about, he led the way to the grove where he had dined two or three hours before, and where the remainder of the reed−birds were suspended from the branch of a tree. The embers of the fire were ready, and in a few minutes Socrates handed Betts his dinner.

Bob ate and drank heartily. He loved a tin−pot of rum−and−water, or grog, as it used to be called though even the word is getting to be obsolete in these temperance times and he liked good eating. It was not epicurism, however, or a love of the stomach, that induced him to defer his explanations on the present occasion. He saw that Mark must hear what he had to relate gradually, and was not sorry that the recognition of the negro had prepared him to expect something wonderful. Wonderful it was, indeed; and at last Betts, having finished his dinner, and given half−a−dozen preparatory hints, in order to lessen the intensity of his young friend's feelings, yielded to an appeal from the other's eyes, and commenced his narrative. Bob told his story, as a matter of course, with a great deal of

circumlocution, and in his own language. There was a good deal of unnecessary prolixity in it, and some irrelative digressions touching currents, and the trades, and the weather; but, on the whole, it was given intelligibly, and with sufficient brevity for one who devoured every syllable he uttered. The reader, however, would most probably prefer to hear an abridgement of the tale in our own words.

When Robert Betts was driven off the Reef, by the hurricane of the preceding year, he had no choice but to let the Neshamony drive to leeward with him. As soon as he could, he got the pinnace before the wind, and, whenever he saw broken water ahead, he endeavoured to steer clear of it. This he sometimes succeeded in effecting; while at others he passed through it, or over it, at the mercy of the tempest. Fortunately the wind had piled up the element in such a way as to carry the craft clear of the rocks, and in three hours after the Neshamony was lifted out of her cradle, she was in the open ocean, to leeward of all the dangers. It blew too hard, however, to make sail on her, and Bob was obliged to scud until the gale broke. Then, indeed, he passed a week in endeavouring to beat back and rejoin his friend, but without success, `losing all he made in the day, while asleep at night.' Such, at least, was Bob's account of his failure to find the Reef again; though Mark thought it probable that he was a little out in his reckoning, and did not look in exactly the right place for it.

At the end of this week high land was made to leeward, and Betts ran down for it, in the hope of finding inhabitants. In this last expectation, however, he did not succeed. It was a volcanic mountain, of a good many resources, and of a character not unlike that of Vulcan's Peak, but entirely unpeopled. He named it after his old ship, and passed several days on it. On describing its appearance, and its bearings from the place where they then were, Mark had no doubt it was the island that was visible from the peak near them, and at which he had been gazing that very afternoon, for fully an hour, with longing eyes. On describing its form to Bob, the latter coincided in this opinion, which was in fact the true one.

From the highest point of Rancocus Island, land was to be seen to the northward and westward, and Bob now determined to make the best of his way in that direction, in the hope of falling in with some vessel after sandal−wood or bêche−le−mar. He fell in with a group of low islands, of a coral formation, about a hundred leagues from his volcanic mountain, and on them he found inhabitants. These people were accustomed to see white men, and turned out to be exceedingly mild and just. It is probable that they connected the sudden appearance of a vessel like the Neshamony, having but one man in it, with some miraculous interposition of their gods, for they paid Bob the highest honours, and when he landed, solemnly tabooed his sloop. Bob was a long−headed fellow in the main, and was not slow to perceive the advantage of such a ceremony, and encouraged it. He also formed a great intimacy with the chief, exchanging names and rubbing noses with him. This chief was styled Betto, after the exchange, and Bob was called Ooroony by the natives. Ooroony stayed a month with Betto, when he undertook a voyage with him in a large canoe, to another group, that was distant two or three hundred miles, still further to the northward, and where Bob was told he should find a ship. This account proved to be true, the ship turning out to be a Spaniard, from South America, engaged in the pearl fishery, and on the eve of sailing for her port. From some misunderstanding with the Spanish captain, that Bob never comprehended and of course could not explain, and which he did not attempt to explain, Betto left the group in haste, and without taking leave of his new friend, though he sent him a message of apology, one−half of which was lost on Bob, in consequence of not understanding the language. The result was, however, to satisfy the latter that his friend was quite as sorry to abandon *him*, as he was glad to get away from the Spanish captain.

This desertion left Betts no choice between remaining on the pearl island, or of sailing in the brig, which went to sea next day. He decided to do the last. In due time he was landed at Panama, whence he made his way across the isthmus, actually reaching Philadelphia in less than five months after he was driven off the Reef. In all this he was much favoured by circumstances; though an old salt, like Bob, will usually make his way where a landsman would be brought up.

The owners of the Rancocus gave up their ship, as soon as Betts had told his story, manifesting no disposition to send good money after bad. They looked to the underwriters, and got Bob to make oath to the loss of the vessel;

which said oath, by the way, was the ground−work of a law−suit that lasted Friend Abraham White as long as he lived. Bob next sought Bridget with his tale. The young wife received the poor fellow with floods of tears, and the most eager attention to his story, as indeed did our hero's sister Anne. It would seem that Betts's arrival was most opportune. In consequence of the non−arrival of the ship, which was then past due two or three months, Doctor Yardley had endeavoured to persuade his daughter that she was a widow, if indeed, as he had of late been somewhat disposed to maintain, she had ever been legally married at all. The truth was, that the medical war in Bristol had broken out afresh, in consequence of certain cases that had been transferred to that village, during one of the fever−seasons in Philadelphia. Greater cleanliness, and the free use of fresh water, appear to have now arrested the course of this formidable disease, in the northern cities of America; but, in that day, it was of very frequent occurrence. Theories prevailed among the doctors concerning it, which were bitterly antagonistical to each other; and Doctor Woolston headed one party in Bucks, while Doctor Yardley headed another. Which was right, or whether either was right, is more than we shall pretend to say, though we think it probable that both were wrong. Anne Woolston had been married to a young physician but a short time, when this new outbreak concerning yellow fever occurred. Her husband, whose name was Heaton, unfortunately took the side of this grave question that was opposed to his father−in−law, for a reason no better than that he believed in the truth of the opposing theory, and this occasioned another breach. Doctor Yardley could not, and did not wholly agree with Doctor Heaton, because the latter was Doctor Woolston's son−in−law, and he altered his theory a little to create a respectable point of disagreement; while Doctor Woolston could not pardon a disaffection that took place, as it might be, in the height of a war. About this time too, Mrs. Yardley died.

All these occurrences, united to the protracted absence of Mark, made Bridget and Anne extremely unhappy. To increase this unhappiness, Doctor Yardley took it into his head to dispute the legality of a marriage that had been solemnized on board a ship. This was an entirely new legal crotchet, but the federal government was then young, and jurisdictions had not been determined as clearly as has since been the case. Had it been the fortune of Doctor Yardley to live in these later times, he would not have given himself the trouble to put violent constructions on anything; but, getting a few female friends to go before the necessary judge, with tears in their eyes, anything would be granted to their requests, very much as a matter of course. Failing of this, moreover, there is always the resource of the legislature, which will usually pass a law taking away a man's wife, or his children, and sometimes his estate, if a pretty pathetic appeal can be made to it, in the way of gossip. We have certainly made great progress in this country, within the last twenty years; but whether it has been in a direction towards the summit of human perfection, or one downward towards the destruction of all principles, the next generation will probably be better able to say than this. Even the government is getting to be gossipian.

In the case of Bridget, however, public sympathy was with her, as it always will be with a pretty woman. Nevertheless, her father had great influence in Bucks county, more especially with the federalists and the anti−depletionists, and it was in his power to give his daughter great uneasiness, if not absolutely to divorce her. So violent did he become, that he actually caused proceedings to be commenced in Bridget's name, to effect a legal separation, taking the grounds that the marriage had never been consummated, that the ceremony had occurred on board a ship, that the wife was of tender years, and lastly, that she was an heiress. Some persons thought the Doctor's proceedings were instigated by the circumstance that another relative had just died, and left Bridget five thousand dollars, which were to be paid to her the day she was eighteen, the period of a female's reaching her majority, according to popular notions. The possession of this money, which Bridget received and placed in the hands of a friend in town, almost made her father frantic for the divorce, or a decree against the marriage, he contending there was no marriage, and that a divorce was unnecessary. The young wife had not abandoned the hope of seeing her husband return, all this time, although uneasiness concerning the fate of the ship, was extending from her owners into the families of those who had sailed in her. She wished to meet Mark with a sum of money that would enable him, at once, to commence life respectably, and place him above the necessity of following the seas.

Betts reached Bristol the very day that a decision was made, on a preliminary point, in the case of Yardley versus Woolston, that greatly encouraged the father in his hopes of final success, and as greatly terrified his daughter. It

was, in fact, a mere question of practice, and had no real connection with the merits of the matter at issue; but it frightened Bridget and her friend Anna enormously. In point of fact, there was not the smallest danger of the marriage being declared void, should any one oppose the decision; but this was more than any one of the parties then knew, and Doctor Yardley seemed so much in earnest, that Bridget and Anne got into the most serious state of alarm on the subject. To increase their distress, a suitor for the hand of the former appeared in the person of a student of medicine, of very fair expectations, and who supported every one of Doctor Yardley's theories, in all their niceties and distinctions; and what is more, would have supported them, had they been ten times as untenable as they actually were, in reason.

