The Sea Lions; or, The Lost Sealers Volume 1

James Fenimore Cooper

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Daughter of Faith, awake, arise, illume
The dread unknown, the chaos of the tomb;
Melt, and dispel, ye spectre doubts, that roll
Cimmerian darkness o'er the parting soul!
Campbell

PREFACE.

If any thing connected with the hardness of the human heart could surprise us, it surely would be the indifference with which men live on, engrossed by their worldly objects, amid the sublime natural phenomena that so eloquently and unceasingly speak to their imaginations, affections, and judgments. So completely is the existence of the individual concentrated in self, and so regardless does he get to be of all without that contracted circle, that it does not probably happen to one man in ten, that his thoughts are drawn aside from this intense study of his own immediate wants, wishes, and plans, even once in the twenty−four hours, to contemplate the majesty, mercy, truth, and justice, of the Divine Being that has set him, as an atom, amid the myriads of the hosts of heaven and earth.

The physical marvels of the universe produce little more reflection than the profoundest moral truths. A million of eyes shall pass over the firmament, on a cloudless night, and not a hundred minds shall be filled with a proper sense of the power of the dread Being that created all that is there—not a hundred hearts glow with the adoration that such an appeal to the senses and understanding ought naturally to produce. This indifference, in a great measure, comes of familiarity; the things that we so constantly have before us, becoming as a part of the air we breathe, and as little regarded.

One of the consequences of this disposition to disregard the Almighty Hand, as it is so plainly visible in all around us, is that of substituting our own powers in its stead. In this period of the world, in enlightened countries, and in the absence of direct idolatry, few men are so hardy as to deny the existence and might of a Supreme Being; but, this fact admitted, how few really feel that profound reverence for him that the nature of our relations justly demands! It is the want of a due sense of humility, and a sad misconception of what we are, and for what we were created, that misleads us in the due estimate of our own insignificance, as compared with the majesty of God.

Very few men attain enough of human knowledge to be fully aware how much remains to be learned, and of that which they never can hope to acquire. We hear a great deal of god−like minds, and of the far−reaching faculties we possess; and it may all be worthy of our eulogiums, until we compare ourselves in these, as in other particulars, with Him who produced them. Then, indeed, the utter insignificance of our means becomes too apparent to admit of a cavil. We know that we are born, and that we die; science has been able to grapple with all the phenomena of these two great physical facts, with the exception of the most material of all—those which should tell us what is life, and what is death. Something that we cannot comprehend lies at the root of every distinct division of natural phenomena. Thus far shalt thou go and no farther, seems to be imprinted on every great fact of creation. There is a point attained in each and all of our acquisitions, where a mystery that no human mind can scan takes the place of demonstration and conjecture. This point may lie more remote with some intellects than with others; but it exists for all, arrests the inductions of all, conceals all.

We are aware that the more learned among those who disbelieve in the divinity of Christ suppose themselves to be sustained by written authority, contending for errors of translation, mistakes and misapprehensions in the ancient texts. Nevertheless, we are inclined to think that nine−tenths of those who refuse the old and accept the new opinion, do so for a motive no better than a disinclination to believe that which they cannot comprehend. This pride of reason is one of the most insinuating of our foibles, and is to be watched as a most potent enemy.

How completely and philosophically does the venerable Christian creed embrace and modify all these workings of the heart! We say philosophically, for it were not possible for mind to give a juster analysis of the whole subject than St. Paul's most comprehensive but brief definition of Faith. It is this Faith which forms the mighty feature of the church on earth. It equalizes capacities, conditions, means, and ends, holding out the same encouragement and hope to the least, as to the most gifted of the race; counting gifts in their ordinary and more secular points of view.

It is when health, or the usual means of success abandon us, that we are made to feel how totally we are insufficient for the achievement of even our own purposes, much less to qualify us to reason on the deep mysteries that conceal the beginning and the end. It has often been said that the most successful leaders of their fellow men have had the clearest views of their own insufficiency to attain their own objects. If Napoleon ever

said, as has been attributed to him, "*Je propose et je dispose*," it must have been in one of those fleeting moments in which success blinded him to the fact of his own insufficiency. No man had a deeper reliance on fortune, cast the result of great events on the decrees of fate, or more anxiously watched the rising and setting of what he called his "star." This was a faith that could lead to no good; but it clearly denoted how far the boldest designs, the most ample means, and the most vaulting ambition, fall short of giving that sublime consciousness of power and its fruits that distinguish the reign of Omnipotence.

In this book the design has been to pourtray man on a novel field of action, and to exhibit his dependence on the hand that does not suffer a sparrow to fall unheeded. The recent attempts of science, which employed the seamen of the four greatest maritime states of Christendom, made discoveries that have rendered the polar circles much more familiar to this age, than to any that has preceded it, so far as existing records show. We say "existing records;" for there is much reason for believing that the ancients had a knowledge of our hemisphere, though less for supposing that they ever braved the dangers of the high latitudes. Many are, just at this moment, much disposed to believe that "Ophir" was on this continent; though for a reason no better than the circumstance of the recent discoveries of much gold. Such savans should remember that `peacocks' came from ancient Ophir. If this be in truth that land, the adventurers of Israel caused it to be denuded of that bird of beautiful plumage.

Such names as those of Parry, Sabine, Ross, Franklin, Wilkes, Hudson, Ringgold, &c., &c., with those of divers gallant Frenchmen and Russians, command our most profound respect; for no battles or victories can redound more to the credit of seamen than the dangers they all encountered, and the conquests they have all achieved. One of those named, a resolute and experienced seaman, it is thought must, at this moment, be locked in the frosts of the arctie circle, after having passed half a life in the endeavour to push his discoveries into those remote and frozen regions. He bears the name of the most distinguished of the philosophers of this country; and nature has stamped on his features—by one of those secret laws which just as much baffle our means of comprehension, as the greatest of all our mysteries, the incarnation of the Son of God—a resemblance that, of itself, would go to show that they are of the same race. Any one who has ever seen this emprisoned navigator, and who is familiar with the countenances of the men of the same name who are to be found in numbers amongst ourselves, must be struck with a likeness that lies as much beyond the grasp of that reason of which we are so proud, as the sublimest facts taught by induction, science, or revelation. Parties are, at this moment, out in search of him and his followers; and it is to be hoped that the Providence which has so singularly attempered the different circles and zones of our globe, placing this under a burning sun, and that beneath enduring frosts, will have included in its divine forethought a sufficient care for these bold wanderers to restore them, unharmed, to their friends and country. In a contrary event, their names must be transmitted to posterity as the victims to a laudable desire to enlarge the circle of human knowledge, and with it, we trust, to increase the glory due to God.

CHAPTER I.

"When that's gone, He shall drink naught but brine."
Tempest.

While there is less of that high polish in America that is obtained by long intercourse with the great world, than is to be found in nearly every European country, there is much less positive rusticity also. There, the extremes of society are widely separated, repelling rather than attracting each other; while among ourselves, the tendency is to gravitate towards a common centre. Thus it is, that all things in America become subject to a mean law that is productive of a mediocrity which is probably much above the average of that of most nations; possibly of all, England excepted; but which is only a mediocrity, after all. In this way, excellence in nothing is justly appreciated, nor is it often recognised; and the suffrages of the nation are pretty uniformly bestowed on qualities of a secondary class. Numbers have sway, and it is as impossible to resist them in deciding on merit, as it is to deny their power in the ballot−boxes; time alone, with its great curative influence, supplying the remedy that is to restore the public mind to a healthful state, and give equally to the pretender and to him who is worthy of renown, his proper place in the pages of history.

The activity of American life, the rapidity and cheapness of intercourse, and the migratory habits both have induced, leave little of rusticity and local character in any particular sections of the country. Distinctions, that an acute observer may detect, do certainly exist between the eastern and the western man, between the northerner and the southerner, the Yankee and middle states' man; the Bostonian, Manhattanese and Philadelphian; the Tuckahoe and the Cracker; the Buckeye or Wolverine, and the Jersey Blue. Nevertheless, the world cannot probably produce another instance of a people who are derived from so many different races, and who occupy so large an extent of country, who are so homogeneous in appearance, characters and opinions. There is no question that the institutions have had a material influence in producing this uniformity, while they have unquestionably lowered the standard to which opinion is submitted, by referring the decisions to the many, instead of making the appeal to the few, as is elsewhere done. Still, the direction is onward, and though it may take time to carve on the social column of America that graceful and ornamental capital which it forms the just boast of Europe to possess, when the task shall be achieved, the work will stand on a báse so broad as to secure its upright attitude for ages.

Notwithstanding the general character of identity and homogenity that so strongly marks the picture of American society, exceptions are to be met with, in particular districts, that are not only distinct and incontrovertible, but which are so peculiar as to be worthy of more than a passing remark in our delineations of national customs. Our present purpose leads us into one of these secluded districts, and it may be well to commence the narrative of certain deeply interesting incidents that it is our intention to attempt to portray, by first referring to the place and people where and from whom the principal actors in our legend had their origin.

Every one at all familiar with the map of America knows the position and general form of the two islands that shelter the well−known harbour of the great emporium of the commerce of the country. These islands obtained their names from the Dutch, who called them Nassau and Staten; but the English, with little respect for the ancient house whence the first of these appellations is derived, and consulting only the homely taste which leads them to a practical rather than to a poetical nomenclature in all things, have since virtually dropped the name of Nassau, altogether substituting that of Long Island in its stead.

Long Island, or the island of Nassau, extends from the mouth of the Hudson to the eastern line of Connecticut; forming a sort of sea−wall to protect the whole coast of the latter little territory against the waves of the broad Atlantic. Three of the oldest New York counties, as their names would imply, Kings, Queens, and Suffolk, are on this island. Kings was originally peopled by the Dutch, and still possesses as many names derived from Holland as from England, if its towns, which are of recent origin, be taken from the account. Queens is more of a mixture, having been early invaded and occupied by adventurers from the other side of the Sound; but Suffolk, which contains nearly, if not quite, two−thirds of the surface of the whole island, is and ever has been in possession of a people derived originally from the puritans of New England. Of these three counties, Kings is much the smallest, though next to New York itself, the most populous county in the state; a circumstance that is owing to the fact that two suburban offsets of the great emporium, Brooklyn and Williamsburg, happen to stand, within its limits, on the

waters of what is improperly called the East River; an arm of the sea that has obtained this appellation, in contradistinction to the Hudson, which, as all Manhattanese well know, is as often called the North River, as by its proper name. In consequence of these two towns, or suburbs of New York, one of which contains nearly a hundred thousand souls, while the other must be drawing on towards twenty thousand, Kings county has lost all it ever had of peculiar, or local character. The same is true of Queens, though in a diminished degree; but Suffolk remains Suffolk still, and it is with Suffolk alone that our present legend requires us to deal. Of Suffolk, then, we purpose to say a few words by way of preparatory explanation.

Although it has actually more sea−coast than all the rest of New York united, Suffolk has but one sea−port that is ever mentioned beyond the limits of the county itself. Nor is this port one of general commerce, its shipping being principally employed in the hardy and manly occupation of whaling. As a whaling town, Sag Harbour is the third or fourth port in the country, and maintains something like that rank in importance. A whaling haven is nothing without a whaling community. Without the last, it is almost hopeless to look for success. New York can, and has often fitted whalers for sea, having sought officers in the regular whaling ports; but it has been seldom that the enterprises have been rewarded with such returns as to induce a second voyage by the same parties.

It is as indispensable that a whaler should possess a certain *esprit de corps*, as that a regiment, or a ship of war, should be animated by its proper spirit. In the whaling communities, this spirit exists to an extent, and in a degree that is wonderful, when one remembers the great expansion of this particular branch of trade within the last five−and−twenty years. It may be a little lessened of late, but at the time of which we are writing, or about the year 1820, there was scarcely an individual who followed this particular calling out of the port of Sag Harbour, whose general standing on board ship was not as well known to all the women and girls of the place, as it was to his shipmates. Success in taking the whale was a thing that made itself felt in every fibre of the prosperity of the town; and it was just as natural that the single−minded population of that part of Suffolk should regard the bold and skilful harpooner, or lancer, with favour, as it is for the belle at a watering−place to bestow her smiles on one of the young heroes of Contreras or Churubusco. His peculiar merit, whether with the oar, lance, or harpoon, is bruited about, as well as the number of whales he may have succeeded in "making fast to," or those which he caused to "spout blood." It is true, that the great extension of the trade within the last twenty years, by drawing so many from a distance into its pursuits, has in a degree lessened this local interest and local knowledge of character; but at the time of which we are about to write, both were at their height, and Nantucket itself had not more of this "intelligence office" propensity, or more of the true whaling *esprit de corps*, than were to be found in the district of country that surrounded Sag Harbour.

Long Island forks at its eastern end, and may be said to have two extremities. One of these, which is much the shortest of the two legs thus formed, goes by the name of Oyster Pond Point; while the other, that stretches much farther in the direction of Blok Island, is the well−known cape called Montauk. Within the fork lies Shelter Island, so named from the snug berth it occupies. Between Shelter Island and the longest or southern prong of the fork, are the waters which compose the haven of Sag Harbour, an estuary of some extent; while a narrow but deep arm of the sea separates this island from the northern prong, that terminates at Oyster Pond.

The name of Oyster Pond Point was formerly applied to a long, low, fertile and pleasant reach of land, that extended several miles from the point itself, westward, towards the spot where the two prongs of the fork united. It was not easy, during the first quarter of the present century, to find a more secluded spot on the whole island, than Oyster Pond. Recent enterprises have since converted it into the terminus of a railroad; and Green Port, once called Sterling, is a name well known to travellers between New York and Boston; but in the earlier part of the present century it seemed just as likely that the *Santa Casa* of Loretto should take a new flight and descend on the point, as that the improvement that has actually been made should in truth occur at that out−of−the−way place. It required, indeed, the keen eye of a railroad projector to bring this spot in connection with anything; nor could it be done without having recourse to the water by which it is almost surrounded. Using the last, it is true, means have been found to place it in a line between two of the great marts of the country, and thus to put an end to aH its seclusion, its simplicity, its peculiarities, and we had almost said, its happiness.

It is to us ever a painful sight to see the rustic virtues rudely thrown aside by the intrusion of what are termed improvements. A railroad is certainly a capital invention for the traveller, but it may be questioned if it is of any other benefit than that of pecuniary convenience to the places through which it passes. How many delightful hamlets, pleasant villages, and even tranquil county towns, are losing their primitive characters for simplicity and

contentment, by the passage of these fiery trains, that drag after them a sort of bastard elegance, a pretension that is destructive of peace of mind, and an uneasy desire in all who dwell by the way−side, to pry into the mysteries of the whole length and breadth of the region it traverses!

We are writing of the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nineteen. In that day, Oyster Pond was, in one of the best acceptations of the word, a rural district. It is true that its inhabitants were accustomed to the water, and to the sight of vessels, from the twodecker to the little shabby−looking craft that brought ashes from town, to meliorate the sandy lands of Suffolk. Only five years before, an English squadron had lain in Gardiner's Bay, here pronounced `Gar'ner's,' watching the Race, or eastern outlet of the Sound, with a view to cut off the trade and annoy their enemy. That game is up, for ever. No hostile squadron, English, French, Dutch, or all united, will ever again blockade an American port for any serious length of time, the young Hercules passing too rapidly from the gristle into the bone, any longer to suffer antics of this nature to be played in front of his cradle. But such was not his condition in the war of 1812, and the good people of Oyster Pond had become familiar with the checkered sides of two−deck ships, and the venerable and beautiful ensign of Old England, as it floated above them.

Nor was it only by these distant views, and by means of hostilities, that the good folk on Oyster Pond were acquainted with vessels. New York is necessary to all on the coast, both as a market and as a place to procure supplies; and every creek, or inlet, or basin, of any sort, within a hundred leagues of it, is sure to possess one or more craft that ply between the favourite haven and the particular spot in question. Thus was it with Oyster Pond. There is scarce a better harbour on the whole American coast, than that which the narrow arm of the sea that divides the Point from Shelter Island presents; and even in the simple times of which we are writing, Sterling had its two or three coasters, such as they were. But the true maritime character of Oyster Pond, as well as that of all Suffolk, was derived from the whalers, and its proper nucleus was across the estuary, at Sag Harbour. Thither the youths of the whole region resorted for employment, and to advance their fortunes, and generally with such success as is apt to attend enterprise, industry and daring, when exercised with energy in a pursuit of moderate gains. None became rich, in the strict signification of the term, though a few got to be in reasonably affluent circumstances; many were placed altogether at their case, and more were made humbly comfortable. A farm in America is well enough for the foundation of family support, but it rarely suffices for all the growing wants of these days of indulgence, and of a desire to enjoy so much of that which was formerly left to the undisputed possession of the unquestionably rich. A farm, with a few hundreds *per annum*, derived from other sources, makes a good base of comfort; and if the hundreds are converted into thousands, your farmer, or agriculturalist, becomes a man not only at his case, but a proprietor of some importance. The farms on Oyster Pond were neither very extensive, nor had they owners of large incomes to support them; on the contrary, most of them were made to support their owners; a thing that is possible, even in America, with industry, frugality and judgment. In order, however, that the names of places we may have occasion to use shall be understood, it may be well to be a little more particular in our preliminary explanations.

The reader knows that we are now writing of Suffolk County, Long Island, New York. He also knows that our opening scene is to be on the shorter, or most northern of the two prongs of that fork, which divides the eastern end of this island, giving it what are properly two capes. The smallest territorial division that is known to the laws of New York, in rural districts, is the `township,' as it is called. These townships are usually larger than the English parish, corresponding more properly with the French canton. They vary, however, greatly in size, some containing as much as a hundred square miles, which is the largest size, while others do not contain more than a tenth of that surface.

The township in which the northern prong, or point of Long Island, lies, is named Southold, and includes not only all of the long, low, narrow land that then went by the common names of Oyster Pond, Sterling, &c., but several islands, also, which stretch off in the Sound, as well as a broader piece of territory, near Riverhead. Oyster Pond, which is the portion of the township that lies on the `point,' is, or *was*, for we write of a remote period in the galloping history of the state, only a part of Southold, and probably was not then a name known in the laws, at all.

We have a wish, also, that this name should be pronounced properly. It is not called Oyster *Pond*, as the uninitiated would be very apt to get it, but *Oys*ter Pùnd, the last word having a sound similar to that of the cockney's `pound,' in his "two pùnd two." This discrepancy between the spelling and the pronunciation of proper names is agreeable to us, for it shows that a people are not put in leading strings by pedagogues, and that they

make use of their own, in their own way. We remember how great was our satisfaction once, on entering Holmes' Hole, a well−known bay in this very vicinity, in our youth, to hear a boatman call the port, `Hum'ses Hull.' It is getting to be so rare to meet with an American, below the higher classes, who will consent to cast this species of veil before his school−day acquisitions, that we acknowledge it gives us pleasure to hear such good, homely, old−fashioned English as "Gar'ner's Island," "Hum'ses Hull," and "*Oys*ter Pùnd."

This plainness of speech was not the only proof of the simplicity of former days that was to be found in Suffolk, in the first quarter of the century. The eastern end of Long Island lies so much out of the track of the rest of the world, that even the new railroad cannot make much impression on its inhabitants, who get their pigs and poultry, butter and eggs, a little earlier to market, than in the days of the stage−wagons, it is true, but they fortunately, as yet, bring little back except it be the dross that sets every thing in motion, whether it be by rail, or through the sands, in the former toilsome mode.

The season, at the precise moment when we desire to take the reader with us to Oyster Pond, was in the delightful month of September, when the earlier promises of the year are fast maturing into performance. Although Suffolk, as a whole, can scarcely be deemed a productive county, being generally of a thin, light soil, and still covered with a growth of small wood, it possesses, nevertheless, spots of exceeding fertility. A considerable portion of the northern prong of the fork has this latter character, and Oyster Pond is a sort of garden compared with much of the sterility that prevails around it. Plain, but respectable dwellings, with numerous out−buildings, orchards and fruit−trees, fences carefully preserved, a pains−taking tillage, good roads, and here and there a "meeting−house," gave the fork an air of rural and moral beauty that, aided by the water by which it was so nearly surrounded, contributed greatly to relieve the monotony of so dead a level. There were heights in view, on Shelter Island, and bluffs towards Riverhead, which, if they would not attract much attention in Switzerland, were by no means overlooked in Suffolk. In a word, both the season and the place were charming, though most of the flowers had already faded; and the apple, and the pear, and the peach, were taking the places of the inviting cherry. Fruit abounded, notwithstanding the close vicinity of the district to salt water, the airs from the sea being broken, or somewhat tempered, by the land that lay to the southward.

We have spoken of the coasters that ply between the emporium and all the creeks and bays of the Sound, as well as of the numberless rivers that find an outlet for their waters between Sandy Hook and Rockaway. Wharves were constructed, at favourable points, *inside* the prong, and occasionally a sloop was seen at them loading its truck, or discharging its ashes or street manure, the latter being a very common return cargo for a Long Island coaster. At one wharf, however, now lay a vessel of a different mould, and one which, though of no great size, was manifestly intended to go *outside*. This was a schooner that that had been recently launched, and which had advanced no farther in its first equipment than to get in its two principal spars, the rigging of which hung suspended over the mast−heads, in readiness to be "set up" for the first time. The day being Sunday, work was suspended, and this so much the more, because the owner of the vessel was a certain Deacon Pratt, who dwelt in a house within half a mile of the wharf, and who was also the proprietor of three several parcels of land in that neighbourhood, each of which had its own buildings and conveniences, and was properly enough dignified with the name of a farm. To be sure, neither of these farms was very large, their acres united amounting to but little more than two hundred; but, owing to their condition, the native richness of the soil, and the mode of turning them to account, they had made Deacon Pratt a warm man, for Suffolk.

There are two great species of deacons; for we suppose they must all be referred to the same *genera*. One species belong to the priesthood, and become priests and bishops; passing away, as priests and bishops are apt to do, with more or less of the savour of godliness. The other species are purely laymen, and are *sui generis* . They are, *ex officio*, the most pious men in a neighbourhood, as they sometimes are, as it would seem to us, *ex officio*, also the most grasping and mercenary. As we are not in the secrets of the sects to which these lay deacons belong, we shall not presume to pronounce whether the individual is elevated to the deaconate because he is prosperous, in a worldly sense, or whether the prosperity is a consequence of the deaconate; but, that the two usually go together is quite certain; which being the cause, and which the effect, we leave to wiser heads to determine.

Deacon Pratt was no exception to the rule. A tighter fisted sinner did not exist in the county than this pious soul, who certainly not only wore, but wore out the "form of godliness," while he was devoted, heart and hand, to the daily increase of worldly gear. No one spoke disparagingly of the deacon, notwithstanding. So completely had he got to be interwoven with the church—`meeting,' we ought to say—in that vicinity, that speaking disparagingly

of him would have appeared like assailing Christianity. It is true, that many an unfortunate fellow−citizen in Suffolk had been made to feel how close was the gripe of his hand, when he found himself in its grasp; but there is a way of practising the most ruthless extortion, that serves not only to deceive the world, but which would really seem to mislead the extortioner himself. Phrases take the place of deeds, sentiments those of facts, and grimaces those of benevolent looks, so ingeniously and so impudently, that the wronged often fancy that they are the victims of a severe dispensation of Providence, when the truth would have shown that they were simply robbed.

We do not mean, however, that Deacon Pratt was a robber. He was merely a hard man in the management of his affairs; never cheating, in a direct sense, but seldom conceding a cent to generous impulses, or to the duties of kind. He was a widower, and childless, circumstances that rendered his love of gain still less pardonable; for many a man who is indifferent to money on his own account, will toil and save to lay up hoards for those who are to come after him. The deacon had only a niece to inherit his effects, unless he might choose to step beyond that degree of consanguinity, and bestow a portion of his means on cousins. The church—or, to be more literal, the `meeting'—had an eye on his resources, however; and it was whispered it had actually succeeded, by means known to itself, in squeezing out of his tight grasp no less a sum than one hundred dollars, as a donation to a certain theological college. It was conjectured by some persons that this was only the beginning of a religious liberality, and that the excellent and godly−minded deacon would bestow most of his property in a similar way, when the moment should come that it could be no longer of any use to himself. This opinion was much in favour with divers devout females of the deacon's congregation, who had daughters of their own, and who seldom failed to conclude their observations on this interesting subject with some such remark as, "Well, in *that* case, and it seems to me that every thing points that way, Mary Pratt will get no more than any other poor man's daughter."

Little did Mary, the only child of Israel Pratt, an elder brother of the deacon, think of all this. She had been left an orphan in her tenth year, both parents dying within a few months of each other, and had lived beneath her uncle's roof for nearly ten more years, until use, and natural affection, and the customs of the country, had made her feel absolutely at home there. A less interested, or less selfish being than Mary Pratt, never existed. In this respect she was the very antipodes of her uncle, who often stealthily rebuked her for her charities and acts of neighbourly kindness, which he was wont to term waste. But Mary kept the even tenor of her way, seemingly not hearing such remarks, and doing her duty quietly, and in all humility.

Suffolk was settled originally by emigrants from New England, and the character of its people is, to this hour, of modified New England habits and notions. Now, one of the marked peculiarities of Connecticut is an indisposition to part with anything without a *quid pro quo*. Those little services, offerings, and conveniences that are elsewhere parted with without a thought of remuneration, go regularly upon the day−book, and often reappear on a `settlement, ' years after they have been forgotten by those who received the favours. Even the man who keeps a carriage will let it out for hire; and the manner in which money is accepted, and even asked for by persons in easy circumstances, and for things that would be gratuitous in the Middle States, often causes disappointment, and sometimes disgust. In this particular, Scottish and Swiss thrift, both notorious, and the latter particularly so, are nearly equalled by New England thrift; more especially in the close estimate of the value of services rendered. So marked, indeed, is this practice of looking for requitals, that even the language is infected with it. Thus, should a person pass a few months by invitation with a friend, his visit is termed `boarding;' it being regarded as a matter of course that he pays his way. It would scarcely be safe, indeed, without the precaution of "passing receipts" on quitting, for one to stay any time in a New England dwelling, unless prepared to pay for his board. The free and frank habits that prevail among relatives and friends elsewhere, are nearly unknown there, every service having its price. These customs are exceedingly repugnant to all who have been educated in different notions; yet are they not without their redeeming qualities, that might be pointed out to advantage, though our limits will not permit us, at this moment, so to do.

Little did Mary Pratt suspect the truth; but habit, or covetousness, or some vague expectation that the girl might yet contract a marriage that would enable him to claim all his advances, had induced the deacon never to bestow a cent on her education, or dress, or pleasures of any sort, that the money was not regularly charged against her, in that nefarious work that he called his "day−book." As for the self−respect, and the feelings of caste, which prevent a gentleman from practising any of these tradesmen's tricks, the deacon knew nothing of them. He would have set the man down as a fool who deferred to any notions so unprofitable. With him, not only every

man, but every *thing* "had its price," and usually it was a good price, too. At the very moment when our tale opens there stood charged in his book, against his unsuspecting and affectionate niece, items in the way of schooling, dress, board, and pocket−money, that amounted to the considerable sum of one thousand dollars, money fairly expended. The deacon was only intensely mean and avaricious, while he was as honest as the day. Not a cent was overcharged; and to own the truth, Mary was so great a favourite with him, that most of his charges against *her* were rather of a reasonable rate than otherwise.

CHAPTER II.

"Marry, I saw your niece do more favours To the count's serving−man, than ever she bestowed Upon me; I saw it i' the orchard."

Twelfth Night.

On the Sunday in question, Deacon Pratt went to meeting as usual, the building in which divine service was held that day, standing less than two miles from his residence; but, instead of remaining for the afternoon's preaching, as was his wont, he got into his one−horse chaise, the vehicle then in universal use among the middle classes, though now so seldom seen, and skirred away homeward as fast as an active, well−fed and powerful switch−tailed mare could draw him; the animal being accompanied in her rapid progress by a colt of some three months' existence. The residence of the deacon was unusually inviting for a man of his narrow habits. It stood on the edge of a fine apple−orchard, having a door−yard of nearly two acres in its front. This door−yard, which had been twice mown that summer, was prettily embellished with flowers, and was shaded by four rows of noble cherry−trees. The house itself was of wood, as is almost uniformly the case in Suffolk, where little stone is to be found, and where brick constructions are apt to be thought damp: but, it was a respectable edifice, with five windows in front, and of two stories. The siding was of unpainted cedar−shingles; and, although the house had been erected long previously to the revolution, the siding had been renewed but once, about ten years before the opening of our tale, and the whole building was in a perfect state of repair. The thrift of the deacon rendered him careful, and he was thoroughly convinced of the truth of the familiar adage which tells us that "a stitch in time, saves nine." All around the house and farm was in perfect order, proving the application of the saying. As for the view, it was sufficiently pleasant, the house having its front towards the east, while its end windows looked, the one set in the direction of the Sound, and the other in that of the arm of the sea, which belongs properly to Peconic Bay, we believe. All this water, some of which was visible over points and among islands, together with a smiling and fertile, though narrow stretch of foreground, could not fail of making an agreeable landscape.

It was little, however, that Deacon Pratt thought of views, or beauty of any sort, as the mare reached the open gate of his own abode. Mary was standing in the stoop, or porch of the house, and appeared to be anxiously awaiting her uncle's return. The latter gave the reins to a black, one who was no longer a slave, but who was a descendant of some of the ancient slaves of the Pratts, and in that character consented still to dawdle about the place, working for half price. On alighting, the uncle approached the niece with somewhat of interest in his manner.

"Well, Mary," said the former, "how does he get on, now?"

"Oh! my dear sir, he cannot possibly live, I think, and I do most earnestly entreat that you will let me send across to the Harbour for Dr. Sage."

By the Harbour was meant Sag's, and the physician named was one of merited celebrity in old Suffolk. So healthy was the country in general, and so simple were the habits of the people, that neither lawyer nor physician was to be found in every hamlet, as is the case to−day. Both were to be had at Riverhead, as well as at Sag Harbour; but, if a man called out "Squire," or "Doctor," in the highways of Suffolk, sixteen men did not turn round to reply, as is said to be the case in other regions; one half answering to the one appellation, and the second half to the other. The deacon had two objections to yielding to his niece's earnest request; the expense being one, though it was not, in this instance, the greatest; there was another reason that he kept to himself, but which will appear as our narrative proceeds.

A few weeks previously to the Sunday in question, a sea−going vessel, inward bound, had brought up in Gardiner's Bay, which is a usual anchorage for all sorts of craft. A worn−out and battered seaman had been put ashore on Oyster Pond, by a boat from this vessel, which sailed to the westward soon after, proceeding most probably to New York. The stranger was not only well advanced in life, but he was obviously wasting away with disease.

The account given of himself by this seaman was sufficiently explicit. He was born on Martha's Vineyard, but, as is customary with the boys of that island, he had left home in his twelfth year, and had now been absent from the place of his birth a little more than half a century. Conscious of the decay which beset him, and fully

convinced that his days were few and numbered, the seaman, who called himself Tom Daggett, had felt a desire to close his eyes in the place where they had first been opened to the light of day. He had persuaded the commander of the craft mentioned, to bring him from the West Indies, and to put him ashore as related, the Vineyard being only a hundred miles or so to the eastward of Oyster Pond Point. He trusted to luck to give him the necessary opportunity of overcoming these last hundred miles.

Daggett was poor, as he admitted, as well as friendless and unknown. He had with him, nevertheless, a substantial sea−chest, one of those that the sailors of that day uniformly used in merchant−vessels, a man−of−war compelling them to carry their clothes in bags, for the convenience of compact stowage. The chest of Daggett, however, was a regular inmate of the forecastle, and, from its appearance, had made almost as many voyages as its owner. The last, indeed, was heard to say that he had succeeded in saving it from no less than three shipwrecks. It was a reasonably heavy chest, though its contents, when opened, did not seem to be of any very great value.

A few hours after landing, this man had made a bargain with a middle−aged widow, in very humble circumstances, and who dwelt quite near to the residence of Deacon Pratt, to receive him as a temporary inmate; or, until he could get a "chance across to the Vineyard." At first, Daggett kept about, and was much in the open air. While able to walk, he met the deacon, and singular, nay, unaccountable as it seemed to the niece, the uncle soon contracted a species of friendship for, not to say intimacy with, this stranger. In the first place, the deacon was a little particular in not having intimates among the necessitous, and the Widow White soon let it be known that her guest had not even a "red cent." He had chattels, however, that were of some estimation among seamen; and Roswell Gardiner, or "Gar'ner," as he was called, the young seaman *par excellence* of the Point, one who had been not only a whaling, but who had also been a sealing, and who at that moment was on board the deacon's schooner, in the capacity of master, had been applied to for advice and assistance. By the agency of Mr. Gar'ner, as the young mate was then termed, sundry palms, sets of sail−needles, a fid or two, and various other similar articles, that obviously could no longer be of any use to Daggett, were sent across to the `Harbour,' and disposed of there, to advantage, among the many seamen of the port. By these means the stranger was, for a few weeks, enabled to pay his way, the board he got being both poor and cheap.

A much better result attended this intercourse with Gardiner, than that of raising the worn−out seaman's immediate ways and means. Between Mary Pratt and Roswell Gardiner there existed an intimacy of long standing for their years, as well as of some peculiar features, to which there will be occasion to advert hereafter. Mary was the very soul of charity in all its significations, and this Gardiner knew. When, therefore, Daggett became really necessitous, in the way of comforts that even money could not command beneath the roof of the Widow White, the young man let the fact be known to the deacon's niece, who immediately provided sundry delicacies that were acceptable to the palate of even disease. As for her uncle, nothing was at first said to him on the subject. Although his intimacy with Daggett went on increasing, and they were daily more and more together, in long and secret conference, not a suggestion was ever made by the deacon in the way of contributing to his new friend's comforts. To own the truth, to give was the last idea that ever occurred to this man's thoughts.

Mary Pratt was observant, and of a mind so constituted, that its observations usually led her to safe and accurate deductions. Great was the surprise of all on the Point when it became known that Deacon Pratt had purchased and put into the water, the new sea−going craft that was building on speculation, at Southold. Not only had he done this, but he had actually bought some half−worn copper, and had it placed on the schooner's bottom, as high as the bends, ere he had her launched. While the whole neighbourhood was "exercised" with conjectures on the motive which could induce the deacon to become a ship−owner in his age, Mary did not fail to impute it to some secret but powerful influence, that the sick stranger had obtained over him. He now spent nearly half his time in private communications with Daggett; and, on more than one occasion, when the niece had taken some light article of food over for the use of the last, she found him and her uncle examining one or two dirty and well−worn charts of the ocean. As she entered, the conversation invariably was changed; nor was Mrs. White ever permitted to be present at one of these secret conferences.

Not only was the schooner purchased, and coppered, and launched, and preparations made to fit her for sea, but "Young Gar'ner" was appointed to command her! As respects Roswell Gardiner, or "Gar'ner," as it would be almost thought a breach of decorum, in Suffolk, not to call him, there was no mystery. Six−and−twenty years before the opening of our legend, he had been born on Oyster Pond itself, and of one of its best families. Indeed, he was known to be a descendant of Lyon Gardiner, that engineer who had been sent to the settlement of the lords

Saye and Seal, and Brook, since called Saybrook, near two centuries before, to lay out a town and a fort. This Lyon Gardiner had purchased of the Indians the island in that neighbourhood, which still bears his name. This establishment on the island was made in 1639; and now, at an interval of two hundred and nine years, it is in possession of its ninth owner, all having been of the name and blood of its original patentee. This is great antiquity for America, which, while it has produced many families of greater wealth, and renown, and importance, than that of the Gardiners, has seldom produced any of more permanent local respectability. This is a feature in society that we so much love to see, and which is so much endangered by the uncertain and migratory habits of the people, that we pause a moment to record this instance of stability, so pleasing and so commendable, in an age and country of changes.

The descendants of any family of two centuries standing, will, as a matter of course, be numerous. There are exceptions, certainly; but such is the rule. Thus is it with Lyon Gardiner, and his progeny, who are now to be numbered in scores, including persons in all classes of life, though it carries with it a stamp of caste to be known in Suffolk as having come direct from the lions of old Lyon Gardiner. Roswell, of that name, if not of that Ilk, the island then being the sole property of David Johnson Gardiner, the predecessor and brother of its present proprietor, was allowed to have this claim, though it would exceed our genealogical knowledge to point out the precise line by which this descent was claimed. Young Roswell was of respectable blood on both sides, without being very brilliantly connected, or rich. On the contrary, early left an orphan, fatherless and motherless, as was the case with Mary Pratt, he had been taken from a country academy when only fifteen, and sent to sea, that he might make his own way in the world. Hitherto, his success had not been of a very flattering character. He had risen, notwithstanding, to be the chief mate of a whaler, and bore an excellent reputation among the people of Suffolk. Had it only been a year or two later, when speculation took hold of the whaling business in a larger way, he would not have had the least difficulty in obtaining a ship. As it was, however, great was his delight when Deacon Pratt engaged him as master of the new schooner, which had been already named the "Sea Lion" — or "Sea Lyon," as Roswell sometimes affected to spell the word, in honour of his old progenitor, the engineer.

Mary Pratt had noted all these proceedings, partly with pain, partly with pleasure, but always with great interest. It pained her to find her uncle, in the decline of life, engaging in a business about which he knew nothing. It pained her, still more, to see one whom she loved from habit, if not from moral sympathies, wasting the few hours that remained for preparing for the last great change, in attempts to increase possessions that were already much more than sufficient for his wants. This consideration, in particular, deeply grieved Mary Pratt; for she was profoundly pious, with a conscience that was so sensitive as materially to interfere with her happiness, as will presently be shown, while her uncle was merely a deacon. It is one thing to be a deacon, and another to be devoted to the love of God, and to that love of our species which we are told is the consequence of a love of the Deity. The two are not incompatible; neither are they identical. This Mary had been made to see, in spite of all her wishes to be blind as respects the particular subject from whom she had learned the unpleasant lesson. The pleasure felt by our heroine, for such we now announce Mary Pratt to be, was derived from the preferment bestowed on Roswell Gardiner. She had many a palpitation of the heart when she heard of his good conduct as a seaman, as she always did whenever she heard his professional career alluded to at all. On this point, Roswell was without spot, as all Suffolk knew and confessed. On Oyster Pond, he was regarded as a species of sea lion himself, so numerous and so exciting were the incidents that were related of his prowess among the whales. But, there was a dark cloud before all these glories, in the eyes of Mary Pratt, which for two years had disinclined her to listen to the young man's tale of love, which had induced her to decline accepting a hand that had now been offered to her, with a seaman's ardour, a seaman's frankness, and a seaman's sincerity, some twenty times at least, which had induced her to struggle severely with her own heart, which she had long found to be a powerful ally of her suitor. That cloud came from a species of infidelity that is getting to be so widely spread in America as no longer to work in secret, but which lifts its head boldly among us, claiming openly to belong to one of the numerous sects of the land. Mary had reason to think that Roswell Gardiner denied the divinity of Christ, while he professed to honour and defer to him as a man far elevated above all other men, and as one whose blood had purchased the redemption of his race!

We will take this occasion to say that our legend is not polemical in any sense, and that we have no intention to enter into discussions or arguments connected with this subject, beyond those that we may conceive to be necessary to illustrate the picture which it is our real aim to draw — that of a confiding, affectionate, nay, devoted

woman's heart, in conflict with a deep sense of religious duty.

Still, Mary rejoiced that Roswell Gardiner was to command the Sea Lion. Whither this little vessel, a schooner of about one hundred and forty tons measurement, was to sail, she had not the slightest notion; but, go where it might, her thoughts and prayers were certain to accompany it. These are woman's means of exerting influence, and who shall presume to say that they are without results, and useless? On the contrary, we believe them to be most efficacious; and thrice happy is the man who, as he treads the mazes and wiles of the world, goes accompanied by the petitions of such gentle and pure−minded beings at home, as seldom think of approaching the throne of Grace without also thinking of him and of his necessities. The Romanists say, and say it rightly too, could one only believe in their efficacy, that the prayers they offer up in behalf of departed friends, are of the most endearing nature; but it would be difficult to prove that petitions for the souls of the dead can demonstrate greater interest, or bind the parties more closely together in the unity of love, than those that are constantly offered up in behalf of the living.

The interest that Mary Pratt felt in Roswell's success needs little explanation. In all things he was most agreeable to her, but in the one just mentioned. Their ages, their social positions, their habits, their orphan condition, even their prejudices—and who that dwells aside from the world is without them, when most of those who encounter its collisions still cherish them so strongly?—all united to render them of interest to each other. Nor was Deacon Pratt at all opposed to the connection; on the contrary, he appeared rather to favour it.

The objections came solely from Mary, whose heart was nearly ready to break each time that she was required to urge them. As for the uncle, it is not easy to say what could induce him to acquiesce in, to favour indeed, the addresses to his niece and nearest relative, of one who was known not to possess five hundred dollars in the world. As his opinions on this subject were well known to all on Oyster Pond, they had excited a good deal of speculation; "exercising" the whole neighbourhood, as was very apt to be the case whenever anything occurred in the least out of the ordinary track. The several modes of reasoning were something like these:—

Some were of opinion that the deacon foresaw a successful career to, and eventual prosperity in the habits and enterprise of, the young mate, and that he was willing to commit to his keeping, not only his niece, but the three farms, his "money at use," and certain shares he was known to own in a whaler and no less than three coasters, as well as an interest in a store at Southold; that is to say, to commit them all to the keeping of "young Gar'ner" when he was himself dead; for no one believed he would part with more than Mary, in his own lifetime.

Others fancied he was desirous of getting the orphan off his hands, in the easiest possible way, that he might make a bequest of his whole estate to the Theological Institution that had been conquetting with him now, for several years, through its recognised agents, and to which he had already made the liberal donation of one hundred dollars. It was well ascertained that the agents of that Institution openly talked of getting Deacon Pratt to sit for his portrait, in order that it might be suspended among those of others of its benefactors.

A third set reasoned differently from both the foregoing. The "Gar'ners" were a better family than the Pratts, and the deacon being so "well to do," it was believed by these persons that he was disposed to unite money with name, and thus give to his family consideration, from a source that was somewhat novel in its history. This class of reasoners was quite small, however, and mainly consisted of those who had rarely been off of Oyster Pond, and who passed their days with "Gar'ner's Island" directly before their eyes. A few of the gossips of this class pretended to say that their own young sailor stood next in succession after the immediate family actually in possession should run out, of which there was then some prospect; and that the deacon, sly fellow, knew all about it! For this surmise, to prevent useless expectations in the reader, it may be well to say at once, there was no foundation whatever, Roswell's connection with the owner of the island being much too remote to give him any chance of succeeding to that estate, or to anything else that belonged to him.

There was a fourth and last set, among those who speculated on the deacon's favour towards "young Gar'ner," and these were they who fancied that the old man had opened his heart towards the young couple, and was disposed to render a deserving youth and a beloved niece happy. This was the smallest class of all; and, what is a little remarkable, it contained only the most reckless and least virtuous of all those who dwelt on Oyster Pond. The parson of the parish, or the Pastor as he was usually termed, belonged to the second category, that good man being firmly impressed that most, if not all of Deacon Pratt's worldly effects would eventually go to help propagate the gospel.

Such was the state of things when the deacon returned from meeting, as related in the opening chapter. At his

niece's suggestion of sending to the Harbour for Dr. Sage, he had demurred, not only on account of the expense, but for a still more cogent reason. To tell the truth, he was exceedingly distrustful of any one's being admitted to a communication with Daggett, who had revealed to him matters that he deemed to be of great importance, but who still retained the key to his most material mystery. Nevertheless, decency, to say nothing of the influence of what "folks would say," the Archimedean lever of all society of puritanical origin, exhorted him to consent to his niece's proposal.

"It is such a round−about road to get to the Harbour, Mary," the uncle slowly objected, after a pause.

"Boats often go there, and return in a few hours."

"Yes, yes — *boats;* but I'm not certain it is lawful to work boats of a Sabbath, child."

"I believe, sir, it was deemed lawful to do good on the Lord's day."

"Yes, if a body was certain it *would* do any good. To be sure, Sage is a capital doctor—as good as any going in these parts — but, half the time, money paid for doctor's stuff is thrown away."

"Still, I think it our duty to try to serve a fellow−creature that is in distress; and Daggett, I fear, will not go through the week, if indeed he go through the night."

"I should be sorry to have him die!" exclaimed the deacon, looking really distressed at this intelligence. "Right sorry should I be, to have him die—just yet."

The last two words were uttered unconsciously, and in a way to cause the niece to regret that they had been uttered at all. But they had come, notwithstanding, and the deacon saw that he had been too frank. The fault could not now be remedied, and he was fain to allow his words to produce their own effect.

"Die he will, I fear, uncle," returned Mary, after a short pause; "and sorry should I be to have it so without our feeling the consolation of knowing we had done all in our power to save him, or to serve him."

"It is so far to the Harbour, that no good might come of a messenger; and the money paid *him* would be thrown away, too."

"I dare say Roswell Gar'ner would be glad to go to help a fellow−creature who is suffering. *He* would not think of demanding any pay."

"Yes, that is true. I will say this for Gar'ner, that he is as reasonable a young man, when he does an odd job, as any one I know. I like to employ him."

