THE LONELY ISLAND
by . Ballantyne

Chapter One.

The Refuge of the Mutineers.

The Mutiny.

On a profoundly calm and most beautiful evening towards the end of the last century, a ship lay becalmed on the fair bosom of the Pacific Ocean.

Although there was nothing piratical in the aspect of the ship—if we except her guns—a few of the men who formed her crew might have been easily mistaken for roving buccaneers. There was a certain swagger in the gait of some, and a sulky defiance on the brow of others, which told powerfully of discontent from some cause or other, and suggested the idea that the peaceful aspect of the sleeping sea was by no means reflected in the breasts of the men. They were all British seamen, but displayed at that time none of the well-known hearty off-hand rollicking characteristics of the Jack-tar.

It is natural for man to rejoice in sunshine. His sympathy with cats in this respect is profound and universal. Not less deep and wide is his discord with the moles and bats. Nevertheless, there was scarcely a man on board of that ship on the evening in question who vouchsafed even a passing glance at a sunset which was marked by unwonted splendour. The vessel slowly rose and sank on a scarce perceptible ocean-swell in the centre of a great circular field of liquid glass, on whose undulations the sun gleamed in dazzling flashes, and in whose depths were reflected the fantastic forms, snowy lights, and pearly shadows of cloudland. In ordinary circumstances such an evening might have raised the thoughts of ordinary men to their Creator, but the circumstances of the men on board of that vessel were not ordinary—very much the reverse.

“No, Bill McCoy,” muttered one of the sailors, who sat on the breach of a gun near the forecastle, “I’ve bin flogged twice for merely growlin’, which is an Englishman’s birthright, an’ I won’t stand it no longer. A pretty pass things has come to when a man mayn’t growl without tastin’ the cat; but if Captain Bligh won’t let me growl, I’ll treat him to a roar that’ll make him cock his ears an’ wink six times without speakin’.”

The sailor who said this, Matthew Quintal by name, was a short, thick-set young man of twenty-one or thereabouts, with a forbidding aspect and a savage expression of face, which was intensified at the moment by thoughts of recent wrongs. Bill McCoy, to whom he said it, was much the same in size and appearance, but a few years older, and with a cynical expression of countenance.

"Whether you growl or roar, Matt," said McCoy, with a low-toned laugh, "I'd advise you to do it in the minor key, else the Captain will give you another taste of the cat. He's awful savage just now. You should have heard him abusin' the officers this afternoon about his cocoa-nuts."

"So I should," returned Quintal. "As ill luck would have it, I was below at the time. They say he was pretty hard on Mr Christian."

"Hard on him! I should think he was," rejoined McCoy. "Why, if Mr Christian had been one of the worst men in the ship instead of the best officer, the Cap'n could not have abused him worse. I heard and saw 'im with my own ears and eyes. The cocoa-nuts was lyin', as it might be here, between the guns, and the Cap'n he came on deck an' said he missed some of his nuts. He went into a towerin' rage right off—in the old style—and sent for all the officers. When they came aft he says to them, says he, 'Who stole my cocoa-nuts?' Of course they all said they didn't know, and hadn't seen any of the people take 'em. 'Then,' says the Cap'n, fiercer than ever, 'you must have stole 'em yourselves, for they couldn't have been taken away without your knowledge.' So he questioned each officer separately. Mr Christian, when he came to him, answered, 'I don't know, sir, who took the nuts, but I hope you do not think me so mean as to be guilty of stealing yours.' Whereupon the Cap'n he flared up like gunpowder. 'Yes, you hungry hound, I do,' says he; 'you must have stolen them from me, or you would have been able to give a better account of them.'"

"That was pitchin' into 'im pretty stiff," said Quintal, with a grim smile. "What said Mr Christian?"

"He said nothin', but he looked thunder. I saw him git as red as a turkey cock, an' bite his lips till the blood came. It's my opinion, messmate," added McCoy, in a lower tone, "that if Cap'n Bligh don't change his tone there'll be—"

"Come, come, mate," interrupted a voice behind him; "if you talk mutiny like that you'll swing at the end o' the yard-arm some fine mornin'."

The sailor who joined the others and thus spoke was a short, sturdy specimen of his class, and much more like a hearty hare-brained tar than his two comrades. He was about twenty-two years of age, deeply pitted with small-pox, and with a jovial carelessness of manner that had won for him the sobriquet of Reckless Jack.

"I'm not the only one that talks mutiny in this ship," growled McCoy. "There's a lot of us whose backs have bin made to smart, and whose grog has been stopped for nothin' but spite, John Adams, and you know it."

"Yes, I do know it," returned Adams, sharply; "and I also know that there's justice to be had in England. We've got a good case against the Captain, so we'd better wait till we get home rather than take the law into our own hands."

"I don't agree with you, Jack," said Quintal, with much decision, "and I wonder to see you, of all men, show the white feather."

Adams turned away with a light laugh of contempt, and the other two joined a group of their mates, who were talking in low tones near the windlass.

Matthew Quintal was not the only man on board who did not agree with the more moderate counsels of Reckless Jack, *alias* John Adams, *alias* John Smith, for by each of those names was he known. On the quarter-deck as well as on the forecastle mutterings of deep indignation were heard.