Had the situation of Doctor Heaton been more pleasant than it was, it is probable that the step taken by himself, his wife, and Bridget, would never have been thought of. But it was highly unpleasant. He was poor, and dependent altogether on his practice for a support. Now, it was in Doctor Woolston's power to be of great service to the young couple, by introducing the son−in−law to his own patients, but this he could not think of doing with a depletionist; and John, as Anne affectionately styled her husband, was left to starve on his system of depletion. Such was the state of things when Bob appeared in Bristol, to announce to the young wife not only the existence but the deserted and lone condition of her husband. The honest fellow knew there was something clandestine about the marriage, and he used proper precautions not to betray his presence to the wrong persons. By means of a little management he saw Bridget privately, and told his story. As Bob had been present at the wedding, and was known to stand high in Mark's favour, he was believed, quite as a matter of course, and questioned in a thousand ways, until the poor fellow had not really another syllable to communicate.

The sisters shed floods of tears at the thought of poor Mark's situation. For several days they did little besides weep and pray. Then Bridget suddenly dried her tears, and announced an intention to go in person to the rescue of her husband. Not only was she determined on this, but, as a means of giving a death−blow to all expectations of a separation and to the hopes of her new suitor, she was resolved to go in a way that should enable her to remain on the Reef with Mark, and, if necessary, to pass the remainder of her days there. Bob had given a very glowing description of the charms of the residence, as well as of the climate, the latter quite justly, and declared his readiness to accompany this faithful wife in the pursuit of her lost partner. The whole affair was communicated to Doctor and Mrs. Heaton, who not only came into the scheme, but enlisted in its execution in person. The idea pleased the former in particular, who had a love of adventure, and a desire to see other lands, while Anne was as ready to follow her husband to the ends of the earth, as Bridget was to go to the same place in quest of Mark. In a word, the whole project was deliberately framed, and ingeniously carried out.

Doctor Heaton had a brother, a resident of New York, and often visited him. Bridget was permitted to accompany Anne to that place, whither her money was transferred to her. A vessel was found that was about to sail for the North−west Coast, and passages were privately engaged. A great many useful necessaries were laid in, and, at the proper time, letters of leave−taking were sent to Bristol, and the whole party sailed. Previously to the embarkation, Bob appeared to accompany the adventurers. He was attended by Socrates, and Dido, and Juno, who had stolen away by order of their young mistress, as well as by a certain Friend Martha Waters, who had stood up in `meeting' with Friend Robert Betts, and had become "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh;" and her maiden sister, Joan Waters, who was to share their fortunes. In a word, Bob had brought an early attachment to the test of matrimony.

So well had the necessary combinations been made, that the ship sailed with our adventurers, nine in number, without meeting with the slightest obstacle. Once at sea, of course nothing but that caused by the elements was to be anticipated. Cape Horn was doubled in due time, and Doctor Heaton, with all under his care, was landed at Panama, just five months, to a day, after leaving New York. Here passages were taken in the same brig that Bob had returned in, which was again bound out, on a pearl−fishing voyage. Previously to quitting Panama, however, a recruit was engaged in the person of a young American shipwright, of the name of Bigelow, who had run from his ship a twelvemonth before, to marry a Spanish girl, and who had become heartily tired of his life in Panama. He and his wife and child joined the party, engaging to serve the Heatons, for a stipulated sum, for the term of two

years.

The voyage from Panama to the pearl islands was a long one, but far from unpleasant. Sixty days after leaving port the adventurers were safely landed, with all their effects. These included two cows, with a young bull, two yearling colts, several goats obtained in South America, and various implements of husbandry that it had not entered into the views of Friend Abraham White to send to even the people of Fejee. With the natives of the pearl island, Bob, already known to them and a favourite, had no difficulty in negotiating. He had brought them suitable and ample presents, and soon effected an arrangement, by which they agreed to transport him and all his stores, the animals included, to Betto's Islands, a distance of fully three hundred miles. The horses and cows were taken on a species of catamaran, or large raft, that is much used in those mild seas, and which sail reasonably well a little off the wind, and not very badly on. At Betto's Islands a new bargain was struck, and the whole party proceeded to Rancocus Island, Bob making his land−fall without any difficulty, from having observed the course steered in coming from it.

At Betto's group, however, Bob found the Neshamony, covered with mats, and tabooed, precisely as he had left her to a rope−yarn. Not a human hand had touched anything belonging to the boat, or a human foot approached it, during the whole time of his absence. Ooroony, or Betto, was rewarded for his fidelity by the present of a musket and some ammunition, articles that were really of the last importance to his dignity and power. They were as good as a standing army to him, actually deciding summarily a point of disputed authority, that had long been in controversy between himself and another chief, in his favour. The voyage between Betto's group and Rancocus Island was made in the Neshamony, so far as the human portion of the freight was concerned. The catamarans and canoes, however, came on with the other animals, and all the utensils and stores.

The appearance of Rancocus Island created quite as much astonishment among the native mariners, as had that of the horses, cows, &c. Until they saw it, not one of them had any notion of its existence, or of a mountain at all. They dwelt themselves on low coral islands, and quite beyond the volcanic formation, and a hill was a thing scarcely known to them. At this island Heaton and Betts deemed it prudent to dismiss their attendants, not wishing them to know anything of the Reef, as they were not sure what sort of neighbours they might prove, on a longer acquaintance. The mountain, however, possessed so many advantages over the Reef, as the latter was when Bob left it, that the honest fellow frankly admitted its general superiority, and suggested the possibility of its becoming their permanent residence. In some respects it was not equal to the Reef, as a residence, however, the fishing in particular turning out to be infinitely inferior. But it had trees and fruits, being very much of the same character as Vulcan's Peak, in this respect. Nevertheless, there was no comparison between the two islands as places of residence, the last having infinitely the most advantages. It was larger, had more and better fruits, better water, and richer grasses. It had also a more even surface, and a more accessible plain. Rancocus Island was higher and more broken, and, while it might be a pleasanter place of residence than the Reef during the warm months, it never could be a place as pleasant as the plain of the Peak.

Bob found it necessary to leave his friends, and most of his stores, at Rancocus Island; Mrs. Heaton becoming a mother two days after their arrival at it, and the cows both increasing their families in the course of the same week. It was, moreover, impossible to transport everybody and everything in the Neshamony, at the same time. As Doctor Heaton would not leave Anne at such a moment, and Bridget was of the same way of thinking, it was thought best to improve the time by sending out Betts to explore. It will be remembered that he was uncertain where the Reef was to be found exactly, though convinced it was to windward, and within a hundred miles of him. While roaming over the rocks of Rancocus, however, Vulcan's Peak had been seen, as much to Bob's surprise as to his delight. To his surprise, inasmuch as he had no notion of the great physical change that had recently been wrought by the earthquake yet could scarce believe he had overlooked such an object in his former examinations; and to his delight, because he was now satisfied that the Reef must lie to the northward of that strange mountain, and a long distance from it, because no such peak had been visble from the former when he left it. It was a good place to steer for, nevertheless, on this new voyage, since it carried him a hundred miles to windward; and when Bob, with Socrates for a companion, left Rancocus to look for the Reef, he steered as near

the course for the Peak as the wind would permit. He had made the island from the boat, after a run of ten hours; and, at the same time, he made the crater of the active volcano. For the latter, he stood that night, actually going within a mile of it; and, next morning, he altered his course, and beat up for the strange island. When Mark first discovered him, he had nearly made the circuit of Vulcan's Peak, in a vain endeavour to land, and he would actually have gone on his way, had it not been for the firing of the fowling−piece, the report of which he heard, and the smoke of which he saw.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Compell the hawke to sit, that is unmanned,
Or make the hound, untaught, to draw the deere,
Or bring the free, against his will, in band,
Or move the sad, a pleasant tale to heere,
Your time is lost, and you no whit the neere!
So love ne learnes, of force, the heart to knit:
She serves but those, that feels sweet fancie's fit."

Churchyard.

We leave the reader to imagine with what feelings Mark heard these facts. Bridget, for whom his tenderness was unabated; Bridget, who had been the subject of so many of his thoughts since his shipwreck, had shown herself worthy to be thus loved, and was now on an island that he might easily reach in a run of a few hours! The young man retired further within the grove, leaving Bob and Socrates behind, and endeavoured to regain his composure by himself. Before rejoining his companions, he knelt and returned thanks to God for this instance of his great kindness. It was a long time, notwithstanding, before he could become accustomed to the idea of having associates, at all. Time and again, within the next month or two, did he *dream* that all this fancied happiness was only a *dream*, and awoke under a sense of having been the subject of an agreeable illusion. It took months perfectly to restore the tone of his mind in this respect, and to bring it back into the placid current of habitual happiness. The deep sense of gratitude to God he never lost; but the recollection of what he had suffered, and from what he had been relieved by the Divine mercy, remained indelibly impressed on his heart, and influenced his future life to a degree that increased the favour a thousand−fold.

The mode of proceeding was next discussed, in the course of doing which Mark communicated to Bob, somewhat in detail, the circumstance of the recent convulsion, and the changes which it had produced. After talking the matter over, both agreed it would be every way desirable to bring the whole party, and as much of the property as could be easily moved, up to windward at once. Now, that the natives knew of the existence of Rancocus Island, their visits might be often expected, and nothing was more uncertain than their policy and friendship. Once on Rancocus Island the Peak could be seen, and from the Peak the Reef was visible. In this way, then, there was every reason to believe that the existence of their little colony would soon become known, and the property they possessed the object of cupidity and violence. Against such consequences it would be necessary to guard with the strictest care, and the first step should be to get everything of value up to windward, with the least possible delay. The natives often went a long distance, in their canoes and on their rafts, with the wind abeam, but it was not often they undertook to go directly to windward. Then the activity of the volcano might be counted on as something in favour of the colonists, since those uninstructed children of nature would be almost certain to set the phenomenon down to the credit of some god, or some demon, neither of whom would be likely to permit his special domains to be trespassed on with impunity.