Mary understood this very well. It amounted to neither more nor less, than the deacon's perfect consciousness that the youth had, again and again, given him his time and his services gratuitously; and that too, more than once, under circumstances when it would have been quite proper that he should look for a remuneration. A slight colour stole over the face of the niece, as memory recalled to her mind these different occasions. Was that sensitive blush owing to her perceiving the besetting weakness of one who stood in the light of a parent to her, and towards whom she endeavoured to feel the affection of a child? We shall not gainsay this, so far as a portion of the feeling which produced that blush was concerned; but, certain it is, that the thought that Roswell had exerted himself to oblige *her* uncle, obtruded itself somewhat vividly among her other recollections.

"Well, sir," the niece resumed, after another brief pause, "we can send for Roswell, if you think it best, and ask him to do the poor man this act of kindness."

"Your messengers after doctors are always in such a hurry! I dare say, Gar'ner would think it necessary to hire a horse to cross Shelter Island, and then perhaps a boat to get across to the Harbour. If no boat was to be found, it might be another horse to gallop away round the head of the Bay. Why, five dollars would scarce meet the cost of such a race!"

"If five dollars were needed, Roswell would pay them out of his own pocket, rather than ask another to assist him in doing an act of charity. But, no horse will be necessary; the whale−boat is at the wharf, and is ready for use, at any moment."

"True, I had forgotten the whale−boat. If that is home, the doctor might be brought across at a reasonable rate; especially if Gar'ner will volunteer. I dare say Daggett's effects will pay the bill for attendance, since they have answered, as yet, to meet the Widow White's charges. As I live, here comes Gar'ner, at this moment, and just as we want him."

"I knew of no other to ask to cross the bays, sir, and sent for Roswell before you returned. Had you not got back, as you did, I should have taken on myself the duty of sending for the doctor."

"In which case, girl, you would have made yourself liable. I have too many demands on my means, to be

scattering dollars broadcast. But, here is Gar'ner, and I dare say all will be made right."

Gardiner now joined the uncle and niece, who had held this conversation in the porch, having hastened up from the schooner the instant he received Mary's summons. He was rewarded by a kind look and a friendly shake of the hand, each of which was slightly more cordial than those that prudent and thoughtful young woman was accustomed to bestow on him. He saw that Mary was a little earnest in her manner, and looked curious, as well as interested, to learn why he had been summoned at all. Sunday was kept so rigidly at the deacon's, that the young man did not dare visit the house until after the sun had set; the New England practice of commencing the Sabbath of a Saturday evening, and bringing it to a close at the succeeding sunset, prevailing among most of the people of Suffolk, the Episcopalians forming nearly all the exceptions to the usage. Sunday evening, consequently, was in great request for visits, it being the favourite time for the young people to meet, as they were not only certain to be unemployed, but to be in their best. Roswell Gardiner was in the practice of visiting Mary Pratt on Sunday evenings; but he would almost as soon think of desecrating a church, as think of entering the deacon's abode, on the Sabbath, until after sunset, or "sun*down* ," to use the familiar Americanism that is commonly applied to this hour of the day. Here he was, now, however, wondering, and anxious to learn why he had been sent for.

"Roswell," said Mary, earnestly, slightly colouring again as she spoke, "we have a great favour to ask. You know the poor old sailor who has been staying at the Widow White's, this month or more—he is now very low; so low, we think he ought to have better advice than can be found on Oyster Pond, and we wish to get Dr. Sage over from the Harbour. How to do it has been the question, when I thought of you. If you could take the whale−boat and go across, the poor man might have the benefit of the doctor's advice in the course of a few hours."

"Yes," put in the uncle, "and I shall charge nothing for the use of the boat; so that, if *you* volunteer, Gar'ner, it will leave so much towards settling up the man's accounts, when settling day comes."

Roswell Gardiner understood both uncle and niece perfectly. The intense selfishness of the first was no more a secret to him than was the entire disinterestedness of the last. He gazed a moment, in fervent admiration, at Mary; then he turned to the deacon, and professed his readiness to "volunteer." Knowing the man so well, he took care distinctly to express the word, so as to put the mind of this votary of Mammon at ease.

"Gar'ner will *volunteer*, then," rejoined the uncle, "and I shall charge nothing for the use of the boat. This is `doing as we would be done by,' and is all right, considering that Daggett is sick and among strangers. The wind is fair, or nearly fair, to go and to come back, and you'll make a short trip of it. Yes, it will cost nothing, and may do the poor man good."

"Now, go at once, Roswell," said Mary, in an entreating manner; "and show the same skill in managing the boat that you did the day you won the race against the Harbour oarsmen."

"I will do all a man can, to oblige you, Mary, as well as to serve the sick. If Dr. Sage should not be at home, am I to look for another physician, Mr. Pratt?"

"Sage *must* be at home—we can employ no other. Your old, long−established physicians understand how to consider practice, and don't make mistakes—by the way, Gar'ner, you needn't mention *my* name in the business, at all. Just say that a sick man, at the Widow White's, needs his services, and that you had *volunteered* to take him across. *That* will bring him—I know the man."

Again Gardiner understood what the deacon meant. He was just as desirous of not paying the physician as of not paying the messenger. Mary understood him, too; and, with a face still more sad than anxiety had previously made it, she walked into the house, leaving her uncle and lover in the porch. After a few more injunctions from the former, in the way of prudent precaution, the latter departed, hurrying down to the water−side, in order to take to the boat.

CHAPTER III.

"All that glisters is not gold,
Often have you heard that told;
Many a man his life hath sold,
But my outside to behold."
Merchant of Venice.

No sooner was Deacon Pratt left alone, than he hastened to the humble dwelling of the Widow White. The disease of Daggett was a general decay that was not attended with much suffering. He was now seated in a homely arm−chair, and was able to converse. He was not aware, indeed, of the real danger of his case, and still had hopes of surviving many years. The deacon came in at the door, just as the widow had passed through it, on her way to visit another crone, who lived hard by, and with whom she was in the constant habit of consulting. She had seen the deacon in the distance, and took that occasion to run across the road, having a sort of instinctive notion that her presence was not required when the two men conferred together. What was the subject of their frequent private communications, the Widow White did not exactly know; but what she imagined, will in part appear in her discourse with her neighbour, the Widow Stone.

"Here's the deacon, ag'in!" cried the Widow White, as she bolted hurriedly into her friend's presence. "This makes the third time he has been at *my* house since yesterday morning. What *can* he mean?"

"Oh! I dare say, Betsy, he means no more than to visit the sick, as he pretends is the reason of his many visits."

"You forget it is Sabba' day!" added the Widow White, with emphasis.

"The better day, the better deed, Betsy."

"I know that; but it's dreadful often for a *man* to visit the sick—three times in twenty−four hours!"

"Yes; 't would have been more nat'ral for a woman, a body must own," returned the Widow Stone, a little drily. "Had the deacon been a woman, I dare say, Betsy, you would not have thought so much of his visits."

"I should think nothing of them at all," rejoined the sister widow, innocently enough. "But it is dreadful odd in a *man* to be visiting about among the sick so much— and he a deacon of the meeting!"

"Yes, it is not as common as it might be, particularly among deacons. But, come in, Betsy, and I will show you the text from which minister preached this morning. It's well worth attending to, for it touches on our forlorn state." Hereupon, the two relicts entered an inner room, where we shall leave them to discuss the merits of the ser mon, interrupted by many protestations on the part of the Widow White, concerning the "dreadful" character of Deacon Pratt's many visits to *her* cottage, "Sabba' days" as well as week days.

In the meanwhile, the interview between the deacon, himself, and the sick mariner, had its course. After the first salutations, and the usual inquiries, the visiter, with some parade of manner, alluded to the fact that he had sent for a physician for the other's benefit.

"I did it of my own head," added the deacon; "or, I might better say, of my own heart. It was unpleasant to me to witness your sufferings, without doing something to alleviate them. To alleviate sorrow, and pain, and the throes of conscience, is one of the most pleasant of all the Christian offices. Yes, I have sent young Gar'ner across the bays, to the Harbour; and three or four hours hence we may look for him back, with Dr. Sage in his boat."

"I only hope I shall have the means to pay for all this expense and trouble, deacon," returned Daggett, in a sort of doubting way, that, for a moment, rendered his friend exceedingly uncomfortable. "Go, I know I must, sooner or later; but could I only live to get to the Vineyard, 't would be found that my share of the old homestead would make up for all my wants. I *may* live to see the end of the other business."

Among the other tales of Daggett, was one which said that he had never yet received his share of his father's property; an account that was true enough, though the truth might have shown that the old man had left nothing worth dividing. He had been a common mariner, like the son, and had left behind him a common mariner's estate. The deacon mused a moment, and then he took an occasion to advert to the subject that had now been uppermost in his thoughts ever since he had been in the habit of holding secret conferences with the sick man. What that subject was, will appear in the course of the conversation that ensued.

"Have you thought of the chart, Daggett," asked the deacon, "and given an eye to that journal?"

"Both, sir. Your kindness to me has been so great, that I am not a man apt to forget it."

"I wish you would show me, yourself, the precise places on the chart, where them islands are to be found. There is nothing like seeing a thing with one's own eyes."

"You forget my oath, deacon Pratt. Every man on us took his bible oath not to point out the position of the islands, until a'ter the year 1820. Then, each and all on us is at liberty to do as he pleases. But, the chart is in my chest, and not only the islands, but the key, is so plainly laid down, that any mariner could find 'em. With that chest, however, I cannot part so long as I live. Get me well, and I will sail in the Sea Lion, and tell your captain Gar'ner all he will have occasion to know. The man's fortune will be made who first gets to either of them places."

"Yes, I can imagine that, easy enough, from your accounts, Daggett — but, how am I to be certain that some other vessel will not get the start of me?"

"Because the secret is now my own. There was but seven on us, in that brig, all told. Of them seven, four died at the islands of the fever, homeward bound; and of the other three, the captain was drowned in the squall I told you of, when he was washed overboard. That left only Jack Thompson and me; and Jack, I think, must be the very man whose death I see'd, six months since, as being killed by a whale on the False Banks."

"Jack Thompson is so common a name, a body never knows. Besides, if he was killed by that whale, he may have told the secret to a dozen before the accident."

"There's his oath ag'in it. Jack was sworn, as well as all on us, and he was a man likely to stand by what he swore to. This was none of your custom−house oaths, of which a chap might take a dozen of a morning, and all should be false; but it was an oath that put a seaman on his honour, since it was a good−fellowship affair, all round."

Deacon Pratt did not *tell* Daggett that Thompson might have as good reasons for disregarding the oath as he had himself; but he *thought* it. These are things that no wise man utters on such occasions; and this opinion touching the equality of the obligation of that oath was one of them.

"There is another hold upon Jack," continued Daggett, after reflecting a moment. "He never could make any fist of latitude and longitude at all, and he kept no journal. Now, should he get it wrong, he and his friends might hunt a year without finding either of the places."

"You think there was no mistake in the pirate's account of that key, and of the buried treasure?" asked the deacon, anxiously.

"I would swear to the truth of what *he* said, as freely as if I had seen the box myself. They was necessitated, as you may suppose, or they never would have left so much gold, in sich an uninhabited place; but leave it they did, on the word of a dying man."

"Dying?—You mean the pirate, I suppose?"

"To be sure I do. We was shut up in the same prison, and we talked the matter over at least twenty times, before he was swung off. When they was satisfied I had nothing to do with the pirates, I was cleared; and I was on my way to the Vineyard, to get some craft or other, to go a'ter these two treasures (for one is just as much a treasure as t'other) when I was put ashore here. It's much the same to me, whether the craft sails from Oyster Pond or from the Vineyard."

"Of course. Well, as much to oblige you, and to put your mind at rest, as anything else, I've bought this Sea Lion, and engaged young Roswell Gar'ner to go out in her, as her master. She'll be ready to sail in a fortnight, and, if things turn out as you say, a good voyage will she make. All interested in her will have reason to rejoice. I see but one thing needful just now, and that is that you should give me the chart at once, in order that I may study it well, before the schooner sails."

"Do you mean to make the v'y'ge yourself, deacon?" asked Daggett, in some surprise.

"Not in person, certainly," was the answer. "I'm getting somewhat too old to leave home for so long a time; and, though born and brought up in sight of salt−water, I've never tried it beyond a trip to York, or one to Boston. Still, I shall have my property in the adventure, and it's nat'ral to keep an eye on *that*. Now, the chart well studied before−hand would be much more useful, it seems to me, than it can possibly be, if taken up at a late hour."

"There will be time enough for captain Gar'ner to overhaul his chart well, afore he reaches either of his ports," returned the mariner, evasively. "If I sail with him, as I suppose I *must*, nothing will be easier than for me to give all the courses and distances."

This reply produced a long and brooding silence. By this time, the reader will have got a clue to the nature of

the secret that was discussed so much, and so often, between these two men. Daggett, finding himself sick, poor, and friendless, among strangers, had early cast about him for the means of obtaining an interest with those who might serve him. He had soon got an insight into the character of Deacon Pratt, from the passing remarks of the Widow White, who was induced to allude to the uncle, in consequence of the charitable visits of the niece. One day, when matters appeared to be at a very low ebb with him, and shortly after he had been put ashore, the sick mariner requested an interview with the deacon himself. The request had been reluctantly granted; but, during the visit, Daggett had managed so well to whet his visiter's appetite for gain, that henceforth there was no trouble in procuring the deacon's company. Little by little had Daggett let out his facts, always keeping enough in reserve to render himself necessary, until he had got his new acquaintance in the highest state of feverish excitement. The schooner was purchased, and all the arrangements necessary to her outfit were pressed forward as fast as prudence would at all allow. The chart, and the latitude and longitude, were the circumstances over which Daggett retained the control. These he kept to himself, though he averred that he had laid down on the charts that were in his chest the two important points which had been the subjects of his communications.

Although this man had been wily in making his revelations; and had chosen his confidant with caution and sagacity, most of that which he related was true. He had belonged to a sealer that had been in a very high southern latitude, where it had made some very important discoveries, touching the animals that formed the objects of its search. It was possible to fill a vessel in those islands in a few weeks; and the master of the sealer, Daggett having been his mate, had made all his people swear on their "bible oaths" not to reveal the facts, except under prescribed circumstances. His own vessel was full when he made the discoveries, but misfortune befel her on her homeward−bound passage, until she was herself totally lost in the West Indies, and that in a part of the ocean where she had no business to be.

In consequence of these several calamities, Daggett and one more man were the sole living depositories of the important information. These men separated, and, as stated, Daggett had reason to think that his former shipmate had been recently killed by a whale. The life and movements of a sailor are usually as eccentric as the career of a comet. After the loss of the sealing−vessel, Daggett remained in the West Indies and on the Spanish Main for some time, until falling into evil company he was imprisoned on a charge of piracy, in company with one who better deserved the imputation. While in the same cell, the pirate had made a relation to Daggett of all the incidents of a very eventful life. Among other things revealed was the fact that, on a certain occasion, he and two others had deposited a very considerable amount of treasure on a key that he described very minutely, and which he now bestowed on Daggett as some compensation for his present unmerited sufferings, his companions having both been drowned by the upsetting of their boat on the return from the key in question. Subsequently, this pirate had been executed, and Daggett liberated. He was not able to get to the key without making friends and confidants on whom he could rely, and he was actually making the best of his way to Martha's Vineyard with that intent, when put ashore on Oyster Pond. In most of that which this man had related to the deacon, therefore, he had told the truth, though it was the truth embellished, as is so apt to be the case with men of vulgar minds. He might have been misled by the narrative of the pirate, but it was his own opinion that he had not been. The man was a Scot, prudent, wary, and sagacious; and in the revelations he made he appeared to be governed by a conviction that his own course was run, and that it was best that his secret should not die with him. Daggett had rendered him certain services, too, and gratitude might have had some influence.

"My mind has been much exercised with this matter of the hidden gold," resumed the deacon, after the long pause already mentioned. "You will remember that there may be lawful owners of that money, should Gar'ner even succeed in finding it."

"'T would be hard for 'em to prove their claims, sir, if what McGosh told me was true. Accordin' to his account, the gold came from all sides—starboard and larboard, as a body might say—and it was jumbled together, and so mixed, that a young girl could not pick out her lover's keepsake from among the other pieces. 'T was the 'arnin's of three years cruisin', as I understood him to say; and much of the stuff had been exchanged in port, especially to get the custom−house officers and king's officers out of its wake. There's king's officers among them bloody Spaniards, Deacon Pratt, all the same as among the English."

"Be temperate in your language, friend; a rough speech is unseemly, particularly of the Lord's day."

Daggett rolled the tobacco over his tongue, and his eyes twinkled with a sort of leer, which indicated that the fellow was not without some humour. He submitted patiently to the rebuke, however, making no remonstrance

against its reception.

"No, no," he added presently, "a starn chase, they say, is a long chase; and the owners of them doubloons, if owners they can now be called, must be out of sight, long before this. Accordin' to McGosh, some of the gold r'aally captured had passed back through the hands of them that sent it to sea, and they did not know their own children!"

"It is certainly hard to identify coin, and it would be a bold man who should stand up, in open court, and make oath to its being the same he had once held. I have heard of the same gold's having answered the purposes of twenty banks, one piece being so like another."

"Ay, ay, sir, gold is gold; and any of it is good enough for me, though doubloons is my favour*ites*. When a fellow has got half−a−dozen doubloons alongside of his ribs, he can look the landlord full in the eye; and no one thinks of saying to sich as he, `it's time to think of shipping ag'in.' "

From the nature of this discourse, it will not be easy for the reader to imagine the real condition of Daggett. At the very moment he was thus conversing of money, and incidentally manifesting his expectations of accompanying Roswell Gardiner in the expedition that was about to sail, the man had not actually four−and−twenty hours of life in him. Mary Pratt had foreseen his true state, accustomed as she was to administer to the wants of the dying; but no one else appeared to be aware of it, not even the deacon. It was true that the fellow spoke, as it might be, from his throat only, and that his voice was hollow, and sometimes reduced to a whisper; but he ascribed this, himself, to the circumstance that he had taken a cold. Whether the deacon believed this account or not, it might be difficult to say; but he appeared to give it full credit. Perhaps his mind was so much occupied with the subject of his discussions with Daggett, that it did not sufficiently advert to the real condition of the man.

Twice, that afternoon, did Deacon Pratt go between the cottage of the Widow White and his own dwelling. As often did the relict fly across the way to express her wonder to the Widow Stone, at the frequency of the rich man's visits. The second time that he came was when he saw the whale−boat rounding the end of Shelter Island, and he perceived, by means of his glass, that Dr. Sage was in it. At this sight the deacon hurried off to the cottage again, having something to say to Daggett that could no longer be delayed.

"The whale−boat will soon be in," he observed, as soon as he had taken his seat, "and we shall shortly have the doctor here. That young Gar'ner does what he has to do, always, with a jerk! There was no such haste, but he seems to be ever in a hurry!"

"Do what is to be done at once, and then lie by, is the sailor's rule, deacon," rejoined the mariner. "Squalls, and gusts, and reefin', and brailin' up, and haulin' down, won't wait for the seaman's leisure. *His* work must be done at once, or it will not be done at all. I'm not afeard of the doctor; so let him come as soon as he pleases. Medicine can't hurt a body, if he don't take it."

"There's one thing I wish to say to you, Daggett, before Dr. Sage comes in. Talking too much may excite you, especially talking of matters that are of interest; and you may give him a false impression of your state, should you get the pulse up, and the cheek flushed, by over−talking."

"I understand you, deacon. My secret is my secret, and no doctor shall get it out of me as long as I know what I say. I'm not so friendly with them, as to seek counsel among doctors."

"Then it's the Lord's day," added the Pharisee, "and it is not seemly to dwell too much on worldly interests, on the Sabbath."

A novice might have been surprised, after what had passed, at the exceeding coolness with which the deacon uttered this sentiment. Daggett was not so in the least, however; for he had taken the measure of his new confidant's conscience, and had lived long enough to know how marked was the difference between professions and practice. Nothing, indeed, is more common than to meet with those who denounce that in others, which is of constant occurrence with themselves; and who rail at vices that are so interwoven with their own moral being, as to compose integral portions of their existence. As for the deacon, he really thought it would be unseemly, and of evil example, for Daggett to converse with Dr. Sage, touching these doubloons, of the Lord's day; while he had felt no scruples himself, a short hour before, to make them the theme of a long and interesting discussion, in his own person. It might not repay us for the trouble, to look for the salve that the worthy man applied to his own conscience, by way of reconciling the apparent contradiction; though it probably was connected with some fancied and especial duty on his part, of taking care of the sick man's secrets. Sickness, it is well known, forms the

apology for many an error, both of omission and commission.

Dr. Sage now arrived; a shrewd, observant, intelligent man, who nad formerly represented the district in which he lived, in Congress. He was skilful in his profession, and soon made up his mind concerning the state of his patient. As the deacon never left him for a moment, to him he first communicated his opinion, after the visit, as the two walked back towards the well−known dwelling of the Pratts.

"This poor man is in the last stages of a decline," said the physician, coolly, "and medicine can do him no good. He *may* live a month; though it would not surprise me to hear of his death in an hour."

"Do you think his time so short!" exclaimed the deacon. "I was in hopes he might last until the Sea Lion goes out, and that a voyage might help to set him up."

"Nothing will ever set him up again, deacon, you may depend on that. No sea−voyage will do him any good; and it is better that he should remain on shore, on account of the greater comforts he will get. Does he belong on Oyster Pond?"

"He comes from somewhere east," answered the deacon, careful not to let the doctor know the place whence the stranger had come, though to little purpose, as will presently be seen. "He has neither friend nor acquaintance, here; though I should think his effects sufficient to meet all charges."

"Should they not be, he is welcome to my visit," answered the doctor, promptly; for he well understood the deacon's motive in making the remark. "I have enjoyed a pleasant sail across the bays with young Gar'ner, who has promised to take me back again. I like boating, and am always better for one of these sailing excursions. Could I carry my patients along, half of them would be benefited by the pure air and the exercise."

"It's a grateful thing to meet with one of your temperament, doctor—but Daggett—"

"Is this man named Daggett?" interrupted the physician.

"I *believe* that is what he calls himself, though a body never is certain of what such people say."

"That's true, deacon; your rambling, houseless sailor is commonly a great liar—at least so have I always found him. Most of their log−books will not do to read; or, for that matter, to be written out, in full. But if this man's name is really Daggett, he must come from the Vineyard. There are Daggetts there in scores; yes, he must be a Vineyard man."

"There are Daggetts in Connecticut, as I know, of a certainty—"

"We all know that, for it is a name of weight there; but the Vineyard is the cradle of the breed. The man has a Vineyard look about him, too. I dare say, now, he has not been home for many a day."

The deacon was in an agony. He was menaced with the very thing he was in the hope of staving off, or a discussion on the subject of the sick man's previous life. The doctor was so mercurial and quick of apprehension, that, once fairly on the scent, he was nearly certain he would extract every thing from the patient. This was the principal reason why the deacon did not wish to send for him; the expense, though a serious objection to one so niggardly, being of secondary consideration when so many doubloons were at state. It was necessary, however, to talk on boldly, as any appearance of hesitation might excite the doctor's distrust. The answers, therefore, came instantaneously.

"It may be as you say, doctor," returned the deacon; "for them Vineyard folks (Anglicé folk) are great wanderers."

"That are they I had occasion to pass a day there, a few years since, on my way to Boston, and I found five women on the island to one man. It must be a particularly conscientious person who could pass a week there, and escape committing the crime of bigamy. As for your bachelors, I have heard that a poor wretch of that description, who unluckily found himself cast ashore there, was married three times the same morning."

As the doctor was a little of a wag, deacon Pratt did not deem it necessary religiously to believe all that now escaped him; but he was glad to keep him in this vein, in order to prevent his getting again on the track of Daggett's early life. The device succeeded, Martha's Vineyard being a standing joke for all in that quarter of the world, on the subject of the ladies.

Mary was in the porch to receive her uncle and the physician. It was unnecessary for her to ask any questions, for her speaking countenance said all that was required, in order to obtain an answer.

"He's in a bad way, certainly, young lady," observed the doctor, taking a seat on one of the benches, "and I can give no hope. How long he may live, is another matter. If he has friends whom he wishes to see, or if he has any affairs to settle, the truth should be told him at once, and no time lost."

"He knows nothing of his friends," interrupted the deacon, quite thrown off his guard by his own eagerness, and unconscious, at the moment, of the manner in which he was committing himself on the subject of a knowledge of the sick man's birth−place, "not having been on the Vineyard, or heard from there, since he first left home, quite fifty years since."

The doctor saw the contradiction, and it set him thinking, and conjecturing, but he was too discreet to betray himself. An explanation there probably was, and he trusted to time to ascertain it.

"What has become of captain Gar'ner?" he asked, looking curiously around, as if he expected to find him tied to the niece's apron−string.

Mary blushed, but she was too innocent to betray any real confusion.

"He has gone back to the schooner, in order to have the boat ready for your return."

"And that return must take place, young lady, as soon as I have drunk two cups of your tea. I have patients at the Harbour who must yet be visited this evening, and the wind goes down with the sun. Let the poor man take the draughts I have left for him — they will soothe him, and help his breathing—more than this my skill can do nothing for him. Deacon, you need say nothing of this visit—I am sufficiently repaid by the air, the sail, and Miss Mary's welcome. I perceive that she is glad to see me, and that is something, between so young a woman and so old a man. And now for the two cups of tea."

The tea was drunk, and the doctor took his leave, shaking his head as he repeated to the niece, that the medical science could do nothing for the sick man.

"Let his friends know his situation at once, deacon," he said, as they walked towards the wharf, where the whale−boat was all ready for a start. "There is not an hour to lose. Now I think of it, the Flash, captain Smith, is to take a cargo of oil to Boston, and sails to−morrow. I can write a line by her, as it is ten to one she will go into the Hole. All our craft get into that Hole, or into Tarpaulin Cove, before they venture across the Shoals; and a letter addressed to any person of the name of Daggett might find the right man. I'll write it this very evening."

The announcement of this intention threw the deacon into a cold−sweat, but he did not think it prudent to say aught against it. He had bought the Sea Lion, engaged Roswell Gardiner, and otherwise expended a large sum of money, in the expectation of handling those doubloons, to say nothing of the furs; and here was a chance of all his calculations being defeated by the interference of impertinent and greedy relatives! There was no remedy but patience, and this the deacon endeavoured to exercise.

Deacon Pratt did not accompany the doctor beyond the limits of his own orchard. It was not deemed seemly for a member of the meeting to be seen walking out on the Sabbath, and this was remembered in season to prevent neighbourly comments. It is true, the *doctor* might furnish an apology; but, your strictly religious people, when they undertake the care of other people's consciences, do not often descend to these particulars.

No sooner had Gardiner and the physician re−embarked, than the deacon returned to the cottage of the Widow White. Here he had another long and searching discourse with the sick mariner. Poor Daggett was wearied with the subject; but Dr. Sage's predictions of an early termination of the case, and the possibility that kinsmen might cross over from the `Vineyard,' in order to learn what the long absent man had in his possession, acted on him as keen incentives. By learning the most material facts now, the Sea Lion might get so far ahead of all competitors as to secure the prizes, even should Daggett let others into the secret, and start another vessel on the same expedition. His own schooner was nearly ready for sea, whereas time would be needed in order to make an entire outfit.

But Daggett did not appear to be disposed to be more communicative than heretofore. He went over the narrative of the discovery of the sealing−island, and gave a graphic account of the number and tame condition of the animals who frequented it. A man might walk in their midst without giving the smallest alarm. In a word, all that a gang of good hands would have to do, would be to kill, and skin, and secure the oil. It would be like picking up dollars on a sea−beach. Sadly! sadly! indeed, was the deacon's cupidity excited by this account; a vivid picture of whales, or seals, having some such effect on the imagination of a true Suffolk county man, or more properly on that of an East−ender, as those who live beyond Riverhead are termed, as a glowing account of a prairie covered with wheat has on that of a Wolverine or a Buckeye; or an enumeration of cent per cent. has on the feelings of a Wall−street broker. Never before had Deacon Pratt been so much "exercised" with a love of Mammon. The pirate's tale, which was also recapitulated with much gusto, scarce excited him as much as Daggett's glowing account of the number, condition, and size of the seals.

Nothing was withheld but the latitudes and longitudes. No art of the deacon's, and he practised many, could extort from the mariner these most material facts, without which all the rest were useless; and the old man worked himself into a fever almost as high as that which soon came over Daggett, in the effort to come at these facts—but all in vain.

At that hour the pulse of the sick man usually quickened; but, on this occasion, it fairly thumped. He had excited himself, as well as his listener; and the inconsiderate manner in which both had yielded up their energies to these enticing images of wealth, contributed largely to increase the evil. At length, exhaustion came to put an end to the scene, which was getting to be dramatic as well as revolting.

So conscious was the deacon, on returning home that evening, that his mind was not in such a condition as it behoved him to keep it in on the Lord's Day, that he was afraid to encounter the placid eye of his devout and single−minded niece. Instead of joining her, and uniting in the services that were customary at that hour, he walked in the adjoining orchard until near nine o'clock. Mammon was uppermost in the place of the Deity, and habit offered too strong a barrier to permit him to bring, as it were, the false god openly into the presence of the true.

CHAPTER IV.

"Oh! mourn not for them, their grief is o'er,
Oh! weep not for them, they weep no more;
For deep is their sleep, though cold and hard
Their pillow may be in the old kirk−yard."
Bayly."

Early on the succeeding morning, the whole household of deacon Pratt, himself included, were up and doing. It was as the sun came up out of the waters that Mary and her uncle met in the porch, as if to greet each other.

"Yonder comes the Widow White, and seemingly in a great hurry," said the niece, anxiously; "I am afraid her patient is worse!"

"He seemed better when I left him last evening, though a little tired with talking," returned the uncle. "The man *would* talk, do all I could to stop him. I wanted to get but two or three words from him, and he used a thousand, without once using the few I wished most to hear. A talking man is that Daggett, I can tell you, Mary!"

"He'll never talk ag'in, deacon!" exclaimed the Widow White, who had got so near as to hear the concluding words of the last speaker—"He'll never say good or evil more!"

The deacon was so confounded as to be speechless. As for Mary, she expressed her deep regrets that the summons should have been so sudden, and that the previous preparation was so small; matters that gave her far more concern than any other consideration. They were not long left to conjectures, the voluble widow soon supplying all the facts that had occurred. It appeared that Daggett died in the night, the widow having found him stiff and cold on visiting his bed−side a few minutes before. That this somewhat unexpected event, as to the time at least, was hastened by the excitement of the conversation mentioned, there can be little doubt, though no comment was made on the circumstance. The immediate cause of death was suffocation from the effects of suppuration, as so often occurs in rapid consumption.

It would be representing deacon Pratt as a worse man than he actually was, to say that this sudden death had no effect on his feelings. For a short time it brought him back to a sense of his own age, and condition, and prospects. For half an hour these considerations troubled him, but the power of Mammon gradually resumed its sway, and the unpleasant images slowly disappeared in others that he found more agreeable. Then he began seriously to bethink him of what the circumstances required to be done.

As there was nothing unusual in the death of Daggett, the investigations of the coroner were not required. It was clearly a natural, though a sudden death. It remained, therefore, only to give directions about the funeral, and to have an eye to the safe−keeping of the effects of the deceased. The deacon assumed the duty of taking charge of everything. The chest of Daggett was removed to his house for safe−keeping, the key having been taken from the pocket of his vest, and the necessary orders were given for the final disposition of the body.

The deacon had another serious, and even painful half−hour, when he first looked upon the corpse. There it lay, a senseless shell, deserted by its immortal tenant, and totally unconscious of that subject which had so lately and so intensely interested them both. It appeared as if the ghastly countenance expressed its sense of the utter worthlessness of all earthly schemes of wealth and happiness. Eternity seemed stamped upon the pinched and sunken features; not eternity in the sense of imperishable matter, but in the sense of the fate of man. Had all the gold of the Indies lain within his reach, the arm of Daggett was now powerless to touch it. His eye could no longer gloat upon treasure, nor any part of his corporeal system profit by its possession. A more striking commentary on the vanity of human wishes could not, just then, have been offered to the consideration of the deacon. His moral being was very strangely constituted. From early childhood he had been accustomed to the cant of religion; and, in many instances, impressions had been made on him that produced effects that it was easy to confound with the fruits that real piety brings forth. This is a result that we often find in a state of society in which appearances are made to take the place of reality. What is more, it is a result that we may look for equally among the formalists of established sects, and among the descendants of those who once deserted the homes of their fathers in order to escape from the impiety of so meretricious an abuse of the substance of godliness. In the case of the latter, appearances occupy the mind more than that love of God which is the one great test of human

conversion from sin to an improving state of that holiness, without which we are told no man shall see his Creator; without which, indeed, no man could endure to look upon that dread Being face to face.

The deacon had all the forms of godliness in puritanical perfection. He had never taken the "name of his God in vain," throughout the course of a long life; but, he had abstained from this revolting and gratuitous sin, more because it was a part of the teachings of his youth so to do, and because the neighbours would have been shocked at its commission, than because he felt the deep reverence for his Marker, which it became the insignificant being that was the work of his hand to entertain; and which would, of itself, most effectually have prevented any wanton use of his holy name, let the neighbours feel or think as they might on the subject. In this way Deacon Pratt might be said to have respected most of the commands of the decalogue; not, however, because the spirit of God impelled him, through love, to reverence and obey, but because he had been brought up in a part of the country where it was considered seemly and right to be moral, to the senses, at least, if not to the all−seeing eye above. It was in this way that the deacon had arrived at his preferment in the meeting. He had all the usual sectarian terms at the end of his tongue; never uttered a careless expression; was regular at meeting; apparently performed all the duties that his church required of its professors, in the way of mere religious observances; yet was he as far from being in that state which St. Paul has described succinctly as "for me to live in Christ, and to die is gain," as if he had been a pagan. It was not the love of God that was active in his soul, but the love of self; and he happened to exhibit his passion under these restrained and deceptive forms, simply because he had been born and educated in a state of society where they composed an integral part of existence. Covetousness was the deacon's besetting sin; and, as it is a vice that may be pretty well concealed, with a little attention to appearances, it was the less likely to expose him to comments than almost any other sin. It is true, that the neighbourhood sometimes fancied him `close,' or, as they expressed it, "cluss," and men got to look sharply to their own interests in their dealings with him; but, on the whole, there was perhaps more reason to apprehend, in such a community, that the example of so good a man should be accepted as authority, than that his acts should impeach his character, or endanger his standing.

Very different were the situation, feelings, and motives of the niece. She devoutly loved God, and, as a consequence, all of those whom he had created, and placed around her. Her meek and gentle spirit led her to worship in sincerity and truth; and all that she thought, said, and did, was under the correction of the principles such motives could best produce. Her woman's love for Roswell Gardiner alone troubled her otherwise happy and peaceful existence. That, indeed, had caused her more than once to falter in her way; but she struggled with the weakness, and had strong hopes of being able to overcome it. To accept of any other man as a husband, was, in her eyes, impossible; with the feelings she was fully conscious of entertaining towards him, it would have been both indelicate and unjust: but, to accept *him*, while he regarded the Redeemer as only man, however pure and exalted, she felt would be putting herself willingly, or wilfully, into the hands of the great enemy of her salvation. Often and often had she prayed for her lover, even more devoutly, and with hotter tears, than she had ever prayed for herself; but, so far as she could discover, without any visible fruits. His opinions remained unchanged, and his frank nature forbade him from concealing their state from Mary. In this way, then, was unhappiness stealing on the early and innocent hours of one who might, otherwise, have been so contented and blessed. It formed a somewhat peculiar feature in her case, that her uncle favoured the views of her suitor. This rendered the trials of the niece so much the more severe, as she had no other judgment to sustain her than her own, fortified as that was, however, by the consciousness of right, and the support of that great power which never deserts the faithful.

Such was the state of feeling among some of the principal actors of our tale, when the sudden death of Daggett occurred. The body was not removed from the house of the Widow White, but the next morning it was conveyed to the "grave−yard"—`church−yard' would have sounded too episcopal—and interred in a corner that was bestowed on the unhonoured and unknown. It was then, only, that the deacon believed he was the sole depository of the important secrets. He had the charts in his possession, and no more revelations could pass the lips of Daggett. Should the friends of the deceased sailor hear of his death, and come to look after his effects, there was very little probability of their finding anything among them to furnish a clue to either the new sealing−ground, or to the buried treasure of the pirate. In order to be secured, he even went a little beyond his usual precautions, actually discharging all indebtedness of the deceased to the Widow White out of his own pocket, by giving to her the sum of ten dollars. This was handsome compensation in her eyes as well as in his, and he quieted the suspicions so great and unusual an act of liberality would be apt to awaken, by saying, "he would look to the

friends, or if they failed him, to the effects, for his returns; for it was better he should lose by the stranger, than a lone widow." He also paid for the coffin, the digging of the grave, and the other light expenses of the interment. In a word, the deacon endeavoured to hush all impertinent inquiries by applying the salve of silver, wherever it was needed.

The chest had been removed to a large, light closet, that communicated with the deacon's own room. When all his accounts were settled, thither he repaired, armed with the key that was to expose so much treasure to his longing eyes. Some slight qualms arose, after he had locked himself in the room, touching the propriety of his opening the chest. It was not his, certainly; but he put such a construction on the nature of the revelations of Daggett, as he thought would fully justify him in proceeding. He had purchased the schooner expressly to go in quest of the seals and the treasure. This he had done with Daggett's knowledge and acquiescence; nor did he conceive that his own rights were lessened by the mariner's decease. As for himself, the deacon had never believed that the Martha's Vineyard man could accompany the expedition, so that his presence or absence could have no influence on his own rights. It is true, the deacon possessed no direct legal transfer of the charts; but he inferred that all the previous circumstances gave him sufficient claims to justify him in, at least, looking into their contents.

It was a solemn, as well as an anxious moment to the deacon, when he first raised the lid of the chest. Solemn, because it was not possible to forget the recent decease of its late owner; and anxious, inasmuch as he had no certainty that he should find even on the charts, the places of which he sought the latitudes and longitudes. Certainly, nothing like treasure presented itself to his eyes, when all that Daggett had left behind him lay exposed to view. The chest of a common sailor is usually but ill−furnished, unless it may be just after his return from a long and well−paid voyage, and before he has had time to fall back on his purchases of clothes, as a fund to supply his cravings for personal gratification. This of Daggett's formed no exception to the rule. The few clothes it contained were of the lightest sort, having been procured in warm climates, and were well worn, in addition. The palms, needles, and shells, and carving in whale−bone, had all been sold, to meet their owner's wants, and nothing of that sort remained. There were two old, dirty, and ragged charts, and on these the deacon laid his hands, much as the hawk, in its swoop, descends on its prey. As it did, however, a tremor came over him, that actually compelled him to throw himself into a chair, and to rest for a moment.

The first of the charts opened, the deacon saw at a glance, was that of the antarctic circle. There, sure enough, was laid down in ink, three or four specks for islands, with lat. —°, —", and long. —°, —", written out, at its side. We are under obligations not to give the figures that stand on the chart, for the discovery is deemed to be important, by those who possess the secret, even to the present hour. We are at liberty to tell the whole story, with this one exception; and we shall proceed to do so, with a proper regard to the pledges made in the premises.

The deacon scarcely breathed as he assured himself of the important fact just mentioned, and his hands trembled to such a degree as to fairly cause the paper of the chart to rattle. Then he had recourse to an expedient that was strictly characteristic of the man. He wrote the latitude and longitude in a memorandum−book that he carried on his person; after which he again sat down, and with great care erased the island and the writing from the chart, with the point of a penknife. This done, his mind felt infinitely relieved. Nor was this all. Charts purchased for the schooner were lying on a table in his own room, and he projected on one of them, as well as his skill would allow, the sealing−islands he had just removed from the chart left by Daggett. There he also wrote, in pencil, the important figures that we are commanded not to reveal.

The second chart was then opened. It was of the West Indies, and particularly of certain keys. One of these last was pointed out in a way to leave no doubt that it was meant for the key indicated by the pirate. The same prohibition existing as to this key that exists in respect to the sealing−island, we cannot be more explicit. The writing near this key being in pencil, it was effectually removed by means of India−rubber. When this was done, the deacon used the precaution to rub some material on the clean place made by his knife, on the other chart, when he believed no eye could detect what had just been done. Having marked the proper key, on his own chart of the West Indies, he replaced the charts of Daggett in the chest, and locked all up again. The verbal accounts of the sick mariner he had already transferred to paper, and he now believed himself secure of all the information that was necessary to render him the richest man in Suffolk!

When they next met, Mary was surprised at the gaiety of her uncle, and that so soon after a funeral. He had a lightened heart, however; for after leading him on, step by step, until he had gone so far as to purchase and fit out

the schooner, Daggett had pertinaciously refused to enter into those minute particulars which it is even now forbidden us to state, and a want of which would have rendered his previous expenditures useless. Death, however, had lifted the veil, and the deacon now believed himself secure in his knowledge.

An hour or two later, Deacon Pratt and his niece were seated, in company with two others, at the dinner−table. The fare was simple, but good. Fish enters largely into the domestic consumption of all those who dwell near the water, in that part of the country; and, on that particular occasion, the uncle had, in the lightness of his heart, indulged in what, for him, was a piece of extravagance. In all such regions there are broken−down, elderly men, who live by taking fish. Liquor has usually been their great enemy, and all have the same generic character of laziness, shiftless and ill−regulated exertions, followed by much idleness, and fits of intemperance, that in the end commonly cause their deaths. Such a man fished between Oyster Pond and Shelter Island, being known to all who dwelt within his beat, by the familiar appellation of Baiting Joe.

Shortly after the discovery of the latitudes and longitudes on the charts, the deacon had gone to the wharf, in his impatience to see how Roswell Gardiner got on with the Sea Lion. The young man, with his gang of hands, was hard at work, and a very material difference was to be observed in the state of the schooner, from that in which she was described in our opening chapter. Her rigging had all been set up, every spar was in its place, and altogether she had a look of preparation and completeness. Her water was taking in, and from time to time a country wagon, or an ox−cart, delivered alongside articles belonging to her stores. Of cargo, proper, there was none, or next to none; a sealer carrying little besides salt, and her stores. In a word, the work was rapidly advancing, and "Captain Gar'ner" told his impatient owner that the craft would be ready to put to sea in all that week.

"I have succeeded in engaging the first officer I wanted," added the young man, "and he is now busy in looking up and shipping hands, at Stonington. We must get half−a−dozen reliable men on the main, and then we can take some of our neighbours here, as beginners, just to please them."

"Yes, ship a goodly number of green hands," said the deacon, zealously. "They work at cheap `lays,' and leave the owners the greater profits. Well, well, Captain Gar'ner, things seem to be doing well in your hands, and I will leave you. About two hours after dinner, I shall want to have a word with you in private, and will thank you just to step across to the house, where you will be certain to find me. Baiting Joe seems to have hooked something there, in 'arnest."

"That has he! I'll answer for it that he has a sheepshead at the end of his line that will weigh eight or ten pounds."

The words of Gardiner proved true, for Joe actually pulled in a fish of the description and weight he had just mentioned. It was this sight that, in the lightness of his heart, tempted the deacon to a little extravagance. Joe was called ashore, and after a good deal of chaffering, the deacon bought the prize for half a dollar. As Mary was celebrated for her skill in preparing this particular fish, the deacon, before he left the wharf, with the sheepshead hanging from one hand, fairly invited "Captain Gar'ner" so to time his visit to the house, as to be present at the feast.

Nor was this all. Before the deacon had settled with Joe, the Rev. Mr. Whittle came on the wharf, confessedly in quest of something to eat. The regular occupations of this divine were writing sermons, preaching, holding conferences, marrying, christening and burying, and hunting up "something to eat." About half of his precious time was consumed in the last of these pursuits. We do not wish to represent this clergyman as having an undue gastronomic propensity; but, as having a due one, and a salary that was so badly paid as quite to disable him from furnishing his larder, or cellar, with anything worth mentioning, in advance. Now, he was short of flour; then, the potatoes were out; next, the pork was consumed; and always there was a great scarcity of groceries, and other necessaries of that nature. This neglect on the part of the parishioners, coupled with a certain improvidence on that of the pastor, left the clergyman's family completely in that state which is usually described as being in the "from hand to mouth" condition, and which consequently occupied so large a portion of the good man's time in "providing."

Deacon Pratt felt a little conscious and awkward, at encountering the Rev. Mr. Whittle. It was not the fish that caused the first any concern. Fifty times had he met and gone by his pastor, running about with a perplexed and hungry look, when his own hands, or chaise, or wagon, as the case might be, contained enough to render the divine's family happy and contented for a week. No compunctions of that sort ever troubled the deacon's breast.

But, he had missed the afternoon's meeting the last Sabbath, a delinquency for which he felt an awkwardness in accounting, while he saw its necessity. The salutations passed as usual, the one party thinking intently on the absence from service, and the other of the sheepshead. Now, it happily occurred to the deacon to invite his pastor also to partake of the fish. There was enough for all; and, though no one on Oyster Pond was much in the habit of entertaining at dinner, it was by no means unusual for the parishioners to have their pastor for a guest. This lucky invitation so occupied the parties that nothing was said about an occurrence so very unusual as the deacon's absence from "meeting" the "last Sabba' day afternoon."