The vessel was the celebrated *Bounty*, which had been fitted up for the express purpose of proceeding to the island of Otaheite, (now named Tahiti), in the Pacific for plants of the breadfruit tree, it being thought desirable to introduce that tree into the West India Islands. We may remark in passing, that the transplantation was afterwards accomplished, though it failed at this time.

The *Bounty* had been placed under the command of Lieutenant Bligh of the Royal Navy. Her burden was about 215 tons. She had been fitted with every appliance and convenience for her special mission, and had sailed from Spithead on the 23rd December 1787.

Lieutenant Bligh, although an able and energetic seaman, was of an angry tyrannical disposition. On the voyage out, and afterwards at Otaheite, he had behaved so shamefully, and with such unjustifiable severity, both to officers and men, that he was regarded by a large proportion of them with bitter hatred. It is painful to be obliged to write thus of one who rose to positions of honour in the service; but the evidence led in open court, coupled with Bligh's own writings, and testimony from other quarters, proves beyond a doubt that his conduct on board the *Bounty* was not only dishonourable but absolutely brutal.

When the islanders were asked at first the name of the island, they replied, "O-Tahiti," which means, "It is Tahiti", hence the earlier form of the name—*Otaheite*.

It was after the *Bounty* had taken in the breadfruit trees at Otaheite, and was advanced a short distance on the homeward voyage, that the events we are about to narrate occurred.

We have said that mutterings of deep discontent were heard on the quarter-deck. Fletcher Christian, acting lieutenant, or master's mate, leaned over the bulwarks on that lovely evening, and with compressed lips and frowning brows gazed down into the sea. The gorgeous clouds and their grand reflections had no beauty for him, but a shark, which swam lazily alongside, showing a fin now and then above water, seemed to afford him a species of savage satisfaction.

"Yes," he muttered, "if one of his legs were once within your ugly jaws, we'd have something like peace again after these months of torment."

Fletcher Christian, although what is called a high-spirited youth, was not quick to resent injury or insult. On the contrary, he had borne with much forbearance the oft-repeated and coarse insolence of his superior. His natural expression was bright and his temperament sunny. He possessed a powerful frame and commanding stature, was agile and athletic, and a favourite with officers and men. But Bligh's conduct had soured him. His countenance was now changed. The last insult about the cocoa-nuts, delivered openly, was more than he could bear. "When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war." In this case the tug was tremendous, the immediate results were disastrous, and the ultimate issues amazing, as will be seen in the sequel of our tale.

"To whom does your amiable wish refer?" asked a brother-officer named Stewart, who came up just then and leaned over the bulwarks beside him.

"Can you not guess?" said the other, sternly.

"Yes, I can guess," returned the midshipman, gazing contemplatively at the shark's fin. "But, I say, surely you don't really mean to carry out your mad intention of deserting."

"Yes, I do," said Christian with emphasis. "I've been to the fore-cockpit several times to-day, and seen the boatswain and carpenter, both of whom have agreed to help me. I've had a plank rigged up with staves into a sort of raft, on which I mean to take my chance. There's a bag all ready with some victuals in it, and another with a few nails, beads, etcetera, to propitiate the natives. Young Hayward is the only other officer besides yourself to whom I have revealed my intention. Like you, he attempts to dissuade me, but in vain. I shall go to-night."

"But where will you go to?" asked Stewart.

Christian pointed to Tofoa, one of the Friendly Islands, which was then in sight like a little black speck on the glowing sky where the sun had just disappeared.

"And how do you propose to escape *him*?" said the midshipman, pointing significantly to the shark, which at the moment gave a wriggle with its tail as if it understood the allusion and enjoyed it.

"I'll take my chance of that," said Christian, bitterly, and with a countenance so haggard yet so fierce that his young companion felt alarmed. "See here," he added, tearing open his vest and revealing within it a deep sea-lead suspended round his neck; "I had rather die than live in the torments of the last three weeks. If I fail to escape, you see, there will be no chance of taking me alive."

"*Better try to take the ship*!" whispered a voice behind him.

Christian started and grew paler, but did not turn his head to see who had spoken. The midshipman at his side had evidently not heard the whisper.

"I cannot help thinking you are wrong," said Stewart. "We have only to bear it a little longer, and then we shall have justice done to us in England."

Well would it have been for Fletcher Christian, and well for all on board the *Bounty*, if he had taken the advice of his young friend, but his spirit had been tried beyond its powers of endurance—at least so he thought—and his mind was made up. What moral suasion failed to effect, however, the weather accomplished. It prevented his first intention from being carried out.

While the shades of evening fell and deepened into a night of unusual magnificence, the profound calm continued, and the ship lay motionless on the sea. The people, too, kept moving quietly about the deck, either induced thereto by the sweet influences around them, or by some indefinable impression that a storm sometimes succeeds a calm as well in the moral as the material world. As the ship had no way through the water, it was impossible for the rash youth to carry out his plan either during the first or middle watches. He was therefore compelled to give it up, at least for that night, and about half-past three in the morning he lay down to rest a few minutes, as he was to be called by Stewart to relieve the watch at four o'clock.