While Mark and Bob were talking these matters over, Socrates had been shooting and cleaning a few dozen more of the reed−birds. This provision of the delicacy was made, because Betts affirmed no such delicious little

creature was to be met with on Rancocus, though they were to be found on Vulcan's Peak literally in tens of thousands. This difference could be accounted for in no other way, than by supposing that some of the birds had originally found their way to the latter, favoured by accidental circumstances, driven by a hurricane, transported on sea−weed, or attending the drift of some plants, and that the same, or similar circumstances, had never contributed to carry them the additional hundred miles to leeward.

It was near sunset when the Neshamony left Snug Cove, as Mark had named his little haven, at the foot of the ravine, which, by the way, he called the Stairs, and put to sea, on her way to Rancocus Island. The bearings of the last had been accurately taken, and our mariners were just as able to run by night as by day. It may as well be said here, moreover, that the black was a capital boatman, and a good fresh−water sailor in general, a proficiency that he had acquired in consequence of having been born and brought up on the banks of the Delaware. But it would have been very possible to run from one of these islands to the other, by observing the direction of the wind alone, since it blew very steadily in the same quarter, and changes in the course were always to be noted by changes in the violence or freshness of the breeze. In that quarter of the ocean the trades blew with very little variation from the south−east, though in general the Pacific Trades are from the south−west.

Mark was delighted with the performances of the Neshamony. Bob gave a good account of her qualities, and said he should not hesitate to make sail in her for either of the continents, in a case of necessity. Accustomed, as he had been of late, to the little Bridget, the pinnace appeared a considerable craft to Mark, and he greatly exulted in this acquisition. No seaman could hesitate about passing from the Reef to the islands, at any time when it did not absolutely blow a gale, in a boat of this size and of such qualities; and, even in a gale, it might be possible to make pretty good weather of it. Away she now went, leaving the Bridget moored in Snug Cove, to await their return. Of course, Mark and Bob had much discourse, while running down before the wind that night, in which each communicated to the other many things that still remained to be said. Mark was never tired of asking questions about Bridget; her looks, her smiles, her tears, her hopes, her fears, her health, her spirits, and her resolution, being themes of which he never got weary. A watch was set, nevertheless, and each person in the pinnace had his turn of sleep, if sleep he could.

At the rising of the sun Mark was awake. Springing to his feet, he saw that Rancocus Island was plainly in view. In the course of the ten hours she had been out, the Neshamony had run about seventy miles, having a square−sail set, in addition to her jib and mainsail. This brought the mountain for which she was steering within ten leagues, and directly to leeward. A little impatience was betrayed by the young husband, but, on the whole, he behaved reasonably well. Mark had never neglected his person, notwithstanding his solitude. Daily baths, and the most scrupulous attention to his attire, so far as neatness went, had kept him not only in health, but in spirits, the frame of the mind depending most intimately on the condition of the body. Among other habits, he preserved that of shaving daily. The cutting of his hair gave him the most trouble, and he had half a mind to get Bob to act as barber on the present occasion. Then he remembered having seen Bridget once cut the hair of a child, and he could not but fancy how pleasant it would be to have her moving about him, in the performance of the same office on himself. He decided, consequently, to remain as he was, as regarded his looks, until his charming bride could act as his hair−dresser. The toilette, however, was not neglected, and, on the whole, there was no reason to complain of the young man's appearance. The ship furnished him clothes at will, and the climate rendered so few necessary, that even a much smaller stock than he possessed, would probably have supplied him for life.

When about a league from the northern end of Rancocus Island, Bob set a little flag at his mast−head, the signal, previously arranged, of his having been successful. Among the stores brought by the party from America, were three regular tents, or marquees, which Heaton purchased at a sale of old military stores, and had prudently brought with him, to be used as occasion might demand. These marquees were now pitched on a broad piece of low land, that lay between the cliffs and the beach, and where the colony had temporarily established itself. Mark's heart beat violently as Bob pointed out these little canvas dwellings to him. They were the abodes of his friends, including his young wife. Next the cows appeared, quietly grazing near by, with a pleasant home look, and the goats and colts were not far off, cropping the grass. Altogether our young man was profoundly overcome

again, and it was some time ere he could regain his self−command. On a point that proved to be the landing−place, stood a solitary female figure. As the boat drew nearer she extended her arms, and then, as if unable to stand, she sunk on a rock which had served her for a seat ever since the distant sail was visible. In two more minutes Mark Woolston had his charming young bride encircled in his arms. The delicacy which kept the others aloof from this meeting, was imitated by Bob, who, merely causing the boat to brush near the rock, so as to allow of Mark's jumping ashore, passed on to a distant landing, where he was met by most of his party, including `Friend Martha,' who rejoiced not a little in the safe return of Friend Robert Betts. In half−an−hour Mark and Bridget came up to the marquees, when the former made the acquaintance of his brother−in−law, and had the happiness of embracing his sister. It was a morning of the purest joy, and deepest gratitude. On the one side, the solitary man found himself restored to the delights of social life, in the persons of those on earth whom he most loved; and, on the other hand, the numberless apprehensions of those who looked for him, and his place of retirement, had all their anxiety rewarded by complete success. Little was done that day but to ask and answer questions. Mark had to recount all that had happened since Bob was taken from him, and not trifling was the trepidation created among his female listeners, when he related the history of the earthquake. Their fears, however, were somewhat appeased by his assurances of security; the circumstance that a volcano was in activity near by, being almost a pledge that no very extensive convulsions could follow.

The colonists remained a week at Rancocus Island, being actually too happy to give themselves the disturbance of a removal. At the end of that time, however, Anne was so far recovered that they began to talk of a voyage, Bridget, in particular, dying to see the place where Mark had passed so many solitary hours; and, as he had assured her more than once, where her image had scarcely ever been absent from his thoughts an hour at a time. As it would be impossible to embark all the effects at once, in the Neshamony, some method was to be observed in the removal. The transportation of the cows and horses was the most serious part of the undertaking, the pinnace not being constructed to receive such animals. Room, nevertheless, could be made for one at a time, and still leave sufficient space in the stern−sheets for the accommodation of five or six persons. It was very desirable to get the females away first, lest the rumour of the mountain, hitherto unknown, should spread among the islands, and bring them visitors who might prove to be troublesome, if not dangerous. Parties existed in Betto's group, as we believe they exist everywhere else; and Bob knew very well that nothing but the ascendancy of his friend, the chief, Ooroony, had been the means of his escaping as well as he did, in the land−fall among them that he had made. The smallest reverse of fortune might put Betto down, and some bitter foe up, and then there was the certainty that war canoes might come off in quest of the mountain, at any time, without asking the leave of the friendly chief, even while he remained in power. On the whole, therefore, it was determined to freight the pinnace with the most valuable of the effects, put all the females on board, and send her off under the care of Mark, Heaton, and Socrates, leaving Bob and Bigelow to look after the stock and the rest of the property. It was supposed the boat might be absent a week. This was done accordingly, Bob, on taking leave of Friend Martha, particularly recommending to her attention the Vulcan's Peak reed−birds, throwing in a hint that he should be glad to find a string of them in the pinnace, on her return.

The voyage to windward was a much more serious business than the run to leeward. By Bob's advice Mark reefed his mainsail, and took the bonnet of the jib. Following the same instructions, he stood away to the southward, letting the boat go through the water freely, intending to tack when he came near the volcano, and not before. This was what Bob himself had done, and that which had turned out so well with him, he fancied might succeed with his friend. The Neshamony left Rancocus Island just at sunset. Next morning Mark saw the smoke of the Volcano, and stood for it. After making two stretches, he came up within a league of this spot, when he tacked and stood to the northward and eastward, Vulcan's Peak having been in plain view the entire day. As respects the volcano, it was in a comparatively quiet state, though rumbling sounds were heard, and stones were cast into the air in considerable quantities, while the boat was nearest in. One thing, moreover, Mark ascertained, which greatly increased his confidence in the permanency of the changes that had lately occurred in the physical formation of all that region. He found himself in comparatively shoal water, when fully a league from this new crater. Shoal in a seaman's sense, though not in shallow water; the soundings being from fifteen to twenty fathoms, with a rocky bottom.

Between the volcano and Vulcan's Peak it blew quite fresh, and Mark had a good occasion to ascertain the qualities of the pinnace. A long, heavy swell, came rolling through the passage, which was near sixty miles in width, seemingly with a sweep that extended to the Southern Ocean. Notwithstanding all this, the little craft did wonders, struggling along in a way one would hardly have expected from so small a vessel. She made fully two knots' headway in the worst of it, and in general her rate of sailing, close on a wind and under pretty short canvas, was about three. The night was very dark, and there was nothing to steer by but the wind, which gave some little embarrassment; but finding himself in much smoother water than he had been all the previous day, about midnight, our young man felt satisfied that he was under the lee of the island, and at no great distance from it. He made short tacks until daylight, when the huge mass hove up out of the departing darkness, within a mile of the boat. It only remained to run along the land for two or three miles, and to enter the haven of Snug Cove. Mark had been telling his companions what a secret place this haven was to conceal a vessel in, when he had a practical confirmation of the truth of his statement that caused him to be well laughed at. For ten minutes he could not discover the entrance himself, having neglected to take the proper land−marks, that he might have no difficulty in running for his port. After a time, however, he caught sight of an object that he remembered, and found his way into the cove. Here lay the little namesake of his pretty wife, just as he had left her, the true Bridget smiling and blushing as the young husband pointed out the poor substitute he had been compelled to receive for herself, only ten days earlier.