By these simple means the party at table consisted of the deacon himself, Mary, Roswell Gardiner, and the Rev. Mr. Whittle. The fish was excellent, being so fresh and so skilfully prepared; and Mary was highly complimented by all who ate of it, for her share in the entertainment. But Mary Pratt seemed sad. She had not yet recovered from the melancholy feelings awakened by the recent death and funeral; and then her thoughts recurred, with few interruptions, to the long voyage of Roswell, and most especially to the unhappy state of religious belief in which he would undertake so hazardous an expedition. Several times had she hinted to the clergyman her desire that he would `talk to Roswell;' but the good man, though well−enough inclined, had really so much to do in `providing,' that it was not a very easy matter for him to go beyond the beaten track, in order to probe the consciences of particular individuals. He promised fairly, but always forgot to perform; and in this he imitated closely the example set him by his parishioners, in reference to his own salary.

Roswell Gardiner, therefore, remained in his unbelief; or, what was tantamount to it, under the influence of a set of opinions that conflicted with all that the church had taught since the time of the apostles — at least so thought Mary, and so think we.

On the contrary, the pastor and the deacon were particularly gay, for men of their habitual sobriety. Although those were not the days of temperance, *par excellence*, neither of the guests was what might be termed even a moderate drinker. For a novelty in a sailor, Roswell Gardiner seldom touched anything but water, while the other two took their rum and water; but it was in moderation, as all the gifts of God should be used. As for the intemperate cry which makes it a sin to partake of any liquor, however prudently, it was then never heard in the land. On the whole, the clergy of all denominations might be set down as brandy−and−water men, a few occasionally carrying out their principle to exaggeration. But the Rev. Mr. Whittle was a sober man, and, though he saw no great harm in enlivening his heart and cheering his spirits with brandy taken in small quantities, he was never known to be any the worse for his libations. It was the same with the deacon, though *he* drank rum−and−water of choice; and no other beverage, Mary's currant−wine and cider excepted, was ever seen on his table.

One thing may be said of liquor, whether it be in its favour or not; it usually brings out all there is of the facetious in a man, rendering him conversable and pleasant; for the time being, at least. This was apt to be peculiarly the case with the Rev. Mr. Whittle and his deacons. In their ordinary intercourse with their fellow−creatures, these good people had taken up the idea that, in order to be religious, their countenances must be sombre, and that care and anxiety should be stamped on their faces, just as if they had no confidence in the efficacy of the redemption. Few, indeed, are they who vindicate their professions by living at peace with God and man! At Oyster Pond, it was much the fashion to imagine that the more a person became impressed with the truths of *his*, and particularly with those of *her*, lost condition, the more it became the party to be cynical, and to pry into, and comment, on the backslidings of the entire community. This weakness, however, was characteristic of neither the pastor nor the deacon, each of whom regarded his professions too much in the light of a regular "business transaction," to descend into these little abuses. As for Mary, good creature; her humility was so profound as to cause her to believe herself among the weakest and least favoured of all who belonged to meeting.

"I was sorry that my late journey into Connecticut prevented my seeing the poor man who was so suddenly taken away from the house of Widow White," observed the Rev. Mr. Whittle, some little time after he had made his original attack on the sheepshead. "They tell me it was a hopeless case from the first?"

"So Dr. Sage considered it," answered the deacon. "Captain Gar'ner volunteered to go across for the doctor in *my* boat—" with a heavy emphasis on the possessive pronoun — "and we had him to look at the patient. But, if the salt−water *be* good for consumptive people, as some pretend, I think there is generally little hope for seamen whose lungs once give way."

"The poor man was a mariner, was he? I did not know his calling, but had rather got the impression that he was

a husbandman. Did he belong to Oyster Pond?"

"No; we have none of the name of Daggett here, which is a tribe on the Vineyard. Most of the Daggetts are sea−faring folks (folk, *Anglicé*), and this man was one of that class, *I believe;* though I know nothing of him, or of his pursuits, except by a word, here and there, dropped in discourse."

The deacon thought himself safe in venturing this little departure from the literal truth, inasmuch as no one had been present, or he *thought* no one had ever been present at his many secret conferences with the deceased mariner. Little, however, did he understand the character of the Widow White, if he flattered himself with holding any discourse under her roof, in which she was not to participate in its subject. So far from this having been the case, the good woman had contrived to obtain, not only a listening−place, but a peeping−hole, where she both heard and saw most of that which passed between her guest and the deacon. Had her powers of comprehension been equal to her will, or had not her mind been prepossessed with the notion that the deacon *must* be after herself, old Suffolk would have rung with the marvels that were thus revealed. Not only would an unknown sealing−island been laid before the East−enders, but twenty such islands, and keys without number, each of which contained more hidden treasure than `Gar'ner's Island,' Oyster Pond, the Plumb and Fisher's, and all the coasts of the Sound put together; enriched as each and all of these places were thought to be, by the hidden deposits of Kidd.

Nothing but an accident had prevented these rumours from being circulated. It happened that on only one occasion Daggett was explicit and connected in his narrative. At all other times his discourse was broken, consisting more in allusions to what had been previously said than in direct and clear revelations. The widow, most unfortunately for her means of information, was with "neighbour Stone" when the connected narrative was given, and all that she knew was disjointed, obscure, and a little contradictory. Still, it was sufficient to set her thinking intensely, and sufficient to produce a material influence on the future fortunes of the Sea Lion, as will appear in the sequel.

"It is always a misfortune for a human being to take his departure away from home and friends," observed the Rev. Mr. Whittle. "Here was an immortal soul left to take its last great flight, unsupported, I dare say, except by the prayers of a few pious neighbours. I regret having been absent during the time he was here. Getting home of a Friday only, I was compelled to devote Saturday to preparations for the Sabbath; and Sabbath−night, as I understand it, he departed."

"We are all in the hands of Divine Providence," said the deacon, with a sober mien, "and it is our duty to submit. To my thinking, Oyster Pond catches more of its share of the poor and needy, who are landed from vessels passing east and west, and add considerably to our burthens."

This was said of a spot as much favoured by Divine Providence, in the way of abundance, as any other in highly−favoured America. Some eight or ten such events as the landing of a stranger had occurred within the last half−century, and this was the only instance in which either of them had cost the deacon a cent. But, so little was he accustomed, and so little was he disposed, to give, that even a threatened danger of that sort amounted, in his eyes, nearly to a loss.

"Well," exclaimed the literal Roswell Gardiner, "I think, deacon, that we have no great reason to complain. Southold, Shelter Island, and all the islands about here, for that matter, are pretty well off as to poor, and it is little enough that we have to pay for their support."

"That's the idea of a young man who never sees the tax−gatherers," returned the deacon. "However, there are islands, captain Gar'ner, that are better off still, and I hope you will live to find them."

"Is our young friend to sail in the Sea Lion in quest of any such?" inquired the pastor, a little curiously.

The deacon now repented him of the allusion. But his heart had warmed with the subject, and the rum−and−water had unlocked some of its wards. So timid and nervous had he become, however, that the slightest indication of anything like a suspicion that his secrets were known, threw him into a sweat.

"Not at all—not at all—the captain goes on well−known and beaten ground—Sam, what is wanting, now?"

"Here is Baiting Joe comed up from the wharf, wanting to see master," returned a grey−headed negro, who had formerly been a slave, and who now lived about the place, giving his services for his support.

"Baiting Joe! He is not after his sheepshead, I hope— if he is, he is somewhat late in the day."

"Ay, ay," put in the young sailor, laughing—"tell him, Sam, that no small part of it is bound to the southward, meaning to cross the line in my company, and that right soon."

"I paid Joe his half−dollar, certainly — *you* saw me pay him, captain Gar'ner."

"I don't think it's any sich thing, master. There is a stranger with Joe, that he has ferried across from Shelter Island, and *he's* comed up from the wharf too. Yes — that's it, master."

A stranger! Who could it be? A command was given to admit him, and no sooner did Mary get a sight of his person, than she quietly arose to procure a plate, in order that he, too, might have his share of the fish.

CHAPTER V.

"Stranger! I fled the home of grief,
At Connocht Moran's tomb to fall;
I found the helmet of my chief,
His bow still hanging on our wall."
Campbell.

"Amphibious!" exclaimed Roswell Gardiner, in an aside to Mary, as the stranger entered the room, following Baiting Joe's lead. The last only came for his glass of rum−and−water, served with which by the aid of the negro, he passed the back of his hand across his mouth, napkinfashion, nodded his "good−day," and withdrew. As for the stranger, Roswell Gardiner's term being particularly significant, it may be well to make a brief explanation.

The word "amphibious" is, or rather *was*, well applied to many of the seamen, whalers, and sealers, who dwelt on the eastern end of Long Island, or the Vineyard, around Stonington, and, perhaps we might add, in the vicinity of New Bedford. The Nantucket men had not base enough, in the way of terra firma, to come properly within the category. The class to which the remark strictly applied were sailors without being seamen, in the severe signification of the term. While they could do all that was indispensably necessary to take care of their vessels, were surpassed by no other mariners in enterprise, and daring, and hardihood, they knew little about "crowning cables," "carrickbends," and all the mysteries of "knotting," "graffing," and "splicing." A regular Delaware−bay seaman would have turned up his nose in contempt at many of their ways, and at much of their real ignorance; but, when it came to the drag, or to the oar, or to holding out in bad weather, or to any of the more manly qualities of the business, he would be certain to yield his respect to those at whom it had originally been his disposition to laugh. It might best describe these men to say that they bore some such relation to the thorough−bred tar, as the volunteer bears to the regular soldier.

As a matter of course, the stranger was invited to take his seat at the table. This he did without using many phrases; and Mary had reason to believe, by his appetite, that he thought well of her culinary skill. There was very little of the sheepshead left when this, its last assailant, shoved his plate back, the signal that he could do no more. He then finished a glass of rum−and−water, and seemed to be in a good condition to transact the business that had brought him there. Until this moment, he had made no allusion to the motive of his visit, leaving the deacon full of conjectures.

"The fish of Peconic and Gar'ner's is as good as any I know," coolly observed this worthy, after certainly having established some claim to give an opinion on the subject. "We think ourselves pretty well off, in this respect, on the Vineyard—"

"On the Vineyard!" interrupted the deacon, without waiting to hear what was to follow.

"Yes, sir, on Martha's Vineyard—for that's the place I come from. Perhaps I ought to have introduced myself a little more particularily—I come from Martha's Vineyard, and my name is Daggett."

The deacon fairly permitted the knife, with which he was spreading some butter, to fall upon his plate. "Daggett" and the "Vineyard" sounded ominously. Could it be that Dr. Sage had managed to get a message so far, in so short a time; and had this amphibious inhabitant of the neighbouring island come already to rob him of his treasure? The perceptions of the deacon, at first, were far from clear; and he even imagined that all he had expended on the Sea Lion was thrown away, and that he might be even called on to give some sort of an account, in a court of chancery, of the information obtained from the deceased. A little reflection, however, sufficed to get the better of this weakness, and he made a civil inclination of his head, as much as to tell the stranger, notwithstanding his name and place of residence, that he was welcome. Of course no one but the deacon himself knew of the thoughts that troubled him, and after a very brief delay, the guest proceeded with his explanations of the object of his visit.

"The Daggetts are pretty numerous on the Vineyard," continued the stranger, "and when you name one of them it is not always easy to tell just what family he belongs to. One of our coasters came into the Hull (Holmes' Hole was meant) a few weeks since, and reported that she spoke an inward−bound brig, off New Haven, from which she heard that the people of that craft had put ashore, at Oyster Pond, a seafaring man, who belonged to the

Vineyard, and who was bound home, arter an absence of fifty years, and whose name was Thomas Daggett. The word passed through the island, and a great stir it made among all us Daggetts. There's plenty of our Vineyard people wandering about the 'arth, and sometimes one drops in upon the island, just to die. As most of them that come back bring something with them, it's gen'rally thought a good sign to hear of their arrival. After casting about, and talking with all the old folks, it has been concluded that this Thomas Daggett must be a brother of my father's, who went to sea about fifty years since, and has never been seen or heard of since. He's the only person of the name for whom we can't account, and the family have got me to come across to look him up."

"I am sorry, Mr. Daggett, that you are so late," answered the deacon, slowly, as if unwilling to give pain. "Had you come last week, you might have seen and conversed with your relation; or had you come early this morning, only, you might have attended his funeral. He came among us a stranger, and we endeavoured to imitate the conduct of the good Samaritan. I believe he had all the comforts that Oyster Pond can give; and, certainly, he had the best advice. Dr. Sage, of Sag Harbour, attended him in his last illness—Dr. Sage, of the Harbour: doubtless you have heard *him* mentioned?"

"I know him by reputation, and make no doubt all was done that could be done. As the sloop I named lay by the brig some time, in a calm, the two captains had a long talk together; and ours had prepared us to hear of our kinsman's speedy dissolution. He was in a decline when he landed, and we suppose that no human skill could have saved him. As he had so skilful a physician, and one who came so far, I suppose my uncle must have left property?"

This was a home−thrust; but, fortunately for the deacon, he had already prepared himself with an answer.

"Sea−faring men, that are landed on points and capes, from inward−bound vessels, are not very apt to be over−loaded with worldly goods," he said, smiling. "When a man prospers in that calling, he usually comes ashore at a wharf, in some large place, and gets into his coach, to ride up to some grand tavern! I have remarked, pastor, that sea−faring men love comforts and free−living, unaccountably, when they can fairly get a chance at 'em."

"That is natural, deacon—quite natural; and what is natural, is very likely to happen. The natural man loves all sorts of indulgences, and these among others."

As there was no gainsaying this commonplace commentary on the species, it was permitted to pass unanswered.

"I hope my kinsman has not been a burthen to any on Oyster Pond?" said the nephew, inquiringly.

"I cannot say that he has," returned the deacon. "He was at little cost, at first, and got along by selling a few odd things that he owned. As Providence had placed him in the dwelling of a poor widow, I thought it might be pleasing to the friends—and every man has *some* friends, I suppose—to settle with *her*. This I did, this very morning, taking her receipt in full, as you can see," passing the paper to the stranger. "As a sort of security for my advances, I had the chest of the deceased removed to this house; and it is now up−stairs, ready to be examined. It feels light, and I do not think much silver or gold will be found in it."

To own the truth, the Vineyard seaman looked a little disappointed. It was so natural that a man who has been absent fifty years should bring back the fruits of his labour, that he had expected some slight reward for the trouble he was now taking, to be bestowed in this particular form. This, however, was not the specific object of his visit, as will appear as we proceed. Keeping in view his real motive, the nephew continued his inquiries, always putting his questions a little indirectly, and receiving answers that were as evasive and cautious as his own interrogatories. All this was characteristic of the wary people from which both had sprung, who seldom speak, in a matter of business, without bearing in mind all the possible constructions of what they are saying. After a discourse of some fifteen minutes, in which the history of the chest, in its outlines, was fully given, and during which the stranger produced written evidence of his right to interfere, it was determined to make an inventory, on the spot, of the property left by Daggett, for the benefit of all who might have any interest in it. Accordingly, the whole party, including Mary, was soon assembled in the deacon's own room, with the sea−chest placed invitingly in the centre. All eyes were fastened on the lid, in curious anticipations of the contents; for, the deacon excepted, all supposed that those contents were a profound secret. The Widow White could have told them better, she having rummaged that chest a dozen times, at least, though without abstracting even a pin. Curiosity had been her ruling motive, far more than cupidity. It is true, the good woman had a prudent regard to her own interests, and felt some anxiety to learn the prospects of her receiving the stipulated price for board— only $1 50 per week—but

the sales of the needles, and palms, and carved whale−bone, having kept her accounts reasonably square, solicitude on this particular interest was not at is height. No: curiosity, pure female curiosity, a little quickened by the passion which is engendered among the vulgar by the possession of a slight degree of instruction, was really at the bottom of her researches. Not only had she handled every article in the chest, but she had read, and re−read, every paper it contained, half−a−dozen letters included, and made her own surmises on their nature. Still, the good woman was very little the wiser for her inquiries. Of the great secret she knew absolutely nothing, unless the broken hints collected in her many listenings, could be so considered. But, here her ignorance ceased. Every hole in a shirt, every patch in a pair of trousers, and every darn in a stocking, had been examined, and its probable effect on the value of the garment duly estimated. The only thing that had escaped her scrutiny was a small till, that was locked. Into that she could not look, and there were moments when she would have parted with a finger in order to overhaul it.

"This jacket might sell for a dollar," had the Widow White calculated, "but for the hole in the elbow; and, that well patched, would bring seventy−five cents. Them trowsers must have cost two dollars, but they ar'n't worth half price now. That pee−jacket is the best article in the chest, and, sent across to the Harbour, about the time the ships are going out, it would bring enough to maintain Daggett a month!"

Such had been the character of the widow's visitations to the chest, though no one knew anything of her discoveries, not even her sister−relict, neighbour Stone.

"Here is the key," said the deacon, producing that instrument from the drawer of a table, as if he had laid it carefully aside for some such moment. "I dare say it will be found to fit, for I remember to have seen Daggett use it once or twice myself."

Roswell Gardiner, as the youngest man, and the one on whom the labouring oar ought to fall, now took the key, applied it to the lock, turned it without difficulty, and then lifted the lid. Disappointment appeared on every face but that of the deacon, at the meagre prospect before the company. Not only was the chest more than half empty, but the articles it did contain were of the coarsest materials; well worn sea−clothes that had seen their best days, and which had never been more than the coarse common attire of a foremast hand.

"There is little here to pay a man for crossing from the Vineyard," observed Roswell Gardiner, a little drily; for he did not half like the appearance of cupidity that shone through the nephew's tardy concern for the fate of the uncle. "The last voyage has not been prosperous, I fear, or the owners failed before the vessel got in! What is to be done with all this dunnage, deacon?"

"It would be best to take out the contents, article by article," answered the other, "and examine each and all. Now that we have made a beginning with the inventory, it is best to go through with it."

The young man obeyed, calling out the name of each article of dress, as he raised it from its receptacle, and passing it over to him who stood there in the character of a sort of heir−at−law. The last gave each garment a sharp look, and prudently put his hand into every pocket, in order to make sure that it was empty, before he laid the article on the floor. Nothing was discovered for some time, until a small key was found in the fob of a pair of old `go−ashore' pantaloons. As there was the till to the chest already mentioned, and a lock on that till, the heir−at−law kept the key, saying nothing touching its existence.

"The deceased does not appear to have been much afflicted with this world's wealth," said the Rev. Mr. Whittle, whose expectations, to own the truth, had been a little disappointed. "This may have been all the better for him, when the moment of departure drew near."

"I dare say he would have borne the burthen cheerfully," put in Roswell Gardiner, "to have been a little more comfortable. I never knew a person, seaman or landsman, who was ever the worse for having things snug about him, and for holding on to the better end of his cheer, as long as he could."

"*Your* notion of what is best for man as he draws near to his end, captain Gar'ner, is not likely to be of the most approved nature. The sea does not produce many very orthodox divines."

The young sailor coloured, bit his lip, cast a glance at Mary, and began a nearly inaudible whistle. In a moment he forgot the rebuke he had received, and laughingly went on with the inventory.

"Well," he cried, "this is rather a poorer outfit than Jack is apt to carry! *In*fit, I suppose it should be called, as the poor fellow who owned it was inward bound, when he brought up on Oyster Pond. You'll hardly think it worth while, captain Daggett, to take this dunnage across to the Vineyard."

"It is scarce worth the trouble, though friends and relations may set a value on it that strangers do not. I see a

couple of charts there — will you hand them this way, if you please? They may have a value with a sea−faring man, as old mariners sometimes make notes that are worth as much as the charts themselves."

This was said very naturally and simply; but it gave the deacon a good deal of concern. Nor was this feeling at all lessened by the earnest, not to say eager, manner in which Daggett, as we shall now call this member of the family, spread the chart on the bed, and began to pry into its records. The particular chart first opened in this way, was the one including the antarctic circle, and, of course, was that from which the deacon had been at so much pains to erase the sealing−islands, that the deceased mariner had laid down with so great precision and care. It was evident that the Martha's Vineyard−man was looking for something that he could not find, and that he felt disappointment. Instead of looking at the chart, indeed, he may be said to have been peering at it, in all its holes and crannies, of which there were not a few, in consequence of the torn condition of the paper. Several minutes elapsed ere the investigation terminated, the stranger seeming, all that time, to feel no interest in the remainder of his relation's wardrobe.

"This is an old chart, and of the date of 1802," observed Daggett, raising himself erect, as a man who has long been bent takes the creaks out of his back. "So old a chart as to be of little use now−a−day. Our sealers have gone over so much of the ground to the southward of the two capes, as to be able to do much better than this now."

"Your uncle had the appearance of an old−fashioned sailor," coldly observed the deacon; "and it may be that he most liked old−fashioned charts."

"If such was the case he must have pretty well forgotten his Vineyard schooling. There is not a woman there who doesn't know that the latest chart is commonly the best. I own I'm disapp'inted somewhat; for the master of the sloop gave me to understand he had heard from the master of the brig, that some valuable information was to be found on the old gentleman's charts."

The deacon started, as here was an indication that the deceased had talked of his knowledge to others, as well as to himself! It was so natural for a man like Daggett to boast of what his charts were worth, that he saw the extreme probability that a difficulty might arise from this source. It was his cue, however, to remain silent, and let the truth develop itself in due course. His attention was not likely to be drawn aside by the shirts and old clothes, for the stranger began a second time to examine the chart, and what was more, in the high latitudes at no great distance from the very spot where the sealing−islands had been placed, and from which they had been so carefully erased.

"It is unaccountable that a man should wear out a chart like this, and leave so few notes on it!" said the Vineyard−man, much as one complains of a delinquency. "Here is white water noted in the middle of the ocean, where I dare say no other white water was seen but that which is made by a fish, and nothing is said of any islands. What do you think of this, captain Gar'ner?" laying his finger on the precise spot where the deacon had been at work so long that very morning erasing the islands. "This looks well−fingered, if nothing else, eh?"

"Its a shoal laid down in dirt," answered Roswell Gardiner, laughing — "Let's see; that's about lat. —° —", and long. —° —". There can be no known land thereaway, as even captain Cook did not succeed in getting as far south. That's been a favourite spot with the skipper for taking hold of his chart. I've known one of those old−fashioned chaps put his hand on a chart, in that way, and never miss his holding ground for three years on a stretch. Mighty go−by−rule people are some of our whaling−masters, in particular, who think they know the countenances of some of the elderly fish, who are too cunning to let a har poon get fast to 'em."

"You've been often in them seas, I some think, captain Gar'ner?" said the other, inquiringly.

"I was brought up in the business, and have a hankering for it yet," returned the young man, frankly. "Nor do I care so much for charts. They are well enough when a vessel is on her road; but, as for whales or seals, the man who wishes to find either, in these times, has to look for them, as I tell my owner. According to reports, the time has been when a craft had only to get an offing to fall in with something that was worth putting a harpoon into; but those days are gone, captain Daggett; and whales are to be looked after, out at sea, much as money is to be looked for ashore here."

"Is the craft I saw at the wharf fitting out for a whaler, then?"

"She is going after luck, and will accept of it, in whatever form it may turn up."

"She is rather small for the whaling business, though vessels of that size *have* done well, by keeping close in upon our own coast."

"We shall know better what she will do after she has been tried," returned Gardiner, evasively. "What do you

think of her for the Banks of Newfoundland?"

The Martha's Vineyard−man gave his brother tar a quick, impatient glance, which pretty plainly said, "tell that to the marines," when he opened the second chart, which as yet had been neglected.

"Sure enough," he muttered, in a low tone, though loud enough to be heard by the keenly attentive deacon; "here it is — a chart of the West Indies, and of all the keys!"

By this casual, spontaneous outbreaking, as it might be, the deacon got another clue to the stranger's knowledge, that gave him increased uneasiness. He was now convinced that, by means of the masters of the brig and the sloop, such information had been sent to the relatives of Daggett as had prepared them to expect the very revelations on which he hoped to establish his own fortunes. To what extent these revelations had been made, of course he could only conjecture; but there must have been a good deal of particularity to induce the individual who had come over to Oyster Pond to look into the two charts so closely. Under the circumstances, therefore, he felicitated himself on the precaution he had so early taken to erase the important notations from the paper.

"Captain Gar'ner, your eyes are younger than mine," said the Vineyard−man, holding the chart up to the light— "will you be good enough to look here?—does it not seem as if that key had been noted, and the words rubbed off the chart?"

This caused the deacon to peer over Roswell Gardiner's shoulder, and glad enough was he to ascertain that the stranger had placed his finger on a key that must lie several hundred miles from that which was supposed to hold the buried treasure of the pirates. Something like an erasure did appear at the indicated point; but the chart was so old and dirty, that little satisfaction could be had by examining it. Should the inquirer settle down on the key he evidently had in his eye, all would be well, since it was far enough from the spot really noted.

"It is strange that so old a seafaring man should wear out a chart, and make no observation on it!" repeated the stranger, who was both vexed and at a loss what to conjecture. "All my charts are written over and marked off, just as if I meant to get out an edition for myself."

"Men differ in their tastes and habits," answered Roswell Gardiner, carelessly. "Some navigators are for ever finding rocks, and white water, and scribbling on their charts, or in the newspapers, when they get back; but I never knew any good come of it. The men who make the charts are most to be trusted. For my part, I would not give a sixpence for a note made by a man who passes a shoal or a rock, in a squall or a gale."

"What would you say to the note of a sealer who should lay down an island where the seals lie about on the beach like pigs in a pen, sunning themselves? Would you not call a chart so noted a treasure?"

"That would alter the case, sure enough," returned Gardiner, laughing; "though I should not think of looking into this chest for any such riches. Most of our masters navigate too much at random to make their charts of any great value. They can find the places they look for themselves, but don't seem to know how to tell other people the road. I have known my old man lay down a shoal that he fancied he saw, quite a degree out of the way. Now such a note as that would do more harm than good. It might make a foul wind of a fair one, and cause a fellow to go about, or ware ship, when there was not the least occasion in the world for doing anything of the sort."

"Ay, ay; this will do for nervous men, who are always thinking they see danger ahead; but it is different with islands that a craft has actually visited. I do not see much use, Deacon Pratt, in your giving yourself any further trouble. My uncle was not a very rich man, I perceive, and I must go to work and make my own fortune if I wish more than I've got already. If there is any demand against the deceased, I am ready to discharge it."

This was coming so much to the point that the deacon hardly knew what to make of it. He recollected his own ten dollars, and the covetousness of his disposition so far got the better of his prudence as to induce him to mention the circumstance.

"Dr. Sage may have a charge — no doubt has one, that ought to be settled, but your uncle mainly paid his way as he went on. I thought the widow who took care of him was entitled to something extra, and I handed her ten dollars this morning, which you may repay to me or not, just as you please."

Captain Daggett drew forth his wallet and discharged the obligation on the spot. He then replaced the charts, and, without opening the till of the chest, he shut down the lid, locked it, and put the key in his pocket, saying that he would cause the whole to be removed, much as if he felt anxious to relieve the deacon of an incumbrance. This done, he asked a direction to the dwelling of the Widow White, with whom he wished to converse, ere he left the Point.

"I shall have the questions of so many cousins to answer, when I get home," he said, smiling, "that it will never

do for me to go back without taking all the talk I can get with me. If you will be kind enough to show me the way, captain Gar'ner, I will promise to do as much for you, when you come to hunt up the leavings of some old relation on the Vineyard."

Roswell Gardiner very cheerfully complied, not observing the look of dissatisfaction with which his owner listened to the request. Away the two went, then, and were soon at the widow's door. Here the young man left his companion, having duty to attend to on board the Sea Lion. The Widow White received her guest with lively interest, it forming one of the greatest pleasures of her existence to be imparting and receiving intelligence.

"I dare say you found my uncle a companionable man," observed the captain, as soon as amicable relations were established between the parties, by means of a few flattering remarks on one side and on the other. "The Vineyard folks are generally quite conversable."

"That he was, captain Daggett; and when the deacon had not been over to perplex him, and wake up the worldly spirit in him, he was as well inclined to preparation as any sick person I ever waited on. To be sure it *was* different arter the deacon had paid one of his visits."

"Was Deacon Pratt in the habit of coming to read and pray with the sick?"

"He pray! I don't believe he as much as went through a single sentence of a prayer in all his visits. Their whull talk was about islands and seals, when they was by themselves."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the nephew, manifesting a new interest in the discourse. "And what could they find to say on such subjects? Islands and seals were a strange topic for a dying man!"

"I know it"—answered the widow, sharply. "I know'd it at the time; but what could a lone woman do to set 'em right; and he a deacon of the meetin' the whull time? If they *would* talk of worldly things at such times, it wasn't for one like me to put 'em right."

"Then this discourse was held openly in your presence— before your face, as it might be, ma'am?"

"I can't say that it was just that; nor was it altogether when my back was turned. They talked, and I overheard what was said, as will happen when a body is about, you know."

The stranger did not press the point, having been brought up in what might almost be termed a land of listeners. An island, that is cut off from much communication with the rest of the earth, and from which two−thirds of the males must be periodically absent, would be very likely to reach perfection in the art of gossiping, which includes that of the listener.

"Yes," he answered, "one picks up a good deal, he doesn't know how. So they talked of islands and seals?"

Thus questioned, the widow cheerfully opened her stores of knowledge. As she proceeded in her account of the secret conferences between Deacon Pratt and her late inmate, her zeal became quickened, and she omitted nothing that she had ever heard, besides including a great deal that she had not heard. But her companion was accustomed to such narratives, and knew reasonably well how to make allowances. He listened with a determination not to believe more than half of what she said, and by dint of long experience, he succeeded in separating the credible portions of the woman's almost breathless accounts, from those that ought to have been regarded as incredible, with a surprising degree of success. The greatest difficulty in the way of comprehending the Widow White's report, arose from the fact that she had altogether missed the preliminary and most explicit conference. This left so much to be understood and inferred, that, in her own efforts to supply the deficiencies, she made a great deal of confusion in the statements. Captain Daggett was fully assured that the deacon knew of the existence of the sealing−island, at least; though he was in doubt whether the rumour that had been brought to him, touching the buried treasure, had also been imparted to this person. The purchase and equipment of the Sea Lion, taken in connection with the widow's account, were enough, of themselves, to convince one of his experience and foresight, that an expedition after seal was then fitting out, on the information derived from his deceased relative. Of this much he had no doubt; but he was not able to assure himself, quite so satisfactorily, that the key was to be looked at by the way.

The interview between Captain Daggett and the Widow White lasted more than an hour. In that time the former had gleaned all the information the latter could give, and they parted on the best terms in the world. It is true that the captain gave the widow nothing—he had acquitted his conscience on this score, by re−paying the deacon the money the last had advanced—but he listened in the most exemplary manner to all she had to say; and, with a certain class of vehement talkers, the most favoured being in the world is your good listener. Interest had given the stranger an air of great attention, and the delighted woman had poured out her torrent of words in a way

that gratified, in the highest degree, her intense desire to be imparting information. When they separated, it was with an understanding that letters, on the same interesting subject, should pass between them.

That afternoon, Captain Daggett found means to remove the chest of his late kinsman, across the bays, to Sag Harbour, whither he proceeded himself by the same conveyance. There, he passed an hour or two in making inquiries touching the state of equipment, and the probable time of the departure of the Sea Lion. The fitting out of this schooner was the cause of a good deal of discourse in all that region, and the Martha's Vineyard−man heard numberless conjectures, but very little accurate information. On the whole, however, he arrived at the conclusion that the Sea Lion would sail within the next ten days; that her voyage was to be distant; that her absence was expected to exceed a twelvemonth; and that it was thought she had some other scheme in view, in addition to that of sealing. That night, this hardy mariner—half agriculturist as he was—got into his whale−boat, and sailed for the Vineyard, all alone, taking the chest with him. This was nothing, however; for quite often, before, had he been off at sea, in his boat, alone, looking out for inward−bound vessels to pilot.

CHAPTER VI.

"Launch thy bark, mariner!
Christian, God speed thee!
Let loose the rudder−bands,
Good angels lead thee!
Set thy sails warily,
Tempests will come;
Steer thy course steadily,
Christian, steer home!"
Mrs. Southey.

The visit of Captain Daggett, taken in connection with all that he had said and done, while on Oyster Pond, and at Sag Harbour, had the effect greatly to hasten the equipments of the Sea Lion. Deacon Pratt knew the characters of the seamen of the island too well, to trifle in a matter of so much moment. How much the Vineyard folk had been told, in reference to his great secrets, he did not know; but he felt assured that they knew enough, and had learned enough in this visit, to quicken all their desires for riches, and to set them in motion towards the antarctic circle. With such a people, distance and difficulties are of no account; a man who has been cradling oats, to−day, in his own retired fields, where one would think ambition and the love of change could never penetrate, being ready to quit home at twenty−four hours' notice, assuming the marlingspike as he lays aside the fork, and setting forth for the uttermost confines of the earth, with as little hesitation as another might quit his home for an ordinary journey of a week. Such, did the deacon well know, was the character of those with whom he had now to deal, and he foresaw the necessity of the utmost caution, perseverance, diligence, and activity.

Philip Hazard, the mate mentioned by Roswell Gardiner, was enjoined to lose no time; and the men engaged for the voyage soon began to cross the Sound, and to make their appearance on board the schooner. As for the craft herself, she had all that was necessary for her wants below hatches; and the deacon began to manifest some impatience for the appearance of two or three men of particular excellence, of whom Phil Hazard was in quest, and whom Captain Gardiner had made it a point should be obtained. Little did the worthy owner suspect that the Vineyard people were tampering with these very hands, and keeping them from coming to terms, in order that they might fit out a second Sea Lion, which they had now been preparing for near a month; having purchased her at New Bedford, with a view to profit by the imperfect information that had reached them, through the masters of the brig and sloop. The identity in the name was accidental, or, it might be better to say, had been naturally enough suggested by the common nature of the enterprise; but, once existing, it had been the means of suggesting to the Vineyard company a scheme of confounding the vessels, out of which they hoped to reap some benefit, but which it would be premature now fully to state.

After a delay of several days, Hazard sent across from Stonington a man by the name of Watson, who had the reputation of being a first−class sealer. This accession was highly prized; and, in the absence of his mates, both of whom were out looking for hands, Roswell Gardiner, to whom command was still novel, consulted freely with this experienced and skilful mariner. It was fortunate for the schemes of the deacon that he had left his young master still in the dark, as respected his two great secrets. Gardiner understood that the schooner was to go after seals, sea−lions, sea−elephants, and all animals of the genus *phoca*; but he had been told nothing concerning the revelations of Daggett, or of the real motives that had induced him to go so far out of his usual course, in the pursuit of gain. We say it was fortunate that the deacon had been so wary; for Watson had no intention whatever to sail out of Oyster Pond, having been actually engaged as the second officer of the rival Sea Lion, which had been purchased at New Bedford, and was then in an active state of forwardness in its equipments, with a view to compete with the craft that was still lying so quietly and unconsciously alongside of Deacon Pratt's wharf. In a word, Watson was a spy, sent across by the Vineyard−men, to ascertain all he could of the intentions of the schooner's owner, to worm himself into Gardiner's confidence, and to report, from time to time, the state of things generally, in order that the East−enders might not get the start of his real employers. It is a common boast of Americans that there are no spies in their country. This may be true in the every−day signification of the term,

though it is very untrue in all others. This is probably the most spying country in christendom, if the looking into other people's concerns be meant. Extensive and recognised systems of *espionage* exist among merchants; and nearly every man connected with the press has enlisted himself as a sort of spy in the interests of politics — many, in those of other concerns, also. The reader, therefore, is not to run away with impressions formed under general assertions that will scarce bear investigation, and deny the truth of pictures that are drawn with daguerreotype fidelity, because they do not happen to reflect the cant of the day. The man Watson, who had partially engaged to go out in the Sea Lion, captain Roswell Gardiner, was not only a spy, but a spy sent covertly into an enemy's camp, with the meanest motives, and with intentions as hostile as the nature of the circumstances would permit.

Such was the state of things on Oyster Pond for quite a week after the nephew had been to look after the effects of the deceased uncle. The schooner was now quite ready for sea, and her master began to talk of hauling off from the wharf. It is true, there was no very apparent reason why this step, preliminary to sailing, should be taken in that port, where there were so few opportunities for her people's running into excesses; but it sounded ship−shape, and captain Gardiner had been heard to express an intention to that effect. The men arrived but slowly from the main, and something like impatience was manifested by the young commander, who had long before got all his green hands, or youths from the neighbourhood, on board, and was gradually breaking them in to the ways of a vessel. Indeed, the best reason he could give to himself for `hauling off,' was the practice it might give to these lads with the oars.

"I don't know what Hazard and Green are about"— called out Roswell Gardiner to his owner, the first being on the quarter−deck of the Sea Lion, and the last on the wharf, while Watson was busy in the main−rigging; "they've been long enough on the main to ship a dozen crews for a craft of this size, and we are still short two hands, even if this man sign the papers, which he has not yet done. By the way, Watson, it's time we saw your hand−writing."

"I'm a poor scholar, captain Gar'ner," returned the cunning mariner, "and it takes time for me to make out even so small a matter as my name."

"Ay, ay; you are a prudent fellow, and I like you all the better for it. But you have had leisure, and a plenty of it too, to make up your mind. You must know the schooner from her keel up by this time, and ought to be able to say now that you are willing to take luck's chances in her."

"Ay, ay, sir; that's all true enough, so far as the craft is concerned. If this was a West India v'y'ge, I wouldn't stand a minute about signing the articles; nor should I make much question if the craft was large enough for a common whalin' v'y'ge; but, sealin' is a different business, and one onprofitable hand may make many an onprofitable lay."

"All this is true enough; but we do not intend to take any unprofitable hands, or to have any unprofitable lays. You know me—"

"Oh! if all was like *you*, captain Gar'ner, I wouldn't stand even to wipe the pen. *Your* repitation was made in the southward, and no man can dispute your skill."

"Well, both mates are old hands at the business, and we intend that all the `ables' shall be as good men as you are yourself."

"It *needs* good men, sir, to be operatin' among some of them sea−elephants! Sea−dogs; for sea−dogs is my sayin'. They tell of seals getting scurce; but I say, it's all in knowin' the business — `There's young captain Gar'ner,' says I, `that's fittin' out a schooner for some onknown part of the world,' says I, `maybe for the South Pole, for−ti−know, or for some sich out−of−the−way hole; now he'll come back *full*, or I'm no judge o' the business,' says I."

"Well, if this is your way of thinking, you have only to clap your name to the articles, and take your lay."

"Ay, ay, sir; when I've seed my shipmates. There isn't the business under the sun that so much needs that every man should be true, as the sea−elephant trade. Smaller animals may be got along with, with a narvous crew, perhaps; but when it comes to the raal old bulls, or bull−dogs, as a body might better call 'em, give me stout hearts, as well as stout hands."

"Well, now, to my notion, Watson, it is less dangerous to take a sea−elephant than to fasten to a regular old bull−whale, that may be has had half a dozen irons in him already."

"Yes, sir, *that's* sometimes skeary work, too; though I don't think so much of a whale as I do of a sea−elephant, or of a sea−lion. `Let me know my shipmates,' say I, `on a sealin' expedition.' "

"Captain Gar'ner," said the deacon, who necessarily overheard this discourse, "you ought to know at once whether this man is to go in the schooner or not. The mates believe he is, and may come across from the main without a hand to take his place should he leave us. The thing should be settled at once."

"I'm willing to come to tarms this minute," returned Watson, as boldly as if he were perfectly sincere; "only let me understand what I undertake. If I know'd to what islands the schooner was bound, it might make a difference in my judgment."

This was a well−devised question of the spy's, though it failed of its effect, in consequence of the deacon's great caution in not having yet told his secret, even to the master of his craft. Had Gardiner known exactly where he was about to go, the desire to secure a hand as valuable as Watson might have drawn from him some imprudent revelation; but knowing nothing himself, he was obliged to make the best answer he could.

"Going," he said; "why, we are going after seals, to be sure; and shall look for them where they are most to be found. As experienced a hand as yourself ought to know where that is."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the fellow, laughing—"it's just neither here nor there—that's all."

"Captain Gar'ner," interrupted the deacon, solemnly, "this is trifling, and we must come to terms with this man, or write to Mr. Hazard to engage another in his place. Come ashore, sir; I have business with you up at the house."

The serious manner in which this was uttered took both the captain and the man a little by surprise. As for the first, he went below to conceal his good−looking throat beneath a black handkerchief, before he followed the deacon where it was most probable he should meet with Mary. While he was thus occupied, Watson came down out of the main−rigging and descended into the forecastle. As the young captain was walking fast towards the dwelling of Deacon Pratt, Watson came on deck again, and hailed Baiting Joe, who was fishing at no great distance from the wharf. In a few minutes Watson was in Joe's boat, bag and all — he had not brought a chest on board — and was under way for the Harbour. From the Harbour he sailed the same evening, in a whale−boat that was kept in readiness for him, carrying the news over to Holmes's Hole that the Sea Lion, of Oyster Pond, would certainly be ready to go out as early as the succeeding week. Although Watson thus seemingly deserted his post, it was with a perfect understanding with his real employers. He had need of a few days to make his own preparations before he left the 41st degree of north latitude to go as far south as a vessel could proceed. He did not, however, leave his post entirely vacant. One of Deacon Pratt's neighbours had undertaken, for a consideration, to let the progress of events be known, and tidings were sent by every opportunity, reporting the movements of the schooner, and the prospects of her getting to sea. These last were not quite as flattering as Roswell Gardiner hoped and believed, the agents of the Vineyard company having succeeded in getting away two of Hazard's best men; and as reliable sealers were not to be picked up as easily as pebbles on a beach, the delay caused by this new stroke of management might even be serious. All this time the Sea Lion, of Holmes' Hole, was getting ahead with untiring industry, and there was every prospect of her being ready to go out as soon as her competitor. But, to return to Oyster Pond.

Deacon Pratt was in his porch ere Roswell Gardiner overtook him. There the deacon gave his young friend to understand he had private business of moment, and led the way at once into his own apartment, which served the purposes of office, bed−room and closet; the good man being accustomed to put up his petition to the throne of Mercy there, as well as transact all his temporal affairs. Shutting the door, and turning the key, not a little to Roswell's surprise, the old man faced his companion with a most earnest and solemn look, telling him at once that he was now about to open his mind to him in a matter of the last concern. The young sailor scarce knew what to think of it all; but he hoped that Mary was, in some way, connected with the result.

"In the first place, captain Gar'ner," continued the deacon, "I must ask you to take an oath."

"An oath, deacon! — This is quite new for the sealing business—as ceremonious as Uncle Sam's people."

"Yes, sir, an oath; and an oath that must be most religiously kept, and on this bible. Without the oath, our whole connection must fall through, captain Gar'ner."

"Rather than that should happen, deacon, I will cheerfully take two oaths; one to clench the other."

"It is well. I ask you, Roswell Gar'ner, to swear on this Holy Book that the secrets I shall now reveal to you shall not be told to any other, except in a manner prescribed by myself; that in no other man's employment will you profit by them; and that you will in all things connected with them be true and faithful to your engagements to me and to my interests—so help you God!"

Roswell Gardiner kissed the book, while he wondered much, and was dying with curiosity to know what was

to follow. This great point secured, the deacon laid aside the sacred volume, opened a drawer, and produced the two allimportant charts, to which he had transferred the notes of Daggett.

"Captain Gar'ner," resumed the deacon, spreading the chart of the antarctic sea on the bed, "you must have known me and my ways long enough to feel some surprise at finding me, at my time of life, first entering into the shipping concern."

"If I've felt any surprise, deacon, it is that a man of your taste and judgment should have held aloof so long from the only employment that I think fit for a man of real energy and character."

"Ay, this is well enough for you to say, as a seaman yourself; though you will find it hard to persuade most of those who live on shore into your own ways of thinking."

"That is because people ashore think and act as they have been brought up to do. Now, just look at that chart, deacon; see how much of it is water, and how little of it is land. Minister Whittle told us, only the last Sabbath, that nothing was created without a design, and that a wise dispensation of Divine Providence was to be seen in all the works of nature. Now, if the land was intended to take the lead of the water, would there have been so much more of the last than of the first, deacon? That was the idea that came into my mind when I heard the minister's words; and had not Mary—"

"What of Mary?" demanded the deacon, perceiving that the young man paused.

"Only I was in hopes that what you had to say, deacon, might have some connection with her."

"What I have to say is better worth hearing than fifty Marys. As to my niece, Gar'ner, you are welcome to her, if she will have you; and why she does not is to me unaccountable. But, you see that chart — look at it well, and tell me if you find anything new or remarkable about it."

"It looks like old times, deacon, and here are many places that I have visited and know. What have we here? Islands laid down in pencil, with the latitude and longitude in figures! Who says there is land, thereaway, Deacon Pratt, if I may be so free as to ask the question?"

"I do—and capital good land it is, for a sealing craft to get alongside of. Them islands, Gar'ner, may make your fortune, as well as mine. No matter how I know they are there—it is enough that I *do* know it, and that I wish you to carry the Sea Lion to that very spot, as straight as you can go; fill her up with elephant's oil, ivory, and skins, and bring her back again as fast as she can travel."