He had barely fallen into a troubled slumber when he was awakened by Stewart, and rose at once to go on deck. He observed in passing that young Hayward, the mate of his watch, had lain down to take a nap on the arm-chest. Mr Hallet, the other midshipman of the watch, had also gone to sleep somewhere, for he

was not to be seen. Whether the seriously reprehensible conduct of these two officers roused his already excited spirit to an ungovernable pitch, or their absence afforded a favourable opportunity, we cannot tell, but certain it is that Fletcher Christian opened his ear at that time to the voice of the tempter.

"*Better try to take the ship*," seemed burning in words of fire into his brain.

Quick to act as well as to conceive, he looked lustily and earnestly at the men of his watch. The one who stood nearest him, looking vacantly out upon the sea, was Matthew Quintal. To him Christian revealed his hastily adopted plan of seizing the ship, and asked if he would join him. Quintal was what men call a deep villain. He was quite ripe for mutiny, but from some motive known only to himself he held back, and expressed doubt as to the possibility of carrying out the plan.

"I did not expect to find cowardice in *you*," said Christian, with a look of scornful indignation.

"It is not cowardice, sir," retorted Quintal. "I will join if others do. Try some one else. Try Martin there, for instance."

Isaac Martin was a raw-boned, sallow, six-foot man of about thirty, who had been undeservedly flogged by Bligh. Christian went to him at once, and put the question, "Will you join me in taking the ship?"

"The very thing, Mr Christian. I'm with you," answered Martin, promptly.

The eager readiness of this man at once decided Quintal. Christian then went to every man in his watch, all of whom had received more or less harsh treatment from the Captain, and most of whom were more than willing to join the conspirators. Those who hesitated, whatever might have been their motives, had not sufficient regard for their commander to warn him of his danger. Perhaps the very suddenness of the proposal, as well as fear of the mutineers, induced them to remain silent. In passing along the deck Christian encountered a man named William Brown. He was assistant-botanist, or gardener, to the expedition, and having been very intimate with Christian, at once agreed to join him. Although a slenderly made young man, Brown was full of vigour and resolution.

"We must look sharp," said Christian to him, in that low eager whisper in which the conversation among the mutineers had hitherto been carried on. "It will soon be daylight. You know the men as well as I do. Go below and gain over those whom you feel sure of influencing. Don't waste your time on the lukewarm or cowardly. Away with you. Here, Williams," he added, turning to another man who was already in the plot, "go below and send up the gunner's mate, I want him; then call John Adams,—I feel sure that Reckless Jack will join; but do it softly. No noise or excitement."

In a few seconds John Mills, the gunner's mate, a strongly-built middle-aged man, came on deck, and agreeing at once to join, was sent to fetch the keys of the arm-chest from the armourer, under pretence of getting out a musket to shoot a shark which was alongside.

Meanwhile John Williams went to the hammock of John Adams and roused him.

"I don't half like it," said Adams, when he was sufficiently awake to understand the message of his mate. "It's all very true what you say, Williams; the ship *has* been little better than a hell since we left Spithead, and Captain Bligh don't deserve much mercy, but mutiny is wrong any way you look at it, and I've got my doubts whether any circumstances can make it right."

The reasoning of Adams was good, but his doubts were cleared away, if not solved, by the abrupt entrance of Christian, who went to the arm-chest just opposite Adams's hammock and began to distribute arms to all the men who came for them. Seeing this, and fearing to be left on the weaker side, Adams rose, armed himself with a cutlass, and went on deck.

The morning of the 28th of April was now beginning to dawn. Before that the greater part of the ship's company had been gained over and armed; yet all this was done so quietly and with such firmness that the remainder of the crew were ignorant of what was going on. No doubt a few who might have given the alarm were afraid to do so. Among those who were asleep was one deserving of special notice, namely, Peter Heywood, a midshipman who was true as steel at heart, but whose extreme youth and inexperience, coupled with the surprise and alarm of being awakened to witness scenes of violence, produced a condition of inaction which resulted in his being left, and afterwards classed, with the mutineers.

Shortly after five o'clock the armed men streamed quietly up the fore-hatch and took possession of the deck. Sentinels were placed below at the doors of the officers' berths, and above at the hatchways. Then Fletcher Christian, John Adams, Matthew Quintal, William McCoy, Isaac Martin, and several others went aft, armed with muskets, bayonets, and cutlasses. Leaving Martin in charge of the quarter-deck, they descended to Captain Bligh's cabin.

The commander of the *Bounty*, all ignorant of the coming storm which his ungentlemanly and cruel conduct had raised, was sleeping calmly in his berth.

He was roughly awakened and bidden to rise.

"What is the reason of such violence?" he demanded, addressing Christian, as they half forced him out of bed.

"Silence, sir," said Christian, sternly; "you know the reason well enough. Tie his hands, lads."

Disregarding the order to be silent, Bligh shouted "murder!" at the top of his voice.

"Hold your tongue, sir, else you're a dead man," said Christian, seizing him by the tied hands with a powerful grasp, and holding a bayonet to his breast.

Of course no one responded to the Captain's cry, the hatchways, etcetera, being guarded. They gave him no time to dress, but hurried him on deck, where, amid much confusion and many abusive cries, preparations were being made for getting out a boat, for it was resolved to set Bligh and his friends adrift. At first there was some disputing among the mutineers as to which boat should be given to them. Eventually the launch was decided on.

"Hoist her out, bo's'n. Do it smartly and instantly, or look-out for yourself."