Mark, and Socrates, and Dido, and Teresa, Bigelow's wife, all carried up heavy loads; while Heaton had as much as he could do to help Anne and the child up the sharp acclivity. Bridget, with her light active step, and great eagerness to behold a scene that Mark had described with so much eloquence, was the first, by a quarter of an hour, on the plain. When the others reached the top, they saw the charming young thing running about in the nearest grove, that in which her husband had dined, collecting fruit, and apparently as enchanted as a child. Mark paused, as he gained the height, to gaze on this sight, so agreeable in his eyes, and which rendered the place so very different from what it had been so recently, while he was in possession of its glorious beauties, a solitary man. Then, he had several times likened himself to Adam in the garden of Eden, before woman was given to him for a companion. Now, now he could feast his eyes on an Eve, who would have been highly attractive in any part of the world.

The articles brought up on the plain, at this first trip, comprised all that was necessary to prepare and to partake of a breakfast in comfort. A fire was soon blazing, the kettle on, and the bread−fruit baking. It was almost painful to destroy the reed−birds, or *becca fichi*, so numerous were they, and so confiding. One discharge from each barrel of the fowling−piece had enabled. Heaton to bring in enough for the whole party, and these were soon roasting. Mark had brought with him from the Reef, a basket of fresh eggs, and they had been Bridget's load, in ascending the mountain. He had promised her an American breakfast, and these eggs, boiled, did serve to remind everybody of a distant home, that was still remembered with melancholy pleasure. A heartier, or a happier meal, notwithstanding, was never made than was that breakfast. The mountain air, invigorating though bland, the exercise, the absence of care, the excellence of the food, which comprised fresh figs, a tree or two of tolerable sweetness having been found, the milk of the cocoa−nut, the birds, the eggs, the bread−fruit, &c., all contributed their share to render the meal memorable.

The men, and the three labouring women, were employed two days in getting the cargo of the Neshamony up on the plain; or to Eden, as Bridget named the spot, unconscious how often she herself had been likened to a lovely Eve, in the mind of her young husband. Two of the marquees had been brought, and were properly erected, having board floors, and everything comfortably arranged within and without them. A roof, however, was scarcely necessary in that delicious climate, where one could get into the shade of a grove; and a thatched shed was easily prepared for a dwelling for the others. By the end of the third day the whole party in Eden was comfortably established, and Mark took a short leave of his bride, to sail for Rancocus again. Bridget shed tears at this separation, short as it was intended to be; and numberless were the injunctions to be wary of the natives, should the latter have visited Betts, in the time intervening between the departure of the Neshamony and her return.

The voyage between the two islands lost something of its gravity each time it was made. Mark learned a little every trip, of the courses to be steered, the peculiarities of the currents, and the height of the seas. He ran down to Rancocus, on this occasion, in three hours' less time than he had done it before, sailing at dusk, and reaching port next day at noon. Nothing had occurred, and to work the men went at once, to load the pinnace. Room was left for one of the cows and its calf; and Bob being seriously impressed with the importance of improving every moment, the little sloop put to sea again, the evening of the very day on which it had arrived.

Bridget was standing on a rock, by the side of the limpid water of the cove, when the Neshamony shot through its entrance into the little haven, and her hand was in Mark's the instant he landed. Tears gushed into the eyes of the young man as he recalled his year of solitude, and felt how different was such a welcome from his many melancholy arrivals and departures, previously to the recent events.

It was rather a troublesome matter to get the cow and calf up the mountain. The first did not see enough that was attractive in naked rocks, to induce her to mount in the best of humours. She drank freely, however, at the brook, appearing to relish its waters particularly well. At length the plan was adopted of carrying the calf up a good distance, the cries of the little thing inducing its mother immediately to follow. In this way both were got up into Eden, in the course of an hour. And well did the poor cow vindicate the name, when she got a look at the broad glades of the sweetest grasses, that were stretched before her. So strongly was her imagination struck with the view for we suppose that some cows have even more imagination than many men that she actually kicked up her heels, and away she went, head down and tail erect, scampering athwart the sward like a colt. It was not long, however, before she began to graze, the voyage having been made on a somewhat short allowance of both food and water. If there ever was a happy animal, it was that cow! Her troubles were all over. Sea−sickness, dry food, short allowances of water, narrow lodgings, and hard beds, were all, doubtless, forgotten, as she roamed at pleasure over boundless fields, on which the grass was perennial, seeming never to be longer or shorter than was necessary to give a good bite; and among which numberless rills of the purest waters were sparkling like crystal. The great difficulty in possessing a dairy, in a warm climate, is the want of pasture, the droughts usually being so long in the summer months. At Vulcan's Peak, however, and indeed in all of that fine region, it rained occasionally, throughout the year; more in winter than in summer, and that was the sole distinction in the seasons, after allowing for a trifling change in the temperature. These peculiarities appear to have been owing to the direction of the prevalent winds, which not only brought frequent showers, but which preserved a reasonable degree of freshness in the atmosphere. *Within* the crater, Mark had often found the heat oppressive, even in the shade; but, *without*, scarcely ever, provided his body was not directly exposed to the sun's rays. Nor was the difference in the temperature between the Reef and the Peak, as marked as might have been expected from the great elevation of the last. This was owing to the circumstance that the sea air, and that usually in swift motion, entered so intimately into the composition of the atmosphere down on that low range of rocks, imparting its customary freshness to everything it passed over.

Mark did not make the next trip to Rancocus. By this time Anne passed half the day in the open air, and was so fast regaining her strength that Heaton did not hesitate to leave her. The doctor had left many things behind him, that he much wished to see embarked in person, and he volunteered to be the companion of Socrates, on this occasion, leaving the bridegroom behind, with his bride. By this time Heaton himself was a reasonably good sailor, and to him Mark confided the instructions as to the course to be steered, and the distance to be run. All resulted favourably, the Neshamony making the trip in very good time, bringing into the cove, the fourth day after she had sailed, not only the remaining cow, and her calf, but several of the goats. Convinced he might now depend on Heaton and Socrates to sail the pinnace, and Anne expressing a perfect willingness to remain on the Peak, in company with Teresa and Dido, Mark resolved to proceed to the crater with his two Bridgets, feeling the propriety of no longer neglecting the property in that quarter of his dominions. There was nothing to excite apprehension, and the women had all acquired a certain amount of resolution that more properly belonged to their situation than to their sex or nature. Anne's great object of concern was the `baby.' As long as that was safe, everything with her was going on well; and Dido being a renowned baby doctor, and all the simples for a child's ailings being in the possession of the young mother, she raised no objection whatever to her brother's quitting her.

Bridget had great impatience to make this voyage, for she longed to see the spot where her husband had passed so many days in solitude. Everything he had mentioned, in their many conferences on this subject, was already familiar to her in imagination; but, she wished to become more intimately acquainted with each and all. For Kitty she really entertained a decided fondness, and even the pigs, as Mark's companions, had a certain romantic value in her eyes.

The morning was taken for the departure, and just as the little craft got out from under the lee of the Peak, and began to feel the true breeze, the sun rose gloriously out of the eastern waves, lighting the whole of the blue waters with his brilliant rays. Never did Vulcan's Peak appear more grand or more soft for grandeur or sublimity, blended with softness, make the principal charm of noble tropical scenery than it did that morning; and Bridget looked up at the dark, overhanging cliffs, with a smile, as she said

"We may love the Reef, dear Mark, for what it did for you in your distress, but I foresee that this Eden will eventually become our home."

"There are many things to render this mountain preferable to the Reef; though, now we are seriously thinking of a colony, it may be well to keep both. Even Rancocus would be of great value to us, as a pasture for goats, and a range for cattle. It may be long before the space will be wanted by human beings, for actual cultivation; but each of our present possessions is now, and long will continue to be, of great use to us as assistants. We shall live principally on the Peak, I think myself; but we must fish, get our salt, and obtain most of our vegetables from the Reef."

"Oh! that Reef, that Reef how long will it be, Mark, before we see it?"

The enamoured young husband laughed, and kissed his charming wife, and told her to restrain her impatience. Several hours must elapse before they could even come in sight of the rocks. These hours did pass, and with the occurrence of no event worthy of being recorded. The Trades usually blew fresh in that quarter of the ocean, but it was seldom that they brought tempests. Occasionally squalls did occur, it is true; but a prudent and experienced mariner could ordinarily guard against their consequences, while the hurricane seldom failed, like most other great physical phenomena, to have its precursors, that were easily seen and understood. On the present occasion, the boat ran across the passage in very good time, making the crater in about five hours, and the ship's masts in six. Mark made a good land−fall coming in to leeward of the cape, or low promontory already mentioned Cape South he called it while there still remained several hours of day. Bridget was greatly struck with the vast difference she could not help finding between the appearance of these low, dark, and so often naked rocks, and that of the Eden she had just left. Tears came into her eyes, as she pictured her husband a solitary wanderer over these wastes, with no water, even, but that which fell from the clouds, or which came from the casks of the ship. When, however, she gave utterance to this feeling, one so natural to her situation, Mark told her to have patience until they reached the crater, when she would see that he had possessed a variety of blessings, for which he had every reason to be grateful to God.