"Islands in that latitude and longitude!" said Roswell Gardiner, examining the chart as closely as if it were of very fine print indeed — "I never heard of any such land before!"

"Tis there, notwithstanding; and like all land in distant seas that men have not often troubled, plentifully garnished with what will pay the mariner well for his visit."

"Of that I have little doubt, should there be actually any land there. It may be a Cape Fly Away that some fellow has seen in thick weather. The ocean is full of such islands!"

"This is none of them. It is bony fidy 'arth, as I know from the man who trod it. You must take good care, Gar'ner, and not run the schooner on it" — with a small chuckling laugh, such as a man little accustomed to this species of indulgence uses, when in high good−humour. "I am not rich enough to buy and fit out Sea Lions for you to cast 'em away."

"That's a high latitude, deacon, to carry a craft into. Cook, himself, fell short of *that*, somewhat!"

"Never mind Cook — he was a king's navigator — my man was an American sealer; and what he has once seen he knows where to find again. There are the islands — three in number; and there you will find 'em, with animals on their shores as plenty as clam−shells on the south beach."

"I hope it may be so. If land is there, and you'll risk the schooner, I'll try to get a look at it. I shall want you to put it down in black and white, however, that I'm to go as high as this."

"You shall have any authority a man may ask. On that point there can be no difficulty between me and you. The risk of the schooner must be mine of course; but I rely on you to take as good care of her as a man can. Go then, direct, to that point, and fill up the schooner. But, Gar'ner, my business doesn't end with this! As soon as the schooner is full, you will come to the southward, and get her clear of everything like ice as fast as possible."

"That I should be very likely to do, deacon, though you had said nothing on the subject."

"Yes, by all accounts them are stormy seas, and the sooner a body is shut of them the better. And now, Gar'ner, I must swear you again. I have another secret to tell you, and an oath must go with each. Kiss this sacred volume once more, and swear to me never to reveal to another that which I am about to reveal to you, unless it may be in

a court of law, and at the command of justice, so help you God."

"What, a second oath, deacon!—You are as bad as the custom−houses, which take you on all tacks, and don't believe you when you've done. Surely, I'm sworn in already."

"Kiss the book, and swear to what I have put to you," said the deacon, sternly, "or never go to sea in a craft of mine. Never to reveal what I shall now tell you, unless compelled by justice, so help you God!"

Thus cornered, Roswell Gardiner hesitated no longer, but swore as required, kissing the book gravely and reverently. This was the young man's first command, and he was not going to lose it on account of so small a matter as swearing to keep his owner's secrets. Having obtained the pledge, the deacon now produced the second chart, which was made to take the place of the other on the bed.

"There!" he exclaimed, in a sort of triumph—"that is the real object of your voyage!"

"That key! Why, deacon, that is in north latitude —°—", and you make a crooked road of it, truly, when you tell me to go as far south as —° —", in order to reach it."

"It is well to have two strings to a body's bow. When you hear what you are to bring from that key, you will understand why I send you south, before you are to come here to top off your cargo."

"It must be with turtle, then," said Roswell Gardiner, laughing. "Nothing grows on these keys but a few stunted shrubs, and nothing is ever to be found on them but turtle. Once in a while a fellow may pick up a few turtle, if he happen to hit the right key."

"Gar'ner," rejoined the deacon; still more solemnly— "that island, low and insignificant as it is, contains treasure. Pirates made their deposits here a long time ago, and the knowledge of that fact is now confined to myself."

The young man started at the deacon as if he had some doubts whether the old man were in his right mind. He knew the besetting weakness of his character well, and had no difficulty in appreciating the influence of such a belief as that he had just expressed, on his feelings; but it seemed so utterly improbable that he, living on Oyster Pond, should learn a fact of this nature, which was concealed from others, that, at first, he fancied his owner had been dreaming of money until its images had made him mad. Then he recollected the deceased mariner, the deacon's many conferences with him, the interest he had always appeared to take in the man, and the suddenness, as well as the time, of the purchase of the schooner; and he at once obtained a clue to the whole affair.

"Daggett has told you this, Deacon Pratt"—said Gardiner, in his off−hand way. "And he is the man who has told you of those sealing−islands too?"

"Admitting it to be so, why not Daggett as well as any other man?"

"Certainly, if he knew what he was saying to be true— but the yarn of a sailor is not often to be taken for gospel."

"Daggett was near his end, and cannot be classed with those who talk idly in the pride of their health and strength— men who are ever ready to say — `Tush, God has forgotten." '

"Why was this told to you, when the man had natural friends and relatives by the dozen over on the Vineyard?"

"He had been away from the Vineyard and them relatives fifty years; a length of time that weakens a body's feelings considerably. Take you away from Mary only a fourth part of that time, and you would forget whether her eyes are blue or black, and altogether how she looks."

"If I should, a most miserable and contemptible dog should I account myself! No, deacon, twice fifty years would not make me forget the eyes or the looks of Mary!"

"Ay, so all youngsters think, and feel, and talk. But let'em try the world, and they'll soon find out thier own foolishness. But Daggett made me his confidant because Providence put me in his way, and because he trusted to being well enough to go in the schooner, and to turn the expedition to some account in his own behalf."

"Had the man the impudence to confess that he had been a pirate, and helped to bury treasure on this key?"

"That is not, by any means, his history. Daggett was never a pirate himself, but accident placed him in the same prison and same room as that in which a real pirate was confined. There the men became friends, and the condemned prisoner, for such he was in the end, gave this secret to Daggett as the last service he could do him."

"I hope, deacon, you do not expect much in the way of profit from this part of the voyage?"

"I expect the most from it, Gar'ner, as you will too, when you come to hear the whole story."

The deacon then went into all the particulars of the revelations made by the pirate to his fellow−prisoner, much as they had been given by Daggett to himself. The young man listened to this account at first with incredulity,

then with interest; and finally with a feeling that induced him to believe that there might be more truth in the narrative than he had originally supposed possible. This change was produced by the earnest manner of the deacon as much as by the narrative itself; for he had become graphic under the strong impulses of that which, with him, was a master passion. So deep had been the impression made on the mind of the old man by Daggett's account, and so intense the expectations thereby awakened, that he omitted nothing, observed the most minute accuracy in all his details, and conveyed just as distinct impressions to his listener, as had been conveyed to himself, when the story was first told to him.

"This is a most extr'or'nary account, take it on whatever tack you will!" exclaimed Roswell Gardiner, as soon as a pause in the deacon's story enabled him to put in another word. "The most extr'or'nary tale I ever listened to! How came so much gold and silver to be abandoned for so long a time?"

"Them three officers hid it there, fearing to trust their own crew with it in their vessel. Their pretence was to stop for turtle, just as you must do; whilst the hands were turtling, the captain and his mates walked about the key, and took occasion to make their deposits in that hole in the coral rock, as you have heard me say. Oh! it's all too natural not to be true!"

Roswell Gardiner saw that the old man's hopes were too keenly excited to be easily cooled, and that his latent covetousness was thoroughly awakened. Of all the passions to which poor human nature is the slave, the love of gold is that which endures the longest, and is often literally carried with us to the verge of the grave. Indeed, in minds so constituted originally as to submit to an undue love of money, the passion appears to increase, as others more dependent on youth, and strength, and enterprise, and ambition, gradually become of diminished force, slowly but surely usurping the entire sway over a being that was once subject to many masters. Thus had it been with the deacon. Nearly all his passions now centred in this one. He no longer cared for preferment in politics, though once it had been the source of a strong desire to represent Suffolk at Albany; even the meeting, and its honours, was loosening its hold on his mind; while his fellow−men, his kindred included, were regarded by him as little more than so many competitors, or tools.

"A lie may be made to seem very natural," answered Roswell Gardiner, "if it has been put together by one who understands knotting and splicing in such matters. Did this Daggett name the amount of the sum that he supposed the pirates may have left on that key?"

"He did," returned the deacon, the whole of his narrow and craving soul seeming to gleam in his two sunken eyes as he answered. "According to the account of the pirate, there could not have been much less than thirty thousand dollars, and nearly all of it in good doubloons of the coin of the kings—doubloons that will weigh their full sixteens to the pound—ay, and to spare!"

"The Sea Lion's cargo, well chosen and well stowed, would double that, deacon, if the right animals can only be found."

"May be so — but, just think, Gar'ner — this will be in good bright coined gold!"

"But what right can we have to that gold, even admitting that it is there, and can be found?"

"Right!" exclaimed the deacon, staring. "Does not that which Divine Providence gives man become his own?"

"By the same rule it might be said Divine Providence gave it to the pirates. There must be lawful owners to all this money, if one could only find them."

"Ay, if one could only find them. Harkee, Gar'ner; have you spent a shilling or a quarter lately?"

"A good many of both, deacon," answered the young man, again betraying the lightness of his heart with a laugh. "I wish I had more of your saving temper, and I might get rich. Yes, I spent a quarter only two hours since, in buying fish for the cabin, of old Baiting Joe."

"Well, tell me the impression of that quarter. Had it a head, or only pillars? What was its date, and in whose reign was it struck? Maybe it was from the mint at Philadelphia— if so, had it the old eagle or the new? In a word, could you swear to that quarter, Gar'ner, or to any quarter you ever spent in your life?"

"Perhaps not, deacon. A fellow doesn't sit down to take likenesses, when he gets a little silver or gold."

"Nor is it very probable that any one could say—`that is my doubloon.' "

"Still there must be a lawful owner to each piece of that money, if any such money be there," returned Roswell Gardiner, a little positively. "Have you ever talked with Mary, deacon, on this subject?"

"I talk of such a matter with a woman! Do you think I'm mad, Gar'ner? If I wanted to have the secret run through old Suffolk, as fire runs over the salt meadows in the spring, I might think of such a thing: but not

without. I have talked with no one but the master of the craft that I am about to send out in search of this gold, as well as in search of the sealing−islands I have shown you. Had there been but *one* object in view, I might not have ventured so much; but with *two* before my eyes, it would seem like flying in the face of Divine Providence to neglect so great an opportunity!"

Roswell Gardiner saw that arguments would avail nothing against a cupidity so keenly aroused. He abstained, therefore, from urging any more of the objections that suggested themselves to his mind, but heard all that the deacon had to tell him, taking full notes of what he heard. It would seem that Daggett had been sufficiently clear in his directions for finding the hidden treasure, provided always that his confidant the pirate had been as clear with him, and had not been indulging in a mystification. The probability of the last had early suggested itself to one of Deacon Pratt's cautious temperament; but Daggett had succeeded in removing the impression by his forcible statements of his friend's sincerity. There was as little doubt of the sincerity of the belief of the Martha's Vineyard mariner, as there was of that of the deacon himself.

The day that succeeded this conference, the Sea Lion hauled off from the wharf, and all communications with her were now made only by means of boats. The sudden disappearance of Watson may have contributed to this change, men being more under control with a craft at her moorings than when fast to a wharf. Three days later the schooner lifted her anchor, and with a light air made sail. She passed through the narrow but deep channel which separates Shelter Island from Oyster Pond, quitting the waters of Peconic altogether. There was not an air of departure about her, notwithstanding. The deacon was not much concerned; and some of Roswell Gardiner's clothes were still at his washerwoman's, circumstances that were fully explained, when the schooner was seen to anchor in Gardiner's Bay, which is an outer roadstead to all the ports and havens of that region.

CHAPTER VII.

"Walk in the light! so shalt thou know
That fellowship of love,
His spirit only can bestow
Who reigns in light above.
Walk in the light! and sin, abhorr'd,
Shall ne'er defile again;
The blood of Jesus Christ, the Lord,
Shall cleanse from every stain."
Bernard Barton.

About an hour after the Sea Lion, of Oyster Pond, had let go her anchor in Gardiner's Bay, a coasting sloop approached her, coming from the westward. There are two passages by which vessels enter or quit Long Island Sound, at its eastern termination. The main channel is between Plum and Fisher's Islands, and, from the rapidity of its currents, is known by the name of the Race. The other passage is much less frequented, being out of the direct line of sailing for craft that keep mid−sound. It lies to the southward of the Race, between Plum Island and Oyster Pond Point, and is called by the Anglo−Saxon appellation of Plum Gut. The coaster just mentioned had come through this latter passage; and it was the impression of those who saw her from the schooner, that she was bound up into Peconic, or the waters of Sag Harbour. Instead of luffing up into either of the channels that would have carried her into these places, however, she kept off, crossing Gardiner's Bay, until she got within hail of the schooner. The wind being quite light, there was time for the following short dialogue to take place between the skipper of this coaster and Roswell Gardiner, before the sloop had passed beyond the reach of the voice.

"Is that the Sea Lion, of Oyster Pond?" demanded the skipper, boldly.

"Ay, ay," answered Roswell Gardiner, in the sententious manner of a seaman.

"Is there one Watson, of Martha's Vineyard, shipped in that craft?"

"He was aboard here for a week, but left us suddenly. As he did not sign articles, I cannot say that he run."

"He changed his mind, then," returned the other, as one expresses a slight degree of surprise at hearing that which was new to him. "Watson is apt to whiffle about, though a prime fellow, if you can once fasten to him, and get him into blue water. Does your schooner go out tomorrow, Captain Gar'ner?"

"Not till next day, I think," said Roswell Gardiner, with the frankness of his nature, utterly free from the slightest suspicion that he was communicating with one in the interests of rivals. "My mates have not yet joined me, and I am short of my complement by two good hands. Had that fellow Watson stuck by me, I would have given him a look at water that no lead ever sounded."

"Ay, ay; he's a whiffler, but a good man on a sea−elephant. Then you think you'll sail day a'ter to−morrow?"

"If my mates come over from the main. They wrote me yesterday that they had got the hands, and were then on the look−out for something to get across in. I've come out here to be ready for them, and to pick 'em up, that they needn't go all the way up to the Harbour."

"That's a good traverse, and will save a long pull. Perhaps they are in *that* boat."

At this allusion to a boat, Roswell Gardiner sprang into his main rigging, and saw, sure enough, that a boat was pulling directly towards the schooner, coming from the main, and distant only a short half mile. A glass was handed to him, and he was soon heard announcing cheerfully to his men, that "Mr. Hazard and the second officer were in the boat, with two seamen," and that he supposed they should *now* have their complement. All this was overheard by the skipper of the sloop, who caught each syllable with the most eager attention.

"You'll soon be travelling south, I'm thinking, Captain Gar'ner?" called out this worthy, again, in a sort of felicitating way — "Them's your chaps, and they'll set you up."

"I hope so, with all my heart, for there is nothing more tiresome than waiting when one is all ready to trip. My owner is getting to be impatient too, and wants to see some skins in return for his dollars."

"Ay, ay, them's your chaps, and you'll be off the day a'ter to−morrow, at the latest. Well, a good time to you, Captain Gar'ner, and a plenty of skinning. It's a long road to travel, especially when a craft has to go as far south

as your's is bound!"

"How do you know, friend, whither I am bound? You have not asked me for my sealing ground, nor is it usual, in our business, to be hawking it up and down the country."

"All that is true enough, but I've a notion, notwithstanding. Now, as you'll be off so soon, and as I shall not see you again, for some time at least, I will give you a piece of advice. If you fall *in* with a consort, don't fall *out* with her, and make a distant v'y'ge a cruise for an enemy, but come to tarms, and work in company; lay for lay; and make fair weather of what can't be helped."

The men on board the sloop laughed at this speech, while those on board the schooner wondered. To Roswell Gardiner and his people the allusions were an enigma, and the former muttered something about the stranger's being a dunce, as he descended from the rigging, and gave some orders to prepare to receive the boat.

"The chap belongs to the Hole," rejoined the master of the schooner, "and all them Vineyard fellows fancy themselves better blue−jackets than the rest of mankind: I suppose it must be because their island lies further out to sea than anything we have here inside of Montauk."

Thus ended the communications with the stranger. The sloop glided away before a light south wind, and, favoured by an ebb tide, soon rounded the spit of sand that shelters the anchorage; and, hauling up to the eastward, she went on her way towards Holmes' Hole. The skipper was a relative of half of those who were interested in fitting out the rival Sea Lion, and had volunteered to obtain the very information he took with him, knowing how acceptable it would be to those at home. Sooth to say, a deep but wary excitement prevailed on the Vineyard, touching not only the sealing−islands, but also in respect to the buried treasure. The information actually possessed by the relations of the deceased mariner was neither very full nor very clear. It consisted principally of sayings of Daggett, uttered during his homeward−bound passage, and transmitted by the master of the brig to him of the sloop in the course of conferences that wore away a long summer's afternoon, as the two vessels lay becalmed within a hundred fathoms of each other. These sayings, however, had been frequent and intelligible. All men like to deal in that which makes them of importance; and the possession of his secrets had just the effect on Daggett's mind that was necessary to render him boastful. Under such impulses his tongue had not been very guarded; and facts leaked out which, when transmitted to his native island, through the medium of half a dozen tongues and as many fancies, amounted to statements sufficient to fire the imaginations of a people much duller than those of Martha's Vineyard. Accustomed to converse and think of such expeditions, it is not surprising that a few of the most enterprising of those who first heard the reports should unite and plan the adventure they now actually had in hand. When the intelligence of what was going on on Oyster Pond reached them, everything like hesitation or doubt disappeared; and from the moment of the nephew's return in quest of his uncle's assets, the equipment of the "Humses' Hull" craft had been pressed in a way that would have done credit to that of a government cruiser. Even Henry Eckford, so well known for having undertaken to cut the trees and put upon the waters of Ontario two double−bank frigates, if frigates they could be termed, each of which was to mount its hundred guns, in the short space of sixty days, scarce manifested greater energy in carrying out his contract, than did these rustic islanders in preparing their craft to compete with that which they were now certain was about to sail from the place where their kinsman had breathed his last.

These keen and spirited islanders, however, did not work quite as much in the dark as our accounts, unexplained, might give the reader reason to suppose. It will be remembered that there was a till to the chest which had not been examined by the deacon. This till contained an old mutilated journal, not of the last, but of one or two of the earlier voyages of the deceased; though it had detached entries that evidently referred to different and distant periods of time. By dint of study, and by putting together sundry entries that at first sight might not be supposed to have any connection with each other, the present possessor of that chest had obtained what he deemed to be very sufficient clues to his uncle's two great secrets. There were also in the chest several loose pieces of paper, on which there were rude attempts to make charts of all the islands and keys in question, giving their relative positions as it respected their immediate neighbours, but in no instance giving the latitudes and longitudes. In addition to these significant proofs that the reports brought through the two masters were not without a foundation, there was an unfinished letter, written by the deceased, and addressed as a sort of legacy, "to any, or all of Martha's Vineyard, of the name of Daggett." This address was sufficiently wide, including, probably, some hundreds of persons; a clan in fact; but it was also sufficiently significant. The individual into whose hands it first fell, being of the name, read it first, as a matter of course, when he carefully folded it up, and

placed it in a pocket−book which he was much in the habit of carrying in his own pocket. On what principle this letter, unfinished and without a signature, with nothing indeed but its general and comprehensive address to point out its origin as well as its destination, was thus appropriated to the purposes of a single individual, we shall not stop to inquire. Such was the fact, however, and none connected with the equipment of the Sea Lion, of Holmes' Hole, knew anything of the existence of that document, its present possessor excepted. He looked it over occasionally, and deemed the information it conveyed of no trifling import, under all the circumstances of the case.

Both the enterprises of which we have given an opening account were perfectly characteristic of the state of society in which they were brought into existence. Deacon Pratt, if he had any regular calling, was properly a husbandman, though the love of money had induced him to invest his cash in nearly every concern around him, which promised remunerating returns. The principal owners of the Sea Lion, of Holmes' Hole, were husbandmen also; folk who literally tilled the earth, cradled their own oats and rye, and mowed their own meadows. Notwithstanding, neither of these men, those of the Vineyard any more than he of Oyster Pond, had hesitated about investing of his means in a maritime expedition, just as if they were all regular ship−owners of the largest port in the Union. With such men, it is only necessary to exhibit an account with a fair prospect of large profits, and they are ever ready to enter into the adventure, heart, hand, and pocket. Last season, it may have been to look for whales on the coast of Japan; the season before that, to search for islands frequented by the seals; this season, possibly, to carry a party out to hunt for camelopards, set nets for young lions, and beat up the quarters of the rhinoceros on the plains of Africa; while the next, they may be transporting ice from Long Pond to Calcutta and Kingston — not to say to London itself. Of such materials are those descendants of the Puritans composed; a mixture of good and evil; of the religion which clings to the past, in recollection rather than in feeling, mingled with a worldly−mindedness that amounts nearly to rapacity; all cloaked and rendered decent by a conventional respect for duties, and respectable and useful, by frugality, enterprise, and untiring activity.

Roswell Gardiner had not mistaken the persons of those in the boat. They proved to be Phil Hazard, his first officer; Tim Green, the second mate; and the two sealers whom it had cost so much time and ingenuity to obtain. Although neither of the mates even suspected the truth, no sooner had they engaged the right sort of man than he was tampered with by the agents of the Martha's Vineyard concern, and spirited away by means of more tempting proposals, before he had got quite so far as to sign the articles. One of the motives for sending Watson across to Oyster Pond had been to induce Captain Gardiner to believe he had engaged so skilful a hand, which would effectually prevent his attempting to procure another, until, at the last moment, he might find himself unable to put to sea for the want of a complement. A whaling or a sealing voyage requires that the vessel should take out with her the particular hands necessary to her specific object, though, of late years, the seamen have got so much in the habit of `running,' especially in the Pacific, that it is only the craft that strictly belong to what may be termed the whaling communities, that bring back with them the people they carry out, and not always them.

But here had Roswell Gardiner his complement full, and nearly everything ready to sea. He had only to go up to the Harbour and obtain his clearance, have a short interview with his owner, a longer with Mary, and be off for the antarctic circle, if indeed the ice would allow him to get as far south. There were now sixteen souls on board the Sea Lion, a very sufficient number for the voyage on which she was about to sail. The disposition or rating of the crew was as follows, viz.

1. Roswell Gardiner, master.
2. Philip Hazard, chief mate.
3. Timothy Green, second do.
4. David Weeks, carpenter.
5. Nathan Thompson, seaman.
6. Sylvester Havens, do.
7. Marcus Todd, do.
8. Hiram Flint, do.
9. Joshua Short, seaman.
10. Stephen Stimson, do.

11. Barlett Davidson, do.
12. Peter Mount, landsman.
13. Arcularius Mott, do.
14. Robert Smith, do.
15. Cato Livingston, cook.
16. Primus Floyd, boy.

This was considered a good crew, on the whole. Every man was a native American, and most of them belonged to old Suffolk. Thompson, and Flint, and Short, and Stimson, four capital fellows in their way, came from the main; the last, it was said, from as far east as Kennebunk. No matter; they were all reasonably young, hale, active fellows, with a promise of excellent service about every man of them. Livingston and Floyd were coloured persons, who bore the names of the two respectable families in which they or their progenitors had formerly been slaves. Weeks was accustomed to the sea, and might have been rated indifferently as a carpenter or as a mariner. Mount and Mott, though shipped as landsmen, were a good deal accustomed to the water also, having passed each two seasons in coasters, though neither had ever yet been really *outside,* or seen blue water.

It would not have been easy to give to the Sea Lion a more efficient crew; yet there was scarce a real seaman belonging to her—a man who could have been made a captain of the forecastle on board a frigate or a ship of the line. Even Gardiner, the best man in his little craft in nearly every respect, was deficient in many attainments that mark the thorough sea−dog. He would have been remarkable anywhere for personal activity, for courage, readiness, hardihood, and all those qualities which render a man useful in the business to which he properly belong; but he could hardly be termed a skilful leadsman, knew little of the finesse of his calling, and was wanting in that in−and−in breeding which converts habit into an instinct, and causes the thorough seaman to do the right thing, blow high or blow low, in the right way, and at the right moment. In all these respects, however, he was much the best man on board; and he was so superior to the rest as fully to command all their respect. Stimson was probably the next best seaman, after the master.

The day succeeding that on which the Sea Lion received the remainder of her people, Roswell Gardiner went up to the Harbour, where he met Deacon Pratt, by appointment. The object was to clear the schooner out, which could be done only at that place. Mary accompanied her uncle, to transact some of her own little domestic business; and it was then arranged between the parties, that the deacon should make his last visit to his vessel in the return−boat of her master, while Roswell Gardiner should take Mary back to Oyster Pond, in the whale−boat that had brought her and her uncle over. As Baiting Joe, as usual, had acted as ferryman, it was necessary to get rid of him, the young sailor desiring to be alone with Mary. This was easily enough effected, by a present of a quarter of a dollar. The boat having two lugg sails, and the wind being light and steady, at south−west, there was nothing to conflict with Roswell Gardiner's wishes.

The young sailor left the wharf at Sag Harbour about ten minutes after the deacon had preceded him, on his way to the schooner. As the wind was so light and so fair, he soon had his sheets in, and the boat gliding along at an easy rate, which permitted him to bestow nearly all his attention on his charming companion. Roswell Gardiner had sought this occasion, that he might once more open his heart to Mary, and urge his suit for the last time, previously to so long an absence. This he did in a manly, frank way, that was far from being unpleasant to his gentle listener, whose inclinations, for a few minutes, blinded her to the resolutions already made on principle. So urgent was her suitor, indeed, that she should solemnly plight her faith to him, ere he sailed, that a soft illusion came over the mind of one as affectionate as Mary, and she was half−inclined to believe her previous determination was unjustifiable and obdurate. But the head of one of her high principles, and clear views of duty, could not long be deceived by her heart, and she regained the self−command which had hitherto sustained her in all her former trials, in connection with this subject.

"Perhaps it would have been better, Roswell," she said, "had I taken leave of you at the Harbour, and not incurred the risk of the pain that I foresee I shall both give and bear, in our present discourse. I have concealed nothing from you; possibly I have been more sincere than prudence would sanction. You know the only obstacle there is to our union; but that appears to increase in strength, the more I ask you to reflect on it—to try to remove it."

"What would you have me do, Mary! Surely, not to play the hypocrite, and profess to believe that which I certainly do not, and which, after all my inquiries, I *cannot* believe."

"I am sorry it is so, on every account," returned Mary, in a low and saddened tone. "Sorry, that one of so frank, ingenuous a mind, should find it impossible to accept the creed of his fathers, and sorry that it must leave so impassable a chasm between us, for ever."

"No, Mary; that can never be! Nothing but death can separate us for so long a time! While we meet, we shall at least be friends; and friends love to meet and to see each other often."

"It may seem unkind, at a moment like this, Roswell, but it is in truth the very reverse, if I say we ought not to meet each other here, if we are bent on following our own separate ways towards a future world. My God is not your God; and what can there be of peace in a family, when its two heads worship different deities? I am afraid that you do not think sufficiently of the nature of these things."

"I did not believe you to be so illiberal, Mary! Had the deacon said as much, I might not have been surprised; but, for one like you to tell me that my God is not your God, is narrow, indeed!"

"Is it not so, Roswell? And, if so, why should we attempt to gloss over the truth by deceptive words? I am a believer in the Redeemer, as the Son of God; as one of the Holy Trinity; while you believe in him only as a man— a righteous and just, a sinless man, if you will, but as a man only. Now, is not the difference in these creeds immense? Is it not, in truth, just the difference between God and man? I worship my Redeemer; regard him as the equal of the Father—as a part of that Divine Being; while you look on him as merely a man without sin—as a man such as Adam probably was before the fall."

"Do we know enough of these matters, Mary, to justify us in allowing them to interfere with our happiness?"

"We are told that they are all−essential to our happiness— not in the sense you may mean, Roswell, but in one of far higher import—and we cannot neglect them, without paying the penalty."

"I think you carry these notions too far, dearest Mary, and that it is possible for man and wife most heartily to love each other, and to be happy in each other, without their thinking exactly alike on religion. How many good and pious women do you see, who are contented and prosperous as wives and mothers, and who are members of meeting, but whose husbands make no profession of any sort!"

"That may be true, or not. I lay no claim to a right to judge of any other's duties, or manner of viewing what they ought to do. Thousands of girls marry without *feeling* the very obligations that they profess to reverence; and when, in after life, deeper convictions come, they cannot cast aside the connections they have previously formed, if they would; and probably would not, if they could. That is a different thing from a young woman, who has a deep sense of what she owes to her Redeemer, becoming deliberately, and with a full sense of what she is doing, the wife of one who regards her God as merely a man—I care not how you qualify this opinion, by saying a pure and sinless man; it will be man, still. The difference between God and man is too immense, to be frittered away by any such qualifications as that."

"But, if I find it *impossible* to believe all you believe, Mary, surely you would not punish me for having the sincerity to tell you the truth, and the whole truth."

"No, indeed, Roswell," answered the honest girl, gently, not to say tenderly. "Nothing has given me a better opinion of your principles, Roswell—a higher notion of what your upright and frank character reany is, than the manly way in which you have admitted the justice of my suspicions of your want of faith—of faith, as I consider faith can alone exist. This fair dealing has made me honour you, and esteem you, in addition to the more girlish attachment that I do not wish to conceal from you, at least, I have so long felt."

"Blessed Mary!" exclaimed Roswell Gardiner, almost ready to fall down on his knees and worship the pretty enthusiast, who sat at his side, with a countenance in which intense interest in his welfare was beaming from two of the softest and sweetest blue eyes that maiden ever bent on a youth in modest tenderness, whatever disposition he might be in to accept her God as his God. "How can one so kind in all other respects, prove so cruel in this one particular!"

"Because that one particular, as you term it, Roswell, is all in all to her," answered the girl, with a face that was now flushed with feeling. "I must answer you as Joshua told the Israelites of old—`Choose you, this day, whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: *but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*.'"

"Do you class me with the idolaters and pagans of Palestine?" demanded Gardiner, reproachfully.

"You have said it, Roswell. It is not I, but yourself, who have thus classed you. You worship your reason, instead of the one true and living God. This is idolatry of the worst character, since the idol is never seen by the

devotee, and he does not know of its existence."

"You consider it then idolatry for one to use those gifts which he has received from his Maker, and to treat the most important of all subjects, as a rational being, instead of receiving a creed blindly, and without thought?"

"If what you call thought could better the matter; if it were sufficient to comprehend and master this subject, there might be force in what you say. But what is this boasted reason, after all? It is not sufficient to explain a single mystery of the creation, though there are thousands. I know there are, nay there *must* be, a variety of opinions among those who look to their reasons, instead of accepting the doctrine of revelation, for the character of Christ; but I believe all, who are not open infidels, admit that the atonement of his death was sufficient for the salvation of men: now, can you explain this part of the theory of our religion any more than you can explain the divine nature of the Redeemer? Can you *reason* any more wisely touching the fall, than touching the redemption itself? I know I am unfit to treat of matters of this profound nature," continued Mary, modestly, though with great earnestness and beauty of manner; "but, to me, it seems very plain that the instant circumstances lead us beyond the limits of our means of comprehension, we are to *believe* in, and not to reason on, revelation. The whole history of Christianity teaches this. Its first ministers were uneducated men; men who were totally ignorant until enlightened by their faith; and all the lessons it teaches are to raise faith, and faith in the Redeemer, high above all other attainments, as the one great acquisition that includes and colours every other. When such is the fact, the heart does not make a stumbling−block of every thing that the head cannot understand."

"I do not know how it is," answered Roswell Gardiner, influenced, though unconvinced; "but when I talk with you on this subject, Mary, I cannot do justice to my opinions, or to the manner in which I reason on them with my male friends and acquaintance. I confess it does appear to me illogical, unreasonable—I scarce know how to designate what I mean—but, improbable, that God should suffer himself, or his Son, to be crucified by beings that he himself created, or that he should feel a necessity for any such course, in order to redeem beings he had himself brought into existence."

"If there be any argument in the last, Roswell, it is an argument as much against the crucifixion of a man, as against the crucifixion of one of the Trinity itself. I understand you to believe that such a being as Jesus of Nazareth did exist; that he was crucified for our redemption; and that the atonement was accepted, and acceptable before God the Father. Now, is it not just as difficult to understand how, or why, this should be, as to understand the common creed of Christians?"

"Surely, there is a vast difference between the crucifixion of a subordinate being, and the crucifixion of one who made a part of the Godhead itself, Mary! I can imagine the first, though I may not pretend to understand its reasons, or why it was necessary it should be so; but, I am certain you will not mistake my motive when I say, I cannot imagine the other."

"Make no apologies to me, Roswell; look rather to that Dread Being whose teachings, through chosen ministers, you disregard. As for what you say, I can fully feel its truth. I do not pretend to *understand* why such a sacrifice should be necessary, but I *believe* it, *feel* it; and believing and feeling it, I cannot but adore and worship the Son, who quitted heaven to come on earth, and suffered, that we might possess eternal life. It is all mystery to me, as is the creation itself, our existence, God himself, and all else that my mind is too limited to comprehend. But, Roswell, if I believe a part of the teachings of the Christian church, I must believe all. The apostles, who were called by Christ in person, who lived in his very presence, who knew nothing except as the Holy Spirit prompted, worshipped him as the Son of God, as one `who thought it not robbery to be equal with God;' and shall I, ignorant and uninspired, pretend to set up my feeble means of reasoning, in opposition to their written instructions!"

"Yet must each of us stand or fall by the means he possesses, and the use he makes of them."

"That is quite true, Roswell; and ask yourself the use to which you put your own faculties. I do not deny that we are to exercise our reason, but it is within the bounds set for its exercise. We may examine the evidence of Christianity, and determine for ourselves how far it is supported by reasonable and sufficient proofs; beyond this we cannot be expected to go, else might we be required to comprehend the mystery of our own existence, which just as much exceeds our understanding as any other. We are told that man was created in the image of his Creator, which means that there is an immortal and spiritual part of him that is entirely different from the material creature. One perishes, temporarily at least—a limb can be severed from the body and perish, even while the body survives; but it is not so with that which has been created in the image of the deity. That is imperishable,

immortal, spiritual, though doomed to dwell awhile in a tenement of clay. Now, why is it more difficult to believe that pure divinity may have entered into the person of one man, than to *believe*, nay to *feel*, that the image of God has entered into the persons of so many myriads of men? You not only overlook all this, Roswell, but you commit the, to me inexplicable, mistake of believing a part of a mystery, while you hesitate about believing all. Were you to deny the merits of the alonement altogether, your position would be much stronger than it is in believing what you do. But, Roswell, we will not embitter the moment of separation by talking more on this subject, now. I have other things to say to you, and but little time to say them in. The promise you have asked of me to remain single until your return, I most freely make. It costs me nothing to give you *this* pledge, since there is scarce a possibility of my ever marrying another."

Mary repeated these words, or rather this idea in other words, to Roswell Gardiner's great delight; and again and again he declared that he could now penetrate the icy seas with a light heart, confident he should find her, on his return, disengaged, and, as he hoped, as much disposed to regard him with interest as she then was. Nevertheless, Gardiner did not deceive himself as to Mary's intentions. He knew her and her principles too well, to fancy that her resolution would be very likely to falter. Notwithstanding their long and intimate knowledge of each other, at no time had she ever betrayed a weakness that promised to undermine her high sense of duty; and as time increased her means of judging of what those duties were, her submission to them seemed to be stronger and stronger. Had there been anything stern or repulsive in Mary's manner of manifesting the feeling that was uppermost in her mind, one of Roswell Gardiner's temperament would have been very apt to shake off her influence; but, so far from this being the case, she ever met him and parted from him with a gentle and ingenuous interest in his welfare, and occasionally with much womanly tenderness. He knew that she prayed for him daily, as fervently as she prayed for herself; and even this, he hoped, would serve to keep alive her interest in him, during his absence. In this respect our young sailor showed no bad comprehension of human nature, nothing being more likely to maintain an influence of this sort, than the conviction that on ourselves depends the happiness or interests of the person beloved.

CHAPTER VIII.

"And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, on ward; from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear;
For I was, as it were, a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows, far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here."
Byron.

It was past the turn of the day when Roswell Gardiner reached his vessel, after having carefully and with manly interest in all that belonged to her, seen Mary to her home, and taken his final leave of her. Of that parting we shall say but little. It was touching and warm−hearted, and it was rendered a little solemn by Mary Pratt's putting into her lover's hand a pocket−bible, with an earnest request that he would not forget to consult its pages. She added, at the same time, that she had carefully marked those passages which she wished him most to study and reflect on. The book was accepted in the spirit in which it was offered, and carefully placed in a little case that contained about a hundred volumes of different works.

As the hour approached for lifting the anchor, the neivousness of the deacon became very apparent to the commander of his schooner. At each instant the former was at the latter's elbow, making some querulous suggestion, or asking a question that betrayed the agitated and unsettled state of his mind. It really seemed as if the old man, at the last moment, had not the heart to part with his property, or to trust it out of his sight. All this annoyed Roswell Gardiner, disposed as he was, at that instant, to regard every person and thing that in any manner pertained to Mary Pratt, with indulgence and favour.

"You will be particular about them islands, Captain Gar'ner, and not get the schooner ashore," said the deacon, for the tenth time at least. "They tell me the tide runs like a horse in the high latitudes, and that seamen are often stranded by them, before they know where they are."

"Ay, ay, sir; I'll try and bear it in mind," answered Gardiner, vexed at being importuned so often to recollect that which there was so little likelihood of his forgetting; "I am an old cruiser in those seas, deacon, and know all about the tides. Well, Mr. Hazard, what is the news of the anchor?"

"We are short, sir, and only wait for orders to go on, and get clear of the ground."

"Trip, at once, sir; and so farewell to America — or to this end of it, at least."

"Then the keys, they tell me, are dangerous navigation, Gar'ner, and a body needs have all his eyes about him."

"All places have their dangers to your sleepy navigator, deacon; but the man who keeps his eyes open has little to fear. Had you given us a chronometer, there would not have been one−half the risk there will be without one."

This had been a bone of contention between the master of the Sea Lion and his owner. Chronometers were not, by any means, in as general use at the period of our tale as they are to−day; and the deacon abhorred the expense to which such an article would have put him. Could he have got one at a fourth of the customary price he might have been tempted; but it formed no part of his principles of saving to anticipate and prevent waste by liberality.

No sooner was the schooner released from the ground than her sails were filled, and she went by the low spit of sand already mentioned, with the light south−west breeze still blowing in her favour, and an ebb tide. Everything appeared propitious, and no vessel probably ever left home under better omens. The deacon remained on board until Baiting Joe, who was to act as his boatman, reminded him of the distance and the probability that the breeze would go down entirely with the sun. As it was, they had to contend with wind and tide, and it would require all his own knowledge of the eddles to get the whale−boat up to Oyster Pond in anything like reasonable time. Thus admonished, the owner tore himself away from his beloved craft, giving "young Gar'ner" as many `last words' as if he were about to be executed. Roswell had a last word on his part, however, in the shape of a message to Mary.

"Tell Mary, deacon," said the young sailor, in an aside, "that I rely on her promise, and that I shall think of her, whether it be under the burning sun of the line, or among the ice of the antarctic."

"Yes, yes; that's as it should be," answered the deacon, heartily. "I like your perseverance, Gar'ner, and hope the gal will come round yet, and I shall have you for a nephew. There's nothing that takes the women's minds like money. Fill up the schooner with skins and ile, and bring back that treasure, and you make as sure of Mary for a wife as if the parson had said the benediction over you."

Such was Deacon Pratt's notion of his niece, as well as of the female sex. For months he regarded this speech as a *coup de maitre* , while Roswell Gardiner forgot it in half an hour; so much better than the uncle did the lover comprehend the character of the niece.

The Sea Lion, of Oyster Pond, had now cast off the last ligament which connected her with the land. She had no pilot, none being necessary, or usual, in those waters; all that a vessel had to do being to give Long Island a sufficient berth in rounding its eastern extremity. The boat was soon shut in by Gardiner's Island, and thenceforth nothing remained but the ties of feeling to connect those bold adventurers with their native country. It is true that Connecticut, and subsequently Rhode Island, was yet visible on one hand, and a small portion of New York on the other; but as darkness came to close the scene, even that means of communication was soon virtually cut off. The light on Montauk, for hours, was the sole beacon for these bold mariners, who rounded it about midnight, fairly meeting the long, rolling swell of the broad Atlantic. Then the craft might be said to be at sea for the first time.

The Sea Lion was found to perform well. She had been constructed with an eye to comfort, as well as to sailing, and possessed that just proportion in her hull which carried her over the surface of the waves like a duck. This quality is of more importance to a small than to a large vessel, for the want of momentum renders what is termed "burying" a very deadening process to a light craft. In this very important particular Roswell was soon satisfied that the ship−wright had done his duty.

As the wind still stood at south−west, the schooner was brought upon an easy bowline, as soon as she had Montauk light dead to windward. This new course carried her out to sea, steering south−south−east, a little easterly, under everything that would draw. The weather appearing settled, and there being no signs of a change, Gardiner now went below and turned in, leaving the care of the vessel to the proper officer of the watch, with an order to call him at sunrise. Fatigue soon asserted its power, and the young man was shortly in as profound a sleep as if he had not just left a mistress whom he almost worshipped for an absence of two years, and to go on a voyage that probably would expose him to more risks and suffering than any other enterprise then attempted by sea−faring men. Our young sailor thought not of the last at all, but he fell asleep dreaming of Mary.

The master of the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond was called precisely at the hour he had named. Five minutes sufficed to bring him on deck, where he found everything as he had left it, with the exception of the schooner itself. In the six hours he had been below, his vessel had moved her position out to sea nearly forty miles. No land was now to be seen, the American coast being very tame and unpicturesque to the eye, as the purest patriot, if he happen to know anything of other parts of the world, must be constrained to admit. A low, monotonous coast, that is scarcely visible at a distance of five leagues, is certainly not to be named in the same breath with those glorious shores of the Mediterranean, for instance, where nature would seem to have exhausted herself in uniting the magnificent with the bewitching. On this continent, or on our own portion of it at least, we must be content with the useful, and lay no great claims to the beautiful; the rivers and bays giving us some compensation in their admirable commercial facilities, for the sameness, not to say tameness, of the views. We mention these things in passing, as a people that does not understand its relative position in the scale of nations, is a little apt to fall into errors that do not contribute to its character or respectability; more especially when they exhibit a self−love founded altogether on ignorance, and which has been liberally fed by flattery.

The first thing a seaman does on coming on deck, after a short absence, is to look to windward, in order to see how the wind stands, and what are the prospects of the weather. Then he turns his eyes aloft to ascertain what canvass is spread, and how it draws. Occasionally, the order of these observations is changed, the first look being sometimes bestowed on the sails, and the second on the clouds. Roswell Gardiner, however, cast his first glance this morning towards the southward and westward, and perceived that the breeze promised to be steady. On looking aloft, he was well satisfied with the manner in which everything drew; then he turned to the second mate, who had the watch, whom he addressed cheerfully, and with a courtesy that is not always observed among sailors.

"A fine morning, sir," said Roswell Gardiner, "and a good−bye to America. We've a long road to travel, Mr. Green, but we've a fast boat to do it in. Here is an offing ready made to our hands. Nothing in sight to the westward; not so much as a coaster, even! It's too early for the outward−bound craft of the last ebb, and too late for those that sailed the tide before. I never saw this bight of the coast clearer of canvass."

"Ay, ay, sir; it does seem empty, like. Here's a chap, however, to leeward, who appears inclined to try his rate of sailing with us. Here he is, sir, a very little abaft the beam; and, as near as I can make him out, he's a fore−tawsail schooner, of about our own dimensions; if you'll just look at him through this glass, Captain Gar'ner, you'll see he has not only our rig, but our canvass set."

"You are right enough, Mr. Green," returned Roswell, after getting his look. "He is a schooner of about our tonnage, and under precisely our canvass. How long has the fellow bore as he does now?"

"He came out from under Blok Island a few hours since, and we made him by moonlight. The question with me is, where did that chap come from? A Stunnin'ton man would have naturally passed to windward of Blok Island; and a Newport or Providence fellow would not have fetched so far to windward without making a stretch or two on purpose. That schooner has bothered me ever since it was daylight; for I can't place him where he is by any traverse my poor l'arnin' can work!"

"She does seem to be out of her way. Possibly it is a schooner beating up for the Hook, and finding herself too close in, she is standing to the southward to get an offing again."

"Not she, sir. She came out from behind Blok, and a craft of her size that wanted to go to the westward, and which found itself so close in, would have taken the first of the flood and gone through the Race like a shot. No, no, Captain Gar'ner; this fellow is bound south as well as ourselves, and it is quite onaccountable how he should be just where he is—so far to windward, or so far to leeward, as a body might say. A south−south−east course, from any place behind Point Judith, would have taken him off near No Man's Land, and here he is almost in a line with Blok Island!"

"Perhaps he is out of New London, or some of the ports on the main, and being bound to the West Indies he has been a little careless about weathering the island. It's no great matter, after all."

"It is some such matter, Captain Gar'ner, as walkin' round a meetin'−'us' when your ar'n'd is in at the door in front. But there was no such craft in at Stunnin'tun or New London, as I know from havin' been at both places within the last eight−and−forty hours."