The order was given sternly, for the boatswain was known to be friendly to Bligh. He obeyed at once, with the assistance of willing men who were only too glad to get rid of their tyrannical commander.

"Now, Mr Hayward and Mr Hallet, get into the boat," said Christian, who seemed to be torn with conflicting emotions. His tone and look were sufficient for those young midshipmen. They obeyed promptly.

Mr Samuel the clerk and several more of the crew were then ordered into the boat. At this point Captain Bligh attempted to interfere. He demanded the intentions of the mutineers, but was told to hold his tongue, with threats of instant death if he did not obey. Particular persons were then called on to go into the boat, and some of these were allowed to collect twine, canvas, lines, sails, cordage, and other things to take with them. They were also allowed an eight-and-twenty gallon cask of water, fifty pounds of bread, a small quantity of rum and wine, a quadrant, and a compass.

When all the men obnoxious to the mutineers were in the boat, Captain Bligh was ordered into it. Isaac Martin had been placed as a guard over the Captain, and appeared to favour him, as he enabled him to moisten his parched lips with a shaddock. For this he was removed, and Adams took his place. Bligh looked round, but no friendly eye met his. He had forfeited the regard of all on board, though there were undoubtedly men there whose detestation of mutiny and whose sense of honour would have inclined them to aid him if they had not been overawed by the numbers and resolution of the mutineers. The master, indeed, had already made an attempt to rally some of the men round him, but had failed, and been sent to his cabin. He, with the others, was now in the boat. Poor young Peter Heywood the middy looked on bewildered as if in a dream. He could not be said in any sense, either by look or act, to have taken part with the mutineers.

At last he went below for some things, intending to go in the boat, but was ordered to remain below. So also, it is thought, was Edward Young, another midshipman, who did not make his appearance on deck at all during the progress of the mutiny. It was afterwards said that the leading seamen among the mutineers had purposely ordered these officers below, and detained them with a view to their working the ship in the event of anything happening to Christian.

Bligh now made a last appeal.

“I’ll give you my honour, Mr Christian,” he said, “never to think of what has passed this day if you will desist. To cast us adrift here in an open boat is to consign us to destruction. Think of my wife and family!”

“No, Captain Bligh,” replied Christian, sternly; “if you had any honour things had not come to this; and if you had any regard for your wife and family, you should have thought of them before and not behaved so much like a villain. It is too late. You have treated me like a dog all the voyage. Come, sir, your officers and men are now in the boat, and you must go with them. If you attempt resistance you shall be put to death.”

Seeing that further appeal would be useless, Bligh allowed himself to be forced over the side. When in the boat his hands were untied.

“You will at least allow us arms, to defend ourselves from the savages,” he said. Fire-arms were refused, but four cutlasses were ultimately allowed him. At this point Isaac Martin quietly descended into the boat, but Quintal, pointing a musket at him, threatened to shoot him if he did not return to the ship. He obeyed the order with reluctance, and soon after the boat was cast adrift.

The crew of the *Bounty* at the time consisted of forty-four souls, all told. Eighteen of these went adrift with the Captain. The remaining twenty-five steered back to the sunny isles of the Pacific.

Chapter Two.

Records the Duties and Troubles of the Mutineers.

It is not our purpose to follow the fortunes of Captain Bligh. The mutineers in the *Bounty* claim our undivided attention.

As regards Bligh, it is sufficient to say that he performed one of the most remarkable boat-voyages on record. In an overloaded and open boat, on the shortest allowance of provision compatible with existence, through calm and tempest, heat and cold, exposed to the attacks of cannibals and to the reproaches of worn-out and mutinous men, he traversed 3618 miles of ocean in forty-one days, and brought himself and his followers to land, with the exception of one man who was killed by the natives. In this achievement he displayed those qualities of indomitable resolution and unflagging courage which ultimately raised him to high rank in the navy. But we leave him now to trace those incidents which result from the display of his other qualities—ungovernable passion, overbearing impetuosity, and incomprehensible meanness.

The first act of Fletcher Christian, after taking command of the ship, was to serve out a glass of grog all round. He then called a council of war, in which the mutineers discussed the question what they should do.

“You see, lads,” said Christian, “it is absolutely certain that we shan’t be left among these islands in peace. Whether Bligh manages to get home or not, the British Government is sure to send out to see what has become of us. My notion is that we should bear away to the south’ard, far out of the usual track of ships, find out some uninhabited and suitable island, and establish ourselves thereon?”

“What! without wives, or sisters, or mothers, or grandmothers, to say nothin’ o’ mothers-in-law, to cook our victuals an’ look after our shirt-buttons?” said Isaac Martin, who, having been detained against his will, had become lugubriously, or recklessly, facetious, and was stimulated to a sort of fierce hilarity by his glass of rum.

“You’re right, Martin,” said Brown, the assistant botanist, “we couldn’t get along without wives, so I vote that we go back to Otaheite, get married, every man of us, an’ ho! for the South Pole. The British cruisers would never find us there.”

There was a general laugh at this sally, but gravity returned almost instantly to every face, for they were in no humour just then for jesting. It is probable that each man began to realise the dreadful nature of his position as an outlaw whose life was forfeited to his country, and who could never more hope to tread the shores of Old England, or look upon the faces of kindred or friends. In such circumstances men sometimes try to hide their true feelings under a veil of recklessness or forced mirth, but seldom succeed in the attempt.