There was no difficulty in getting into the proper channel, when the boat fairly flew along the rocks that lined the passages. So long as she was in rough water, the sails of so small a craft were necessarily becalmed a good deal of the time; but, now that there was nothing to intercept the breeze, she caught it all, and made the most of it. To Mark's surprise, as they passed the Prairie, he saw all of his swine on it, now, including two half−unconsumed litters of well−grown pigs, some seventeen in number. These animals had actualy found their way along the rocks, a distance of at least twenty miles from home, and by the crooked path they had taken, probable one much greater. They all appeared full, and contented. So much of the water had already evaporated as to make it tolerable walking on the sea−weed; and Mark, stopping to examine the progress of things, prognosticated that another year, in that climate, would convert the whole of that wide plain into dry land. In many places, the hogs had already found their way down, through the sea−weed, into the mud; and there was one particular spot, quite near the channel, where the water was all gone, and where the pigs had rooted over so much of the surface, as to convert

two or three acres into a sort of half−tilled field, in which the sea−weed was nearly turned under the mud. Nothing but drenching rains were wanting to render such a place highly productive, and it was certain those rains would come at the end of the season.

About the middle of the day, Mark ran the boat alongside of the Reef, at the usual landing, and welcomed Bridget to his and her home, with a kiss. Everything was in its place, and a glance sufficed to show that no human foot had been there, during the weeks of his absence. Kitty was browsing on the Summit, and no spaniel could have played more antics than she did, at the sight of her master. At first, Mark had thought of transferring this gentle and playful young goat to the Peak, and to place her in the little flock collected there; but he had been induced to change his mind, by recollecting how much she contributed to the beauty of the Summit, by keeping down the grass. He had therefore brought her a companion, which had no sooner been landed on the Reef, than it bounded off to make acquaintance with the stranger on the elevation.

Bridget was almost overcome when she got on board the ship. There was even a certain sublimity in the solitude that reigned over everything, that impressed her imagination, and she wondered that any human being could so long have dwelt there alone, uncheered by the hope of deliverance. In the cabin of that vessel she had plighted her faith to Mark, and a flood of recollections burst upon her as she entered it. Mark was obliged to allow her to seek relief in tears. But, half an hour brought her round again, and then she set about putting things in order, and making this very important abode submit to the influence of woman's love of comfort and order. By the time Mark came back from his garden, whither he had gone to ascertain its condition, Bridget had his supper ready for him, prepared with a neatness and method to which he had long been a stranger. That was a very delicious meal to both. The husband had lighted a fire in the galley, where the wife had cooked the meal, which consisted principally of some pan−fish, taken in the narrow channels between the rocks, and which had been cleaned by Mark himself, as they sailed along. It was, indeed, a great point of solicitude with this young husband to prevent his charming wife from performing duties for which she was unfitted by education, while the wife herself was only too solicitous to make herself useful. In one sense, Bridget was a very knowing person about a household. She knew how to prepare many savoury compounds, and had the whole culinary art at her fingers ends, in the way of giving directions. It was no wonder, then, that Mark found everything she touched, or prepared, good, as everything she said sounded pleasant and reasonable. The last is a highly important ingredient in matrimonial life, but the first has its merit. And Bridget Woolston was both pleasant and reasonable. Though a little romantic, and inclined to hazard all for feeling, and what she conceived to be duty, at the bottom of all ran a vein of excellent sense, which had been reasonably attended to. Her temper was sweetness itself, and that is one of the greatest requisites in married happiness. To this great quality must be added affection, for she was devoted to Mark, and nothing he wished would she hesitate about striving to obtain, even at painful sacrifices to herself. One as generous−minded and manly as her husband, could not fail to discover and appreciate such a disposition, which entered very largely into the composition of their future happiness.

Our young couple did not visit the crater and the Summit until the sun had lost most of its power. Then Mark introduced his wife into his garden, and to his lawn. Exclamations of delight escaped the last, at nearly every step; for, in addition to the accidental peculiarities of such a place, the vegetation had advanced, as vegetation only can advance within the tropics, favoured by frequent rains and a rich soil. The radishes were half as large as Bridget's wrists, and as tender as her heart. The lettuce was already heading; the beans were fit to pull; the onions large enough to boil, and the peas even too old. On the Summit Mark cut a couple of melons, which were of a flavour surpassing any he had ever before tasted. With that spot Bridget was especially delighted. It was, just then, as green as grass could be, and Kitty had found its plants so very sweet, that she had scarce descended once to trespass on the garden. Here and there the imprint of her little hoof was to be traced on a bed, it is true, but she appeared to have gone there more to look after the condition of the garden than to gratify her appetite.

While on the Summit, Mark pointed out to his wife the fowls, now increased to something like fifty. Two or three broods of chickens had come within the last month, making their living on the reef that was separated from that of the crater by means of the bridge of planks. As two or three flew across the narrow pass, however, he was aware

that the state of his garden must be owing to the fact that they still found a plenty on those rocks for their support. In returning to the ship, he visited a half−barrel prepared for that purpose, and, as he expected, found a nest containing a dozen eggs. These he took the liberty of appropriating to his own use, telling Bridget that they could eat some of them for their breakfast.

But food never had been an interest to give our solitary man much uneasiness. From the hour when he found muck, and sea−weed, and guano, he felt assured of the means of subsistence; being in truth, though he may not have known it himself, more in danger of falling behindhand, in consequence of the indisposition to activity that almost ever accompanies the abundance of a warm climate, than from the absolute want of the means of advancing. That night Mark and Bridget knelt, side by side, and returned thanks to God for all his mercies. How sweet the former found it to see the light form of his beautiful companion moving about the spacious cabin, giving it an air of home and happiness, no one can fully appreciate who has not been cut off from these accustomed joys, and then been suddenly restored to them.

CHAPTER XV.

"I beg, good Heaven, with just desires,
What need, not luxury, requires;
Give me, with sparing hands, but moderate wealth,
A little honour, and enough of health;
Free from the busy city life,
Near shady groves and purling streams confined,
A faithful friend, a pleasing wife;
And give me all in one, give a contented mind."

Anonymous.

Mark and Bridget remained at the Reef a week, entirely alone. To them the time seemed but a single day; and so completely were they engrossed with each other, and their present happiness, that they almost dreaded the hour of return. Everything was visited, however, even to the abandoned anchor, and Mark made a trip to the eastward, carrying his wife out into the open water, in that direction. But the ship and the crater gave Bridget the greatest happiness. Of these she never tired, though the first gave her the most pleasure. A ship was associated with all her earliest impressions of Mark; on board that very ship she had been married; and now it formed her home, temporarily, if not permanently. Bridget had been living so long beneath a tent, and in savage huts, that the accommodations of the Rancocus appeared like those of a palace. They were not inelegant even, though it was not usual, in that period of the republic, to fit up vessels with a magnificence little short of royal yachts, as is done at present. In the way of convenience, however, our ship could boast of a great deal. Her cabins were on deck, or under a poop, and consequently enjoyed every advantage of light and air. Beneath were store−rooms, still well supplied with many articles of luxury, though time was beginning to make its usual inroads on their qualities. The bread was not quite as sound as it was once, nor did the teas retain all their strength and flavour. But the sugar was just as sweet as the day it was shipped, and in the coffee there was no apparent change. Of the butter, we do not choose to say anything. Bridget, in the prettiest manner imaginable, declared that as soon as she could set Dido at work, the store−rooms should be closely examined, and thoroughly cleaned. Then the galley made such a convenient and airy kitchen! Mark had removed the house, the awning answering every purpose, and his wife declared that it was a pleasure to cook a meal for him, in so pleasant a place.

The first dish Bridget ever literally cooked for Mark, with her own hands, or indeed for any one else, was a mess of `grass,' as it was the custom of even the most polished people of America then to call asparagus. They had gone together to the asparagus bed on Loam Island, and had found the plant absolutely luxuriating in its favourite soil.

The want of butter was the greatest defect in this mess, for, to say the truth, Bridget refused the ship's butter on this occasion, but luckily, enough oil remained to furnish a tolerable substitute. Mark declared he had never tasted anything in his life half so good!

At the end of the week, the governor, as Heaton had styled Mark, and as Bridget had begun playfully to term him, gave the opinion that it was necessary for them to tear themselves away from their paradise. Never before, most certainly, had the Reef appeared to the young husband a spot as delightful as he now found it, and it did seem to him very possible for one to pass a whole life on it without murmuring. His wife again and again assured him she had never before been half as happy, and that, much as she loved Anne and the baby, she could remain a month longer, without being in the least wearied. But it was prudent to return to the Peak, for Mark had never felt his former security against foreign invasion, since he was acquainted with the proximity of peopled islands.