"You begin to make me as curious about this fellow as you seem to be yourself, sir. And now I think the matter all over, it is somewhat extr'or'nary he should be just where he is. It is, however, a very easy thing to get a nearer look at him, and it's no great matter to us, intending as we do to make the islands off the Cape de Verde, if we do lose a little of our weatherly position—keep the schooner away a point, and get a small pull on your weather braces — give her a little sheet too, fore and aft, sir. So, that will do — keep her steady at that—south−east and by south. In two hours we shall just about speak this out−of−the−way joker."

As every command was obeyed, the Sea Lion was soon running off free, her bowlines hanging loose, and all her canvass a rap full. The change in her line of sailing brought the sail to leeward, a little forward of her beam; but the movement of the vessel that made the freest wind was consequently the most rapid. In the course of half an hour the stranger was again a little abaft the beam, and he was materially nearer than when first seen. No change was made in the route of the stranger, who now seemed disposed to stand out to sea, with the wind as it was, on an easy bowline, without paying any attention to the sail in sight.

It was noon ere the two schooners came within hail of each other. Of course, as they drew nearer and nearer, it was possible for those on board of each to note the appearance, equipments, and other peculiarities of his neighbour. In size, there was no apparent difference between the vessels, and there was a somewhat remarkable resemblance in the details.

"That fellow is no West India drogger," said Roswell Gardiner, when less than a mile from the stranger. "He carries a boat on deck, as we do, and has one on each quarter, too. Can it be possible that he is bound after seals, as well as we are ourselves!"

"I believe you're right, sir," answered Hazard, the chief−mate, who was now on deck. "There's a sealing look about the gentleman, if I know my own complexion. It's odd enough, Captain Gar'ner, that two of us should come together, out here in the offing, and both of us bound to the other end of the 'arth!"

"There is nothing so very remarkable in *that*, Mr. Hazard, when we remember that the start must be properly

timed for those who wish to be off Cape Horn in the summer season. We shall neither of us get there much before December, and I suppose the master of yon schooner knows that as well as I do myself. The position of this craft puzzles me far more than anything else about her. From what port can a vessel come, that she should be just here, with the wind at south−west?"

"Ay, sir," put in Green, who was moving about the decks, coiling ropes and clearing things away, "that's what I tell the chief−mate. Where can a craft come from, to be just here, with this wind, if she don't come from Stunnin'tun. Even from Stunnin'tun she'd be out of her way; but no such vessel has been in that port any time these six weeks. Here, you Stimson, come this way a bit. Didn't you tell me something of having seen a schooner at New Bedford, that was about our build and burthen, and that you understood had been bought for a sealer?"

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Stimson, as bluff an old sea−dog as ever flattened in a jib−sheet, "and that's the craft, as I'm a thinkin', Mr. Green. She had an animal for a figure−head, and that craft has an animal, as well as I can judge, at this distance."

"You are right enough there, Stephen," cried Roswell Gardiner, "and that animal is a seal. It's the twin−brother of the sea lion we carry under our own bowsprit. There's some proof in that, tastes agree sometimes, even if they do differ generally. What became of the schooner you saw?"

"I heard, sir, that she was bought up by some Vineyard men, and was taken across to Hum'ses Hull. They sometimes fit out a craft there, as well as on the main. I should have crossed myself to see what they was at, but I fell in with Mr. Green, and shipped aboard here."

"An adventure by which, I hope, you will not be a loser, my hearty," put in the captain. "And you think that is the craft which was built at New Bedford, and fitted out on the Vineyard?"

"Sartain of it, sir; for I know the figure−head, and all about her build."

"Hand me the trumpet, Mr. Green; we shall soon be near enough for a hail, and it will be easy to learn the truth."

Roswell Gardiner waited a few minutes for the two schooners to close, and was in the very act of applying the trumpet to his mouth, when the usual salutation was sent across the water from the stranger. During the conversation that now took place, the vessels gradually drew nearer to each other, until both parties laid aside their trumpets, and carried on the discourse with the unaided voice.

"Schooner, ahoy!" was the greeting of the stranger, and a simple "Hilloa!" the answer.

"What schooner is that, pray?"

"The Sea Lion, of Oyster Pond, Long Island; bound to the southward, after seal, as I suppose you know by our outfit."

"When did you leave Oyster Pond—and how did you leave your owner, the good Deacon Pratt?"

"We sailed yesterday afternoon, on the first of the ebb, and the deacon left us as we weighed anchor. He was well, and full of hope for our luck. What schooner is that, pray?"

"The Sea Lion, of Hum'ses Hull; bound to the southward, after seals, as you probably knew by *our* outfit. Who commands that schooner?"

"Captain Roswell Gar'ner—who commands aboard you, pray?"

"Captain Jason Daggett," showing himself more plainly, by moving out of the line of the main−rigging. "I had the pleasure of seeing you when I was on the P'int, looking after my uncle's dunnage, you may remember, Captain Gar'ner. 'T was but the other day, and you are not likely to have forgotten my visit."

"Not at all, not at all, Captain Daggett; though I had no idea, *then*, that you intended to make a voyage to the southward so soon. When did you leave the Hole, sir?"

"Day before yesterday, a'ternoon. We came out of the Hull about five o'clock."

"How had you the wind, sir?"

"Sou'−west, and sou'−west and by south. There has been but little change in that, these three days."

Roswell Gardiner muttered something to himself; but he did not deem it prudent to utter the thoughts, that were just then passing through his mind, aloud.

"Ay, ay," he answered, after a moment's pause, "the wind has stood there the whole week; but I think we shall shortly get a change. There is an easterly feeling in the air."

"Waal, let it come. With this offing, we could clear Hatteras with anything that wasn't worse than a south−easter. There's a southerly set, in here, down the coast, for two or three hundred miles."

"A heavy south−easter would jam us in, here, between the shoals, in a way I shouldn't greatly relish, sir. I like always to get to the eastward of the Stream, as soon as I can, in running off the land."

"Very true, Captain Gar'ner—very true, sir. It *is* best to get outside the Stream, if a body *can*. Once there, I call a craft at sea. Eight−and−forty hours more of this wind would just about carry us there. Waal, sir, as we're bound on the same sort of v'y'ge, I'm happy to have fallen in with you; and I see no reason why we should not be neighbourly, and `gam' it a little, when we've nothing better to do. I like that schooner of yours so well, that I've made my own to look as nearly resembling her as I could. You see our paint is exactly the same."

"I have observed that, Captain Daggett; and you might say the same of the figure−heads."

"Ay, ay; when I was over on the P'int, they told me the name of the carver, in Boston, who cut your seal, and I sent to him to cut me a twin. "If they lay in a ship−yard, side by side, I don't think you could tell one from the other."

"So it seems, sir. Pray haven't you a man aboard there of the name of Watson?"

"Ay, ay — he's my second−mate. I know what you mean, Captain Gar'ner—you're right enough, 'tis the same hand who was aboard you; but wanting a second officer, I offered him the berth, and he thought that better than taking a foremast lay in your craft."

This explanation probably satisfied all who heard it, though the truth was not more than half told. In point of fact, Watson was engaged as Daggett's second mate *before* he had ever laid eyes on Roswell Gardiner, and had been sent to watch the progress of the work on Oyster Pond, as has been previously stated. It was so much in the natural order of events for a man to accept preferment when offered, however, that even Gardiner himself blamed the delinquent for the desertion far less than he had previously done. In the mean time the conversation proceeded.

"You told us nothing of your having that schooner fitting, when you were on the Point," observed Roswell Gardiner, whose thoughts just then happened to advert to this particular fact.

"My mind was pretty much taken up with the affairs of my poor uncle, I suppose, Captain Gar'ner. Death must visit each of us, once; nevertheless, it makes us all melancholy when he comes among friends."

Now, Roswell Gardiner was not in the least sentimental, nor had he the smallest turn towards indulging in moral inferences, from ordinary events; but, this answer seemed so proper, that it found no objection in his mind. Still, the young man had his suspicions on the subject of the equipment of the other schooner, and suspicions that were now active and keen, and which led him directly to fancy that Daggett had also some clue to the very objects he was after himself. Singular as it may seem at first, Deacon Pratt's interests were favourably affected by this unexpected meeting with the Sea Lion of Holmes' Hole. From the first, Roswell Gardiner had been indisposed to give full credit to the statements of the deceased mariner, ascribing no small part of his account to artifice, stimulated by a desire to render himself important. But, now that he found one of this man's family embarked in an enterprise similar to his own, his views of its expediency were sensibly changed. Perfectly familiar with the wary economy with which every interest was regulated in that part of the world, he did not believe a company of Martha's Vineyard men would risk their money in an enterprise that they had not good reasons for believing would succeed. Although it exceeded his means to appreciate fully the information possessed by the Vineyard folk, and covetousness did not quicken his faculties on this subject, as they had quickened those of the deacon, he could see enough to satisfy his mind that either the sealing−islands, or the booty of the pirates, or both, had a reality, in the judgments of others, which had induced them also to risk their money in turning their knowledge to account. The effect of this conviction was very natural. It induced Roswell to regard the charts, and his instructions, and all connected with his voyage, as much more serious matters than he had originally been inclined to do. Until now, he had thought it well enough to let the deacon have his fancies, relying on his own ability to obtain a cargo for the schooner, by visiting sealing stations where he had been before; but, now, he determined to steer at once for Daggett's Islands, as he and his owner named the land revealed to them, and ascertain what could be done there. He thought it probable the other Sea Lion might wish to keep him company; but the distance was so great, that a hundred occasions must occur when it would be in his power to shake off such a consort, should be deem it necessary.

For several hours the two schooners stood on in company, keeping just without hailing distance apart, and sailing so nearly alike as to render it hard to say which craft had the best of it. There was nothing remarkable in the fact that two vessels, built for the same trade, should have a close general resemblance to each other; but it

was not common to find them so moulded, stowed, sparred and handled, that their rate of sailing should be nearly identical. If there was any difference, it was slightly in favour of the Sea Lion of the Vineyard, which rather drew ahead of her consort, if consort the other Sea Lion could be termed, in the course of the afternoon.

It is scarcely necessary to say that many were the speculations that were made on board these rival vessels—competitors now for the commonest glories of their pursuits, as well as in the ultimate objects of their respective voyages. On the part of Roswell Gardiner and his two mates, they did not fail, in particular, to comment on the singularity of the circumstance that the Sea Lion, of the Vineyard, should be so far out of her direct line of sailing.

"Although we have had the wind at sow−west" (*sow*− west always, as pronounced by every seaman, from the Lord High Admiral of England, when there happens to be such a functionary, down to the greenest hand on board the greenest sealer) "for these last few days," said Hazard, "anybody can see we shall soon have easterly weather. There's an easterly feel in the air, and all last night the water had an easterly glimmer about it. Now, why a man who came out of the Vineyard Sound, and who had nothing to do but just to clear the west eend of his own island, and then lay his course off yonder to the southward and eastward, should bear up cluss (Anglicé, close) under Blok, and stretch out to sea, for all the world as if he was a Stunnin'tun chap, or a New Lunnoner, that had fallen a little to leeward, is more than I can understand, Captain Gar'ner! Depend on it, sir, there's a reason for't. Men don't put schooners into the water, now−a−days, and give them costly outfits, with three whale−boats, and sealin' gear in abundance, just for the fun of making fancy traverses, on or off a coast, like your yacht gentry, who never know what they would be at, and who never make a v'y'ge worth speaking on."

"I have been turning all this over in my mind, Mr. Hazard," answered the young master, who was amusing himself at the moment with strapping a small block, while he threw many a glance at the vessel that was just as close under his lee as comported with her sailing. "There is a reason for it, as you say; but, I can find no other than the fact that she has come so much out of her way, in order to fall in with *us;* knowing that we were to come round Montauk at a particular time."

"Well, sir, that may have been her play! Men bound the same way often wish to fall into good company, to make the journey seem the shorter, by making it so much the pleasanter."

"Those fellows can never suppose the two schooners will keep in sight of each other from forty−one degrees north all the way to seventy south, or perhaps further south still! If we remain near each other a week, 't will be quite out of the common way."

"I don't know that, sir. I was once in a sealer that, do all she could, couldn't get shut of a curious neighbour. When seals are scarce, and the master don't know where to look for 'em, he is usually glad to drop into some vessel's wake, if it be only to pick up her leavin's.

"Outfits are not made on such chances as that. These Vineyard people know where they are going as well as we know ourselves; perhaps better."

"There is great confidence aboard here, in the master, Captain Gar'ner. I overheard the watch talking the matter over early this morning; and there was but one opinion among *them*, I can tell you, sir."

"Which opinion was, Mr. Hazard—"

"That a lay aboard this craft would be worth a lay and a half aboard any other schooner out of all America! Sailors go partly on skill and partly on luck. I've known hands that wouldn't ship with the best masters that ever sailed a vessel, if they didn't think they was lucky as well as skilful."

"Ay, ay, it's all *luck!* Little do these fellows think of *Providence* — or of *deserving*, or *undeserving*. Well, I hope the schooner will not disappoint them—or her master either. But, whaling and sealing, and trusting to the chances of the ocean, and our most flattering hopes, may mislead us after all."

"Ay, ay, sir; nevertheless, Captain Gar'ner *has* a name, and men will trust to it!"

Our young master could not but be flattered at this, which came at a favourable moment to sustain the resolutions awakened by the competition with the rival schooner. Although so obviously competitors, and that in a matter of trade, the interest which above all others is apt to make men narrow−minded and hostile to each other, though the axiom would throw this particular reproach on *doctors* , there were no visible signs that the two vessels did not maintain the most amicable relations. As the day advanced the wind fell, and after many passages of nautical compliments, by means of signals and the trumpet, Roswell Gardiner fairly lowered a boat into the water, and went a "gamming," as it is termed, on board the other schooner.

Each of these little vessels was well provided with boats, and those of the description in common use among whalers. A whale−boat differs from the ordinary jolly−boat, launch, or yawl—gigs, barges, dinguis, &c. &c., being exclusively for the service of vessels of war—in the following particulars: viz. — It is sharp at both ends, in order that it may `back off,' as well as `pull on;' it steers with an oar, instead of with a rudder, in order that the bows may be thrown round to avoid danger when not in motion; it is buoyant, and made to withstand the shock of waves at both ends; and it is light and shallow, though strong, that it may be pulled with facility. When it is remembered that one of these little egg−shells — little as vessels, though of good size as boats — is often dragged through troubled waters at the rate of ten or twelve knots, and frequently at even a swifter movement, one can easily understand how much depends on its form, buoyancy and strength. Among seamen, it is commonly thought that a whale−boat is the safest craft of the sort in which men can trust themselves in rough water.

Captain Daggett received his guest with marked civility, though in a quiet, eastern way. The rum and water were produced, and a friendly glass was taken by one after the other. The two masters drank to each other's success, and many a conventional remark was made between them on the subject of sea−lions, sea−elephants, and the modes of capturing such animals. Even Watson, semi−deserter as he was, was shaken cordially by the hand, and his questionable conduct overlooked. The ocean has many of the aspects of eternity, and often disposes mariners to regard their fellow−creatures with an expansiveness of feeling suited to their common situations. Its vastness reminds them of the time that has neither beginning nor end; its ceaseless movement, of the never−tiring impulses of human passions; and its accidents and dangers, of the Providence which protects all alike, and which alone prevents our being abandoned to the dominion of chance.

Roswell Gardiner was a kind−hearted man, moreover, and was inclined to judge his fellows leniently. Thus it was that his "good evening" at parting, to Watson, was just as frank and sincere as that he bestowed on Captain Daggett himself.

CHAPTER IX.

"Roll on, thon deep and dark blue ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deeds, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown."
Byron.

That evening the sun set in clouds, though the eastern horizon was comparatively clear. There was, however, an unnatura! outline to objects, by which their dimensions were increased, and in some degree rendered indefinite. We do not know the reason why the wind at east should produce these phenomena, nor do we remember ever to have met with any attempt at a solution; but of the fact, we are certain, by years of observation. In what is called `easterly weather,' objects are seen through the medium of a refraction that is entirely unknown in a clear north−wester; the crests of the seas emit a luminous light that is far more apparent than at other times; and the face of the ocean, at midnight, often wears the aspect of a clouded day. The nerves, too, answer to this power of the eastern winds. We have a barometer within that can tell when the wind is east without looking abroad, and one that never errs. It is true that allusions are often made to these peculiarities, but where are we to look for the explanation? On the coast of America the sea−breeze comes from the rising sun, while on that of Europe it blows from the land; but no difference in these signs of its influence could we ever discover on account of this marked distinction.

Roswell Gardiner found the scene greatly changed when he came on deck next morning. The storm, which had been brewing so long, had come at last, and the wind was blowing a little gale from south−east. The quarter from which the air came had compelled the officer of the watch to haul up on the larboard tack, or with the schooner's head to the southward and westward; a course that might do for a few days, provided it did not blow too heavily. The other tack would not have cleared the shoals, which stretched away to a considerable distance to the eastward. Hazard had got in his flying−jib, and had taken the bonnets off his foresail and jib, to prevent the craft burying. He had also single−reefed his mainsail and foretopsail. The Sea Lion, of the Vineyard, imitated each movment, and was brought down precisely to the same canvass as her consort, and on the same tack. At that moment the two vessels were not a cable's length asunder, the Oyster Ponders being slightly to leeward. Their schooner, however, had a trifling advantage in sailing when it blew fresh and the water was rough; which advantage was now making itself apparent, as the two craft struggled ahead through the troubled element.

"I wish we were two hundred miles to the eastward," observed the young master to his first officer, as soon as his eye had taken in the whole view. "I am afraid we shall get jammed in on Cape Hatteras. That place is always in the way with the wind at south−east and a vessel going to the southward. We are likely to have a dirty time of it, Mr. Hazard."

"Ay, ay, sir, dirty enough," was the careless answer. "I've known them that would go back and anchor in Fort Pond Bay, or even in Gardiner's, until this south−easter had blown itself out."

"I couldn't think of that! We are a hundred miles south−east of Montauk, and if I run the craft into any place, it shall be into Charleston, or some of the islands along that coast. Besides, we can always ware off the land, and place ourselves a day's run further to the southward, and we can then give the shoals a wide berth on the other tack. If we were in the bight of the coast between Long Island and Jersey, 't would be another matter; but, out here, where we are, I should be ashamed to look the deacon in the face if I didn't hold on."

"I only made the remark, Captain Gar'ner, by way of saying something. As for getting to the southward, close in with our own coast, I don't know that it will be of much use to a craft that wishes to stand so far to the eastward, since the trades must be met well to windward, or they had better not be met at all. For my part, I would

as soon take my chance of making a passage to the Cape de Verds or their neighbourhood, by lifting my anchor from Gardidiner's Bay, three days hence, as by meeting the next shift of wind down south, off Charleston or Tybee."

"We should be only five hundred miles to windward, in the latter case, did the wind come from the south−west, again, as at this season of the year it is very likely to do. But, it is of no consequence; men bound where we have got to go, ought not to run into port every time the wind comes out foul. You know as well as I do, Mr. Hazard, that away down south, yonder, a fellow thinks a gale of wind is a relief, provided it brings clear water with it. I would rather run a week among islands, than a single day among icebergs. One knows where to find land, for that never moves; but your mountains that float about, are here to−day, and there to−morrow."

"Quite true, sir," returned Hazard, "and men that take their lays in sealers, are not to expect anything but squalls. I'm ready to hold on as long as our neighbour yonder; he seems to be trimming down to it, as if in raal earnest to get ahead."

This was true enough. The Sea Lion of the Vineyard was doing her best, all this time; and though unable to keep her station on her consort's weather bow, where she had been most of the morning, she was dropped so very slowly as to render the change nearly imperceptible. Now, it was, that the officers and crews of these two craft watched their "behaviour," as it is technically termed, with the closest vigilance and deepest interest. Those in the Oyster Pond vessel regarded the movements of their consort, much as a belle in a ball−room observes the effect produced by the sister belles around her; or a rival physician notes the progress of an operation, that is to add new laurels, or to cause old ones to wither. Now, the lurch was commented on; then, the pitch was thought to be too heavy; and Green was soon of opinion that their competitor was not as easy on her spars as their own schooner. In short, every comparison that experience, jealousy or skill could suggest, was freely made; and somewhat as a matter of course, in favour of their own vessel. That which was done on board the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond, was very freely emulated by those on board her namesake of the Vineyard. They made *their* comparisons, and formed *their* conclusions, with the same deference to self−esteem, and the same submission to hope, as had been apparent among their competitors. It would seem to be a law of nature that men should thus flatter themselves, and perceive the mote in the eye of their neighbour, while the beam in their own escapes.

Had there been an impartial judge present, he might have differed from both sets of critics. Such a person would have seen that one of these schooners excelled in this quality, while the other had an equal advantage in another. In this way, by running through the list of properties that are desirable in a ship, he would, most probably, have come to the conclusion that there was not much to choose between the two vessels; but, that each had been constructed with an intelligent regard to the particular service in which she was about to be employed, and both were handled by men who knew perfectly well how to take care of craft of that description.

The wind gradually increased in strength, and sail was shortened in the schooners, until each was finally brought down to a close−reefed foresail. This would have been heaving the vessels to, had they not been kept a little off, in order to force them through the water. To lie−to, in perfection, some after−sail might have been required; but neither master saw a necessity, as yet, of remaining stationary. It was thought better to wade along some two knots, than to be pitching and lurching with nothing but a drift, or leeward set. In this, both masters were probably right, and found their vessels farther to windward in the end, than if they had endeavoured to hold their own, by lying−to. The great difficulty they had to contend with, in keeping, a little off, was the danger of seas coming on board; but, as yet, the ocean was not sufficiently aroused to make this very hazardous, and both schooners, having no real cargoes, were light and buoyant, and floated dry. Had they encountered the sea there was, with full freights in their holds, it might have been imprudent to expose them even to this remote chance of having their decks swept. Water comes aboard of small vessels, almost without an exception, in head winds and seas; though the contrivances of modern naval architecture have provided defences that make merchant vessels, now, infinitely more comfortable, in this respect, than they were at the period of which we are writing.

At the end of three days, Roswell Gardiner supposed himself to be about the latitude of Cape Henry, and some thirty or forty leagues from the land. It was much easier to compute the last, than the first of these material facts. Of course, he had no observations. The sun had not been visible since the storm commenced, and nearly half the time, during the last day, the two vessels were shut in from one another, by mists and a small rain. It blew more in squalls than it had done, and the relative positions of the schooners were more or less affected by the circumstance. Sometimes, one would be to windward, and ahead; then, the other would obtain a similar

advantage. Once or twice they seemed about to separate, the distance between them getting to be so considerable, as, apparently, to render it impossible to keep in company; then the craft would change places, by a slow process, passing quite near to each other again. No one could tell, at the moment, precisely why these variations occurred; though the reasons, generally, were well understood by all on board them. Squalls, careless steering, currents, eddies, and all the accidents of the ocean, contribute to create these vacillating movements, which will often cause two vessels of equal speed, and under the same canvass, to seem to be of very different qualities. In the nights, the changes were greatest, often placing the schooners leagues asunder, and seemingly separating them altogether. But, Roswell Gardiner became satisfied that Captain Daggett stuck by him intentionally; for on all such occasions if *his* schooner happened to be out of the way, he managed to close again, ere the danger of separating became too great to be overcome.

Our mariners judged of their distance from the land, by means of the lead. If the American coast is wanting in the sublime and picturesque, and every traveller must admit its defects in both, it has the essential advantage of graduated soundings. So regular is the shoaling of the water, and so studiously have the fathoms been laid down, that a cautious navigator can always feel his way in to the coast, and never need place his vessel on the beach, as is so often done, without at least knowing that he was about to do so. Men become adventurous by often−repeated success; and the struggles of competition, the go−ahead−ism of the national character, and the trouble it gives to sound in deep water, all contribute to cast away the reckless and dashing navigator, on this as well as on other coasts, and this to his own great surprise; but, whenever such a thing *does* happen, unless in cases of stress of weather, the reader may rest assured it is because those who have had charge of the stranded vessel have neglected to sound. The milestones on a highway do not more accurately note the distances, than does the lead on nearly the whole of the American coast. Thus Roswell Gardiner judged himself to be about thirty−two or three marine leagues from the land, on the evening of the third day of that gale of wind. He placed the schooner in the latitude of Cape Henry on less certain data, though that was the latitude in which he supposed her to be, by dead reckoning.

"I wish I knew where Daggett makes himself out," said the young master, just as the day closed on a most stormy and dirty−looking night. "I don't half like the appearance of the weather; but, I do not wish to ware off the land, with that fellow ahead and nearer to the danger, if there be any, than we are ourselves."

Here, Roswell Gardiner manifested a weakness that lies at the bottom of half our blunders. He did not like to be outdone by a competitor, even in his mistakes. If the Sea Lion of Holmes' Hole could hold on, on that tack, why might not the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond do the same? It is by this process of human vanity that men sustain each other in wrong, and folly obtains the sanction of numbers, if not that of reason. In this practice we see one of the causes of the masses becoming misled, and this seldom happens without their becoming oppressive.

Roswell Gardiner, however, did not neglect the lead. The schooner had merely to luff close to the wind, and they were in a proper state to sound. This they did twice, during that night, and with a very sensible diminution in the depth of the water. It was evident that the schooner was getting pretty close in on the coast, the wind coming out nearly at south, in squalls. Her commander held on, for he thought there were indications of a change, and he still did not like to ware so long as his rival of the Vineyard kept on the larboard tack. In this way, each encouraging the other in recklessness, did these two craft run nearly into the lion's jaw, as it might be; for, when the day re−appeared, the wind veered round to the eastward, a little northerly, bringing the craft directly on a leeshore, blowing at the time so heavily as to render a foresail reefed down to a mere rag, more canvass than the little vessels could well bear. As the day returned, and the drizzle cleared off a little, land was seen to leeward, stretching slightly to seaward, both ahead and astern! On consulting his charts, and after getting a pretty good look at the coast from aloft, Roswell Gardiner became satisfied that he was off Currituck, which placed him near six degrees to the southward of his port of departure, and about four to the westward. Our young man now deeply felt that a foolish rivalry had led him into an error, and he regretted that he had not wore the previous evening, when he might have had an offing that would have enabled him to stand in either direction, clearing the land. As things were, he was not by any means certain of the course he ought to pursue.

Little did Gardiner imagine that the reason why Daggett had thus stood on, was solely the wish to keep him company; for, that person, in consequence of Gardiner's running so close in towards the coast, had taken up the notion that the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond meant to pass through the West Indies, visiting the key, which was thought to contain treasure, and of which he had some accounts that had aroused all his thirst for gold, without

giving him the clue necessary to obtain it. Thus it was that a mistaken watchfulness on one side, and a mistaken pride on the other, had brought these two vessels into as dangerous a position as could have been obtained for them by a direct attempt to place them in extreme jeopardy.

About ten, the gale was at its height, the wind still hanging at east, a little northerly: In the course of the morning, the officers on board both schooners, profiting by lulls and clear moments, had got so many views of the land from aloft, as to be fully aware of their respective situations. All thoughts of competition and watchfulness had now vanished. Each vessel was managed with a reference solely to her safety; and, as might have been foreseen when true seamen handled both, they had recourse to the same expedients to save themselves. The mainsails of both crafts were set, balance−reefed, and the hulls were pressed up against the wind and sea, while they were driven ahead with increased momentum.

"That main−mast springs like a whale−bone whip−handle, sir," said Hazard, when this new experiment had been tried some ten minutes or more. "She jumps from one sea to another, like a frog in a hurry to hop into a puddle!"

"She must stand it, or go ashore," answered Gardiner, coolly, though in secret he was deeply concerned. "Did Deacon Pratt forgive me, should we lose the schooner, I never could forgive myself!"

"Should we lose the schooner, Captain Gar'ner, few of us would escape drowning, to feel remorse or joy. Look at that coast, sir — it is clear now, and a body can see a good bit of it—never did I put eyes upon a less promising land−fall, for strangers to make."

Roswell Gardiner did look, as desired, and he fully agreed with Hazard in opinion. Ahead, and astern, the land trended to seaward, placing the schooners in a curve of the coast, or what seamen term a bight, rendering it quite impossible for the vessels to lay out past either of the head−lands in sight. The whole coast was low, and endless lines of breakers were visible along it, flashing up with luminous crests that left no doubt of their character, or of the dangers that they so plainly denoted. At times, columns of water shot up into the air like enormous jets, and the spray was carried inland for miles. Then it was that gloom gathered around the brows of the seamen, who fully comprehended the nature of the danger that was so plainly indicated. The green hands were the least concerned, "knowing nothing and fearing nothing," as the older seamen are apt to express their sense of this indifference on the part of the boys and landsmen.

According to the calculations of those on board the Sea Lion, of Oyster Pond, they had about two miles of drift before they should be in the breakers. They were on the best tack, to all appearances, and that was the old one, or the same leg that had carried them into the bight. To ware now, indeed, would be a very hazardous step, since every inch of room was of importance. Gardiner's secret hope was that they might find the inlet that led into Currituck, which was then open, though we believe it has since been closed, in whole or in part, by the sands. This often happens on the American coast, very tolerable passages existing this year for vessels of an easy draught, that shall be absolutely shut up, and be converted into visible beach, a few years later. The waters within will then gain head, and break out, cutting themselves a channel, that remains open until a succession of gales drives in the sands upon them from the outside once more.

Gardiner well knew he was on the most dangerous part of the whole American coast, in one sense, at least. The capacious sounds that spread themselves within the long beaches of sand were almost as difficult of navigation as any shoals to the northward; yet would he gladly have been in one in preference to clawing off breakers on their outside. As between the two schooners, the Vineyard−men had rather the best of it, being near a cable's length to windward, and so much further removed from destruction. The difference, however, was of no great account in the event of the gale continuing, escape being utterly impossible for either in that case. So critical was the situation of both craft becoming, indeed, that neither could now afford to yield a single fathom of the ground she held.

All eyes were soon looking for the inlet, it having been determined to keep the Sea Lion, of Oyster Pond, away for it, should it appear to leeward, under circumstances that would allow of her reaching it. The line of breakers was now very distinctly visible, and each minute did it not only appear to be, but it was in fact nearer and nearer. Anchors were cleared away, and ranges of cable overhauled, anchoring being an expedient that a seaman felt bound to resort to, previously to going ashore, though it would be with very little hope of ground−tackles holding.

The schooner had been described by Hazard as `jumping' into the sea. This expression is not a bad one, as applied to small vessels in short seas, and it was particularly apt on this occasion. Although constructed with great

care forward as to buoyancy, this vessel made plunges into the waves she met that nearly buried her; and, once or twice, the shocks were so great, that those on board her could with difficulty persuade themselves they had not struck the bottom. The lead, nevertheless, still gave water sufficient, though it was shoaling fast, and with a most ominous regularity. Such was the actual state of things when the schooner made one of her mad plunges, and was met by a force that seemed to check her forward movement as effectually as if she had hit a rock. The mainmast was a good spar in some respects, but it wanted wood. An inch or two more in diameter might have saved it; but the deacon had been induced to buy it to save his money, though remonstrated with at the time. This spar now snapped in two, a few feet from the deck, and falling to leeward, it dragged after it the head of the foremast, leaving the Sea Lion, of Oyster Pond, actually in a worse situation, just at that moment, than if she had no spars at all.

Roswell Gardiner now appeared in a new character. Hitherto he had been silent, but observant; issuing his orders in a way not to excite the men, and with an air of unconcern that really had the effect to mislead most of them on the subject of his estimate of the danger they were in. Concealment, however, was no longer possible, and our young master came out as active as circumstances required, foremost in every exertion, and issuing his orders amid the gale trumpet−tongued. His manner, so full of animation, resolution and exertion, probably prevented despair from getting the ascendancy at that important moment. He was nobly sustained by both his mates; and three or four of the older seamen now showed themselves men to be relied on to the last.

The first step was to anchor. Fortunately, the foresight of Gardiner had everything ready for this indispensable precaution. Without anchoring, ten minutes would probably have carried the schooner directly down upon the breakers, leaving no hope for the life of any on board her, and breaking her up into chips. Both bowers were let go at once, and long ranges of cable given. The schooner was snubbed without parting anything, and was immediately brought head to sea. This relieved her at once, and there was a moment that her people fancied she might ride out the gale where she was, could they only get clear of the wreck. Axes, hatchets, and knives were freely used, and Roswell Gardiner saw the mass of spars and rigging float clear of him with a delight he did not desire to conceal. As it drove to leeward, he actually cheered. A lead was instantly dropped alongside, in order to ascertain whether the anchors held. This infallible test, however, gave the melancholy certainty that the schooner was still drifting her length in rather less than two minutes.

The only hope now was that the flukes of the anchors might catch in better holding ground than they had yet met with. The bottom was hard sand, however, which never gives a craft the chance that it gets from mud. By Roswell Gardiner's calculations, an hour, at the most, would carry them into the breakers; possibly less time. The Sea Lion, of Holmes' Hole, was to windward a cable's length when this accident happened to her consort, and about half a mile to the southward. Just at that instant the breakers trended seaward, ahead of that schooner, rendering it indispensable for her to ware. This was done, bringing her head to the southward, and she now came struggling directly on towards her consort. The operation of waring had caused her to lose ground enough to bring her to leeward of the anchored craft, and nearer to the danger.

Roswell Gardiner stood on his own quarter−deck, anxiously watching the drift of the other schooner, as she drew near in her laboured way, struggling ahead through billows that were almost as white as the breakers that menaced them with destruction to leeward. The anchored vessel, though drifting, had so slow a movement that it served to mark the steady and rapid set of its consort towards its certain fate. At first, it seemed to Gardiner that Daggett would pass just ahead of him, and he trembled for his cables, which occasionally appeared above water, stretched like bars of iron, for the distance of thirty or forty fathoms. But, the leeward set of the vessel under way was too fast to give her any chance of bringing this new danger on her consort. When a cable's length distant, the Sea Lion, of the Vineyard, *did* seem as if she might weather her consort; but, ere that short space was passed over, it was found that she fell off so fast, by means of her drift, as to carry her fairly clear of her stern. The two masters, holding with one hand to some permanent object by which to steady themselves, and each pressing his tarpaulin firmly down on his head with the other, had a minute's conversation when the schooners were nearest together.

"Do your anchors hold?" demanded Daggett, who was the first to speak, and who put his question as if he thought his own fate depended on the answer.

"I'm sorry to say they do not. We drift our length in about two minutes."

"That will put off the evil moment an hour or two. Look what a wake *we* are making!"

Sure enough, that wake was frightful! No sooner was the head of the Sea Lion, of the Vineyard, fairly up with the stern of the Sea Lion, of Oyster Pond, than Gardiner perceived that she went off diagonally, moving quite as fast to leeward as she went ahead. This was so very obvious that a line drawn from the quarter of Roswell's craft, in a quartering direction, would almost have kept the other schooner in its range from the moment that her bow hove heavily past.

"God bless you!—God bless you!" cried Roswell Gardiner, waving his hand in adieu, firmly persuaded that he and the Vineyard master were never to meet again in this world. "The survivors must let the fate of the lost be known. At the pinch, I shall out boats, if I can."

The other made no answer. It would have been useless, indeed, to attempt it; since no human voice had power to force itself up against such a gale, the distance that had now to be overcome.

"That schooner will be in the breakers in half an hour," said Hazard, who stood by the side of young Gardiner. "Why don't he anchor! No power short of Divine Providence can save her."

"And Divine Providence will do it—thanks to Almighty God for his goodness!" exclaimed Roswell Gardiner. "Did you perceive that, Mr. Hazard?"

The `*that*' of our young mariner was, in truth, a most momentous omen. The wind had lulled so suddenly that the rags of sails which the other schooner carried actually flapped. At first our seamen thought she had been becalmed by the swell; but the change about themselves was too obvious to admit of any mistake. It blew terribly, again, for a minute; then there was another lull. Gardiner sprang to the lead−line to see the effect on his own vessel. She no longer dragged her anchor!

"God is with us!" exclaimed the young master—"blessed for ever be his holy name."

"And that of his only and *true* Son," responded a voice from one at his elbow.

Notwithstanding the emergency, and the excitement produced by this sudden change, Roswell Gardiner turned to see from whom this admonition had come. The oldest seaman on board, who was Stimson, a Kennebunk man, and who had been placed there to watch the schooner's drift, had uttered these unusual words. The fervour with which he spoke produced more impression on the young master than the words themselves; the former being very unusual among sea−faring men, though the language was not so much so. Subsequently, Gardiner remembered that little incident, which was not without its results.

"I do believe, sir," cried Hazard, "that the gale is broken. It often happens, on our own coast, that the southe easters chop round suddenly, and come out nor'−westers. I hope this will not be too late to save the Vineyard chap, though he slips down upon them breakers at a most fearful rate."

"There goes his foresail, again—and here is another lull!" rejoined Gardiner. "I tell you, Mr. Hazard, we shall have a shift of wind—nothing short of which could save either of us from these breakers."

"Which comes from the marcy of God Almighty, through the intercession of his only Son!" added Stimson, with the same fervour of manner, though he spoke in a very low tone of voice.

Roswell Gardiner was again surprised, and for another moment he forgot the gale and its dangers. Gale it was no longer, however, for the lull was now decided, and the two cables of the schooner were distended only when the roll of the seas came in upon her. This wash of the waves still menaced the other schooner, driving her down towards the breakers, though less rapidly than before.

"Why don't the fellow anchor!" exclaimed Gardiner, in his anxiety, all care for himself being now over. "Unless he anchor, he will yet go into the white water, and be lost!"

"So little does he think of that, that he is turning out his reefs," answered Hazard. "See! there is a hand aloft loosening his topsail—and there goes up a whole mainsail, already!"

Sure enough, Daggett appeared more disposed to trust to his canvass, than to his ground−tackle. In a very brief space of time he had his craft under whole sail, and was struggling, in the puffs, to claw off the land. Presently, the wind ceased altogether, the canvass flapping so as to be audible to Gardiner and his companions, at the distance of half a mile. Then, the cloth was distended in the opposite direction, and the wind came off the land. The schooner's head was instantly brought to meet the seas, and the lead dropped at her side showed that she was moving in the right direction. These sudden changes, sometimes destructive, and sometimes providential as acts of mercy, always bring strong counter−currents of air in their train.

"Now we shall have it!" said Hazard—"a true nor'−wester, and butt−end foremost!"

This opinion very accurately described that which followed. In ten minutes it was blowing heavily, in a

direction nearly opposite to that which had been the previous current of the wind. As a matter of course, the Sea Lion of the Vineyard drew off the land, wallowing through the meeting billows that still came rolling in from the broad Atlantic; while the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond tended to the new currents of air, and rode, as it might be, suspended between the two opposing forces, with little or no strain on her cables. Gardiner expected to see his consort stand out to sea, and gain an offing; but, instead of this, Captain Daggett brought his schooner quite near to the disabled vessel, and anchored. This act of neighbourly kindness was too unequivocal to require explanation. It was the intention of the Vineyard men to lie by their consort until she was relieved from all apprehensions of danger. The `butt−end' of the `nor'−wester' was too large to admit of intercourse until next morning, when that which had been a small gale had dwindled to a good steady breeze, and the seas had gone down, leaving comparatively smooth water all along the coast. The line of white water which marked the breakers was there, and quite visible; but it no longer excited apprehension. The jury−masts on board the disabled craft were got up, and what was very convenient, just at that moment, the wreck came floating out on the ebb, so near to her as to enable the boats to secure all the sails and most of the rigging. The main−boom, too, an excellent spar, was towed alongside and saved.

CHAPTER X.

"The shadow from thy brow shall melt,
The sorrow from thy strain;
But where thy earthly smile hath dwelt,
Our hearts shall thirst in vain."
Mrs. Hemans.

As soon as it would do to put his boats in the water, or at daylight next morning, Captain Daggett came alongside of his consort. He was received with a seaman's welcome, and his offers of services were accepted, just as frankly, as under reversed circumstances, they would have been made. In all this there was a strange and characteristic admixture of neighbourly and Christian kindness, blended with a keen regard of the main chance. If the former duties are rarely neglected by the descendants of the Puritans, it may be said, with equal truth, that the latter are never lost sight of. Speculation, and profit, are regarded as so many integral portions of the duty of man; and, as our kinsmen of Old England have set up an idol to worship, in the form of aristocracy, so do our kinsmen of New England pay homage to the golden calf. In point of fact, Daggett had a double motive in now offering his services to Gardiner; the one being the discharge of his moral obligations, and the other a desire to remain near the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond, lest she should visit the key, of which he had some very interesting memorandums, without having enough to find the place unless led there by those who were better informed on the subject of its precise locality than he was himself.

The boats of Daggett assisted in getting the wreck alongside, and in securing the sails and rigging. Then, his people aided in fitting jury−masts; and, by noon, both vessels got under way, and stood along the coast, to the southward and westward. Hatteras was no longer terrible, for the wind still stood at north−west, and they kept in view of those very breakers which, only the day before, they would have given the value of both vessels to be certain of never seeing again. That night they passed the formidable cape, a spit of sand projecting far to seaward, and which is on a low beach, and not on any main land at all. Once around this angle in the coast, they had a lee, hauling up to the south−west. With the wind abeam, they stood on the rest of the day, picking up a pilot. The next night they doubled Cape Look Out, a very good landmark for those going north to keep in view, as a reminder of the stormy and sunken Hatteras, and arrived off Beaufort harbour just as the sun was rising, the succeeding morning. By this time the north−wester was done, and both schooners entered Beaufort, with a light southerly breeze, there being just water enough to receive them. This was the only place on all that coast into which it would have answered their purposes to go; and it was, perhaps, the very port of all others that was best suited to supply the present wants of Roswell Gardiner. Pine timber, and spars of all sorts, abounded in that region; and the "Banker," who acted as pilot, told our young master that he could get the very sticks he needed, in one hour's time after entering the haven. This term of "Banker" applies to a scattering population of wreckers and fishermen, who dwell on the long, low, narrow beaches which extend along the whole of this part of the coast, reaching from Cape Fear to near Cape Henry, a distance of some hundred and fifty miles. Within lie the capacious sounds already mentioned, including Albemarle and Pimlico, and which form the watery portals to the sea−shores of all North Carolina. Well is the last headland of that region, but one which the schooners did not double, named Cape Fear. It is the commencement, on that side, of the dangerous part of the coast, and puts the mariner on his guard by its very appellation, admonishing him to be cautious and prudent.

Off the entrance of Beaufort, a very perfect and beautiful haven, if it had a greater depth of water, the schooners hove−to, in waiting for the tide to rise a little; and Roswell Gardiner took that occasion to go on board the sister craft, and express to Daggett a sense of the obligations he felt for the services the other had rendered.

"Of course, you will not think of going in, Captain Daggett," continued our hero, in dwelling on the subject, "after having put yourself, already, to so much unnecessary trouble. If I find the spars the Banker talks of, I shall be out again in eight−and−forty hours, and we may meet, some months hence, off Cape Horn."

"I'll tell you what it is, Gar'ner," returned the Vineyard mariner, pushing the rum towards his brother master, "I'm a plain sort of a fellow, and don't make much talk when I do a thing, but I like good−fellowship. We came near going, both of us—nearer than I ever was before, and escape wrackin'; but escape we did—and when men

have gone through such trials in company, I don't like the notion of casting off till I see you all a−tanto ag'in, and with as many legs and arms as I carry myself. That's just my feelin', Gar'ner, and I won't say whether it's a right feelin' or not—help yourself."

"It's a right feeling, as between you and me, Captain Daggett, as I can answer for. My heart tells me you are right, and I thank you from it, for these marks of friendship. But, you must not forget there are such persons as owners, in this world. I shall have trouble enough on my hands, with my owner, and I do not wish you to have trouble with yours. Here is a nice little breeze to take you out to sea again; and by passing to the southward of Bermuda, you can make a short cut, and hit the trades far enough to windward to answer all your purposes."

"Thankee, thankee, Gar'ner — I know the road, and can find the places I'm going to, though no great navigator. Now, I never took a lunar in my life, and can't do anything with a chronometer; but as for finding the way between Martha's Vineyard and Cape Horn, I'll turn my back on no shipmaster living."

"I'm afraid, Captain Daggett, that we have both of us turned our backs on our true course, when we suffered ourselves to get jammed away down here, on Hatteras. Why, I never saw the place before, and never wish to see it again! It's as much out of the track of a whaler, or sealer, as Jupiter is out of the track of Mars, or Venus."

"Oh, there go your lunars, about which I know nothing, and care nothing. I tell you, Gar'ner, a man with a good judgment, can just as well jog about the 'arth, without any acquaintance with lunars, as he can with. Then, your sealer hasn't half as much need of your academy−sort of navigation, as another man. More than half of our calling is luck; and all the best sealing stations I ever heard of, have been blundered on by some chap who has lost his way. I despise lunars, if the truth must be said; yet I like to go straight to my port of destination. Take a little sugar with your rum−and−water—we Vineyard folks like sweetening."

"For which purpose, or that of going straight to your port, Captain Daggett, you've come down here, on your way to the Pacific; or, about five hundred miles out of your way!"

"I came here for company, Gar'ner. We hadn't much choice, you must allow, for we couldn't have weathered the shoals on the other tack. I see no great harm in our positions, if you hadn't got dismasted. That's a two or three hundred dollar job, and may make your owner grumble a little, but it's no killing matter. I'll stick by you, and you can tell the deacon as much in the letter you'll write him, when we get in."