“No man in his senses would go back to Otaheite—at least not to stay there,” said John Adams, gravely; “it’s the first place they will send to look for us.”

“What’s the odds?” growled one of the seamen. “They won’t look there for us for a long time to come, unless Cap’n Bligh borrows a pair of wings from an albatross, an’ goes home as the crow flies.”

At this point John Mills, the gunner's mate, a man of about forty, cleared his throat and gave it as his opinion that they should not go back to Otaheite, but should leave the matter of their future destination in the hands of Mr Christian, who was well able to guide them.

This proposal was heartily backed by Edward Young, midshipman, a stout young fellow of twenty-two, who was fond of Christian; but there were one or two dissentient voices, among which were the little middy Peter Heywood, his brother-officer George Stewart, and James Morrison the boatswain's mate. These wished to return to Otaheite, but the counsel of the majority prevailed, and Christian ultimately steered for the island of Toubouai, which lay some five hundred miles to the south of Otaheite. There he expected to be safe from pursuit, and there it was resolved that the mutineers should take up their abode if the natives proved friendly.

That night, while the *Bounty* was skimming gently over the starlit sea before a light breeze, the three officers, Heywood, Stewart, and Young, leaned over the weather side of the quarter-deck, and held a whispered conversation.

"Why did you vote for going back to Otaheite, Heywood?" asked Young.

"Because it is to Otaheite that they will send to look after us, and I should like to be there to give myself up, the instant a man-of-war arrives, and declare my innocence of the crime of mutiny."

"You are right, Heywood," said Stewart; "I, too, would like to give myself up the moment I get the chance. Captain Bligh knows that you and I had no hand in the mutiny, and if he reaches England will clear us of so foul a stain. It's a pity that those who voted for Otaheite were not in the majority."

"That's all very well for you, who were seen to go below to fetch your clothes, and were detained against your will," said Young, "but it was not so with me. I was forcibly detained below. They would not allow me to go on deck at all until the launch had left, so that it would go hard with me before a court-martial. But the die is now cast, and there's no help for it. Although I took no part in the mutiny, I won't risk falling into the hands of justice, with such an unprincipled scoundrel as Bligh to witness against me. My future fortunes now lie with Fletcher Christian. I cannot avoid my fate."

Young spoke sadly, yet with some bitterness of tone, like one who has made up his mind to face and endure the worst.

On reaching the remote island of Toubouai the mutineers were much impressed with its beauty. It seemed exceedingly fertile, was wooded to the water's edge, and surrounded by a coral reef, with one opening through which a ship might enter. Altogether it seemed a most suitable refuge, but here they met with an insurmountable difficulty. On drawing near to the shore they saw hundreds of natives, who, armed with clubs and spears, lined the beach, blew their shell-horns, and resolutely opposed the landing of the strangers.

As all efforts to conciliate them were fruitless, resort was had to cannon and musketry. Of course the terrible thunder of the white man's artillery had its usual effect on the savages. They fled inland, and the mutineers gained a footing on the island.

But the natives continued their opposition so vigorously, that this refuge proved to be the reverse of a place of rest.

Christian therefore changed his plan, and, re-embarking in the *Bounty*, set sail for Otaheite.

On the way thither the mutineers disagreed among themselves. Some of those who had been forcibly detained even began to plot the retaking of the ship, but their intentions were discovered and prevented.

On the 6th of June they reached their former anchorage in Otaheite, where the natives received them with much joy and some surprise, but a story was trumped up to account for this sudden re-appearance of the mutineers.

Christian, however, had not yet given up his intention of settling on the island of Toubouai. He foresaw the doom that awaited him if he should remain at Otaheite, and resolved to return to the former island with a quantity of livestock. He began to barter with the friendly Otaheitans, and soon had as many hogs, goats, fowls, cats, and dogs as he required, besides a bull and a cow which had been left there by Captain Cook. With these and several natives he sailed again for Toubouai. Arriving there in nine days, he found that a change had come over the spirit of the natives. They were decidedly and unaccountably amiable. They not only permitted the white men to land, but assisted them in warping the ship into a place of shelter, as well as in landing provisions and stores.

Fletcher Christian, whatever his faults may have been, seems to have had peaceful tendencies. He had not only secured the friendship of the Otaheitans by his just and considerate treatment of them while engaged in barter, but he now managed to conciliate some of the chiefs of Toubouai. As a precaution, however, he set about building an entrenched fortress, in the labours connected with which he took his full share of work with the men. While the building was in progress the natives, despite the friendly chiefs, threw off the mask of good-will, which had doubtless been put on for the purpose of getting the white men into their power. Strong in overwhelming numbers, they made frequent attacks on the mutineers, which these latter, being strong in arms, successfully repelled. It soon became evident that warfare, not peace, was to be the lot of the residents on Toubouai, and, finally, it was agreed that the *Bounty* should be got ready for sea, and the whole party should return to Otaheite.

The resolution was soon carried into effect, and the mutineers ere long found themselves once again drawing near to the island.

As they approached it under full sail, for the wind was light, the men stood looking at it, commenting on its beauty and the amiableness of its people, but Fletcher Christian stood apart by himself, with his back to the shore, gazing in the opposite direction.

Edward Young went up to him.