The passage was prosperous, and it gave the scene an air of civilization and life, to fall in with the Neshamony off the cove. She was coming in from Rancocus, on her last trip for the stores, having brought everything away but two of the goats. These had been driven up into the mountains, and there left. Bigelow had come away, and the whole party of colonists were now assembled at Vulcan's Peak. But Betts had a communication to make that gave the governor a good deal of concern. He reported that after they had got the pinnace loaded, and were only waiting for the proper time of day to quit Rancocus, they discovered a fleet of canoes and catamarans, approaching the island from the direction of the Group, as they familiarly termed the cluster of islands that was known to be nearest to them, to the northward and westward. By means of a glass, Betts had ascertained that a certain Waally was on board the leading canoe, and he regarded this as an evil omen. Waally was Ooroony's most formidable rival and most bitter foe; and the circumstance that he was leading such a flotilla, of itself, Bob thought, was an indication that he had prevailed over honest Betto, in some recent encounter, and was now abroad, bent on further mischief. Indeed, it seemed scarcely possible that men like the natives should hear of the existence of such a mountain as that of Rancocus Island, in their vicinity, and not wish to explore, if not to possess it.

Betts had pushed off, and made sail, as soon as assured of this fact. He knew the pinnace could outsail anything the islanders possessed, more especially on a wind, and he manoeuvred about the flotilla for an hour, making his observations, before he left it. This was clearly a war party, and Bob thought there were white men in it. At least, he saw two individuals who appeared to him to be white sailors, attired in a semi−savage way, and who were in the same canoe with the terrible Waally. It was nothing out of the way for seamen to get adrift on the islands scattered about in the Pacific, there being scarcely a group in which more or less of them are not to be found. The presence of these men, too, Bob regarded as another evil omen, and he felt the necessity of throwing all the dust he could into their eyes. When the pinnace left the flotilla, therefore, instead of passing out to windward of the island, as was her true course, she steered in an almost contrary direction, keeping off well to leeward of the land, in order not to get becalmed under the heights, for Bob well knew the canoes, with paddles, would soon overhaul him, should he lose the wind.

It was the practice of our colonists to quit Rancocus just before the sun set, and to stand all night on a south−east course. This invariably brought them in sight of the smoke of the volcano by morning, and shortly after they made the Peak. All of the day that succeeded, was commonly passed in beating up to the volcano, or as near to it as it was thought prudent to go; and tacking to the northward and eastward, about sunset of the second day, it was found on the following morning, that the Neshamony was drawing near to the cliffs of Vulcan's Peak, if she were not already beneath them. As a matter of course, then, Bob had not far to go, before night shut in, and left him at liberty to steer in whatever direction he pleased. Fortunately, that night had no moon, though there was not much danger of so small a craft as the Neshamony being seen at any great distance on the water, even by moonlight. Bob consequently determined to beat up off the north end of the island, or Low Cape, as it was named by the colonists, from the circumstance of its having a mile or two of low land around it, before the mountains commenced. Once off the cape again, and reasonably well in, he might possibly make discoveries that would be of use.

It took two or three hours to regain the lost ground, by beating to windward. By eleven o'clock, however, the Neshamony was not only off the cape, but quite close in with the landing. The climate rendering fires altogether unnecessary at that season, and indeed at nearly all seasons, except for cooking, Bob could not trace the encampment of the savages, by that means. Still, he obtained all the information he desired. This was not done, however, without great risk, and by a most daring step on his part. He lowered the sails of the boat and went alongside of the rock, where the pinnace usually came to, the canoes, &c., having made another, and a less eligible harbour. Bob then landed in person, and stole along the shore in the direction of the sleeping savages. Unknown to himself, he was watched, and was just crouching under some bushes, in order to get a little nearer, when he felt a hand on his shoulder. There was a moment when blood was in danger of being shed, but Betts's hand was stayed by hearing, in good English, the words

"Where are you bound, shipmate?"

This question was asked in a guarded, under−tone, a circumstance that reassured Bob, quite as much as the language. He at once perceived that the two men whom he had, rightly enough, taken for seamen, were in these bushes, where it would seem they had long been on the watch, observing the movements of the pinnace. They told Bob to have no apprehensions, as all the savages were asleep, at some little distance, and accompanied him back to the Neshamony. Here, to the surprise and joy of all parties, Bigelow recognised both the sailors, who had not only been his former shipmates, but were actually his townsmen in America, the whole three having been born within a mile of each other. The history of these three wanderers from home was very much alike. They had come to the Pacific in a whaler, with a drunken captain, and had, in succession, left the ship. Bigelow found his way to Panama, where he was caught by the dark eyes of Theresa, as has been related. Peters had fallen in with Jones, in the course of his wanderings, and they had been for the last two years among the pearl islands, undecided what to do with themselves, when Waally ordered both to accompany him in the present expedition. They had gathered enough in hints given by different chiefs, to understand that a party of Christians was to be massacred, or enslaved, and plundered of course. They had heard of the `canoe' that had been tabooed for twelve moons, but were at a loss to comprehend one−half of the story, and were left to the most anxious conjectures. They were not permitted to pass on to the islands under the control of Ooroony, but were jealously detained in Waally's part of the group, and consequently had not been in a situation to learn all the particulars of the singular party of colonists who had gone to the southward. Thus much did Peters relate, in substance, when a call among the savages notified the whole of the whites of the necessity of coming to some conclusion concerning the future. Jones and Peters acknowledged it would not be safe to remain any longer, though the last gave his opinion with an obvious reluctance. As it afterwards appeared, Peters had married an Indian wife, to whom he was much attached, and he did not like the idea of abandoning her. There was but a moment for reflection, however, and almost without knowing it himself, when he found the pinnace about to make sail in order to get off the land, he followed Jones into her, and was half a mile from the shore before he had time to reflect much on her he had left behind him. His companion consoled him by telling him that an opportunity might occur of sending a message to Petrina, as they had named the pretty young savage, who would not fail to find her way to Rancocus, sooner or later.

With these important accessions to his forces, Bob did not hesitate about putting to sea, leaving Waally to make what discoveries he might. Should the natives ascend to the higher parts of the mountain, they could hardly fail to see both the smoke of the volcano and the Peak, though it would luckily not be in their power to see the Reef, or any part of that low group of rocks. It was very possible they might attempt to cross the passage between the two mountains, though the circumstance that Vulcan's Peak lay so directly to windward of Rancocus offered a very serious obstacle to their succeeding. Had the two sailors remained with them, *they*, indeed, might have taught the Indians to overcome the winds and waves; but these very men were of opinion, from what they had seen of the natives and of their enterprises, that it rather exceeded their skill and perseverance, to work their canoes a hundred miles dead to windward, and against the sea that was usually on in that quarter of the Pacific.

The colonists, generally, gave the two recruits a very welcome reception. Bridget smiled when Mark suggested that Jones, who was a well−looking lad enough, would make a very proper husband for Joan, and that he doubted

not his being called on, in his character of magistrate, to unite them in the course of the next six months. The designs of the savages, however, caused the party to think of anything but weddings, just at that moment, and a council was held to devise a plan for their future government. As Mark was considered the head of the colony, and had every way the most experience, his opinion swayed those of his companions, and all his recommendations were adopted. There were on board the ship eight carronades, then quite a new gun, and mounted on trucks. They were of the bore of twelve−pounders, but light and manageable. There was also abundance of ammunition in the vessel's magazine, no ship coming to the Fejees to trade without a proper regard to the armament. Mark proposed going over to the Reef with the Neshamony, the very next day, in order to transport two of the guns, with a proper supply of powder and shot, to the Peak. Now there was one place on the path, or Stairs, where it would be easy to defend the last against an army, the rocks, which were absolutely perpendicular on each side of it, coming so close together, as to render it practicable to close the passage by a narrow gate. This gate Mark did not purpose to erect now, for he thought it unnecessary. All he intended was to plant the two guns at this pass; one on a piece of level rock directly over it, and a little on one side, which would command the entrance of the cove, and the cove itself, as well as the whole of the path beneath, and the other on another natural platform, a short distance above, where it could not only command the pass, but, by using the last as a sort of embrasure, by firing through it, could not only sweep the ravine for some distance down, but could also rake the entrance of the cove, and quite half of the little basin itself.

Bob greatly approved of this arrangement, though all the seamen were too much accustomed to obey their officers to raise the smallest objections to anything that Mark proposed. Betts was the only person who had made the circuit of the Peak; but he, and Mark; and Heaton, who had been a good deal round the cliffs, on the side of the water, all agreed in saying they did not believe it possible for a human being to reach the plain, unless the ascent was made by the Stairs. This, of course, rendered the fortifying of the last a matter of so much the greater importance, since it converted the whole island into a second Gibraltar. It was true, the Reef would remain exposed to depredations; though Mark was of opinion that, by leaving a portion of their force in the ship, with two or three of the guns at command, it would not be difficult to beat off five hundred natives. As for the creater, it might very easily be made impregnable.

At this meeting Heaton proposed the establishment of some sort of government and authority, which they should all solemnly swear to support. The idea was favourably received, and Mark was unanimously chosen governor for life, the law being the rule of right, with such special enactments as might, from time to time, issue from a council of three, who were also elected for life. This council consisted of the governor, Heaton, and Betts. Human society has little difficulty in establishing itself on just principles, when the wants are few and interests simple. It is the bias given by these last that perverts it from the true direction. In our island community, most of its citizens were accustomed to think that education and practice gave a man certain claims to control, and, as yet, demagogueism had no place with them. A few necessary rules, that were connected with their particular situation, were enacted by the council and promulgated, when the meeting adjourned. Happily they were as yet far, very far from that favourite sophism of the day, which would teach the inexperienced to fancy it an advantage to a legislator to commence his career as low as possible on the scale of ignorance, in order that he might be what it is the fashion to term "a self−made man."