"It seems like doing injustice to *your* owners, as well as to my own, keeping you here, Captain Daggett," returned Roswell, innocently, for he had not the smallest suspicion of the true motive of all this apparent good−fellowship, "and I really wish you would now quit me."

"I couldn't think of it, Gar'ner. 'T would make an awful talk on the Vineyard, was I to do anything of the sort. `Stick by your consort,' is an eleventh commandment, in our island."

"Which is the reason why there are so many old maids there, I suppose, Daggett," cried Roswell Gardiner, laughing. "Well, I thank you for your kindness, and will endeavour to remember it when you may have occasion for some return. But, the tide must be making, and we ought to lose no time, unnecessarily. Here's a lucky voyage to us both, Captain Daggett, and a happy return to sweet−hearts and wives."

Daggett tossed off his glass to this toast, and the two then went on deck. Roswell Gardiner thought that a kinder ship's company never sailed together than this of the Sea Lion of Holmes' Hole; for, notwithstanding the interest of every man on board depended on the returns of their own voyage, each and all appeared willing to stick by him and his craft so long as there was a possibility of being of any service.

Whalers and sealers do not ship their crews for wages in money, as is done with most vessels. So much depends on the exertions of the people in these voyages, that it is the practice to give every man a direct interest in the result. Consequently, all on board engage for a compensation to be derived from a division of the return cargo. The terms on which a party engages are called his "lay;" and he gets so many parts of a hundred, according to station, experience and qualifications. The owner is paid for his risk and expenses in the same way, the vessel and outfits usually taking about two−thirds of the whole returns, while the officers and crew get the other. These conditions vary a little, as the proceeds of whaling and sealing rise or fall in the market, and also in reference to the cost of equipments. It follows that Captain Daggett and his crew were actually putting their hands into their own pockets, when they lost time in remaining with the crippled craft. This Gardiner knew, and it caused him to appreciate their kindness at a rate so much higher than he might otherwise have done.

At first sight, it might seem that all this unusual kindness was superfluous, and of no avail. This, however, was not really the case, since the crew of the second schooner was of much real service in forwarding the equipment

of the disabled vessel. Beaufort has an excellent harbour for vessels of a light draught of water like our two sealers; but the town is insignificant, and extra labourers, especially those of an intelligence suited to such work, very difficult to be had. At the bottom, therefore, Roswell Gardiner found his friendly assistants of much real advantage, the two crews pushing the work before them with as much rapidity as suited even a seaman's impatience. Aided by the crew of his consort, Gardiner got on fast with his repairs, and on the afternoon of the second day after he had entered Beaufort, he was ready to sail once more; his schooner probably in a better state for service than the day she left Oyster Pond.

The lightning−line did not exist at the period of which we are writing. It is our good fortune to be an intimate acquaintance of the distinguished citizen who has bestowed this great gift on his own country—one that will transmit his name to posterity, side by side with that of Fulton. In his case, as in that of the last−named inventor, attempts have been made to rob him equally of the honours and the profits of his very ingenious invention. As respects the last, we hold that it is every hour becoming less and less possible for any American to maintain his rights against numbers. There is no question that the government of this great Republic was intended to be one of well−considered and upright principles, in which certain questions are to be referred periodically to majorities, as the wisest and most natural, as well as the most just mode of disposing of them. Such a government, well administered, and with an accurate observance of its governing principles, would probably be the best that human infirmity will allow men to administer; but when the capital mistake is made of supposing that mere numbers are to control all things, regardless of those great fundamental laws that the state has adopted for its own restraint, it may be questioned if so loose, and capricious, and selfish a system, is not in great danger of becoming the very worst scheme of polity that cupidity ever set in motion. The tendency—not the *spirit* of the institutions, the two things being the very antipodes of each other, though common minds are so apt to confound them— the *tendency* of the institutions of this country, in flagrant opposition to their *spirit* or *intentions* , which were devised expressly to restrain the disposition of men to innovate, is out of all question to foster this great abuse, and to place numbers above principles, even when the principles were solemnly adopted expressly to bring numbers under the control of a sound fundamental law. This influence of numbers, this dire mistake of the very nature of liberty, by placing men and their passions above those great laws of right which come direct from God himself, is increasing in force, and threatens consequences which may set at naught all the well−devised schemes of the last generation for the security of the state, and the happiness of that very people, who can never know either security or even peace, until they learn to submit themselves, without a thought of resistance, to those great rules of right which in truth form the *spirit* of their institutions, and which are only too often in opposition to their own impulses and motives.

We pretend to no knowledge on the subject of the dates of discoveries in the arts and sciences, but well do we remember the earnestness and single−minded devotion to a laudable purpose, with which our worthy friend first communicated to us his ideas on the subject of using the electric spark by way of a telegraph. It was in Paris, and during the winter of 1831−2, and the succeeding spring, a time when we were daily together; and we have a satisfaction in recording this date, that others may prove better claims if they can. Had Morse set his great invention on foot thirty years earlier, Roswell Gardiner might have communicated with his owner, and got a reply, ere he again sailed, considerable as was the distance between them. As things then were, he was fain to be content with writing a letter, which was put into the deacon's hand about a week after it was written, by his niece, on his own return from a short journey to Southold, whither he had been to settle and discharge a tardy claim against his schooner.

"Here is a letter for you, uncle," said Mary Pratt, struggling to command her feelings, though she blushed with the consciousness of her own interest in the missive. "It came from the Harbour, by some mistake; Baiting Joe bringing it across just after you left home."

"A letter with a post mark — `Beaufort, N. C.' — Who in natur' can this letter be from?—What a postage, too, to charge on a letter! Fifty cents!"

"That is a proof, sir, that Beaufort must be a long way off. Besides, the letter is double. I think the hand−writing is Roswell's."

Had the niece fired a six−pounder under her uncle's ears, he would scarcely have been more startled. He even turned pale, and instead of breaking the wafer as he had been about to do, he actually shrunk from performing the act, like one afraid to proceed.

"What can this mean?" said the deacon, taking a moment to recover his voice. "Gar'ner's hand−writing! So it

is, I declare. If that imprudent young man has lost my schooner, I'll never forgive him in this world, whatever a body may be *forced* to do in the next!"

"It is not necessary to believe anything as bad as that, uncle. Letters are often written at sea, and sent in by vessels that are met. I dare say Roswell has done just this."

"Not he—not he—the careless fellow! He has lost that schooner, and all my property is in the hands of wrackers, who are worse than so many rats in a larder. `Beaufort, N. C.' Yes, that must be one of the Bahamas, and N. C. stands for New Providence — Ah's me! Ah's me!"

"But N. C. does *not* stand for New Providence — it would be N. P. in that case, uncle."

"N. C. or N. P., they sound so dreadfully alike, that I don't know what to think! Take the letter and open it. Oh! how big it is—there must be a protest, or some other costly thing inclosed."

Mary did take the letter, and she opened it, though with trembling hands. The inclosure soon appeared, and the first glance of her eye told her it was a letter addressed to herself.

"What is it, Mary?—What is it, my child? Do not be afraid to tell me," said the deacon, in a low faltering voice. "I hope I know how to meet misfortunes with Christian fortitude. Has it one of them awful−looking seals that Notary Publics use when they want money?"

Mary blushed rosy−red, and she appeared very charming at that moment, though as resolute as ever to give her hand only to a youth whose `God should be her God.'

"It is a letter to me, sir—nothing else, I do assure you, uncle. Roswell often writes to me, as you know; he has sent one of his letters inclosed in this to you."

"Yes, yes—I'm glad it's no worse. Well, where was his letter written? Does he mention the latitude and longitude? It will be some comfort to learn that he was well to the southward and eastward."

Mary's colour disappeared, and a paleness came over her face, as she ran through the few first lines of the letter. Then she summoned all her resolution, and succeeded in telling her uncle the facts.

`A misfortune has befallen poor Roswell," she said, her voice trembling with emotion, "though it does not seem to be half as bad as it might have been. The letter is written at Beaufort, in North Carolina, where the schooner has put in to get new masts, having lost those with which she sailed in a gale of wind off Cape Hatteras."

"Hatteras!" interrupted the deacon, groaning—"What in natur' had my vessel to do down there?"

"I am sure I don't know, sir—but I had better read you the contents of Roswell's letter, and then you will hear the whole story."

Mary now proceeded to read aloud. Gardiner gave a frank, explicit account of all that had happened since he parted with his owner, concealing nothing, and not attempting even to extenuate his fault. Of the Sea Lion of Holmes' Hole he wrote at large, giving it as his opinion that Captain Daggett really possessed some clue—what he did not know— to the existence of the sealing islands, though he rather thought that he was not very accurately informed of their precise position. As respected the key, Roswell was silent, for it did not at all occur to him that Daggett knew anything of that part of his own mission. In consequence of this opinion, not the least suspicion of the motive of the Vineyard−man, in sticking by him, presented itself to Gardiner's mind; and nothing on the subject was communicated in the letter. On the contrary, our young master was quite eloquent in expressing his gratitude to Daggett and his crew, for the assistance they had volunteered, and without which he could not have been ready to go to sea again in less than a week. As it was, the letter was partly written as the schooner re−passed the bar, and was sent ashore by the pilot to be mailed. This fact was stated in full, in a postscript.

"Volunteered!" groaned the deacon, aloud. "As if a man ever volunteers to work without his pay!"

"Roswell tells us that Captain Daggett did, uncle," answered Mary, "and that it is understood between them he is to make no charge for his going into Beaufort, or for anything he did while there. Vessels often help each other in this kind way, I should hope, for the sake of Christian charity, sir."

"Not without salvage, not without salvage! Charity is a good thing, and it is our duty to exercise it on all occasions; but salvage comes into charity all the same as into any other interest. This schooner will ruin me, I fear, and leave me in my old age to be supported by the town!"

"That can hardly happen, uncle, since you owe nothing for her, and have your farms, and all your other property unencumbered. It is not easy to see how the schooner can ruin you."

"Yes, I am undone"—returned the deacon, beating the floor with his foot, in nervous agitation—"as much undone as ever Roswell Gar'ner's father was, and he might have been the richest man between Oyster Pond and

Riverhead, had he kept out of the way of speculation. I remember him much better off than I am myself, and he died but little more than a beggar. Yes, yes; I see how it is; this schooner has undone me!"

"But Roswell sends an account of all that he has paid, and draws a bill on you for its payment. The entire amount is but one hundred and sixteen dollars and seventy−two cents."

"That's not for salvage. The next thing will be a demand for salvage in behalf of the owners and crew of the Sea Lion of Humses' Hull! I know how it will be, child; I know how it will be! Gar'ner has undone me, and I shall go down into my grave a beggar, as his father has done already."

"If such be the fact, uncle, no one but I would be the sufferer, and I will strive not to grieve over your losses. But, here is a paper that Roswell has inclosed in his letter to me, by mistake, no doubt. See, sir; it is an acknowledgment, signed by Captain Daggett and all his crew, admitting that they went into Beaufort with Roswell out of good feeling, and allowing that they have no claims to salvage. Here it is, sir; you can read it for yourself."

The deacon did not only read it—he almost devoured the paper, which, as Mary suggested, had been inclosed in her letter by mistake. The relief produced by this document so far composed the uncle, that he not only read Gardiner's letter himself, with a very close attention to its contents, but he actually forgave the cost of the repairs incurred at Beaufort. While he was in the height of his joy at this change in the aspect of things, the niece stole into her own room in order to read the missive she had received, by herself.

The tears that Mary Pratt profusely shed over Roswell's letter, were both sweet and bitter. The manifestations of his affection for her, which were manly and frank, brought tears of tenderness from her eyes; while the recollection of the width of the chasm that separated them, had the effect to embitter these proofs of love. Most females would have lost the sense of duty which sustained our heroine in this severe trial, and, in accepting the man of their heart, would have trusted to time, and her own influence, and the mercy of Divine Providence, to bring about the change she desired; but Mary Pratt could not thus blind herself to her own high obligations. The tie of husband and wife she rightly regarded as the most serious of all the obligations we can assume, and she could not — *would* not plight her vows to any man whose `God was not her God.'

Still there was much of sweet consolation in this littleexpected letter from Roswell. He wrote, as he always did, simply and naturally, and attempted no concealments. This was just as true of his acts, as the master of the schooner, as it was in his character of a suitor. To Mary he told the whole story of his weakness, acknowledging that a silly spirit of pride which would not permit him to seem to abandon a trial of the qualities of the two schooners, had induced him to stand on to the westward longer than he should otherwise have done, and the currents had come to assist in increasing the danger. As for Daggett, he supposed him to have been similarly influenced; though he did not withhold his expressions of gratitude for the generous manner in which that seaman had stuck to him to the last.

For weary months did Mary Pratt derive sweet consolation from her treasure of a letter. It was, perhaps, no more than human nature, or woman's nature at least, that, in time, she got most to regard those passages which best answered to the longings of her own heart; and that she came at last to read the missive, forgetful in a degree, that it was written by one who had deliberately, and as a matter of faith, adopted the idea that the Redeemer was not, in what may be called the catholic sense of the term, the Son of God. The papers gave an account of the arrival of the `Twin Sea Lions,' as the article styled them, in the port of Beaufort, to repair damages; and of their having soon sailed again, in company. This paragraph she cut out of the journal in which it met her eye, and enclosing it in Roswell's last letter, there was not a day in the succeeding year in which both were not in her hand, and read for the hundredth time, or more. These proofs of tenderness, however, are not to be taken as evidence of any lessening of principle, or as signs of a disposition to let her judgment and duty submit to her affection. So far from this, her resolution grew with reflection, and her mind became more settled in a purpose that she deemed sacred, the longer she reflected on the subject. But, her prayers in behalf of her absent lover grew more frequent, and much more fervent.

In the mean time, the Twin Lions sailed. On leaving Beaufort, they ran off the coast with a smart breeze from south−west, making a leading wind of it. There had been some variance of opinion between Daggett and Gardiner, touching the course they ought to steer. The last was for hauling up higher, and passing to the southward of Bermuda; while the first contended for standing nearly due east, and going to the northward of those islands. Gardiner felt impatient to repair his blunder, and make the shortest cut he could; whereas Daggett

reasoned more coolly, and took the winds into the account, keeping in view the main results of the voyage. Perhaps the last wished to keep his consort away from all the keys, until he was compelled to alter his course in a way that would leave no doubt of his intentions. Of one thing the last was now certain; he knew by a long trial that the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond could not very easily run away from the Sea Lion of Holmes' Hole, and he was fully resolved that she should not escape from him in the night, or in squalls. As for Roswell Gardiner, not having the smallest idea of looking for his key, until he came north, after visiting the antarctic circle, he had no notion whatever of the reason why the other stuck to him so closely; and, least of all, why he wished to keep him clear of the West Indies, until ready to make a descent on his El Dorado.

Beaufort lies about two degrees to the northward of the four hundred rocks, islets, and small islands, which are known as the Bermudas; an advanced naval station, that belongs to a rival commercial power, and which is occupied by that power solely as a check on this republic in the event of war. Had the views of real statesmen prevailed in America, instead of those of mere politicians, the whole energy of this republic would have been long since directed to the object of substituting our own flag for that of England, in these islands. As things are, there they exist; a station for hostile fleets, a receptacle for prizes, and a dêpot for the munitions of war, as if expressly designed by nature to hold the whole American coast in command. While little men with great names are wrangling about south−western acquisitions, and north−eastern boundaries, that are of no real moment to the growth and power of the republic, these islands, that ought never to be out of the mind of the American statesman, have not yet entered into the account at all; a certain proof how little the minds that do, or ought to, influence events, are really up to the work they have been delegated to perform. Military expeditions have twice been sent from this country to Canada, when both the Canadas are not of one−half the importance to the true security and independence of the country—(no nation is independent until it holds the control of all its greater interests in its own hands) — as the Bermudas. When England asked the cession of territory undoubtedly American, because it overshadowed Quebec, she should have been met with this plain proposition—"Give us the Bermudas, and we will exchange with you. You hold those islands as a check on our power, and we will hold the angle of Maine for a check on yours, unless you will consent to make a fair and mutual transfer. We will not attack you for the possession of the Bermudas, for we deem a just principle even more important than such an accession; but when you ask us to cede, we hold out our hands to take an equivalent in return. The policy of this nation is not to be influenced by saw−logs, but by these manifest, important, and ulterior interests. If you wish Maine, give us Bermuda in exchange, or go with your wishes ungratified." Happily, among us, events are stronger than men; and the day is not distant when the mere force of circumstances will compel the small−fry of diplomacy to see what the real interests and dignity of the republic demand, in reference to this great feature of its policy.

Roswell Gardiner and Daggett had several discussions touching the manner in which they ought to pass those islands. There were about four degrees to spare between the trades and the Bermudas; and the former was of opinion that they might pass through this opening, and make a straighter wake, than by going farther north. These consultations took place from quarter−deck to quarter−deck, as the two schooners ran off free, steering directly for the islands, as a sort of compromise between the two opinions. The distance from the main to the Bermudas is computed at about six hundred miles, which gave sufficient leisure for the discussion of the subject in all its bearings. The conversations were amicable, and the weather continuing mild, and the wind standing, they were renewed each afternoon, when the vessels closed, as if expressly to admit of the dialogue. In all this time, five days altogether, it was farther ascertained that the difference in sailing between the Twin Lions, as the sailors now began to call the two schooners, was barely perceptible. If anything, it was slightly in favour of the Vineyard craft, though there yet remained many of the vicissitudes of the seas, in which to make the trial. While this uncertainty as to the course prevailed, the low land appeared directly ahead, when Daggett consented to pass it to the southward, keeping the cluster in sight, however, as they went steadily on towards the southward and eastward.

CHAPTER XI.

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank."
Mazeppa.

Roswell Gardiner felt as if he could breathe more freely when they had run the Summers Group fairly out of sight, and the last hummock had sunk into the waves of the west. He was now fairly quit of America, and hoped to see no more of it, until he made the well−known rock that points the way into that most magnificent of all the havens of the earth, the bay of Rio de Janeiro. Travellers dispute whether the palm ought to be given to this port, or to those of Naples and Constantinople. Each, certainly, has its particular claims to surpassing beauty, which ought to be kept in view in coming to a decision. Seen from its outside, with its minarets, and Golden Horn, and Bosphorus, Constantinople is, probably, the most glorious spot on earth. Ascend its mountains, and overlook the gulfs of Salerno and Gaeta, as well as its own waters, the *Campagna Felici* and the memorials of the past, all seen in the witchery of an Italian atmosphere, and the mind becomes perfectly satisfied that nothing equal is to be found elsewhere; but enter the bay of Rio, and take the whole of the noble panorama in at a glance, and even the experienced traveller is staggered with the stupendous as well as bewitching character of the loveliness that meets his eye. Witchery is a charm that peculiarly belongs to Italy, as all must feel who have ever been brought within its influence; but it is a witchery that is more or less shared by all regions of low latitudes.

Our two Sea Lions met with no adventures worthy of record, until they got well to the southward of the equator. They had been unusually successful in getting through the calm latitudes; and forty−six days from Montauk, they spoke a Sag Harbour whaler, homeward bound, that had come out from Rio only the preceding week, where she had been to dispose of her oil. By this ship, letters were sent home; and as Gardiner could now tell the deacon that he should touch at Rio even before the time first anticipated, he believed that he should set the old man's heart at peace. A little occurrence that took place the very day they parted with the whaler, added to the pleasure this opportunity of communicating with the owner had afforded. As the schooners were moving on in company, about a cable's length asunder, Hazard saw a sudden and extraordinary movement on board the Vineyard Lion, as the men now named that vessel, to distinguish her from her consort.

"Look out for a spout!" shouted the mate to Stimson, who happened to be on the foretopsail−yard at work, when this unexpected interruption to the quiet of the passage occurred. "There is a man overboard from the other schooner, or they see a spout."

"A spout! a spout!" shouted Stimson, in return; "and a spalm (sperm, or spermaceti, was meant) whale, in the bargain! Here he is, sir, two p'ints on our weather beam."

This was enough. If any one has had the misfortune to be in a coach drawn by four hourses, when a sudden fright starts them off at speed, he can form a pretty accurate notion of the movement that now took place on board of Deacon Pratt's craft. Every one seemed to spring into activity, as if a single will directed a common set of muscles. Those who were below literally "tumbled up," as seamen express it, and those who were aloft slid down to the deck like flashes of lightning. Captain Gardiner sprang out of his cabin, seemingly at a single bound; at another, he was in the whale−boat that Hazard was in the very act of lowering into the water, as the schooner rounded−to. Perceiving himself anticipated here, the mate turned to the boat on the other quarter, and was in her, and in the water, almost as soon as his commanding officer.

Although neither of the schooners was thoroughly fitted for a whaler, each had lines, lances, harpoons, &c., in readiness in their quarter−boats, prepared for any turn of luck like this which now offered. The process of paddling up to whales, which is now so common in the American ships, was then very little or not at all resorted to. It is said that the animals have got to be so shy, in consequence of being so much pursued, that the old mode of approaching them will not suffice, and that it now requires much more care and far more art to take one of these creatures, than it did thirty years since. On this part of the subject, we merely repeat what we hear, though we think we can see an advantage in the use of the paddle that is altogether independent of that of the greater quiet of

that mode of forcing a boat ahead. He that paddles looks *ahead*, and the approach is more easily regulated, when the whole of the boat's crew are apprised, by means of their own senses, of the actual state of things, than when they attain their ideas of them through the orders of an officer. The last must govern in all cases, but the men are prepared for them, when they can see what is going on, and will be more likely to act with promptitude and intelligence, and will be less liable to make mistakes.

The four boats, two from each schooner, dropped into the water nearly about the same time. Daggett was at the steering−oar of one, as was Roswell at that of another. Hazard, and Macy, the chief mate of the Vineyard craft, were at the steering−oars of the two remaining boats. All pulled in the direction of the spot on the ocean where the spouts had been seen. It was the opinion of those who had been aloft, that there were several *fish;* and it was certain that they were of the most valuable species, or the spermaceti, one barrel of the oil of which was worth about as much as the oil of three of the ordinary sort, or that of the *right* whale, supposing them all to yield the same quantity in number of barrels. The nature or species of the fish was easily enough determined by the spouts; the right whale throwing up two high arched jets of water, while the spermaceti throws but a single, low, bushy one.

It was not long ere the boats of the two captains came abreast of each other, and within speaking distance. A stern rivalry was now apparent in every countenance, the men pulling might and main, and without even a smile among them all. Every face was grave, earnest, and determined; every arm strung to its utmost powers of exertion. The men rowed beautifully, being accustomed to the use of their long oars in rough water, and in ten minutes they were all fully a mile dead to windward of the two schooners.

Few things give a more exalted idea of the courage and ingenuity of the human race than to see adventurers set forth, in a mere shell, on the troubled waters of the open ocean, to contend with and capture an animal of the size of the whale. The simple circumstance that the last is in its own element, while its assailants are compelled to approach it in such light and fragile conveyances, that, to the unpractised eye, it is sufficiently difficult to manage them amid the rolling waters, without seeking so powerful an enemy to contend with. But, little of all this did the crews of our four boats now think. They had before them the objects, or *one* of the objects, rather, of their adventure, and so long as that was the case, no other view but that of prevailing could rise before their eyes.

"How is it, Gar'ner?" called out the Vineyard master; "shall it be shares? or does each schooner whale on her own hook?"

This was asked in a friendly way, and apparently with great indifference as to the nature of the reply, but with profound art. It was Daggett's wish to establish a sort of partnership, which, taken in connection with the good feeling created by the affair at Beaufort, would be very apt to lead on to further and more important association. Luckily for Gardiner, an idea crossed his mind, just as he was about to reply, which induced the wisest answer. It was the thought, that competition would be more likely to cause exertion than a partnership, and that the success of all would better repay them for their toils and risks, should each vessel act exclusively for itself. This is the principle that renders the present state of society more healthful and advantageous than that which the friends of the different systems of associating, that are now so much in vogue, wish to substitute in its place. Individuality is an all−important feeling in the organization of human beings into communities; and the political economist who does not use it as his most powerful auxiliary in advancing civilization, will soon see it turn round in its tracks, and become a dead weight; indulging its self−love, by living with the minimum of exertion, instead of pushing his private advantage, with the maximum.

"I think each vessel had better work for herself and her owners," answered Roswell Gardiner.

As the schooners were in the trades, there was a regular sea running, and one that was neither very high nor much broken. Still, the boats were lifted on it like egg−shells or bubbles, the immense power of the ocean raising the largest ships, groaning under their vast weight of ordnance, as if they were feathers. In a few minutes, Gardiner and Daggett became a little more separated, each looking eagerly for the spouts, which had not been seen by either since quitting his vessel. All this time the two mates came steadily on, until the whole of the little fleet of boats was, by this time, not less than a marine league distant from the schooners. The vessels themselves were working up to windward, to keep as near to the boats as possible, making short tacks under reduced canvass; a shipkeeper, the cook, steward, and one or two other hands, being all who were left on board them.

We shall suppose that most of our readers are sufficiently acquainted with the general character of that class of animals to which the whale belongs, to know that all of the genus breathe the atmospheric air, which is as

necessary for life to them as it is to man himself. The only difference in this respect is, that the whale can go longer without renewing his respiration than all purely land−animals, though he must come up to breathe at intervals, or die. It is the exhaling of the old stock of air, when he brings the "blow−holes," as seamen call the outlets of his respiratory organs, to the surface, that forces the water upward, and forms the "spouts," which usually indicate to the whalers the position of their game. The "spouts" vary in appearance, as has been mentioned, owing to the number and situation of the orifices by which the exhausted air escapes. No sooner is the vitiated air exhaled, than the lungs receive a new supply; and the animal either remains near the surface, rolling about and sporting amid the waves, or descends again, a short distance, in quest of its food. This food, also, varies materially in the different species. The right−whale is supposed to live on what may be termed marine insects, or the molluscæ of the ocean, which it is thought he obtains by running in the parts of the sea where they most abound; arresting them by the hairy fibres which grow on the laminæ of bone that, in a measure, compose his jaws, having no teeth. The spermaceti, however, is furnished with regular grinders, which he knows very well how to use, and with which he often crushes the boats of those who come against him. Thus, the whalers have but one danger to guard against, in assaulting the common animal, viz., his flukes, or tail; while the spermaceti, in addition to the last means of defence, possesses those of his teeth or jaws. As this latter animal is quite one−third head, he has no very great dissemblance to the alligator in this particular.

By means of this brief description of the physical formation and habits of the animals of which our adventurers were in pursuit, the general reader will be the better able to understand that which it is our duty now to record. After rowing the distance named, the boats became a little separated, in their search for the fish. That spouts had been seen, there was no doubt; though, since quitting the schooners, no one in the boats had got a further view of the fish,—if fish, animals with respiratory organs can be termed. A good look−out for spouts had been kept by each man at the steering−oars, but entirely without success. Had not Roswell and Daggett, previously to leaving their respective vessels, seen the signs of whales with their own eyes, it is probable that they would now have both been disposed to return, calling in their mates. But, being certain that the creatures they sought were not far distant, they continued slowly to separate, each straining his eyes in quest of his game, as his boat rose on the summit of the rolling and tossing waves. Water in motion was all around them; and the schooners working slowly up against the trades, were all that rewarded their vigilant and anxious looks. Twenty times did each fancy that he saw the dark back, or head, of the object he sought; but as often did it prove to be no more than a lipper of water, rolling up into a hummock ere it broke, or melted away again into the general mass of the unquiet ocean. When it is remembered that the surface of the sea is tossed into a thousand fantastic outlines, as its waves roll along, it can readily be imagined how such mistakes could arise.

At length Gardiner discerned that which his practised eye well knew. It was the flukes, or extremity of the tail of an enormous whale, distant from him less than a quarter of a mile, and in such a position as to place the animal at about the same breadth of water from Daggett. It would seem that both of these vigilant officers perceived their enemy at the same instant, for each boat started for it, as if it had been instinct with life. The pike or the shark could not have darted towards its prey with greater promptitude, and scarcely with greater velocity, than these two boats. Very soon the whole herd was seen, swimming along against the wind, an enormous bull−whale leading, while half a dozen calves kept close to the sides of their dams, or sported among themselves, much as the offspring of land animals delight in their youth and strength. Presently a mother rolled lazily over on her side, permitting its calf to suck. Others followed this example; and then the leader of the herd ceased his passage to windward, but began to circle the spot, as if in complaisance to those considerate nurses who thus waited on the wants of their young. At this interesting moment, the boats came glancing in among the herd.

Had the competition and spirit of rivalry been at a lower point among our adventurers than it actually was, greater caution might have been observed. It is just as dangerous to assault a whale that has its young to defend, as to assault most other animals. We know that the most delicate women become heroines in such straits; and nature seems to have given to the whole sex, whether endowed with reason or only with an instinct, the same disposition to die in defence of the helpless creatures that so much depend on their care. But, no one there now thought of the risk he ran, it being the Vineyard against Oyster Pond, one Sea Lion against the other, and, in many instances, pocket against pocket.

Roswell, as if disdaining all meaner game, pulled quite through the herd, and laid the bows of his boat directly on the side of the old bull — a hundred−barrel whale, at the very least. No sooner did the enormous creature feel

the harpoon, than, throwing its flukes upward, it descended into the depths of the ocean, with a velocity that caused smoke to arise from the chuck through which the line passed. Ordinarily, the movement of a whale is not much faster than an active man can walk; and, when it runs on the surface, its speed seldom exceeds that of a swift vessel under full sail; but, when suddenly startled, with the harpoon in its blubber, the animal is capable of making a prodigious exertion. When struck, it usually `sounds,' as it is termed, or runs downward, sometimes to the depth of a mile; and it is said that instances have been known in which the fish inflicted great injury on itself, by dashing its head against rocks.

In the case before us, after running out three or four hundred fathoms of line, the `bull' to which Gardiner had `fastened,' came up to the surface, `blowed,' and began to move slowly towards the herd again. No sooner was the harpoon thrown, than a change took place in the disposition of the crew of the boat, which it may be well to explain. The harpoon is a barbed javelin, fastened to a staff to give it momentum. The line is attached to this weapon, the proper use of which is to `fasten' to the fish, though it sometimes happens that the animal is killed at the first blow This is when the harpoon has been hurled by a very skilful and vigorous harpooner. Usually, this weapon penetrates some distance into the blubber in which a whale is encased, and when it is drawn back by the plunge of the fish, the barbed parts get embedded in the tough integuments of the hide, together with the blubber, and hold. The iron of the harpoon being very soft, the shank bends under the strain of the line, leaving the staff close to the animal's body. Owing to this arrangement, the harpoon offers less resistance to the water, as the whale passes swiftly through it. No sooner did the boat−steerer, or harpooner, cast his `irons,' as whalers term the harpoon, than he changed places with Roswell, who left the steering−oar, and proceeded forward to wield the lance, the weapon with which the victory is finally consummated. The men now `peaked' their oars, as it is termed; or they placed the handles in cleets made to receive them, leaving the blades elevated in the air, so as to be quite clear of the water. This was done to get rid of the oars, in readiness for other duty, while the instruments were left in the tholes, to be resorted to in emergencies. This gives a whale−boat a peculiar appearance, with its five long oars raised in the air, at angles approaching forty−five degrees. In the mean time, as the bull approached the herd, or school, as the whalers term it, the boats' crew began to haul in line, the boat−steerer coiling it away carefully, in a tub placed in the stern−sheets purposely to receive it. Any one can understand how important it was that this part of the duty should be well performed, since bights of line running out of a boat, dragged by a whale, would prove so many snares to the men's legs, unless previously disposed of in a place proper to let it escape without this risk. For this reason it is, that the end of a line is never permitted to run out at the bow of a boat at all. It might do some injury in its passage, and an axe is always applied near the bows, when it is found necessary to cut from a whale.

It was so unusual a thing to see a fish turn towards the spot where he was struck, that Roswell did not know what to make of this manoeuvre in his bull. At first he supposed the animal meant to make fight, and set upon him with its tremendous jaws; but it seemed that caprice or alarm directed the movement; for, after coming within a hundred yards of the boat, the creature turned and commenced sculling away to windward, with wide and nervous sweeps of its formidable flukes. It is by this process that all the fish of this genus force their way through the water, their tails being admirably adapted to the purpose. As the men had showed the utmost activity in hauling in upon the line, by the time the whale went off to windward again they had got the boat up within about four hundred feet of him.

Now commenced a tow, dead to windward, it being known that a fish, when struck, seldom runs at first in any other direction. The rate at which the whale moved was not at the height of his speed, though it exceeded six knots. Occasionally, this rate was lessened, and in several instances his speed was reduced to less than half of that just mentioned. Whenever one of these lulls occurred, the men would haul upon the line, gradually getting nearer and nearer to the fish, until they were within fifty feet of his tremendous flukes. Here, a turn was taken with the line, and an opportunity to use the lance was waited for.

Whalers say that a forty−barrel bull of the spermaceti sort is much the most dangerous to deal with of all the animals of this species. The larger bulls are infinitely the most powerful, and drive these half−grown creatures away in herds by themselves, that are called `pads,' a circumstance that probably renders the young bull discontented and fierce. The last is not only more active than the larger animal, but is much more disposed to make fight, commonly giving his captors the greatest trouble. This may be one of the reasons why Roswell Gardiner now found himself towing at a reasonable rate, so close upon the flukes of a hundred−barrel whale. Still,

there was that in the movements of this animal, that induced our hero to be exceedingly wary. He was now two leagues from the schooners, and half that distance from the other boats, neither of which had as yet fastened to a fish. This latter circumstance was imputed to the difficulty the different officers had in making their selections, cows, of the spermaceti breed, when they give suck, being commonly light, and yielding, comparatively, very small quantities of head−matter and oil. In selecting the bull, Roswell had shown his judgment, the male animal commonly returning to its conquerors twice the profit that is derived from the female.

The whale to which Roswell was fast continued sculling away to windward for quite two hours, causing the men to entirely lose sight of the other boats, and bringing the top−sails of the schooners themselves down to the water's edge. Fortunately, it was not yet noon, and there were no immediate apprehensions from the darkness; nor did the bull appear to be much alarmed, though the boat was towing so close in his rear. At first, or before the irons were thrown, the utmost care had been taken not to make a noise; but the instant the crew were `fast,' whispers were changed into loud calls, and orders were passed in shouts, rather than in verbal commands. The wildest excitement prevailed among the men, strangely blended with a cool dexterity; but it was very apparent that a high sporting fever was raging among them. Gardiner himself was much the coolest man in his own boat, as became his station and very responsible duties.

Stimson, the oldest and the best seaman in the schooner, he who had admonished his young commander on the subject of the gratitude due to the Deity, acted as the master's boat−steerer, having first performed the duty of harpooner. It was to him that Gardiner now addressed the remarks he made, after having been fastened to his whale fully two hours.

"This fellow is likely to give us a long drag," said the master, as he stood balancing himself on the clumsy cleets in the bows of the boat, using his lance as an adept in saltation poises his pole on the wire, the water curling fairly above the gunwale forward, with the rapid movement of the boat; "I would haul up alongside, and give him the lance, did I not distrust them flukes. I believe he knows we are here."

"That he does — that does he, Captain Gar'ner. It's always best to be moderate and wait your time, sir. There's a jerk about that chap's flukes that I don't like myself, and it's best to see what he would be at, before we haul up any nearer. Don't you see, sir, that every minute or two he strikes down, instead of sculling off handsomely and with a wide sweep, as becomes a whale?"

"That is just the motion I distrust, Stephen, and I shall wait a bit to see what he would be at. I hope those ship−keepers will be busy, and work the schooners well up to windward before it gets to be dark. Our man is asleep half his time, and is apt to let the vessel fall off a point or two."

"Mr. Hazard gave him caution to keep a bright look out, sir, and I think he'll be apt to—look out, sir!—Look out!"

This warning was well−timed; for, just at that instant the whale ceased sculling, and lifting its enormous tail high in the air, it struck five or six blows on the surface of the water, that made a noise which might have been heard half a league, besides filling the atmosphere immediately around him with spray. As the tail first appeared in the air, line was permitted to run out of the boat, increasing the distance between its bows and the flukes to quite a hundred feet. Nothing could better show the hardy characters of the whalers than the picture then presented by Roswell Gardiner and his companions. In the midst of the Atlantic, leagues from their vessel, and no other boat in sight, there they sat patiently waiting the moment when the giant of the deep should abate in his speed, or in his antics, to enable them to approach and complete their capture. Most of the men sat with their arms crossed, and bodies half−turned, regarding the scene, while the two officers, the master and boat−steerer, if the latter could properly be thus designated, watched each evolution with a keenness of vigilance that let nothing like a sign or a symptom escape them.

Such was the state of things, the whale still threshing the sea with his flukes, when a cry among his men induced Roswell for a moment to look aside. There came Daggett fast to a small bull, which was running directly in the wind's eye with great speed, dragging the boat after him, which was towing astern at a distance of something like two hundred fathoms. At first, Roswell thought he should be compelled to cut from his whale, so directly towards his own boat did the other animal direct his course. But, intimidated, most probably, by the tremendous blows with which the larger bull continued to belabour the ocean, the smaller animal sheered away in time to avoid a collision, though he now began to circle the spot where his dreaded monarch lay. This change of course gave rise to a new source of apprehension. If the smaller bull should continue to encircle the larger, there

was great reason to believe that the line of Daggett might get entangled with the boat of Gardiner, and produce a collision that might prove fatal to all there. In order to be ready to meet this danger, Roswell ordered his crew to be on the look−out, and to have their knives in a state for immediate use. It was not known what might have been the consequence of this circular movement as respects the two boats; for, before they could come together, Daggett's line actually passed into the mouth of Gardiner's whale, and drawing up tight into the angle of his jaws, set the monster in motion with a momentum and power that caused the iron to draw from the smaller whale, which by this time had more than half encircled the animal. So rapid was the rate of running now, that Roswell was obliged to let out line, his whale sounding to a prodigious depth. Daggett did the same, unwilling to cut as long as he could hold on to his line.

At the expiration of five minutes the large bull came up again for breath, with both lines still fast to him; the one in the regular way, or attached to the harpoon, and the other jammed in the jaws of the animal by means of the harpoon and staff, which formed a sort of toggle at the angle of his enormous mouth. In consequence of feeling this unusual tenant, the fish compressed its jaws together, thus rendering the fastening so much the more secure. As both boats had let run line freely while the whale was sounding, they now found themselves near a quarter of a mile astern of him, towing along, side by side, and not fifty feet asunder. If the spirit of rivalry had been aroused among the crew of these two boats before, it was now excited to a degree that menaced acts of hostility.

"You know, of course, Captain Daggett, that this is my whale," said Gardiner. "I was fast to him regularly, and was only waiting for him to become a little quiet to lance him, when your whale crossed his course, fouled your line, and has got you fast in an unaccountable way, but not according to whaling law."

"I don't know that. I fastened to a whale, Captain Gar'ner, and am fast to a whale now. It must be *proved* that I have no right to the crittur' before I give him up."

Gardiner understood the sort of man with whom he had to deal too well to waste words in idle remonstrances. Resolved to maintain his just rights at every hazard, he ordered his men to haul in upon the line, the movement of the whale becoming so slow as to admit of this measure. Daggett's crew did the same, and a warm contest existed between the two boats, as to which should now first close with the fish and kill it. This was not a moment for prudence and caution. It was "haul in — haul in, boys," in both boats, without any regard to the danger of approaching the whale. A very few minutes sufficed to bring the parties quite in a line with the flukes, Gardiner's boat coming up on the larboard or left−hand side of the animal, where its iron was fast, and Daggett's on the opposite, its line leading out of the jaws of the fish in that direction. The two masters stood erect on their respective clumsy cleets, each poising his lance, waiting only to get near enough to strike. The men were now at the oars, and without pausing for any thing, both crews sprung to their ashen instruments, and drove the boats headlong upon the fish. Daggett, perhaps, was the coolest and most calculating at that moment, but Roswell was the most nervous, and the boldest. The boat of the last actually hit the side of the whale, as its young commander drove his lance through the blubber, into the vitals of the fish. At the same instant Daggett threw his lance with consummate skill, and went to the quick. It was now "stern all!" for life, each boat backing off from the danger as fast as hands could urge. The sea was in a foam, the fish going into his "flurry" almost as soon as struck, and both crews were delighted to see the red of the blood mingling its deep hues with the white of the troubled water. Once or twice the animal spouted, but it was a fluid dyed in his gore. In ten minutes it turned up and was dead.

CHAPTER XII.

"God save you, sir!"
"And you, sir! you are welcome."
"Travel you far on, or are you at the furthest?"
"Sir, at the furthest for a week or two."
Shakspeare.

Gardiner and Daggett met, face to face, on the carcase of the whale. Each struck his lance into the blubber, steadying himself by its handle; and each eyed the other in a way that betokened feelings awakened to a keen desire to defend his rights. It is a fault of American character,—a fruit of the institutions, beyond a doubt,—that renders men unusually indisposed to give up. This stubbornness of temperament, that so many mistake for a love of liberty and independence, is productive of much good, when the parties happen to be right, and of quite as much evil, when they happen to be wrong. It is ever the wisest, as, indeed, it is the noblest course, to defer to that which is just, with a perfect reliance on its being the course pointed out by the finger of infallible wisdom and truth. He who does this, need feel no concern for his dignity, or for his success; being certain that it is intended that right shall prevail in the end, as prevail it will and does. But both our shipmasters were too much excited to feel the force of these truths; and there they stood, sternly regarding each other, as if it were their purpose to commence a new struggle for the possession of the leviathan of the deep.

"Captain Daggett," said Roswell, sharply, "you are too old a whaler not to know whaling law. My irons were first in this fish; I never have been loose from it, since it was first struck, and my lance killed it. Under such circumstances, sir, I am surprised that any man, who knows the usages among whalers, should have stuck by the creature as you have done."

"It's in my natur', Gar'ner," was the answer. "I stuck by you when you was dismasted under Hatteras, and I stick by everything that I undertake. This is what I call Vineyard natur'; and I'm not about to discredit my native country."

"This is idle talk," returned Roswell, casting a severe glance at the men in the Vineyard boat, among whom a common smile arose, as if they highly approved of the reply of their own officer. "You very well know that Vineyard law cannot settle such a question, but American law. Were you man enough to take this whale from me, as I trust you are not, on our return home you could be and would be made to pay smartly for the act. Uncle Sam has a long arm, with which he sometimes reaches round the whole earth. Before you proceed any further in this matter, it may be well to remember that."

Daggett reflected; and it is probable that, as he cooled off from the excitement created by his late exertions, he fully recognised the justice of the other's remarks, and the injustice of his own claims. Still, it seemed to him un−American, un−Vineyard, if the reader please, to "give up;" and he clung to his error with as much pertinacity as if he had been right.

"If you are fast, I am fast, too. I'm not so certain of your law. When a man puts an iron into a whale, commonly it is his fish, if he can get him, and kill him. But there is a law above all whalers' law, and that is the law of Divine Providence. Providence has fastened us to this crittur', as if on purpose to give us a right in it; and I'm by no means so sure States' law won't uphold that doctrine. Then, I lost my own whale by means of this, and am entitled to some compensation for such a loss."

"You lost your own whale because he led round the head of mine, and not only drew his own iron, but came nigh causing me to cut. If any one is entitled to damage for such an act, it is I, who have been put to extra trouble in getting my fish."

"I do believe it was my lance that did the job for the fellow! I darted, and you struck; in that way I got the start of you, and may claim to have made the crittur' spout the first blood. But, hearkee, Gar'ner—there's my hand—we've been friends so far, and I want to hold out friends. I will make you a proposal, therefore. Join stocks from this moment, and whale, and seal, and do all things else in common. When we make a final stowage for the return passage, we can make a final division, and each man take his share of the common adventure."

To do Roswell justice, he saw through the artifice of this proposition, the instant it was uttered. It had the

effect, notwithstanding, a good deal to mollify his feelings, since it induced him to believe that Daggett was manoeuvring to get at his great secret, rather than to assail his rights.

"You are part owner of your schooner, Captain Daggett," our hero answered, "while I have no other interest in mine than my lay, as her master. You may have authority to make such a bargain, but I have none. It is my duty to fill the craft as fast and as full as I can, and carry her back safely to Deacon Pratt; but, I dare say, your Vineyard people will let you cruise about the earth at your pleasure, trusting to Providence for a profit. I cannot accept your offer."

"This is answering like a man, Gar'ner, and I like you all the better for it. Forty or fifty barrels of ile shan't break friendship between us. I helped you into port at Beaufort, and gave up the salvage; and now I'll help tow your whale alongside, and see you fairly through this business, too. Perhaps I shall have all the better luck for being a little generous."

There was prudence, as well as art, in this decision of Daggett's. Notwithstanding his ingenious pretensions to a claim in the whale, he knew perfectly well that no law would sustain it, and that, in addition to the chances of being beaten on the spot, which were at least equal, he would certainly be beaten in the courts at home, should he really attempt to carry out his declared design. Then, he really deferred to the expectation that his future good fortune might be influenced by his present forbearance. Superstition forms a material part of a sailor's nature, if, indeed, it do not that of every man engaged in hazardous and uncertain adventures. How far his hopes were justified in this last respect, will appear in the contents of a communication that Deacon Pratt received from the master of his schooner, and to which we will now refer, as the clearest and briefest mode of continuing the narrative.