“If this breeze holds, sir, we shall soon be at anchor in our old quarters.”

The midshipman spoke in the respectful tone of one addressing his superior officer. Indeed, although Christian had, by his rash and desperate act of mutiny, forfeited his position, and lowered himself to a level with the worst of his associates, he never lost their respect. It is recorded that they styled him *Mister* Christian to the end.

“At anchor!” said Christian, in a tone of deepest despondency. “Ah, Edward Young, there is no anchorage for us now in this world! We may anchor in Matavai Bay to-night, but it will only be to up anchor and off again in a few days.”

"Come, come, sir," said Young, heartily, "don't give way to despondency. You know we were driven to act as we did, and it can't be helped now."

"*We* were driven! My poor fellow," returned Christian, laying a hand on the midshipman's shoulder, "*you* had no part in this miserable business. It is I who have drawn you all into it, but—well, well, as you say, it can't be helped now. We must make the best of it,—God help us!"

He spoke in a low, soft tone of profound sadness, and continued his wistful gaze over the stern of the *Bounty*. Presently he looked quickly round, and, taking Young's arm, began to pace the deck while he spoke to him.

"As you say, Edward, we shall anchor once more in Matavai Bay, but I am firmly resolved not to remain there."

"I'm sorry to hear it, sir," said Young, "for most of the men are as firmly resolved to stay, and you know several of them are resolute, not to say desperate, characters."

"I am quite aware of that, but I shall make a proposal to them, which I think they will accept. I will first of all propose to leave Otaheite for some safer place of refuge, and when they object to that, I will propose to divide the whole of the ship's stores and property among us all, landing that portion which belongs to those who elect to remain on the island, and sailing away with the rest, and with those who choose to follow my fortunes, to seek a more distant and a safer home."

"That may perhaps suit them," said Young.

"Suit *them*," rejoined Christian, with a quick glance; "then *you* don't count yourself one of them?"

"No," returned the midshipman with a frank look, "I will follow you now, sir, to the end. How far I am guilty is a question that does not concern me at present. If the British Government gets hold of me, my fate is sealed. I am in the same boat with yourself, Mr Christian, and I mean to stick by it."

There was a strange spasm on Christian's countenance, as if of conflicting emotions, while he grasped the youth's hand and squeezed it.

"Thank you, Edward, thank you. Go now and see the anchor cleared to let go."

He descended quickly to the cabin, while the unfortunate midshipman went forward to give the order.

When the proposal just referred to was made the following day, after landing at Otaheite, it was at once agreed to. Peter Heywood, Stewart, Morrison, and others who had taken no active part in the mutiny, were glad to have the prospect of being enabled, sooner or later, to make a voluntary surrender of themselves, while the thoughtless and reckless among the men were well pleased to have done with uncertain wanderings, and to be allowed to settle among their amiable native friends.

Preparations for instant departure were made by Christian and those who chose to follow his lead. The contents of the *Bounty* were landed and fairly divided; then the vessel was got ready for her final voyage. Those who resolved to sail in her were as follows:—

Fletcher Christian, formerly acting lieutenant—age 24.

Edward Young, midshipman—age 22.

John Adams, seaman—age 22.

William McCoy, seaman—age 25.

Matthew Quintal, seaman—age 21.

John Williams, seaman—age 25.

Isaac Martin, seaman—age 30.

John Mills, gunner's mate—age 40.

William Brown, botanist's assistant—age 27.

All these had married native women of Otaheite, who agreed to forsake home and kindred and follow the fortunes of their white husbands. There were also six native men who consented to accompany them. Their names were Talaloo, Ohoo, Timoa, Nehow, Tetaheite, and Menalee. Three of these had wives, and one of the wives had a baby girl by a former husband. The European sailors named the infant Sally. She was a round light-brown embodiment of gleeful impudence, and had barely reached the staggering age of infancy when taken on board the *Bounty* to begin her strange career.

Thus the party consisted of twenty-eight souls—namely, nine mutineers, six native men, twelve native women, and the light-brown baby.

It was a pleasant bright morning in September 1790 when Fletcher Christian and his followers bade farewell to Otaheite. For some time the breeze was light, and the *Bounty* hovered round the Island as if loath to leave it. In the dusk of evening a boat put off from her, pulled to the shore, and Christian landed, alone, near the house of a chief who had become the special friend of Peter Heywood and Stewart. With the two midshipmen he spent some time in earnest conversation.

"I could not leave you," he said in conclusion, "without relieving my mind of all that I have just said about the mutiny, because you are sure to be sent for and taken to England as soon as the intelligence of this sad affair reaches. I advise you to go off at once to the first ship that may appear, and give yourselves up to the commander."

"Such is our intention," said Heywood.

"Right," rejoined Christian; "you are both innocent. No harm can come to you, for you took no part in the mutiny. For me, my fate is fixed. I go to search for some remote and uninhabited island, where I hope to spend the remainder of my days without seeing the face of any Europeans except those who accompany me. It is a dreary thought, lads, to lose country and kindred and friends for *ever* by the act of one dark hour. Now, remember, Heywood, what I have told you to tell my friends. God knows I do not plead guiltless; I am alone responsible for the mutiny, and I exonerate all, even my adherents, from so much as suggesting it to me; nevertheless, there are some who love me in England, to whom I would beg of you to

relate the circumstances that I have told you. These may extenuate though they cannot justify the crime I have committed. I assure you, most solemnly, that almost up to the last I had no intention of doing more than making my own escape from the ship which the injustice and brutality of Bligh had made a place of torment to me. When you called me, Stewart, to relieve the watch, my brain seemed on fire, and it was when I found the two officers both asleep, who should have been on duty, that I suddenly made up my mind to take the ship. Now," concluded Christian, grasping the hands of the youths, "I must say farewell. I have done you grievous wrong. God forgive me, and bless you. Good-bye, Peter; good-bye, Stewart, good-bye."