Mark now took the command, and issued his orders with a show of authority. His attention was first turned to rendering the Peak impregnable. There were a plenty of muskets and fowling−pieces already there, Heaton having come well provided with arms and ammunition. As respects the last, Peters and Jones were set to work to clear out a sort of cavern in the rock, that was not only of a convenient size, but which was conveniently placed for such a purpose, at no great distance from the head of the Stairs, to receive the powder, &c. The cavity was perfectly dry, an indispensable requisite, and it was equally well protected against the admission of water.

The next thing was to collect a large pile of dry wood on the naked height of the Peak. This was to be lighted, at night, in the event of the canoes appearing while he was absent, Mark being of opinion that he could see such a beacon−fire from the Reef, whither he was about to proceed. Having made these arrangements, the governor set

sail with Betts, Bigelow, and Socrates for his companions, leaving Heaton, with Peters and Jones, to take care of most of the females. We say of most, since Dido and Juno went along, in order to cook, and to wash all the clothes of the whole colony, a part of which were sent in the pinnace, but most of which were on board the ship. This was a portion of his duty, when a solitary man, to which Mark was exceedingly averse, and having shirts almost *ad libitum*, Bridget had found nearly a hundred ready for the `buck−basket.' There was no danger, therefore, that the `wash' would be too small.

Betts was deeply impressed with the change that he found in the rocks. There, where he had left water over which he had often floated his raft, appeared dry land. Nor was he much less struck with the appearance of the crater. It was now a hill of a bright, lively verdure, Kitty and her new friend keeping it quite as closely cropped as was desirable. The interior, too, struck him forcibly; for there, in addition to the garden, now flourishing, though a little in want of the hoe, was a meadow of acres in extent, in which the grass was fit to cut. Mark had observed this circumstance when last at the crater, and Socrates had brought his scythe and forks, to cut and cure the hay.

The morning after the arrival, everybody went to work. The women set up their tubs, under an awning spread for that purpose, near the spring, and were soon up to their elbows in suds. The scythe was set in motion, and the pinnace was taken round to the ship. Three active seamen soon hoisted out the carronades, and stowed them in the little sloop. The ammunition followed, and half−a−dozen barrels of the beef and pork were put in the Neshamony also. Mark scarcely ever touched this food now, the fish, eggs, chickens, and pigs, keeping his larder sufficiently well supplied. But some of the men pined for *ship's* provisions, beef and pork that had now been packed more than two years, and the governor thought it might be well enough to indulge them. The empty barrels would be convenient on the Peak, and the salt would be acceptable, after being dried and pulverized.

The day was passed in loading the Neshamony, and in looking after various interests on the Reef. The hogs had all come in, and were fed. Mark shot one, and had it dressed, putting most of its meat into the pinnace. He also sent Bob out to his old place of resort, near Loam Island, whence he brought back near a hundred hog−fish. These were divided, also, some being given to Dido's mess, and the rest put in the pinnace, after taking out enough for a good supper. About ten at night the Neshamony sailed, Mark carrying her out into the open water, when he placed Bob at the helm. Bigelow had remained in the ship, to overhaul the lumber, of which there were still large piles both betwixt decks and in the lower hold, as did the whole of the Socrates family, who were yet occupied with the hay harvest and the `wash.' Before he lay down to catch his nap, Mark took a good look to the southward, in quest of the beacon, but it was not burning, a sign the savages had not appeared in the course of the day. With this assurance he fell asleep, and slept until informed by Bob that the pinnace was running in beneath the cliffs. Betts called him, because the honest fellow was absolutely at a loss to know where to find the entrance of the cove. So closely did the rocks lap, that this mouth of the harbour was most effectually concealed from all but those who happened to get quite close in with the cliffs, and in a particular position. Mark, himself, had caught a glimpse of this narrow entrance accidentally, on his first voyage, else might he have been obliged to abandon the hope of getting on the heights; for subsequent examination showed that there was but that one spot, on the whole circuit of Vulcan's Peak, where man could ascend to the plain, without having recourse to engineering and the labour of months, if not of years.

Bob had brought along one of the two swivels of the ship, as an armament for the Neshamony, and he fired it under the cliffs, as a signal of her return. This brought down all the men, who, with their united strength, dragged the carronades up the Stairs, and placed them in position. With a view to scale the guns, the governor now had each loaded, with a round shot and a case of canister. The gun just above the pass, he pointed himself, at the entrance of the cove, and touched it off. The whole of the missiles went into the passage, making the water fairly foam again. The other gun was depressed so as to sweep the Stairs, and, on examination, it was found that its shot had raked the path most effectually for a distance exceeding a hundred yards. Small magazines were made in the rocks, near each gun, when the most important part of the arrangements for defence were considered to be satisfactorily made for the present. The remainder of the cargo was discharged, and got up the mountain, though it took three days to effect the last. The provisions were opened below and overhauled, quite one−half of the pork

being consigned to the soap−fat, though the beef proved to be still sound and sweet. Such as was thought fit to be consumed was carried up in baskets, and re−packed on the mountain, the labour of rolling up the barrels satisfying everybody, after one experiment. This difficulty set Mark to work with his wits, and he found a shelf that overhung the landing, at a height of fully a hundred yards above it, where there was a natural platform of rock, that would suffice for the parade of a regiment of men. Here he determined to rig a derrick, for there was an easy ascent and descent to this `platform,' as the place was called, and down which a cart might go without any difficulty, if a cart was to be had. The `platform' might also be used for musketeers, in an action, and on examining it, Mark determined to bring over one of the two long sixes, and mount it there, with a view to command the offing. From that height a shot could be thrown in any direction, for more than a mile, outside of the harbour.

Heaton had seen no signs of the canoes, nor could Mark, at any time during the next four days after his return, though he was each day on the Peak itself, to examine the ocean. On the fifth day, therefore, he and Bob crossed over to the Reef again, taking Bridget along this time. The latter delighted in the ship, the cabins of which were so much more agreeable and comfortable than the tents, and which had so long been her husband's solitary abode.

On reaching the Reef, the governor was greatly surprised to find that Bigelow had the frame of a boat even larger than the pinnace set up, one that measured fourteen tons, though modelled to carry, rather than to sail. In overhauling the `stuff' in the ship, he had found not only all the materials for this craft, but those necessary for a boat a little larger than the Bridget, which, it seems, had been sent for the ordinary service of the ship, should anything occur to occasion the loss of the two she commonly used, in addition to the dingui. These were treasures, indeed, vessels of this size being of the utmost use to the colonists. For the next month, several hands were kept at work on these two boats, when both were got into the water, rigged, and turned over for duty. The largest boat of the little fleet, which had no deck at all, not even forward, and which was not only lighter−built but lighterrigged, having one large sprit−sail that brailed, was called the Mary, in honour of Heaton's mother; while the jolly−boat carried joy to the hearts of the house of Socrates, by being named the Dido. As she was painted black as a crow, this appellation was not altogether inappropriate, Soc declaring, "dat 'e boat did a good deal favour his ole woman."

While these things were in progress, the Neshamony was not idle. She made six voyages between the Reef and the Peak in that month, carrying to the last, fish, fresh pork, various necessaries from the ship, as well as eggs and salt. Some of the fowls were caught and transferred to the Peak, as well as half−a−dozen of the porkers. The return cargo consisted of reed−birds, in large quantities, several other varieties of birds, bread−fruits, bananas, yams, cocoa−nuts, and a fruit that Heaton discovered, which was of a most delicious flavour, resembling strawberries and cream, and which was afterwards ascertained to be the charramoya, the fluit that, of all others, when good, is thought to surpass everything else of that nature. Bridget also picked a basket of famously large wild strawberries on the Summit, and sent them to Anne. In return, Anne sent her sister, not only cream and milk, by each passage, but a little fresh butter. I'he calves had been weaned, and the two cows were now giving their largest quantity of milk, furnishing almost as much butter as was wanted.

At the crater, Socrates put everything in order. He mowed the grass, and made a neat stack of it, in the centre of the meadow. He cleamed the garden thoroughly, and made some arrangements for enlarging it, though the yield, now, was quite as great as all the colonists could consume; for, no sooner was one vegetable dug, or cut, than another was put in its place. On the Peak, Peters, who was half a farmer, dug over an acre or two of rich loam, and made a fence of brush, with a view of having a garden in Eden. Really, it almost seemed superfluous; though those who had been accustomed to salads, and beans, and beets, and onions, and cucumbers, and all the other common vegetables of a civilized kitchen, soon began to weary of the more luscious fruits of the tropics. With the wild figs, however, Heaton, who was a capital horticulturist, fancied he could do something. He picked out three or four thriving young trees of that class, which bore fruit a little better flavoured than most around them, and cut away all their neighbours, letting in the sun and air freely. He also trimmed their branches, and dug around the roots, which he refreshed with guano; the use of which had been imparted by Mark to his fellow−colonists,

though Bigelow knew all about it from having lived in Peru, and Bob had early let the governor himself into the secret.

The governor and his lady, as the community now began to term Mr. and Mrs. Mark Woolston, were on the point of embarking in the Neshamony, to visit Vulcan's Peak, after a residence on the Reef of more than a month, when the orders for sailing were countermanded, in consequence of certain signs in the atmosphere, which indicated something like another hurricane. The tempest came, and in good earnest, but without any of the disastrous consequences which had attended that of the previous year. It blew fearfully, and the water was driven into all the sounds, creeks, channels and bays of the group, bringing many of the islands, isthmuses, peninsulas, and plains of rock, what the seamen call `awash,' though no material portion was actually overflowed. At the Reef itself, the water rose a fathom, but it did not reach the surface of the island by several feet, and all passed off without any other consequences than giving the new colonists a taste of the climate.