The Sea Lion left Oyster Pond late in September. It was the third day of March, in the succeeding year, that Mary was standing at a window, gazing with melancholy interest at that point in the adjacent waters where last she had seen, nearly six months before, the vessel of Roswell disappear behind the woods of the island that bears his family name. There had been a long easterly gale, but the weather had changed; the south wind blew softly, and all the indications of an early spring were visible. For the first time in three months, she had raised the sash of that window; and the air that entered was bland, and savoured of the approaching season.

"I dare say, uncle"—the deacon was writing near a very low wood−fire, which was scarcely more than embers — "I dare say, uncle," said the sweet voice of Mary, which was a little tremulous with feeling, "that the ocean is calm enough to−day. It is very silly in us to tremble, when there is a storm, for those who must now be so many, many thousand miles away. What is the distance between the Antarctic Seas and Oyster Pond, I wonder?"

"You ought to be able to calculate that yourself, gal, or what is the use to pay for your schooling?"

"I should not know how to set about it, uncle," returned the gentle Mary, "though I should be very glad to know."

"How many miles are there in a degree of latitude, child? You know that, I believe."

"More than sixty−nine, sir."

"Well, in what latitude is Oyster Pond?"

"I have heard Roswell say that we were a little higher, as he calls it, than forty−one."

"Well, 41 times 69"—figuring as he spoke—"make 2829; say we are 3000 miles from the equator, the nearest way we can get there. Then, the antarctic circle commences in 23° 30' south, which, deducted from 90 degrees, leave just 66° 30' between the equator and the nearest spot within the sea you have mentioned. Now, 66° 30' give about 4589 statute miles more, in a straight line, allowing only 69 to a degree. The two sums, added together, make 7589 miles, or rather more. But the road is not straight, by any means, as shipmasters tell me; and I suppose Gar'ner must have gone, at the very least, 8000 miles to reach his latitude, to say nothing of a considerable distance of longitude to travel over, to the southward of Cape Horn."

"It is a terrible distance to have a friend from us!" ejaculated Mary, though in a low, dejected tone.

"It is a terrible distance for a man to trust his property away from him, gal; and I do not sleep a−nights for thinking of it, when I remember where my own schooner may be all this time!"

"Ah, here is Baiting Joe, and with a letter in his hand, uncle, I do declare!"

It might be a secret hope that impelled Mary, for away she bounded, like a young fawn, running to meet the old fisherman at the door. No sooner did her eyes fall on the superscription, than the large package was pressed to her heart, and she seemed, for an instant, lost in thanksgiving. That no one might unnecessarily be a witness of

what passed between her uncle and herself, Joe was directed to the kitchen, where a good meal, a glass of rum and water, and the quarter of a dollar that Mary gave him as she showed the way, satisfied him with the results of his trouble.

"Here it is, uncle," cried the nearly breathless girl, reentering the `keeping−room,' and unconsciously holding the letter still pressed to her heart,—"A letter—a letter from Roswell, in his own precious hand."

A flood of tears gave some relief to feelings that had so long been pent, and eased a heart that had been compressed nearly to breaking. At any other time, and at this unequivocal evidence of the hold the young man had on the affections of his niece, Deacon Pratt would have remonstrated with her on the folly of refusing to become "Roswell Gar'ner's" wife; but the sight of the letter drove all other thoughts from his head, concentrating his whole being in the fate of the schooner.

"Look, and see if it has the Antarctic post−mark on it, Mary," said the deacon, in a tremulous voice.

This request was not made so much in ignorance as in trepidation. The deacon very well knew that the islands the Sea Lion was to visit were uninhabited, and were destitute of post−offices; but his ideas were confused, and apprehension rendered him silly.

"Uncle!" exclaimed the niece, wiping the tears from a face that was now rosy with blushes at her own weakness, "surely, Roswell can find no post−office where he is!"

But the letter must have some post−mark, child. Baiting Joe has not brought it himself into the country."

"It is post−marked `New York,' sir, and nothing else— Yes, here is `Forwarded by Cane, Spriggs, and Button, Rio de Janeiro.' It must have been put into a post−office there."

"Rio!—Here is more salvage, gal—more salvage coming to afflict me!"

"But you had no salvage to pay, uncle, on the other occasion; perhaps there will be none to pay on this. Had I not better open the letter at once, and see what has happened?"

"Yes, open it, child," answered the deacon, in a voice so feeble as to be scarcely audible—"open it at once, as you say, and let me know my fate. Anything is better than this torment!"

Mary did not wait for a second permission, but instantly broke the seal. It might have been the result of education, or there may be such a thing as female instinct in these matters; but, certain it is, that the girl turned towards the window, as she tore the paper asunder, and slipped the letter that bore her own name into a fold of her dress, so dexterously, that one far more keen−sighted than her uncle would not have detected the act. No sooner was her own letter thus secured, than the niece offered the principal epistle to her uncle.

"Read it yourself, Mary," said the last, in his querulous tones. "My eyes are so dim, that I could not see to read it."

"Rio di Janeiro, Province of Brazil, South America, Nov. 14th, 1819," commenced the niece.

"Rio di Janeiro!" interrupted the uncle. "Why that is round Cape Horn, isn't it, Mary?"

"Certainly not, sir. Brazil is on the east side of the Andes, and Rio di Janeiro is its capital. The king of Por tugal lives there now, and has lived there as long as I can remember."

"Yes, yes; I had forgotten. The Brazil Banks, where our whalers go, are in the Atlantic. But what can have taken Gar'ner into Rio, unless it be to spend more money!"

"By reading the letter, sir, we shall soon know. I see there is something about spermaceti oil here."

"He? And spalm ile, do you say!" exclaimed the deacon, brightening up at once — "Read on, Mary, my good gal—read the letter as fast as you can—read it at a trot."

"Deacon Israel Pratt — Dear sir," continued Mary, in obedience to this command, "the two schooners sailed from Beaufort, North Carolina, as stated already per mail, in a letter written at that port, and which has doubtless come to hand. We had fine weather and a tolerable run of it, until we reached the calm latitudes, where we were detained by the usual changes for about a week. On the 18th Oct. the pleasant cry of `there she spouts' was heard aboard here, and we found ourselves in the neighbourhood of whales. Both schooners lowered their boats, and I was soon fast to a fine bull, who gave us a long tow before the lance was put into him, and he was made to spout blood. Captain Daggett set up some claims to this fish, in consequence of his line's getting foul of the creature's jaws, but he changed his mind in good season, and clapped on to help tow the whale down to the vessel. His irons drew from a young bull, and a good deal of dissatisfaction existed among the other crew, until, fortunately, the school of young bulls came round quite near us, when Captain Daggett and his people succeeded in securing no less than three of the fish, and Mr. Hazard got a very fine one for us.

"I am happy to say that we had very pleasant weather to cut in, and secured every gallon of the oil of both our whales, as did Captain Daggett all of his. Our largest bull made one hundred and nineteen barrels, of which forty−three barrels was head−matter. I never saw better case and junk in a whale in my life. The smallest bull turned out well too, making fifty−eight barrels, of which twenty−one was head. Daggett got one hundred and thirty−three barrels from his three fish, a very fair proportion of head, though not as large as our own. Having this oil on board, we came in here after a pleasant run; and I have shipped, as per invoice enclosed, one hundred and seventy−seven barrels of spermaceti oil, viz., sixty−four barrels of head, and rest in body−oil, to your order, care of Fish & Grinnell, New York, by the brig Jason, Captain Williams, who will sail for home about the 20th proximo, and to whom I trust this letter"—

"Stop, Mary, my dear—this news is overpowering—it is almost too good to be true," interrupted the deacon, nearly as much unmanned by this intelligence of his good fortune as he had previously been by his apprehensions. "Yes, it does seem too good to be true; read it again, child; yes, read every syllable of it again!"

Mary complied, delighted enough to hear all she could of Roswell's success.

"Why, uncle," said the deeply−interested girl, "all this oil is spermaceti! It is worth a great deal more than so much of that which comes of the right whale."

"More! Ay, nearly as three for one. Hunt me up the last Spectator, girl — hunt me up the last Spectator, and let me see at once at what they quote spalm."

Mary soon found the journal, and handed it to her uncle.

"Yes, here it is, and quoted $1.12½ per gallon, as I live! That's nine shillings a gallon, Mary—just calculate on that bit of paper—thirty times one hundred and seventy−seven, Mary; how much is that, child?"

"I make it 5310, uncle — yes, that is right. But what are the 30 times for, sir?"

"Gallons, gal, gallons. Each barrel has 30 gallons in it, if not more. There ought to be 32 by rights, but this is a cheating age. Now, multiply 5310 by 9, and see what that comes to."

"Just 47,790, sir, as near as I can get it."

"Yes, that's the shillings. Now, divide 47,790 by 8, my dear. Be actyve, Mary, be actyve."

"It leaves 5973, with a remainder of 6, sir. I believe I'm right."

"I dare say you are, child; yes, I dare say you are. This is the dollars. A body may call them $6000, as the barrels will a little overrun the 30 gallons. My share of this will be two−thirds, and that will nett the handsome sum of, say $4000!"

The deacon rubbed his hands with delight, and having found his voice again, his niece was astonished at hearing him utter what he had to say, with a sort of glee that sounded in her ears as very unnatural, coming from him. So it was, however, and she dutifully endeavoured not to think of it.

"Four thousand dollars, Mary, will quite cover the first cost of the schooner; that is without including outfit and spare−rigging, of which her master took about twice as much as was necessary. He's a capital fellow, is that young Gar'ner, and will make an excellent husband, as I've always told you, child. A little wasteful, perhaps, but an excellent youth at the bottom. I dare say he lost his spars off Cape Hatteras in trying to outsail that Daggett; but I overlook all that now. He's a capital youth to work upon a whale or a sea−elephant! There isn't his equal, as I'll engage, in all Ameriky, if you'll only let him know where to find the creatur's. I knew his character before I engaged him; for no man but a real skinner shall ever command a craft of mine."

"Roswell *is* a good fellow," answered Mary, with emphasis, the tears filling her eyes as she listened to these eulogiums of her uncle on the youth she loved with all of a woman's tenderness, at the very moment she scrupled to place her happiness on one whose `God was not her God.' "No one knows him better than I, uncle, and no one respects him more. But, had I not better read the rest of his letter?—there is a good deal more of it."

"Go on, child, go on — but, read the part over again where he speaks of the quantity of the ile he has shipped to Fish & Grinnell."

Mary did as requested, when she proceeded to read aloud the rest of the communication.

"I have been much at a loss how to act in regard to Captain Daggett," said Roswell, in his letter. "He stood by me so manfully and generously off Cape Hatteras, that I did not like to part company in the night, or in a squall, which would have seemed ungrateful, as well as wearing a sort of runaway look. I am afraid he has some knowledge of the existence of our islands, though I doubt whether he has their latitude and longitude exactly. Something there is of this nature on board the other schooner, her people often dropping hints to my officers and

men, when they have been gamming. I have sometimes fancied Daggett sticks so close to us, that he may get the advantage of our reckoning to help him to what he wants to find. He is no great navigator anywhere, running more by signs and currents, in my judgment, than by the use of his instruments. Still, he could find his way to any part of the world."

"Stop there, Mary; stop a little, and let me have time to consider. Isn't it awful, child?"

The niece changed colour, and seemed really frightened, so catching was the deacon's distress, though she scarce knew what was the matter.

"What is awful, uncle?" at length she asked, anxious to know the worst.

"This covetousness in them Vineyarders! I consider it both awful and wicked. I must get the Rev. Mr. Whittle to preach against the sin of covetousness; it does gain so much ground in Ameriky! The whole church should lift its voice against it, or it will shortly lift its voice against the church. To think of them Daggetts' fitting out a schooner to follow my craft about the 'arth in this unheard−of manner; just as if she was a pilot−boat, and young Gar'ner a pilot! I do hope the fellows will make a wrack of it, among the ice of the antarctic seas! That would be a fit punishment for their impudence and covetousness."

"I suppose, sir, they think that they have the same right to sail on the ocean that others have. Seals and whales are the gifts of God, and one person has no more right to them than another."

"You forget, Mary, that one man may have a secret that another doesn't know. In that case he ought not to go prying about like an old woman in a village neighbourhood. Read on, child, read on, and let me know the worst at once."

"I shall sail to−morrow, having finished all my business here, and hope to be off Cape Horn in twenty days, if not sooner. In what manner I am to get rid of Daggett, I do not yet know. He outsails me a little on all tacks, unless it be in very heavy weather, when I have a trifling advantage over him. It will be in my power to quit him any dark night; but if I let him go ahead, and he should really have any right notions about the position of the islands, he might get there first, and make havoc among the seals."

"Awful, awful!" interrupted the deacon, again; "that would be the worst of all! I won't allow it; I forbid it— it shall not be."

"Alas! uncle, poor Roswell is too far from us, now, to hear these words. No doubt the matter is long since decided, and he has acted according to the best of his judgment."

"It is terrible to have one's property so far away! Government ought to have steam−boats, or packets of some sort, running between New York and Cape Horn, to carry orders back and forth.—But we shall never have things right, Mary, so long as the democrats are uppermost."

By this remark, which savours very strongly of a species of censure that is much in fashion in the coteries of that Great Emporium, which it is the taste and pleasure of its people to term a *commercial* emporium, especially among elderly ladies, the reader will at once perceive that the deacon was a federalist, which was somewhat of a novelty in Suffolk, thirty years since. Had he lived down to our own times, the old man would probably have made all the gyrations in politics that have distinguished the school to which he would have belonged, and, without his own knowledge, most probably, would have been as near an example of perpetual motion as the world will ever see, through his devotion to what are now called "Whig Principles." We are no great politician, but time has given us the means of comparing; and we often smile when we hear the disciples of Hamilton, and of Adams, and of all that high−toned school, declaiming against the use of the veto, and talking of the "one man power," and of Congress' leading the government! The deacon was very apt to throw the opprobrium of even a bad season on the administration, and the reader has seen what he thought of the subject of running packets between New York and Cape Horn.

"There ought to be a large navy, Mary, a monstrous navy, so that the vessels might be kept carrying letters about, and serving the public. But we shall never have things right, until Rufus King, or some man like him, gets in. If Gar'ner lets that Daggett get the start of him, he never need come home again. The islands are as much mine as if I had bought them; and I'm not sure an action wouldn't lie for seals taken on them without my consent. Yes, yes; we want a monstrous navy, to convoy sealers, and carry letters about, and keep some folks at home, while it lets other folks go about their lawful business."

"Of what islands are you speaking, uncle? Surely the sealing islands, where Roswell has gone, are public and uninhabited, and no one has a better right there than another!"

The deacon perceived that he had gone too far, in his tribulation, and began to have a faint notion that he was making a fool of himself. He asked his niece, in a very faint voice, therefore, to hand him the letter, the remainder of which he would endeavour to read himself. Although every word that Roswell Gardiner wrote was very precious to Mary, the gentle girl had a still unopened epistle to herself to peruse, and glad enough was she to make the exchange. Handing the deacon his letter, therefore, she withdrew at once to her private room, in order to read her own.

`Dearest Mary," said Roswell Gardiner, in this epistle, "your uncle will tell you what has brought us into this port, and all things connected with the schooner. I have sent home more than $4000 worth of oil, and I hope my owner will forgive the accident off Currituck, on account of this run of good luck. In my opinion, we shall yet make a voyage, and that part of my fortune will be secure. Would that I could feel as sure of finding you more disposed to be kind to me, on my return! I read in your Bible every day, Mary, and I often pray to God to enlighten my mind, if my views have been wrong. As yet, I cannot flatter myself with any change, for my old opinions appear rather to be more firmly rooted than they were before I sailed." Here poor Mary heaved a heavy sigh, and wiped the tears from her eyes. She was pained to a degree she could hardly believe possible, though she did full credit to Roswell's frankness. Like all devout persons, her faith in the efficacy of sacred writ was strong: and she so much the more lamented her suitor's continued blindness, because it remained after light had shone upon it. "Still, Mary," the letter added, "as I have every human inducement to endeavour to be right, I shall not throw aside the book, by any means. In that I fully believe; our difference being in what the volume teaches. Pray for me, sweetest girl— but I know you do, and will continue to do, as long as I am absent."

"Yes, indeed, Roswell," murmured Mary—"as long as you and I live!"

"Next to this one great concern of my life, comes that which this man Daggett gives me,"—the letter went on to say. "I hardly know what to do under all the circumstances. Keep in his company much longer I cannot, without violating my duty to the deacon. Yet, it is not easy, in any sense, to get rid of him. He has stood by me so manfully on all occasions, and seems so much disposed to make good−fellowship of the voyage, that, did it depend on myself only, I should at once make a bargain with him to seal in company, and to divide the spoils. But this is now impossible, and I must quit him in some way or other. He outsails me in most weathers, and it is a thing easier said than done. What will make it more difficult is the growing shortness of the nights. The days lengthen fast now, and as we go south they will become so much longer, that, by the time when it will be indispensable to separate, it will be nearly all day. The thing must be done, however, and I trust to luck to be able to do it as it ought to be effected.

"And now, dearest, dearest Mary_____" But why should we lift the veil from the feelings of this young man, who concluded his letter by pouring out his whole heart in a few sincere and manly sentences. Mary wept over them most of that day, perusing and reperusing them, until her eyes would scarce perform their proper office.

A few days later the deacon was made a very happy man by the receipt of a letter from Fish & Grinnell, notifying him of the arrival of his oil, accompanied by a most gratifying account of the state of the market, and asking for instructions. The oil was disposed of, and the deacon pocketed his portion of the proceeds as soon as possible; eagerly looking for a new and profitable investment for the avails. Great was the reputation Roswell Gardiner made by this capture of the two spermaceti whales, and by sending the proceeds to so good a market. In commerce, as in war, success is all in all, though in both success is nearly as often the result of unforeseen circumstances as of calculations and wisdom. It is true there are a sort of trade, and a sort of war, in which prudence and care may effect a great deal, yet are both often outstripped by the random exertions and adventures of those who calculate almost as wildly as they act. Audacity, as the French term it, is a great quality in war, and often achieves more than the most calculated wisdom — nay, it becomes wisdom in that sort of struggle; and we are far from being sure that audacity is not sometimes as potent in trade. At all events, it was esteemed a bold, as well as a prosperous exploit, for a little schooner like the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond, to take a hundred−barrel whale, and to send home its "ile," as the deacon always pronounced the word, in common with most others in old Suffolk.

Long and anxious months, with one exception, succeeded this bright spot of sunshine in Mary Pratt's solicitude in behalf of the absent Roswell. She knew there was but little chance of hearing from him again until he returned north. The exception was a short letter that the deacon received, dated two weeks later than that written from Rio, in latitude forty−one, or just as far south of the equator as Oyster Pond was north of it, and nearly fourteen

hundred miles to the southward of Rio. This letter was written in great haste, to send home by a Pacific trader who was accidentally met nearer the coast than was usual for such vessels to be. It stated that all was well; that the schooner of Daggett was still in company; and that Gardiner intended to get "shut" of her, as the deacon expressed it, on the very first occasion.

After the receipt of this letter, the third written by Roswell Gardiner since he left home, a long and blank interval of silence succeeded. Then it was that months passed away in an anxious and dark uncertainty. Spring followed winter, summer succeeded to spring, and autumn came to reap the fruits of all the previous seasons, without bringing any further tidings from the adventurers. Then winter made its second appearance since the Sea Lion had sailed, filling the minds of the mariners' friends with sad forebodings as they listened to the moanings of the gales that accompanied that bleak and stormy quarter of the year. Deep and painful were the anticipations of the deacon, in whom failing health, and a near approach to the "last of earth," came to increase the gloom. As for Mary, youth and health sustained her; but her very soul was heavy, as she pondered on so long and uncertain an absence.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Safely in harbour
Is the king's ship; in the deep nook, where once
Thou calledst me up at midnight to fetch dew
From the still vex'd Bermoothes, there she's hid."

Tempest.

The letter of Roswell Gardiner last received, bore the date of December 10th, 1819, or just a fortnight after he had sailed from Rio de Janeiro. We shall next present the schooner of Deacon Pratt to the reader on the 18th of that month, or three weeks and one day after she had sailed from the capital of Brazil. Early in the morning of the day last mentioned, the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond was visible, standing to the northward, with the wind light but freshening from the westward, and in smooth water. Land was not only in sight, but was quite near, less than a league distant. Towards this land the head of the schooner had been laid, and she was approaching it at the rate of some four or five knots. The land was broken, high, of a most sterile aspect where it was actually to be seen, and nearly all covered with a light but melting snow, though the season was advanced to the middle of the first month in summer. The weather was not very cold, however, and there was a feeling about it that promised it would become still milder. The aspect of the neighbouring land, so barren, rugged and inhospitable, chilled the feelings, and gave to the scene a sombre hue which the weather itself might not have imparted. Directly ahead of the schooner rose a sort of pyramid of broken rocks, which, occupying a small island, stood isolated in a measure, and some distance in advance of other and equally ragged ranges of mountains, which belonged also to islands detached from the main land thousands of years before, under some violent convulsions of nature.

It was quite apparent that all on board the schooner regarded that ragged pyramid with lively interest. Most of the crew was collected on the forecastle, including the officers, and all eyes were fastened on the ragged pyramid which they were diagonally approaching. The principal spokesman was Stimson, the oldest mariner on board, and one who had oftener visited those seas than any other of the crew.

"You know the spot, do you, Stephen?" demanded Roswell Gardiner, with interest.

"Yes, sir, there's no mistake. That's the Horn. Eleven times have I doubled it, and this is the third time that I've been so close in as to get a fair sight of it. Once I went inside, as I've told you, sir."

"I have doubled it six times myself," said Gardiner, "but never saw it before. Most navigators give it a wide berth. 'Tis said to be the stormiest spot on the known earth!"

"That's a mistake, you may depend on't, sir. The sow−westers blow great guns here−abouts, it is true enough; and when they do, sich a sea comes tumbling in on that rock as man never seed anywhere else, perhaps; but, on the whull, I'd rather be close in here, than two hundred miles further to the southward. With the wind at sow−west, and heavy, a better slant might be made from the southern position; but here I know where I am, and I'd go in and anchor, and wait for the gale to blow itself out."

"Talking of seas, Captain Gar'ner," observed Hazard, "don't you think, sir, we begin to feel the swell of the Pacific. Smooth as the surface of the water is, here is a ground−swell rolling in that must be twelve or fifteen feet in height."

"There's no doubt of that. We have felt the swell of the Pacific these two hours; no man can mistake *that*. The Atlantic has no such waves. This is an ocean in reality, and this is its stormiest part. The wind freshens and hauls, and I'm afraid we are about to be caught close in here, with a regular sow−west gale."

"Let it come, sir, let it come," put in Stimson, again; "if it does, we've only to run in and anchor. I can stand pilot, and I promise to carry the schooner where twenty sow−westers will do her no harm. What I've seen done once, I know can be done again. The time will come when the Horn will be a reg'lar harbour."

Roswell left the forecastle, and walked aft, pondering on what had just been said. His situation was delicate, and demanded decision, as well as prudence. The manner in which Daggett had stuck by him, ever since the two vessels took their departure from Block Island, is known to the reader. The Sea Lions had sailed from Rio in company, and they had actually made Staten Land together, the day preceding that on which we now bring the Oyster Pond craft once more upon the scene, and had closed so near as to admit of a conversation between the

two masters. It would seem that Daggett was exceedingly averse to passing through the Straits of le Maire. An uncle of his had been wrecked there, and had reported the passage as the most dangerous one he had ever encountered. It has its difficulties, no doubt, in certain states of the wind and tide; but Roswell had received good accounts of the place from Stimson, who had been through several times. The wind was rather scant to go through, and the weather threatened to be thick. As Daggett urged his reasons for keeping off and passing outside of Staten Land, a circuit of considerable extent, besides bringing a vessel far to leeward with the prevalent winds of that region, which usually blow from northwest round to southwest, Roswell was reflecting on the opportunity the circumstances afforded of giving his consort the slip. After discussing the matter for some time, he desired Daggett to lead on, and he would follow. This was done, though neither schooner was kept off until Roswell got a good view of Cape St. Diego, on Tierra del Fuego, thereby enabling him to judge of the positions of the principal land−marks. Without committing himself by any promise, therefore, he told Daggett to lead on, and for some time he followed, the course being one that did not take him much out of the way. The weather was misty, and at times the wind blew in squalls. The last increased as the schooners drew nearer to Staten Land. Daggett, being about half a mile ahead, felt the full power of one particular squall that came out of the ravines with greater force than common, and he kept away to increase his distance from the land. At the same time, the mist shut in the vessels from each other. It was also past sunset, and a dark and dreary night was approaching. This latter fact had been one of Daggett's arguments for going outside. Profiting by all these circumstances, Roswell tacked, and stood over towards Tierra del Fuego. He knew from the smoothness of the water that an ebb−tide was running, and trusted to its force to carry him through the Straits. He saw no more of the Sea Lion of the Vineyard. She continued shut in by the mist until night closed around both vessels. When he got about mid−channel, Roswell tacked again. By this time the current had sucked him fairly into the passage, and no sooner did he go about than his movement to the southward was very rapid. The squalls gave some trouble, but, on the whole, he did very well. Next morning he was off Cape Horn, as described. By this expression, it is generally understood that a vessel is somewhere near the longitude of that world−renowned cape, but not necessarily in sight of it. Few navigators actually see the extremity of the American continent, though they double the cape, it being usually deemed the safest to pass well to the southward. Such was Daggett's position; who, in consequence of having gone outside of Staten Land, was now necessarily a long distance to leeward, and who could not hope to beat up abreast of the Hermits, even did the wind and sea favour him, in less than twenty−four hours. A great advantage was obtained by coming through the Straits of Le Maire, and Roswell felt very certain that he should not see his late consort again that day, even did he heave−to for him. But our hero had no idea of doing anything of the sort. Having shaken off his leech, he had no wish to suffer it to fasten to him again. It was solely with the intention of making sure of this object that he thought of making a harbour.

In order that the reader may better understand those incidents of our narrative which we are about to relate, it may be well to say a word of the geographical features of the region to which he has been transported, in fiction, if not in fact. At the southern extremity of the American continent is a cluster of islands, which are dark, sterile, rocky, and most of the year covered with snow. Evergreens relieve the aspect of sterility, in places that are a little sheltered, and there is a meagre vegetation in spots that serve to sustain animal life. The first strait which separates this cluster of islands from the main, is that of Magellan, through which vessels occasionally pass, in preference to going farther south. Then comes Tierra del Fuego, which is much the largest of all the islands. To the southward of Tierra del Fuego lies a cluster of many small islands, which bear different names; though the group farthest south of all, and which it is usual to consider as the southern termination of our noble continent, but which is not on a continent at all, is known by the appropriate appellation of the Hermits. If solitude, and desolation, and want, and a contemplation of some of the sublimest features of this earth, can render a spot fit for a hermitage, these islands are very judiciously named. The one that is farthest south contains the cape itself, which is marked by the ragged pyramid of rock already mentioned; placed there by nature; a never−tiring sentinel of the war of the elements. Behind this cluster of the Hermits it was that Stimson advised his officer to take refuge against the approaching gale, of which the signs were now becoming obvious and certain. Roswell's motive, however, for listening to such advice, was less to find a shelter for his schooner than to get rid of Daggett. For the gale he cared but little, since he was a long way from the ice, and could stretch off the land to the southward into a waste of waters that seems interminable. There are islands to the southward of Cape Horn, and a good many of them too, though none very near. It is now known, also, by means of the toils and courage of various seamen,

including those of the persevering and laborious Wilkes, the most industrious and the least rewarded of all the navigators who have ever worked for the human race in this dangerous and exhausting occupation, that a continent is there also; but, at the period of which we are writing, the existence of the Shetlands and Palmer's Land was the extent of the later discoveries in that part of the ocean. After pacing the quarter−deck a few minutes, when he quitted the forecastle as mentioned, Roswell Gardiner again went forward among the men.

"You are quite sure that this high peak is the Horn, Stimson?" he observed, inquiringly.

"Sartain of it, sir. There's no mistaking sich a place, which, once seen, is never forgotten."

"It agrees with the charts and our reckoning, and I may say it agrees with our eyes also. Here is the Pacific Ocean, plain enough, Mr. Hazard."

"So I think, sir. We are at the end of Ameriky, if it *has* an end anywhere. This heavy long swell is an old acquaintance, though I never was in close enough to see the land, hereabouts, before."

"It is fortunate we have one trusty hand on board who can stand pilot. Stimson, I intend to go in and anchor, and I shall trust to you to carry me into a snug berth."

"I'll do it, Captain Gar'ner, if the weather will permit it," returned the seaman, with an unpretending sort of confidence that spoke well for his ability.

Preparations were now commenced in earnest, to come to. It was time that some steady course should be adopted, as the wind was getting up, and the schooner was rapidly approaching the land. In half an hour the Sea Lion was bending to a little gale, with her canvass reduced to close−reefed mainsail and foresail, and the bonnet off her jib. The sea was fast getting up, though it came in long, and mountain−like. Roswell dreaded the mist. Could he pass through the narrow channels that Stimson had described to him, with a clear sky, one half of his causes of anxiety would be removed. But the wind was not a clear one, and he felt that no time was to be lost.

It required great nerve to approach a coast like that of Cape Horn in such weather. As the schooner got nearer to the real cape, the sight of the seas tumbling in and breaking on its ragged rock, and the hollow roaring sound they made, actually became terrifie. To add to the awe inspired in the breast of even the most callous−minded man on board, came a doubt whether the schooner could weather a certain point of rock, the western extremity of the island, after she had got so far into a bight as to render waring questionable, if not impossible. Every one now looked grave and anxious. Should the schooner go ashore in such a place, a single minute would suffice to break her to pieces, and not a soul could expect to be saved. Roswell was exceedingly anxious, though he remained cool.

"The tides and eddies about these rocks, and in so high a latitude, sweep a vessel like chips," he said to his chief mate. "We have been set in here by an eddy, and a terrible place it is."

"All depends on our gears holding on, sir," was the answer, "with a little on Providence. Just watch the point ahead, Captain Gar'ner; though we are not actually to leeward of it, see with what a drift we have drawn upon it! The manner in which these seas roll in from the sow−west is terrific! No craft can go to windward against them."

This remark of Hazard's was very just. The seas that came down upon the cape resembled a rolling prairie in their outline. A single wave would extend a quarter of a mile from trough to trough, and as it passed beneath the schooner, lifting her high in the air, it really seemed as if the glancing water would sweep her away in its force. But human art had found the means to counteract even this imposing display of the power of nature. The little schooner rode over the billows like a duck, and when she sank between two of them, it was merely to rise again on a new summit, and breast the gale gallantly. It was the current that menaced the greatest danger; for that, unseen except in its fruits, was clearly setting the little craft to leeward, and bodily towards the rocks. By this time our adventurers were so near the land that they almost gave up hope itself. Cape Hatteras and its much−talked−of dangers, seemed a place of refuge compared to that in which our navigators now found themselves. Could the deepest bellowings of ten thousand bulls be united in a common roar, the noise would not have equalled that of the hollow sound which issued from a sea as it went into some cavern of the rocks. Then, the spray filled the air like driving rain, and there were minutes when the cape, though so frightfully near, was hid from view by the vapour.

At this precise moment, the Sea Lion was less than a quarter of a mile to windward of the point she was struggling to weather, and towards which she was driving under a treble impetus; that of the wind, acting on her sails, and pressing her ahead at the rate of fully five knots, for the craft was kept a rap full; that of the eddy, or current, and that of the rolling waters. No man spoke, for each person felt that the crisis was one in which silence

was a sort of homage to the Deity. Some prayed privately, and all gazed on the low rocky point that it was indispensable to pass, to avoid destruction. There was one favourable circumstance; the water was known to be deep, quite close to the iron−bound coast, and it was seldom that any danger existed, that it was not visible to the eye. This, Roswell knew from Stimson's accounts, as well as from those of other mariners, and he saw that the fact was of the last importance to him. Should he be able to weather the point ahead, that which terminated at the mouth of the passage that led within the Hermits, it was now certain it could be done only by going fearfully near the rocks.

Roswell Gardiner took his station between the knightheads, beckoning to Stimson to come near him. At the same time, Hazard himself went to the helm.

"Do you remember this place?" asked the young master of the old seaman.

"This is the spot, sir; and if we can round the rocky point ahead, I will take you to a safe anchorage. Our drift is awful, or we are in an eddy tide here, sir!"

"It is the eddy," answered Roswell, calmly, "though our drift is not trifling. This is getting frightfully near to that point!"

"Hold on, sir—it's our only chance;—hold on, and we may rub and go."

"If we *rub*, we are lost; that is certain enough. Should we get by *this* first point, there is another, a short distance beyond it, which must certainly fetch us up, I fear. See— it opens more, as we draw ahead."

Stimson saw the new danger, and fully appreciated it. He did not speak, however; for, to own the truth, he now abandoned all hope, and, being a piously inclined person, he was privately addressing himself to God. Every man on board was fully aware of the character of this new dander, and all seemed to forget that of the nearest point of rock, towards which they were now wading with portentous speed. That point *might* be passed; there was a little hope there; but as to the point a quarter of a mile beyond, with the leeward set of the schooner, the most ignorant hand on board saw how unlikely it was that they should get by it.

An imposing silence prevailed in the schooner, as she came abreast of the first rock. It was about fifty fathoms under the lee bow, and, as to *that* spot, all depended on the distance outward that the dangers thrust themselves. This it was impossible to see amid the chaos of waters produced by the collision between the waves and the land. Roswell fastened his eyes on objects ahead, to note the rate of his leeward set, and, with a seaman's quickness, he noted the first change.

"She feels the under−tow, Stephen," he said, in a voice so compressed as to seem to come out of the depths of his chest, "and is breasted up to windward!"

"What means that sudden luff, sir? Mr. Hazard must keep a good full, or we shall have no chance."

Gardiner looked aft, and saw that the mate was bearing the helm well up, as if he met with much resistance. The truth then flashed upon him, and he shouted out—

"All's well, boys! God be praised, we have caught the ebb−tide, under our lee−bow!"

These few words explained the reason of the change. Instead of setting to leeward, the schooner was now meeting a powerful tide of some four or five knots, which hawsed her up to wind ward with irresistible force. As if conscious of the danger she was in, the tight little craft receded from the rocks as she shot ahead, and rounded that second point, which, a minute before, had appeared to be placed there purposely to destroy her. It was handsomely doubled, at the safe distance of a hundred fathoms. Roswell believed he might now beat his schooner off the land far enough to double the cape altogether, could he but keep her in that current. It doubtless expended itself, however, a short distance in the offing, as its waters diffused themselves on the breast of the ocean; and it was this diffusion of the element that produced the eddy which had proved so nearly fatal.

In ten minutes after striking the tide, the schooner opened the passage fairly, and was kept away to enter it. Notwithstanding it blew so heavily, the rate of sailing, by the land, did not exceed five knots. This was owing to the great strength of the tide, which sometimes rises and falls thirty feet, in high latitudes and narrow waters. Stimson now showed he was a man to be relied on. Conning the craft intelligently, he took her in behind the island on which the cape stands, luffed her up into a tiny cove, and made a cast of the lead. There were fifty fathoms of water, with a bottom of mud. With the certainty that there was enough of the element to keep him clear of the ground at low water, and that his anchors would hold, Roswell made a flying moor, and veered out enough cable to render his vessel secure.

Here, then, was the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond, that craft which the reader had seen lying at Deacon Pratt's

wharf, only three short months before, safely anchored in a nook of the rocks behind Cape Horn. No navigator but a sealer would have dreamed of carrying his vessel into such a place, but it is a part of their calling to poke about in channels and passages where no one else has ever been. It was in this way that Stimson had learned to know where to find his present anchorage. The berth of the schooner was perfectly snug, and entirely land−locked. The tremendous swell that was rolling in on the outside, caused the waters to rise and fall a little within the passage, but there was no strain upon the cables in consequence. Neither did the rapid tides affect the craft, which lay in an eddy that merely kept her steady. The gale came howling over the Hermits, but was so much broken by the rocks as to do little more than whistle through the cordage and spars aloft.

Three days, and as many nights, did the gale from the south−west continue. The fourth day there was a change, the wind coming from the eastward. Roswell would now have gone out, had it not been for the apprehension of falling in with Daggett again. Having at length gotten rid of that pertinacious companion, it would have been an act of great weakness to throw himself blindly in his way once more. It was possible that Daggett might not suppose he had been left intentionally, in which case, he would be very apt to look for his lost consort in the vicinity of the cape. As for the gale, it might, or it might not, have blown him to leeward. A good deal would depend on the currents, and his distance to the southward. Near the land, Gardidiner believed the currents favoured a vessel doubling it, going west; and if Daggett was also aware of this fact, it might induce him to keep as near the spot as possible.

Time was very precious to our sealers, the season being so short in the high latitudes. Still, they were a little in advance of their calculations, having got off the Horn fully ten days sooner than they had hoped to be there. Nearly the whole summer was before them, and there was the possibility of their even being too soon for the loosening of the ice further south. The wind was the strongest inducement to go out, for the point to which our adventurers were bound lay a considerable distance to the westward, and fair breezes were not to be neglected. Under all the circumstances, however, it was decided to remain within the passage one day longer, and this so much the more, because Hazard had discovered some signs of sea−elephants frequenting an island at no great distance. The boats were lowered accordingly, and the mate went in one direction, while the master pulled up to the rocks, and landed on the Hermit, or the island which should bear that name, *par excellence*, being that in which the group terminates.

Taking Stimson with him, to carry a glass, and armed with an old lance as a pike−pole, to aid his efforts, Roswell Gardiner now commenced the ascent of the pyramid already mentioned. It was ragged, and offered a thousand obstacles, but none that vigour and resolution could not overcome. After a few minutes of violent exertion, and by helping each other in difficult places, both Roswell and Stimson succeeded in placing themselves on the summit of the elevation, which was an irregular peak. The height was considerable, and gave an extended view of the adjacent islands, as well as of the gloomy and menacing ocean to the southward. The earth, probably, does not contain a more remarkable sentinel than this pyramid on which our hero had now taken his station. There it stood, actually the Ultima Thule of this vast continent, or, what was much the same, so closely united to it as to seem a part of our own moiety of the globe, looking out on the broad expanse of waters. The eye saw, to the right, the Pacific; in front was the Southern, or Antarctic Ocean; and to the left was the great Atlantic. For several minutes, both Roswell and Stephen sat mute, gazing on this grand spectacle. By turning their faces north, they beheld the high lands of Terra del Fuego, of which many of the highest peaks were covered with snow. The pyramid on which they were, however, was no longer white with the congealed rain, but stood, stern and imposing, in its native brown. The outlines of all the rocks, and the shores of the different islands, had an appearance of volcanic origin, though the rocks themselves told a somewhat different story. The last was principally of trap formation. Cape pigeons, gulls petrels, and albatross were wheeling about in the air, while the rollers that still came in on this noble sea−wall were really terrific. Distant thunder wants the hollow, bellowing sound that these waves made when brought in contact with the shores. Roswell fancied that it was like a groan of the mighty Pacific, at finding its progress suddenly checked. The spray continued to fly, and, much of the time, the air below his elevated seat was filled with vapour.

As soon as our young master had taken in the grander features of this magnificent view, his eyes sought the Sea Lion of Martha's Vineyard. There she was, sure enough, at a distance of only a couple of leagues, and apparently standing directly for the Cape. Could it be possible that Daggett suspected his manoeuvre, and was coming in search of him, at the precise spot in which he had taken shelter? As respects the vessel, there was no

question as to her character. From the elevation at which he was placed, Roswell, aided by the glass, had no difficulty in making her out, and in recognising her rig, form, and character. Stimson also examined her, and knew her to be the schooner. On that vast and desolate sea, she resembled a speck, but the art of man had enabled those she held to guide her safely through the tempest, and bring her up to her goal, in a time that really seemed miraculous for the circumstances.

"If we had thought of it, Captain Gar'ner," said Stephen, "we might have brought up an ensign, and set it on these rocks, by way of letting the Vineyarders know where we are to be found. But we can always go out and meet them, should this wind stand."

"Which is just what I have no intention of doing, Stephen. I came in here, on purpose to get rid of that schooner."

"You surprise me, sir! A consort is no bad thing, when a craft is a−sealin' in a high latitude. The ice makes such ticklish times, that, for me, I'm always glad to know there is such a chance for taking a fellow off, should there happen to be a wrack."

"All that is very true, but there are reasons which may tell against it. I have heard of some islands where seals abound, and a consort is not quite so necessary to take them, as when one is wrecked."

"That alters the case, Captain Gar'ner. Nobody is obliged to tell of his sealing station. I was aboard one of the very first craft that found out that the South Shetlands was a famous place for seals, and no one among us thought it necessary to tell it to all the world. Some men are weak enough to put sich discoveries in the newspapers; but, for my part, I think it quite enough to put them in the log."

"That schooner must have the current with her, she comes down so fast. She'll be abreast of the Horn in half an hour longer, Stephen. We will wait, and see what she would be at."

Gardiner's prediction was true. In half an hour, the Sea Lion of Holmes' Hole glided past the rocky pyramid of the Horn, distant from it less than a mile. Had it been the object of her commander to pass into the Pacific, he might have done so with great apparent ease. Even with a south−west wind, that which blows fully half the time in those seas, it would have been in his power to lay past the islands, and soon get before it. A north−east course, with a little offing, will clear the islands, and when a vessel gets as far north as the main land, it would take her off the coast.

But Daggett had no intention of doing anything of the sort. He was looking for his consort, which he had hoped to find somewhere near the cape. Disappointed in this expectation, after standing far enough west to make certain nothing was in sight in that quarter, he hauled up on an easy bowline, and stood to the southward. Roswell was right glad to see this, inasmuch as it denoted ignorance of the position of the islands he sought. They lay much farther to the westward; and no sooner was he sure of the course steered by the other schooner, than he hastened down to the boat, in order to get his own vessel under way, to profit by the breeze.

Two hours later, the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond glanced through the passage which led into the ocean, on an ebb−tide. By that time, the other vessel had disappeared in the southern board; and Gardiner came out upon the open waters again, boldly, and certain of his course. All sail was set, and the little craft slipped away from the land with the ease of an aquatic bird, that is plying its web−feet. Studding−sails were set, and the pyramid of the Horn soon began to lower in the distance, as the schooner receded. When night closed over the rolling waters, it was no longer visible, the vessel having fairly entered the Antarctic Ocean, if anything north of the circle can properly so be termed.

CHAPTER XIV.

"All gone! 'tis ours the goodly land—
Look round—the heritage behold;
Go forth—upon the mountain stand;
Then, if you can, be cold."
Sprague.

It was an enterprising and manly thing for a little vessel like the Sea Lion to steer with an undeviating course into the mysterious depths of the antarctic circle — mysterious, far more in that day, than at the present hour. But the American sealer rarely hesitates. He has very little science, few charts, and those oftener old than new, knows little of what is going on among the savans of the earth, though his ear is ever open to the lore of men like himself, and he has his mind stored with pictures of islands and continents that would seem to have been formed for no other purpose than to meet the wants of the race of animals it is his business to pursue and to capture. Cape Horn and its vicinity have so long been frequented by this class of men, that they are at home among their islands, rocks, currents and sterility; but, to the southward of the Horn itself, all seemed a waste. At the time of which we are writing, much less was known of the antarctic regions than is known to−day; and even now our knowledge is limited to a few dreary outlines, in which barrenness and ice compete for the mastery. Wilkes, and his competitors, have told us that a vast frozen continent exists in that quarter of the globe; but even their daring and perseverance have not been able to determine more than the general fact.

We should be giving an exaggerated and false idea of Roswell Gardiner's character, did we say that he steered into that great void of the southern ocean in a total indifference to his destination and objects. Very much the reverse was his state of mind, as he saw the high land of the cape sink, as it might be foot by foot, into the ocean, and then lost sight of it altogether. Although the weather was fine for the region, it was dark and menacing. Such, indeed, is usually the case in that portion of this globe, which appears to be the favourite region of the storms. Although the wind was no more than a good breeze, and the ocean was but little disturbed, there were those symptoms in the atmosphere and in the long ground−swells that came rolling in from the southwest, that taught the mariner the cold lessons of caution. We believe that heavier gales of wind at sea are encountered in the warm than in the cold months; but there is something so genial in the air of the ocean during summer, and something so chilling and repulsive in the rival season, that most of us fancy that the currents of air correspond in strength with the fall of the mercury. Roswell knew better than this, it is true; but he also fully understood where he was, and what he was about. As a sealer, he had several times penetrated as far south as the ne plus ultra of Cook; but it had ever before been in subordinate situations. This was the first time in which he had the responsibility of command thrown on himself, and it was no more than natural that he should feel the weight of this new burthen. So long as the Sea Lion of the Vineyard was in sight, she had presented a centre of interest and concern. To get rid of her had been his first care, and almost absorbing object; but, now that she seemed to be finally thrown out of his wake, there remained the momentous and closely approaching difficulties of the main adventure directly before his eyes. Roswell, therefore, was thoughtful and grave, his countenance offering no bad reflection of the sober features of the atmosphere and the ocean.