He turned abruptly, stepped into his boat, and was rowed out to sea.

The young midshipmen, with moistened eyes, stood silently watching the boat until it reached the ship. Then they saw the *Bounty* steering away to the northward. Before daylight was quite gone she had disappeared on the distant horizon.

Thus did Fletcher Christian and his comrades pass from the sight and ken of man, and they were not heard of after that for more than twenty years!

But you and I, reader, have a special privilege to follow up these mutineers. Before doing so, however, let us note briefly what became of their comrades left on Otaheite.

These, to the number of sixteen, soon distributed themselves among the houses of their various friends, and proceeded to make themselves quite at home. Some of them, however, were not disposed to take up a permanent abode there. Among these was the boatswain's mate, James Morrison, a man of superior mental power and energy, who kept an interesting and graphic journal of events. (See note.) He, with the armourer, cooper, carpenter's mate, and others, set to work to construct a small vessel, in which they meant to sail to Batavia, whence they hoped to procure a passage to England. The natives opposed this at first, but on being told that the vessel was only meant for pleasure trips round the island, they ceased their opposition, and watched with great wonder at the process of ship-building, which was carried on industriously from day to day.

During the progress of the work there was witnessed an interesting ceremony, which, according to custom, was annually performed by the chief of the district and a vast concourse of natives. It shows how deeply the celebrated Captain Cook had gained the reverence and love of the people of Otaheite. A picture of the circumnavigator, which had been presented to the islanders by the captain of a merchant vessel, was brought out with great ceremony and held up before the people, who, including their queen, Eddea, paid homage to it. A ceremonial dance was also performed in its honour, and a long oration was pronounced by a leading chief, after which the portrait was returned to the care of an old man, who was its appointed custodian.

Long and earnestly did the white men labour at their little ship, and with equal, if not superior, earnestness did the natives flock from all parts of the island to see the wonderful work advance, bringing supplies of provisions to the whites as a sort of payment for admission to the show. The vessel was completed and launched after months of toil, but its sails of matting were found to be so untrustworthy that the plan of proceeding in it to Batavia had to be given up.

Meanwhile, two of the worst of the mutineers, named Thompson and Churchill, came to a tragical end. The former insulted a member of the family with whom he resided, and was knocked down. He left them

in high dudgeon, and went to that part of the island where the vessel above referred to was being built. One day a canoe from a distant district touched there, and the owner landed with his wife and family, carrying his youngest child in his arms. Thompson angrily ordered him to go away, but the man did not obey the order, whereupon Thompson seized his musket and shot father and child with the same bullet. For this murder he was shunned with abhorrence by his comrades, and obliged to go off to another part of the island, accompanied by Churchill. These two took up their abode with a chief who was a *tayo*, or sworn friend, of the latter. This chief died shortly afterwards, leaving no children behind him; and Churchill, being his *tayo*, succeeded to his possessions and dignity, according to the custom of the country. He did not, however, enjoy his new position long, for Thompson, from jealousy or some other cause, shot him. The natives were so incensed at this that they arose *en masse* and stoned Thompson to death.

While these events were occurring, a messenger of retribution was speeding over the sea to Otaheite. On the morning of 23rd March 1791, exactly sixteen months after the landing of the mutineers, H.M.S. *Pandora*, Captain Edwards, sailed into Matavai Bay. Before she had anchored, Coleman the armourer swam off to her, and Peter Heywood and Stewart immediately followed and surrendered themselves. These, and all the mutineers, were immediately put in irons, and thrown into a specially prepared prison on the quarter-deck, named the "Pandora's Box," in which they were conveyed to England.

We have not space to recount the stirring incidents of this remarkable and disastrous voyage, and the subsequent trial of the mutineers. Let it suffice to say, that the *Pandora*, after spending three months in a fruitless search for the *Bounty*, was wrecked on the homeward voyage, and a large number of the crew and some of the prisoners were drowned, among whom was poor Stewart the midshipman. The remainder of the crew were saved in the ship's boats, after performing a voyage which, as to its length and the sufferings endured, rivals that previously made by Bligh. Thereafter, on reaching England, the mutineers were tried by court-martial; some were honourably acquitted, others were condemned to death but afterwards pardoned, and ultimately only three were executed.

Among those who were condemned, but afterwards pardoned as being unquestionably innocent, was Peter Heywood, whose admirable defence and correspondence with his family, especially that between himself and his charming sister Nessy, form a most interesting feature in the records of the trial; but all this must be passed over in silence, while we resume the thread of our story.

Note. Part of this journal is quoted in an excellent account of the *Mutineers of the Bounty*, by Lady Belcher.

Chapter Three.

The Lonely Island Sighted.