Mark, on this occasion, for the first time, noted a change that was gradually taking place on the surface of the Reef, without the crater. Most of its cavities were collecting deposits, that were derived from various sources. Sea−weed, offals, refuse stuff of all kinds, the remains of the deluge of fish that occurred the past year, and all the indescribable atoms that ever contribute to form soil in the neighbourhood of man. There were many spots on the Reef, of acres in extent, that formed shallow basins, in which the surface might be two or three inches lower than the surrounding rocks, and, in these spots in particular, the accumulations of an incipient earthy matter were plainly visible. As these cavities collected and retained the moisture, usually from rain to rain, Mark had some of Friend Abraham White's grass−seed sown over them, in order to aid nature in working out her own benevolent designs. In less than a month, patches of green began to appear on the dusky rocks, and there was good reason to hope that a few years would convert the whole Reef into a smiling, verdant plain. It was true, the soil could not soon obtain any useful depth, except in limited spots; but, in that climate, where warmth and moisture united to push vegetation to the utmost, it was an easy thing to obtain a bottom for grasses of almost all kinds.

Nor did Mark's provident care limit itself to this one instance of forethought. Socrates was sent in the dingui to the prairie, over which the hogs had now been rooting for fully two months, mixing together mud and sea−weed, somewhat loosely it is true, but very extensively; and there he scattered Timothy−seed in tolerable profusion. Socrates was a long−headed, as well as a long−footed fellow, and he brought back from this expedition a report that was of material importance to the future husbandry of the colonists. According to his statement, this large deposit of mud and sea−weed lay on a peninsula, that might be barricaded against the inroads of hogs, cattle, &c., by a fence of some two or three rods in length. This was a very favourable circumstance, where wood was to be imported for many years to come, if not for ever; though the black had brought the seeds of certain timbers, from the Peak, and put them into the ground in a hundred places on the Reef, where the depth of deposit, and other circumstances, seemed favourable to their growth. As for the Prairie, could it be made to grow grasses, it would be a treasure to the colony, inasmuch as its extent reached fully to a thousand acres. The examination of Socrates was flattering in other respects. The mud was already dry, and the deposit of salt did not seem to be very great, little water having been left there after the eruption, or lifting of the earth's crust. The rains had done much, and certain coarse, natural grasses, were beginning to show themselves in various parts of the field. As the hogs would not be likely to root over the same spot twice, it was not proposed to exclude them, but they were permitted to range over the field at pleasure, in the hope that they would add to its fertility by mixing the materials for soil. In such a climate, every change of a vegetable character was extremely rapid, and now that no one thought of abandoning the settlement, it was very desirable to obtain the different benefits of civilization as soon as possible.

All the blacks remained at the Reef, where Mark himself passed a good deal of his time. In their next visit to the Peak, they found things flourishing, and the garden looking particularly well. The Vulcanists had their melons in any quantity, as well as most vegetables without limits. It was determined to divide the cows, leaving one on the Peak, and sending the other to the crater, where there was now sufficient grass to keep two or three such animals. With a view to this arrangement, Bob had been directed to fence in the garden and stack, by means of ropes and stanchions let into the ground. When the Anne returned to the Reef, therefore, from her first voyage to the Peak, a

cow was sent over in her. This change was made solely for the convenience of the milk, all the rest of the large stock being retained on the plain, where there was sufficient grass to sustain thousands of hoofs.

But the return cargo of the Anne, on this her first voyage, was composed mainly of ship−timber. Heaton had found a variety of the teak in the forests that skirted the plain, and Bigelow had got out of the trees the frame of a schooner that was intended to measure about eighty tons. A craft of that size would be of the greatest service to them, as it would enable the colonists to visit any part of the Pacific they pleased, and obtain such supplies as they might find necessary. Nor was this all; by mounting on her two of the carronades, she would effectually give them the command of their own seas, so far as the natives were concerned at least. Mark had some books on the draughting of vessels, and Bigelow had once before laid down a brig of more than a hundred tons in dimensions. Then the stores, rigging, copper, &c., of the ship, could never be turned to better account than in the construction of another vessel, and it was believed she could furnish materials enough for two or three such craft. Out of compliment to his old owner, Mark named this schooner in embryo, the `Friend Abraham White,' though she was commonly known afterwards as the `Abraham.'

The cutting of the frame of the intended schooner was a thing easy enough, with expert American axemen, and with that glorious implement of civilization, the American axe. But it was not quite so easy to get the timber down to the cove. The keel, in particular, gave a good deal of trouble. Heaton had brought along with him both cart and wagon wheels, and without that it is questionable if the stick could have been moved by any force then at the command of the colony. By suspending it in chains beneath the axles, however, it was found possible to draw it, though several of the women had to lend their aid in moving the mass. When at the head of the Stairs, the timber was lowered on the rock, and was slid downwards, with occasional lifts by the crowbar and handspike. When it reached the water it was found to be much too heavy to float, and it was by no means an easy matter to buoy it up in such a way that it might be towed. The Anne was three times as long making her passage with this keel in tow, as she was without it. It was done, however, and the laying of the keel was effected with some little ceremony, in the presence of nearly every soul belonging to the colony.

The getting out and raising of the frame of the `Friend Abraham White' took six weeks. Great importance was attached to success in this matter, and everybody assisted in the work with right good will. At one time it was doubted if stuff enough could be found in the ship to plank her up with, and it was thought it might become necessary to break up the Rancocus, in order to complete the job. To Bridget's great joy, however, the good *old* Rancocus so they called her, though she was even then only eight years old the good old Rancocus' time had not yet come, and she was able to live in her cabin for some months longer. Enough planks were found by using those of the 'twixt decks, a part of which were not bolted down at all, to accomplish all that was wanted.

Heaton was a man of singular tastes, which led him to as remarkable acquirements. Among other accomplishments, he was a very good general mechanician, having an idea of the manner in which most of the ordinary machinery ought to be, not only used, but fabricated. At the point where the rivulet descended the cliff into the sea, he discovered as noble a mill−seat as the heart of man could desire to possess. To have such a mill−seat at command, and not to use it, would, of itself, have made him unhappy, and he could not be easy until he and Peters, who had also a great taste and some skill in that sort of thing, were hard at work building a saw−mill. The saw had been brought from America, as a thing very likely to be wanted, and three months after these two ingenious men had commenced their work, the saw was going, cutting teak, as well as a species of excellent yellow pine that was found in considerable quantities, and of very respectable size, along the cliffs in the immediate vicinity of the mill. The great difficulty to be overcome in that undertaking, was the transportation of the timber. By cutting the trees most favourably situated first, logs were got into the pond without much labour; but after they were in planks, or boards, or joists, they were quite seven miles from the head of the Stairs, in the vicinity of which it was, on several accounts, the most desirable to dwell. Had the Abraham been kept on the stocks, until the necessary timber was brought from the mill, across the plain of Eden, she would have been well seasoned before launching; but, fortunately, that was not necessary materials sufficient for her were got on board the ship, as mentioned, with some small additions of inch boards that were cut to finish her joiners' work.

Months passed, as a matter of course, while the schooner and the mill were in the course of construction. The work on the first was frequently intermitted, by little voyages in the other craft, and by labour necessary to be done in preparing dwellings on the Peak, to meet the rainy season, which was now again near at hand. Past experience had told Mark that the winter months in his islands, if winter a season could be termed, during which most of the trees, all the grasses, and many of the fruits continued to grow and ripen as in summer, were not very formidable. It is true it then rained nearly every day, but it was very far from raining all day. Most of the rain, in fact, fell at night, commencing a little after the turn in the day, and terminating about midnight. Still it must be very unpleasant to pass such a season beneath canvass, and, about six weeks ere the wet time commenced, everybody turned to, with a will, to erect proper framed houses. Now that the mill was sawing, this was no great task, the pine working beautifully and easily into almost every article required.

Heaton laid out his house with some attention to taste, and more to comfort. It was of one story, but fully a hundred feet in length, and of half that in depth. Being a common American dwelling that was clap−boarded, it was soon put up and enclosed, the climate requiring very little attention to warmth. There were windows, and even glass, a small quantity of that article having been brought along by the colonists. The floors were beautiful, and extremely well laid down; nor were the doors, window−shutters, &c., neglected. The whole, moreover, was painted, the stores of the ship still furnishing the necessary materials. But there was neither chimney nor plastering, for Heaton had neither bricks nor lime. Bricks he insisted he could and would make, and did, though in no great number; but lime, for some time, baffled his ingenuity. At last, Socrates suggested the burning of oystershells, and by dint of fishing a good deal, among the channels of the reef, a noble oyster−bed was found, and the boats brought in enough of the shells to furnish as much lime as would put up a chimney for the kitchen; one apartment for that sort of work being made, as yet, to suffice for the wants of all who dwelt in Eden.

These various occupations and interests consumed many months, and carried the new−comers through the first wet season which they encountered as a colony. As everybody was busy, plenty reigned, and the climate being so very delicious as to produce a sense of enjoyment in the very fact of existence, everybody but Peters was happy. He, poor fellow, mourned much for his Peggy, as he called the pretty young heathen wife he had left behind him in Waally's country.

END OF VOL. I.