Although the season was that of summer, and the weather was such as is deemed propitious in the neighbourhood of Cape Horn, a feeling of uncertainty prevailed over every other sensation. To the southward a cold mistiness veiled the view, and every mile the schooner advanced appeared like penetrating deeper and deeper into regions that nature had hitherto withheld from the investigation of the mariner. Ice, and its dangers, were known to exist a few degrees farther in that direction; but islands also had been discovered, and turned to good account by the enterprise of the sealers.

It was truly a great thing for the Sea Lion of Oyster Pond to have thrown off her namesake of the Vineyard. It is true both vessels were still in the same sea, with a possibility of again meeting; but, Roswell Gardiner was steering onward towards a haven designated in degrees and minutes, while the other craft was most probably left to wander in uncertainty in that remote and stormy ocean. Our hero thought there was now very little likelihood of his again falling in with his late consort, and this so much the more, because the islands he sought were not laid

down in the vicinity of any other known land, and were consequently out of the usual track of the sealers. This last circumstance was fully appreciated by our young navigator, and gave him confidence of possessing its treasures to himself, could he only find the place where nature had hid them.

When the sun went down in that vast waste of water which lies to the southward of this continent, the little Sea Lion had fairly lost sight of land, and was riding over the long southwestern ground−swell like a gull that holds its way steadily towards its nest. For many hours her course had not varied half a point, being as near as possible to south−southwest, which kept her a little off the wind. No sooner, however, did night come to shut in the view, than Roswell Gardiner went aft to the man at the helm, and ordered him to steer to the southward, as near as the breeze would conveniently allow. This was a material change in the direction of the vessel, and, should the present breeze stand, would probably place her, by the return of light, a good distance to the eastward of the point she would otherwise have reached. Hitherto, it had been Roswell's aim to drop his consort; but, now it was dark, and so much time had already passed and been improved since the other schooner was last seen, he believed he might venture to steer in the precise direction he desired to go. The season is so short in those seas, that every hour is precious, and no more variation from a real object could be permitted than circumstances imperiously required. It was now generally understood that the craft was making the best of her way towards her destined sealing−ground.

Independently of the discoveries of the regular explorers, a great deal of information has been obtained from the sealers themselves within the present century, touching the antarctic seas. It is thought that many a headland, and various islands, that have contributed their shares in procuring the *accolades* for different European navigators, were known to the adventurers from Stonington and other by−ports of this country, long before science ever laid its eyes upon them, or monarchs their swords on the shoulders of their secondary discoverers.

That divers islands existed in this quarter of the ocean was a fact recognised in geography long before the Sea Lion was thought of; probably before her young master was actually born; but the knowledge generally possessed on the subject was meagre and unsatisfactory. In particular cases, nevertheless, this remark would not apply, there being at that moment on board our little schooner several mariners who had often visited the South Shetlands, New Georgia, Palmer's Land, and other known places in those seas. Not one of them all, however, had ever heard of any island directly south of the present position of the schooner.

No material change occurred during the night, or in the course of the succeeding day, the little Sea Lion industriously holding her way toward the south pole; making very regularly her six knots each hour. By the time she was thirty−six hours from the Horn, Gardiner believed himself to be fully three degrees to the southward of it, and consequently some distance within the parallel of sixty degrees south. Palmer's Land, with its neighbouring islands, would have been near, had not the original course carried the schooner so far to the westward. As it was, no one could say what lay before them.

The third day out, the wind hauled, and it blew heavily from the north−east. This gave the adventurers a great run. The blink of ice was shortly seen, and soon after ice itself, drifting about in bergs. The floating hills were grand objects to the eye, rolling and wallowing in the seas; but they were much worn and melted by the wash of the ocean, and comparatively of greatly diminished size. It was now absolutely necessary to lose most of the hours of darkness, it being much too dangerous to run in the night. The great barrier of ice was known to be close at hand; and Cook's "Ne Plus Ultra," at that time the great boundary of antarctic navigation, was near the parallel of latitude to which the schooner had reached. The weather, however, continued very favourable, and after the blow from the north−east, the wind came from the south, chill, and attended with flurries of snow, but sufficiently steady and not so fresh as to compel our adventurers to carry very short sail. The smoothness of the water would of itself have announced the vicinity of ice: not only did Gardiner's calculations tell him as much as this, but his eyes confirmed their results. In the course of the fifth day out, on several occasions when the weather cleared a little, glimpses were had of the ice in long mountainous walls, resembling many of the ridges of the Alps, though moving heavily under the heaving and setting of the restless waters. Dense fogs, from time to time, clouded the whole view, and the schooner was compelled, more than once that day, to heave−to, in order to avoid running on the sunken masses of ice, or fields, of which many of vast size now began to make their appearance.

Notwithstanding the dangers that surrounded our adventurers, they were none of them so insensible to the sublime powers of nature as to withhold their admiration from the many glorious objects which that lone and wild scene presented. The ice−bergs were of all the hues of the rainbow, as the sunlight gilded their summits or sides,

or they were left shaded by the interposition of dark and murky clouds. There were instances when certain of the huge frozen masses even appeared to be quite black, in particular positions and under peculiar lights; while others, at the same instant, were gorgeous in their gleams of emerald and gold!

The aquatic birds, also, had now become numerous again. Penguins were swimming about, filling the air with their discordant cries, while there was literally no end of the cape−pigeons and petrels. Albatrosses, too, helped to make up the picture of animated nature, while whales were often heard blowing in the adjacent waters. Gardiner saw many signs of the proximity of land, and began to hope he should yet actually discover the islands laid down on his chart, as their position had been given by Daggett.

In that high latitude a degree of longitude is necessarily much shorter than when nearer to the middle of our orb. On the equator, a degree of longitude measures, as is known to most boarding−school young ladies, just sixty geographical, or sixty−nine and a half English statute miles. But, as is not known to most boarding−school young ladies, or is understood by very few of them indeed, even when known, in the sixty−second degree of latitude, a degree of longitude measures but little more than thirty−two of those very miles. The solution of this seeming contradiction is so very simple that it may assist a certain class of our readers if we explain it, by telling them that it arises solely from the fact that these degrees of longitude, which are placed sixty geographical miles asunder at the centre or middle of the earth, converge towards the poles, where they all meet in a point. According to the best observations Roswell Gardiner could obtain, he was just one of these short degrees of longitude, or two−and−thirty miles, to the westward of the parallel where he wished to be, when the wind came from the southward. The change was favourable, as it emboldened him to run nearer than he otherwise might have felt disposed to do, to the great barrier of ice which now formed a sort of weather−shore. Fortunately, the loose bergs and sunken masses had drifted off so far to the northward, that once within them the schooner had pretty plain sailing; and Roswell, to lose none of the precious time of the season, ventured to run, though under very short canvass, the whole of the short night that succeeded. It is a great assistance to the navigation of those seas that, during the summer months, there is scarcely any night at all, giving the adventurer sufficient light by which to thread his way among the difficulties of his pathless journey.

When the sun reappeared, on the morning of the sixth day after he had left the Horn, Roswell Gardiner believed himself to be far enough west for his purposes. It now remained to get a whole degree further to the south, which was a vast distance in those seas and in that direction, and would carry him a long way to the southward of the `Ne Plus Ultra.' If there was any truth in Daggett, however, that mariner had been there; and the instructions of the owner rendered it incumbent on our young man to attempt to follow him. More than once, that morning, did our hero regret he had not entered into terms with the Vineyard men, that the effort might have been made in company. There was something so portentous in a lone vessel's venturing within the ice, in so remote a region, that, to say the truth, Roswell hesitated. But pride of profession, ambition, love of Mary, dread of the deacon, native resolution, and the hardihood produced by experience in dangers often encountered and escaped, nerved him to the undertaking. It must be attempted, or the voyage would be lost; and our young mariner now set about his task with a stern determination to achieve it.

By this time the schooner had luffed up within a cable's length of the ice, along the margin of which she was running under easy sail. Gardiner believed himself to be quite as far to the westward as was necessary, and his present object was to find an opening, by means of which he could enter among the floating chaos that was spread, far and wide, to windward. As the breeze was driving the drifting masses to the northward, they became loosened and more separated, every moment; and glad enough was Gardiner to discover, at length, a clear spot that seemed to favour his views. Without an instant's delay, the sheets were flattened in, a pull was taken on the braces, and away went the little Sea Lion into a passage that had a hundred−fold more real causes of terror than the Scylla and Charybdis of old.

One effect of the vicinity of ice, in extensive fields, is to produce comparatively still water. It must blow a gale, and that over a considerable extent of open sea, to produce much commotion among the fields and bergs, though that heaving and setting, which has been likened to the respiration of some monster, and which seamen call the "ground−swell," is never entirely wanting among the waters of an ocean. On the present occasion, our adventurers were favoured in this respect, their craft gliding forward unimpeded by anything like opposing billows. At the end of four hours, the schooner, tacking and waring when necessary, had worked her way to the southward and westward, according to her master's reckoning, some five−and−twenty miles. It was then noon,

and the atmosphere being unusually clear, though never without fog, Gardiner went aloft, to take a look for himself at the condition of things around him.

To the northward, and along the very passage by which the vessel had sailed, the ice was closing, and it was far easier to go on than to return. To the eastward, and towards the south−east in particular, however, did Roswell Gardiner turn his longing eyes. Somewhere in that quarter of the ocean, and distant now less than ten leagues, did he expect to find the islands of which he was in quest, if, indeed, they had any existence at all. In that direction there were many passages open among the ice, the latter being generally higher than in the particular place to which the vessel had reached. Once or twice, Roswell mistook the summits of some of these bergs for real mountains, when, owing to the manner in which the light fell upon them, or rather did not fall upon them directly, they appeared dark and earthy. Each time, however, the sun's rays soon came to undeceive him; and that which had so lately been black and frowning was, as by the touch of magic, suddenly illuminated, and became bright and gorgeous, throwing out its emerald hues, or perhaps a virgin white, that filled the beholder with delight, even amid the terrors and dangers by which, in very truth, he was surrounded. The glorious Alps themselves, those wonders of the earth, could scarcely compete in scenery with the views that nature lavished, in that remote sea, on a seeming void. But the might and honour of God were there, as well as beneath the equator.

For one whole hour did Roswell Gardiner remain in the cross−trees, having hailed the deck, and caused the schooner's head to be turned to the south−east, pressing her through the openings as near the wind as she could go. The atmosphere was never without fog, though the vapour drifted about, leaving large vacancies that were totally clear. One spot, in particular, seemed to be a favourite resting−place for these low clouds, which just there appeared to light upon the face of the ocean itself. A wide field of ice, or, it were better to say, a broad belt of bergs, lay between this stationary cloud and the schooner, though the existence of the vapour early caught Roswell's attention; and during the hour he was aloft, conning the craft through a very intricate and ticklish channel, not a minute passed that the young man did not turn a look towards that veiled spot. He was in the act of placing a foot on the ratlin below him, to descend to the deck, when he half−unconsciously turned to take a last glance at this distant and seemingly immovable object. Just then, the vapour, which had kept rolling and moving, like a fluid in ebullition, while it still clung together, suddenly opened, and the bald head of a real mountain, a thousand feet high, came unexpectedly into the view! There could be no mistake; all was too plain to admit of a doubt. There, beyond all question, was land; and it was doubtless the most western of the islands described by the dying seaman. Everything corroborated this conclusion. The latitude and longitude were right, or nearly so, and the other circumstances went to confirm the conjecture, or conclusion. Daggett had said that one island, high, mountainous, ragged and bleak, but of some size, lay the most westerly in the group, while several others were within a few miles of it. The last were lower, much smaller, and little more than naked rocks. One of these last, however, he insisted on it, was a volcano in activity, and that, at intervals, it emitted flames as well as a fierce heat. By his account, however, the party to which he belonged had never actually visited that volcanic cauldron, being satisfied with admiring its terrors from a distance.

As to the existence of the land, Roswell got several pretty distinct and certain views, leaving no doubt of its character and position. There is a theory which tells us that the orb of day is surrounded by a luminous vapour, the source of heat and light, and that this vapour, being in constant motion, occasionally leaves the mass of the planet itself to be seen, forming what it is usual to term the "spots on the sun." Resembling this theory, the fogs of the antarctic seas rolled about the mountain now seen, withdrawing the curtain at times, and permitting a view of the striking and majestic object within. Well did that lone and nearly barren mass of earth and rock merit these appellations! The elevation has already been given; and a rock that is nearly perpendicular, rising out of the ocean for a thousand feet, is ever imposing and grand. This was rendered so much the more so by its loneliness, its stable and stern position amid floating and moving mountains of ice, its brown sides and bald summit, the latter then recently whitened with a fall of pure snow, and its frowning and fixed aspect amid a scene that might otherwise be said to be ever in motion.

Roswell Gardiner's heart beat with delight when assured of success in discovering this, the first great goal of his destination. To reach it was now his all−absorbing desire. By this time the wind had got round to the southwest, and was blowing quite fresh, bringing him well to windward of the mountain, but causing the ice−bergs to drift in towards the land, and placing an impassable barrier along its western shore. Our young man, however, remembered that Daggett had given the anchorage as on the north−eastern side of the island, where,

according to his statements, a little haven would be found, in which a dozen craft might he in security. To this quarter of the island Gardiner consequently endeavoured to get.

There was no opening to the northward, but a pretty good channel was before the schooner to the southward of the group. In this direction, then, the Sea Lion was steered, and by eight bells (four in the afternoon) the southern point of the largest island was doubled. The rest of the group were made, and to the infinite delight of all on board her, abundance of clear water was found between the main island and its smaller neighbours. The bergs had grounded apparently, as they drew near the group, leaving this large bay entirely free from ice, with the exception of a few small masses that were floating through it. These bodies, whether field or berg, were easily avoided; and away the schooner went, with flowing sheets, into the large basin formed by the different members of the group. To render `assurance doubly sure,' as to the information of Daggett, the smoke of a volcano arose from a rock to the eastward, that appeared to be some three or four miles in circumference, and which stood on the eastern side of the great basin, or some four leagues from Sealer's Land, as Daggett had at once named the principal island. This was, in fact, about the breadth of the main basin, which had two principal passages into it, the one from the south and the other from the north−east.

Once within the islands, and reasonably clear of all ice, it was an easy thing for the schooner to run across the basin, or great bay, and reach the north−eastern extremity of Sealer's Land. As the light would continue some hours longer, there being very little night in that high latitude in December, the month that corresponds to our June, Roswell caused a boat to be lowered and manned, when he pulled at once towards the spot where it struck him the haven must be found, if there were any such place at all. Everything turned out as it had been described by Daggett, and great was our young man's satisfaction when he rowed into a cove that was little more than two hundred yards in diameter, and which was so completely land−locked as not to feel the influence of any sea outside. In general, the great difficulty is to land on any of the antarctic rocks, the breakers and surf opposing it; but, in this spot, the smallest boat could be laid with its bows on a beach of shingles, without the slightest risk of its being injured. The lead also announced good anchorage in about eight fathoms of water. In a word, this little haven was one of those small basins that so often occur in mountainous islands, where fragments of rock appear to have fallen from the principal mass as it was forced upward out of the ocean, as if purposely intended to meet the wants of mariners.

Nor was the outer bay, or the large basin formed by the entire group, by any means devoid of advantages to the navigator. From north to south this outer bay was at least six leagues in length, while its breadth could not much have fallen short of four. Of course it was much more exposed to the winds and waves than the little harbour proper, though Roswell was struck with the great advantages it offered in several essential particulars. It was almost clear of ice, while so much was floating about outside of the circle of islands; thus leaving a free navigation in it for even the smallest boat. This was mainly owing to the fact that the largest island had two long crescent−shaped capes, the one at its north−eastern and the other at its south−eastern extremity, giving to its whole eastern side the shape of a new moon. The harbour just described was to the southward of, or within the north−eastern cape, which our young master at once named Cape Hazard, in honour of his chief mate's vigilance; that officer having been the first to point out the facilities probably offered by the formation of the land for an anchorage.

Though rocky and broken, it was by no means difficult to ascend the rugged banks on the northern side of the harbour, and Gardiner went up it, attended by Stimson, who of late had much attached himself to the person of his commander. The height of this barrier above the waves of the ocean was but a little less than a hundred feet, and when the summit was reached, a common exclamation of surprise, not to say delight, broke from the lips of both. Hitherto not a seal of any sort had been seen, and Gardiner had felt some misgivings touching the benefits that were to be derived from so much hardship, exposure and enterprise. All doubts, however, vanished, the instant he got a sight of the northern shore of the island. This shore, a reach of several miles in extent, was fairly alive with the monsters of which he was in search. They lay in thousands on the low rocks that lined that entire side of the island, basking in the sun of the antarctic seas. There they were, sure enough! Sea Lions, Sea Elephants, huge, clumsy, fierce−looking and revolting creatures, belonging properly to neither sea nor land. These animals were constantly going and coming in crowds, some waddling to the margin of the rocks and tumbling into the ocean in search of food, while others scrambled out of the water, and got upon shelves and other convenient places to repose and enjoy the light of day. There was very little contention or fighting among these revolting−looking

creatures, though nearly every known species of the larger seals was among them.

"There is famous picking for us, master Stephen," said Roswell to his companion, fairly rubbing his hands in delight. "One month's smart work will fill the schooner, and we can be off before the equinox. Does it not seem to you that yonder are the bones of sea lions, or of seals of some sort, lying hereaway as if men had been at work on the creatures?"

"No doubt on't at all, Captain Gar'ner; as much out of the way as this island is — and I never heard of the place afore, old a sealer as I am — but, as much out of the way as it is, we are not the first to find it. Somebody has been here, and that within a year or two; and he has picked up a cargo, too, depend on't."

As all this merely corresponded with Daggett's account of the place, Roswell felt no surprise; on the contrary, he saw in it a confirmation of all that Daggett had stated, and as furnishing so much the more reason to hope for a successful termination to the voyage in all its parts. While on the rocks, Roswell took such a survey of the localities as might enable him to issue his orders hereafter with discretion and intelligence. The schooner was already making short tacks to get close in with the island, in obedience to a signal to that effect; and the second mate had pulled out to the entrance of the little haven, with a view to act as pilot. Before the captain had descended from the summit of the northern barrier, the vessel came in under her jib, the wind being nearly aft, and she dropped two anchors in suitable spots, making another flying moor of it.

General joy now illuminated every face. It was, in itself, a great point gained to get the schooner into a perfectly safe haven, where her people could take their natural rest at night, or during their watches below, without feeling any apprehension of being crushed in the ice; but here was not only security, but the source of that wealth of which they were in quest, and which had induced them all to encounter so many privations and so much danger. The crew landed to a man, each individual ascending to the summit of the barrier, to feast his eyes on the spectacle that lay spread in such affluent abundance, along the low rocks of the northern side of the island.

As there were yet several hours of light remaining, Roswell, still attended by Stimson, each armed with a sealing−spear or lance, not only as a weapon of defence but as a leaping−staff, set out to climb as high up the central acclivity of the island as circumstances would allow him to go. He was deceived in the distances, however, and soon found that an entire day would be necessary to achieve such an enterprise, could it be performed at all; but he did succeed in reaching a low spur of the central mountain that commanded a wide and noble view of all that lay to the north and east of it. From this height, which must have been a few hundred feet above the level of the ocean, our adventurers got a still better view of the whole north coast, or of what might have been called the sealing quarter of the island. They also got a tolerably accurate idea of the general formation of that lone fragment of rock and earth, as well as of the islets and islands that lay in its vicinity. The outline of the first was that of a rude, and of course an irregular triangle, the three principal points of which were the two low capes already mentioned, and a third that lay to the northward and westward. The whole of the western or south−western shore seemed to be a nearly perpendicular wall of rock, that, in the main, rose some two or three hundred feet above the ocean. Against this side of the island in particular, the waves of the ocean were sullenly beating, while the ice drove up `home,' as sailors express it; showing a vast depth of water. On the two other sides, it was different. The winds prevailed most from the south−west, which rendered the perpendicular face of the island its weather−wall; while the two other sides of the triangle were more favoured by position. The north side, of course, lay most exposed to the sun, everything of this nature being reversed in the southern hemisphere from what we have it in the northern; while the eastern or north−eastern side, to be precisely accurate, was protected by the group of islands that lay in its front. Such was the general character of Sealer's Land, so far as the hurried observations of its present master enabled him to ascertain. The near approach of night induced him now to hasten to get off of the somewhat dangerous acclivities to which he had climbed, and to rejoin his people and his schooner.

CHAPTER XV.

"Ye dart upon the deep, and straight is heard
A wilder roar; and men grow pale, and pray:
Ye fling its. waters round you, as a bird
Flings o'er his shivering plumes the fountain's spray.
See! to the breaking mast the sailor clings!
Ye scoop the ocean to its briny springs,
And take the mountain billows on your wings,
And pile the wreck of navies round the bay."
Bryant's Winds.

No unnecessary delay was permitted to interfere with the one great purpose of the sealers. The season was so short, and the difficulties and dangers of entering among and of quitting the ice were so very serious, that every soul belonging to the schooner felt the importance of activity and industry. The very day that succeeded the vessel's arrival, not only was great progress made in the preliminary arrangements, but a goodly number of fur−seals, of excellent quality, were actually killed and secured. Two noble sea−elephants were also lanced, animals that measured near thirty feet in length, each of which yielded a very ample return for the risk and trouble of taking it, in oil. The skins of the fur−seals, however, were Roswell's principal object; and glad enough was he to find the creature that pays this tribute to the wants and luxuries of man, in numbers sufficient to promise him a speedy return to the northward. While the slaughter, and skinning, and curing, and trying out were all in active operation, our young man paid some attention to certain minor arrangements, which had a direct bearing on the comforts of his people, as well as the getting in of cargo.

An old store−house, of respectable size, had stood on the deacon's wharf, while the schooner was fitting out, but it had been taken to pieces, in order to make room for a more eligible substitute. The materials of this building, Roswell Gardiner had persuaded his owner to send on board, and they had all been received and stowed away, a part below and a part on deck, as a provision for the possible wants of the people. As it was necessary to clear the decks and break out the hold, all these materials, consisting principally of the timbers of the frame, the siding, and a quantity of planks and boards, were now floated ashore in the cove, and hauled up on the rocks. Roswell took a leisure moment to select a place for the site of his building, which he intended to erect at once, in order to save the time that would otherwise be lost in pulling between the schooner and the shore.

It was not difficult to find the sort of spot that was desi rable for the dwelling. That chosen by Gardiner was a shelf of rock of sufficient extent, that lay perfectly exposed to the north and north−east, or to the sunny side of the island, while it was sheltered from the south and south−west by masses of rock, that formed a complete protection against the colder winds of the region. These walls of stone, however, were not sufficiently near to permit any snows they might collect to impend over the building, but enough space was left between them and the house, to admit of a capacious yard, in which might be placed any articles that were necessary to the ordinary work, or to the wants of the sealers.

Had it been advisable to set all hands at the business of slaughtering, Roswell Gardiner certainly would not have lost the time he did, in the erection of his house. But our master was a judicious and wary commander at his calling. The seals were now perfectly tame, and nothing was easier than to kill them in scores. The great difficulty was in removing the spoils across the rocks, as it was sometimes necessary to do so for a distance of several miles. Means were found, in the end, to use the boats on this service, though even then, at midsummer, the northern shore of the island was frequently so closely beset by the ice as completely to block up the passage. This, too, occurred at times when the larger bay was nearly free, and the cove, which went by the name of the "Deacon's Bight," among the men, was entirely so. In order to prevent a premature panic among the victims of this intended foray, then, Gardiner allowed no one to go out to "kill" but the experienced hands, and no more to be slain each day than could be skinned or cut up at that particular time. In consequence of this prudent caution, the work soon got into a regular train; and it was early found that more was done in this mode, than could have been effected by a less guarded assault on the seals.

As for the materials of the building, they were hauled up the rocks without much difficulty. The frame was of some size, as is the case generally with most old constructions in America; but being of pine, thoroughly seasoned, the sills and plates were not so heavy but that they might be readily enough handled by the non−sealing portion of the crew. Robert Smith, the landsman, was a carpenter by trade, and it fell to his lot to put together again the materials of the old warehouse. Had there not been such a mechanic among the crew, however, a dozen Americans could, at any time, construct a house, the `rough and ready' habits of the people usually teaching them, in a rude way, a good deal of a great many other arts, besides this of the carpenter. Mott had served a part of his time with a black−smith, and he now set up his forge. When the frame was ready, all hands assembled to assist in raising it; and, by the end of the first week, the building was actually enclosed, the labour amounting to no more than putting each portion in its place, and securing it there, the saw being scarcely used during the whole process. This building had two apartments, one of which Gardiner appropriated to the uses of a sitting−room, and the other to that of a dormitory. Rough bunks were constructed, and the mattresses of the men were all brought ashore, and put in the house. It was intended that everybody should sleep in the building, as it would save a great deal of going to and fro, as well as a great deal of time. The cargo was to be collected on a shelf of rock, that lay about twenty feet below that on which the building stood; by following which, it was possible to turn the highest point of the pass, that which formed the southern protection of the building, and come out on the side of the cove at another shelf, that was not more than fifty feet above the level of the vessel's decks. Down this last declivity, Roswell proposed to lower his casks by means of a projecting derrick, the rock being sufficiently precipitous to admit of this arrangement, while his spare spars furnished him with the necessary means. Thus was every preparation made with judgement and foresight.

In this manner did the first ten days pass, every man and boy being as busy as bees. To own the truth, no attention was paid to the Sabbath, which would seem to have been left behind them by the people, among the descendants of those Puritans who were so rigid in their observance of that festival. At the end of the time just mentioned, a great deal had been done. The house, such as it was, was completed. To be sure, it was nothing but an old store−house re−vamped, but it was found to be of infinite service, and greatly did all hands felicitate themselves at having brought its materials along with them. Even those who had most complained of the labour of getting the timbers on board, had the most often cursed them for being in the way, during the passage, and had continued the loudest to deride the idea of `sealers turning carpenters,' were shortly willing to allow that the possession of this dwelling was of the greatest value to them, and that, so far from the extra work's causing them to fall behind in their main operations, the comfort they found, in having a home like this to go to, after a long day's toil, refreshed them to a degree which enabled every man to return to his labour, with a zeal and an energy that might otherwise have been wanting. Although it was in the warmest season of the year, and the nights could scarcely be called nights at all, yet the sun never got very low without leaving a chilliness in the air that would have rendered sleeping without a cover and a protection from the winds, not only excessively uncomfortable, but somewhat dangerous. Indeed, it was often found necessary to light a fire in the old ware−house. This was done by means of a capacious box−stove, that was almost as old as the building itself, and which had also been brought along as an article of great necessity in that climate. Fuel could not be wanting, as long as the `scraps' from the try−works abounded, and there were many more of these than were needed to `try out' the sea−elephant oil. The schooner, however, had a very ample supply of wood to burn, that being an article which abounded on Shelter Island, and which the deacon had consented to lay in, in some abundance. Gardiner got this concession out of the miserly temperament of the old man, by persuading him that a sealer could not work to any advantage, unless he had the means of occasionally warming himself. The miserly propensities of the deacon were not so engrossing that he did not comprehend the wisdom of making sufficient outlay to secure the execution of his main object; and among other things of this nature, the schooner had sailed with a very large supply of wood, as has just been stated. Wood and onions, indeed, were more abundant in her than any other stores.

The arrangements described were completed by the end of the first fortnight, during which period the business of sealing was also carried on with great industry and success. So very tame were the victims, and so totally unconscious of the danger they incurred from the presence of man, that the crew moved round among them, seemingly but very little observed, and not at all molested. The utmost care was taken to give no unnecessary alarm; and when an animal was lanced, it was done in such a quiet way as to produce as little commotion as possible. By the end of the time named, however, the sealing had got so advanced as to require the aid of all hands

in securing the spoils. To work, then, everybody went, with a hearty good−will; and the shelf of rock just below the house was soon well garnished with casks and skins. Had the labour been limited to the mere killing, and skinning, and curing, and barreling of oil, it would have been comparatively quite light; but the necessity of transporting the fruits of all this skill and luck considerable distances, in some cases several miles, and this over broken rocks, formed the great obstacle to immediate success. It was the opinion of Roswell Gardiner, that he could have filled his schooner in a month, were it possible to place her directly alongside of the rocks frequented by the seals, and prevent all this toil in transporting. This, however, was impossible, the waves and the ice rendering it certain destruction to lay a craft anywhere along the northern shore of the island. The boats might be, and occasionally they were used, bringing loads of skin and oil round the cape, quite into the cove. These little cargoes were immediately transferred to the hold of the schooner, a ground−tier of large casks having been left in her purposely to receive the oil, which was emptied into them by means of a hose. By the end of the third week, this ground−tier was filled, and the craft became stiff, and was in good ballast trim, although the spare water was now entirely pumped out of her.

All this time the weather was very fair for so high a latitude, and every way propitious. The twenty−third day after the schooner got in, Roswell was standing on a spur of the hill, at no great distance from the house, overlooking the long reach of rocky coast over which the `sea−elephants,' and `lions,' and `dogs,' and `bears,' were waddling in as much seeming security as the hour when he first saw them. The sun was just rising, and the seals were clambering up out of the water to enjoy its warm rays, as they placed themselves in positions favourable to such a purpose.

"That is a pleasant sight to a true sealer, Captain Gar'ner," observed Stimson, who as usual had kept near his officer, "and one that I can say I never before saw equalled. I've been in this business now some five−and−twenty years, and never before have I met with so safe a harbour for a craft, and so large herds that have not been stirred up and got to be skeary."

"We have certainly been very fortunate thus far, Stephen, and I am now in hopes we may fill up and be off in good season to get clear of the ice," returned Roswell. "Our luck has been surprising, all things considered."

"You call it luck, Captain Gar'ner; but, in my creed, there is a truer and a better word for it, sir."

"Ay, I know well enough what you mean, Stephen; though I cannot fancy that Providence cares much whether we shall take a hundred seals to−day, or none at all."

"Such is not my idee, sir; and I'm not ashamed to own it. In my humble way of thinking, Captain Gar'ner, the finger of Divine Providence is in all that comes to pass; if not straight ahead like, as a body would receive a fall, still, by sartain laws that bring about everything that is to happen, just as it does happen. I believe now, sir, that Providence does not intend we shall take any seals at all to−day, sir"

"Why not, Stimson? It is the very finest day we have had since we have been on the island!"

"That's true enough; and it is this glorious sunny day, glorious and sunny for sich a high latitude, that makes me feel and think that this day was not intended for work. You probably forget it is the Sabbath, Captain Gar'ner."

"Sure enough; I had forgotten that, Stephen; but we sealers seldom lie by for such a reason."

"So much the worse for us sealers, then, sir. This is my seventeenth v'y'ge into these seas, sir, and I will say that more of them have been made with officers and crews that did *not* keep the Sabbath, than with officers and crews that did. Still, I have obsarved one thing, sir, that the man who takes his rest one day in seven, and freshens his mind, as it might be, with thinking of other matters than his every−day consarns, comes to his task with so much better will, when he *does* set about it, as to turn off greater profit than if he worked night and day, Sundays and all."

Roswell Gardiner had no great reverence for the Christian Sabbath, and this more because it was so *called,* than for any sufficient reason in itself. Pride of reason rendered him jealous of everything like a concession to the faith of those who believed in the Son of God; and he was very apt to dissent from all admission that had even the most remote bearing on its truth. Still, as a kind−hearted commander, as well as a judicious reasoner on the economy of his fellow−creatures, he fully felt the policy of granting relaxation to labour. Nor was he indisposed to believe in the care of a Divine Providence, or in its justice, though less believing in this respect than the illiterate but earnest−minded seaman who stood at his side. He knew very well that "all work, and no play, makes Jack a dull boy;" and he understood well enough that it was good for man, at stated seasons, to raise his mind from the cares and business of this world, to muse on those of the world that is to come. Though inclined to

Deism, Roswell worshipped in his heart the creator of all he saw and understood, as well as much that he could neither scan nor comprehend.

"This is not the seaman's usual way of thinking," returned our hero, after regarding his companion for a moment, a little intently. "With us, there is very little Sabbath in blue−water."

"Too little, sir; much too little. Depend on 't, Captain Gar'ner, God is on the face of the waters as well as on the hill−tops. His Spirit is everywhere; and it must grieve it to see human beings, that have been created in his image, so bent on gain as to set apart no time even for rest; much less for his worship and praise!"

"I am not certain you are wrong, Stimson, and I feel much more sure that you are right as a political economist than in your religion. There *should* be seasons of rest and reflection — yet I greatly dislike losing a day as fine as this."

" `The better the day, the better the deed,' sir. No time is lost to him who stops in his work to think a little of his God. Our crew is used to having a Sabbath; and though we work on lays, there is not a hand aboard us, Captain Gar'ner, who would not be glad to hear the word pass among 'em which should say this is the Lord's Day, and you've to knock off from your labour."

"As I believe you understand the people, Stephen, and we have had a busy time of it since we got in, I'll take you at your word, and give the order. Go and tell Mr. Hazard there'll be no duty carried on to−day beyond what is indispensable. It is Sunday, and we'll make it a day of rest."

Truth compels us to say that Roswell was quite as much influenced in giving this order, by recollecting the pleasure it would give Mary, as by any higher consideration.

Glad enough was Stimson to hear this order, and away he hastened to find the mate, that it might be at once communicated to the men. Although this well−disposed seaman a little overrated the motives of a portion of the crew at least, he was right enough as to the manner in which they would receive the new regulation. Rest and relaxation had become, in a measure, necessary to them; and leisure was also needed to enable the people to clean themselves; the business in which they had been engaged being one that accumulates oily substances, and requiring occasional purifications of the body in order to preserve the health. The scurvy, that great curse of long voyages, is as much owing to neglect of cleanliness as to diet.

No sooner was it known that this day was to be treated as the Sabbath, than soap, razors, scissors, and all the usual appliances of the sailor's toilet, were drawn out of bags and chests, and paraded about on the rocks. An hour passed in scrubbing, shaving, cutting hair, holding garments up to the light to look for holes and ascertain their condition, and rummaging among "properties," as the player would term the different wardrobes that were thus brought into view. The mates came out of the *mêlée* `shaven and shorn,' as well as neatly attired; and there was not a man on the island who did not look like a different being from what he had appeared an hour before, in consequence of this pause in the regular business of sealing, and the promised holiday. A strict order was given that no one should go among the seals, as it was feared that some indiscretion or other might have a tendency to create an alarm. In all other respects the island was placed at the disposal of the men, if anything could be made of such a lone spot, a speck on the surface of the antarctic seas, and nearly encircled by mountains of floating ice.

As for Roswell himself, after reading a chapter or two in Mary Pratt's bible, he determined to make another effort to ascend to the summit of the sterile rocks which capped the pile that rose vertically in the centre of the island. The day was nearly all before him; and, summoning Stimson as a companion, for he had taken a great fancy to this man, away he went, young, active, and full of buoyancy. Almost at the same instant, Hazard, the chief mate, pulled out of the cove in one of the whale−boats, manned by volunteers and provided with sails, with an intention to cross the Great Bay, and get a nearer view of the volcanic hill, out of which smoke was constantly pouring, and occasionally flames. The second mate and one or two of the hands remained near the house, to keep a look−out on the vessel and other property.

The season had now advanced to the first day of January, a month that in the southern hemisphere corresponds with our own July. As Roswell picked his way among the broken rocks that covered the ascent to what might be termed the table−land of the island, if indeed any portion of so ragged a bit of this earth could properly be so named, his thoughts recurred to this question of the season, and to the probability of his getting a cargo before it would be absolutely necessary to go to the northward. On the whole, he fancied his chances good; and such he found to be Stimson's opinion, when this experienced sealer was questioned on the subject.

"We've begun right in all respects but one, Captain Gar'ner," said Stephen, as he closed his remarks on the

subject; "and even in that matter in which we made a small mistake at the outset, we are improving, and I hope will come out right in the end. I said a *small* mistake, but in this I'm wrong, as it was a *great* mistake."

"And what was it, Stephen? Make no bones of telling me of any blunder I may have committed, according to your views of duty. You are so much older than myself, that I'll stand it."

"Why, sir, it's not in seamanship, or in sealing; if it was, I'd hold my tongue; but it's in not keeping the Lord's Day from the hour when we lifted our anchor in that bay that bears the name of your family, Captain Gar'ner; and which ought to be, and I make no doubt *is*, dear to you on that account, if for no other reason. I rather think, from what they tell me, that the old Lord Gar'ner of all had much preaching of the word, and much praying to the Lord in the old times, when he lived there."

"There never was any *Lord* Gardiner among us," returned Roswell, modestly, "though it was a fashion among the east−enders to give that title to the owner of the island. My ancestor who first got the place was Lyon Gardiner, an engineer in the service of the colony of Connecticut."

"Well, whether he was a lion or a lamb, I'll answer for it the Lord was not forgotten on that island, Captain Gar'ner, and he shouldn't be on this. No man ever lost anything in this world, or in that which is to come a'ter it, by remembering once in seven days to call on his Creator to help him on in his path. I've heard it said, sir, that you're a little partic'lar like in your idees of religion, and that you do not altogether−hold to the doctrines that are preached up and down the land."

Roswell felt his cheeks warm at this remark, and he thought of Mary, and of her meek reliance on that Saviour whom, in the pride of his youth, strength, and as he fancied of his reason also, he doubted about, as being the Son of God. The picture thus presented to his mind had its pleasant and its unpleasant features. Strange as it may seem, it is certain that the young man would have loved, would have respected Mary less than he now did, could he imagine that *she* entertained the same notions on this very subject as those he entertained himself! Few men relish infidelity in a woman, whose proper sphere would seem to be in believing and in worshipping, and not in cavilling, or in splitting straws on matters of faith. Perhaps it is that we are apt to associate laxity of morals with laxity of belief, and have a general distaste for releasing the other sex from any, even the smallest of the restraints that the dogmas of the church impose; but we hold it to be without dispute that, with very few exceptions, every man would prefer that the woman in whom he feels an interest should err on the side of bigotry rather than on that of what is called liberalism in points of religious belief. Thus it is with most of us, and thus was it with Roswell Gardiner. He could not wonder at Mary's rigid notions, considering her education; and, on the whole, he rather liked her the better for them, at the very moment that he felt they might endanger his own happiness. If women thoroughly understood how much of their real power and influence with men arises from their seeming dependence, there would be very little tolerance in their own circles for those among them who are for proclaiming their independence and their right to equality in all things.

While our young mariner and his companion were working their way up to the table−land, which lay fully three hundred feet above the level of the sea, there was little opportunity for further discourse, so rough was the way, and so difficult the ascent. At the summit, however, there was a short pause, ere the two undertook the mountain proper, and they came to a halt to take a look at the aspect of things around them. There was the boat, a mere white speck on the water, flying away with a fresh northerly breeze towards the volcano, while the smoke from the latter made a conspicuous and not very distant land−mark. Nearer at home, all appeared unusually plain for a region in which fogs were so apt to prevail. The cove lay almost beneath them, and the schooner, just then, struck the imagination of her commander as a fearfully small craft to come so far from home and to penetrate so deep among the mazes of the ice. It was that ice, itself, however, that attracted most of Roswell's attention. Far as the eye could reach, north, south, east and west, the ocean was brilliant and chill with the vast floating masses. The effect on the air was always perceptible in that region, `killing the summer,' as the sealers expressed it; but it seemed to be doubly so at the elevation to which the two adventurers had attained. Still, the panorama was magnificent. The only part of the ocean that did not seem to be alive with ice−bergs, if one may use such an expression, was the space within the group, and that was as clear as an estuary in a mild climate. It really appeared as if nature had tabooed that privileged spot, in order that the communication between the different islands should remain open. Of course, the presence of so many obstacles to the billows without, and indeed even to the rake of the winds, produced smooth water within, the slow, breath−like heaving and setting of the ceaseless ground−swell, being the only perceptible motion to the water inside.

"'T is a very remarkable view, Stephen," said Roswell Gardiner, "but there will be one much finer, if we can work our way up that cone of a mountain, and stand on its naked cap. I wish I had brought an old ensign and a small spar along, to set up the gridiron, in honour of the States. We're beginning to put out our feelers, old Stimson, and shall have 'em on far better bits of territory than this, before the earth has gone round in its track another hundred years."

"Well, to my notion, Captain Gar'ner," answered the seaman, following his officer towards the base of the cone, "Uncle Sam has got more land now than he knows what to do with. If a body could discover a bit of ocean, or a largish sort of a sea, there might be some use in 't. Whales are getting to be skeary, and are mostly driven off their old grounds; and as for the seals, you must bury yourself, craft and all, up to the truck in ice, to get a smile from one of their good−lookin' count'nances, as I always say."

"I'm afraid, Stephen, it is all over with the discovery of more seas. Even the moon, they now say, is altogether without water, having not so much as a lake or a large pond to take a duck in."

"Without water, sir!" exclaimed Stimson, quite aghast. "If 'tis so, sir, it *must* be right, since the same hand that made the moon made this 'arth, and all it contains. But what *can* they do for seafaring folks in the moon, if what you tell me, Captain Gar'ner, is the truth?"

"They must do without them. I fancy oil and skins are not very much in demand among the moonites, Stephen. What's that, off here to the eastward, eh? East−and−by−north−half−east, or so?"

"I see what you mean, sir. It does look wonderfully like a sail, and a sail pretty well surrounded by ice, too!"

There was no mistake in the matter. The white canvass of a vessel was plainly visible, over a vast breadth of field−ice, a little to the northward of the island that lay directly opposite the cove. Although the sails of this stranger were spread, it was plain enough he was closely beset, if not actually jammed. From the first instant he saw the strange craft, Roswell had not a doubt of her character. He felt convinced it was his late consort, the Sea Lion of the Vineyard, which had found her way to the group by means of some hints that had fallen into Daggett's hands, if not by a positive nautical instinct. So great had been his own success, however, and so certain did he now feel of filling up in due season, that he cared much less for this invasion on his privacy than he would have done a fortnight earlier. On the contrary, it might be a good thing to have a consort in the event of any accident occurring to his own vessel. From the moment, then, that Gardiner felt certain of the character of the strange sail, his policy was settled in his own mind. It was to receive his old acquaintance with good will, and to help fill him up too, as soon as he had secured his own cargo, in order that they might sail for home in company. By his aid and advice, the other schooner might save a week in time at that most important season of the year; and by the experience and exertions of his people, a whole month in filling up might readily be gained.

All thoughts of climbing the peak were at once abandoned; and, in fifteen minutes after the sail was seen, Roswell and Stephen both came panting down to the house; so much easier is it to descend in this world than to mount. A swivel was instantly loaded and fired as a signal; and, in half an hour, a boat was manned and ready. Roswell took command himself, leaving his second mate to look after the schooner. Stimson went with his captain, and in less than one hour after he had first seen the strange sail, our hero was actually pulling out of the cove, with a view to go to her assistance. Roswell Gardiner was as good−hearted a fellow as ever lived. He had a sufficient regard for his own interests, as well as for those of others entrusted to his care; but, these main points looked after, he would cheerfully have worked a month to relieve the Vineyard−men from the peril that so plainly beset them. Setting his sails the instant the boat was clear of the rocks, away he went, then, as fast as ash and canvass could carry him, which was at a rate but little short of eight knots in the hour.

As he was thus flying towards his object, our young mariner formed a theory in his own mind, touching the drift of the ice in the adjacent seas. It was simply this. He had sounded in entering the great bay, and had ascertained that comparatively shallow water existed between the south−eastern extremity of Sealer's Land and the nearest island opposite. It was deep enough to admit the largest vessel that ever floated, and a great deal more than this; but it was not deep enough to permit an ice−berg to pass. The tides, too, ran in races among the islands, which prevented the accumulation of ice at the southern entrance, while the outer currents seemed to set everything past the group to allow of the floating mountains to collect to the eastward, where they appeared to be thronged. It was on the western verge of this wilderness of ice−bergs and ice−fields that the strange sail had been seen working her way towards the group, which must be plainly in view from her decks, as her distance from the nearest of the islands certainly did not exceed two leagues.

It required more than two hours for the whale−boat of Roswell to cross the bay, and reach the margin of that vast field of ice, which was prevented from drifting into the open space only by encountering the stable rocks of the first of the group. Every eye was now turned in quest of an opening, by means of which it might be possible to get further to the eastward. One, at length, was discovered, and into it Gardiner dashed, ordering his boat's crew to stretch themselves out at their oars, though every man with him thought they were plunging into possible destruction. On the boat went, however, now sheering to starboard, now to port, to avoid projecting spurs of ice, until she had ploughed her way through a fearfully narrow, and a deviating passage, that sometimes barely permitted them to go through, until a spot was reached where the two fields which formed this strait actually came in close crushing contact with each other. Roswell took a look before and behind him, saw that his boat was safe owing to the formation of the two outlines of the respective fields, when he sprang upon the ice itself, bidding the boat−steerer to wait for him. A shout broke out of the lips of the young captain the instant he was erect on the ice. There lay the schooner, the Martha's Vineyard craft, within half a mile of him, in plain sight, and in as plain jeopardy. She was jammed, with every prospect, as Roswell thought, of being crushed, ere she could get free from the danger. END OF VOL. I.