It is pleasant to turn for a time from the dark doings of evil men to the contemplation of innocent infancy.

We return to the *Bounty*, and solicit the reader's attention to a plump brown ball which rolls about that vessel's deck, exhibiting a marked tendency to gravitate towards the lee scuppers. This brown ball is Sally, the Otaheitan infant.

Although brown, Sally's face is extremely pretty, by reason of the regularity of her little features, the beauty of her little white teeth, and the brilliancy of her large black eyes, to say nothing of her luxuriant hair and the gleeful insolence of her sweet expression.

We cannot say how many, or rather how few, months old the child is, but, as we have already remarked, she is a staggerer. That is to say, she has begun to assert the independence of her little brown legs, and progresses, even when on shore, with all the uncertainty of a drunken woman. Of course, the ship's motion does not tend to remedy this defect. Sally's chief delight is wallowing. No matter what part of the ship's deck she may select for her operations—whether the scuppers, the quarter-deck, or the forecastle—she lays her down straightway for a luxurious wallow. If the spot be dirty, she wallows it clean; if it be clean, she wallows it dirty. This might seem an awkward habit to an English mother; but it is a matter of supreme indifference to Sally's mother, who sits on a gun-carriage plaiting a mat of cocoa-nut fibre, for Sally, being naked, requires little washing. A shower of rain or a dash of spray suffices to cleanse her when at sea. On shore she lives, if we may say so, more in the water than on the land.

The day is fine, and the breeze so light that it scarce ruffles the face of the great ocean, though it manages to fill the topsails of the *Bounty*, causing her to glide quietly on. Some of the mutineers are seated on the deck or bulwarks, patching a canvas jacket or plaiting a grass hat. Others are smoking contemplatively. John Adams is winding up the log-line with McCoy. Edward Young stands gazing through a telescope at something which he fancies is visible on the horizon, and Fletcher Christian is down in the cabin poring over Carteret's account of his voyage in the Pacific.

There were goats on board. One of these, having become a pet with the crew, was allowed to walk at liberty, and became a grand playmate for Sally. Besides the goats, Christian had taken care to procure a number of hogs and poultry from Otaheite; also a supply of young breadfruit-trees and other vegetable products of the island, wherewith to enrich his new home when he should find it. All the animals were confined in cribs and pens with the exception of Sally's playmate.

"Take care!" exclaimed John Adams as he left the quarter-deck with his hands in his pockets; "your mate'll butt you overboard, Sal, if you don't look-out."

There was, indeed, some fear of such a catastrophe, for the precocious infant had a tendency to scramble on any object which enabled her to look over the low bulwarks, and the goat had a propensity to advance on its hind legs with a playful toss of its head and take its playmate by surprise, in truth, what between the fore-hatch, the companion-hatch, and the low bulwarks, it may be said that Sally led a life of constant and imminent danger. She was frequently plucked by the men out of the very jaws of death, and seemed to enjoy the fun.

While attempting to avoid one of the goat's playful assaults, Sally stumbled up against Matthew Quintal, deranged the work on which he was engaged, and caused him to prick his hand with a sail-needle, at which William McCoy, who was beside him, laughed.

"Get out o' that, you little nigger!" exclaimed Quintal, angrily, giving the child a push with his foot which sent her rolling to the side of the ship, where her head came in contact with an iron bolt. Sally opened her mouth, shut her eyes, and howled.

Quintal had probably not intended to hurt the child, but he expressed no regret. On the contrary, seeing that she was not much injured, he laughed in concert with McCoy.

These two, Quintal and McCoy, were emphatically the bad men of the party. They did not sympathise much, if at all, with human suffering—certainly not with those whom they styled "niggers;" but there was one witness of the act whose heart was as tender towards the natives as Quintal's was hard.

"If you ever dare to touch her so again," said Young, striding up to Quintal, "I'll kick you into the pig-sty."

The midshipman seemed to be the last man on board whose natural disposition would lead him to utter such a threat, and Quintal was quite taken aback; but as Young was a powerful fellow, perfectly capable of carrying his threat into execution, and seemed, moreover, thoroughly roused, the former thought it best to hold his tongue, even though lugubrious Isaac Martin chuckled audibly, and Ohoo, one of the natives, who stood near, displayed his fine teeth from ear to ear.

Lifting up Sally with much tenderness, Young carried her to her mother, who, after a not very careful examination of the bruised head, set her down on the deck, where she immediately began to wallow as before. Rising on her brown little feet, she staggered forward a few paces, and then seated herself without bending her knees. From this position she rolled towards the starboard side of the ship and squeezed herself between a gun-carriage and the bulwarks, until she got into the porthole. Thrusting her head over the edge of this, she gazed at the ripples that rolled pleasantly from the side. This was paradise! The sun glittered on these ripples, and Sally's eyes glittered in sympathy. A very gentle lurch of the ship soon after sent Sally head foremost into the midst of the ripples.

This event was nothing new to Sally. In her Otaheitan home her mother had been wont to take her out for a swim as British mothers take their offspring for a walk. Frequently had that mother pitched Sally off her shoulders and left her to wabble in the water, as eagles are said to toss their eaglets into the air, and leave them to flutter until failing strength renders aid advisable.

No doubt when Sally, falling from such a height, and turning so as to come flat on her back, experienced a tingling slap upon her skin, she felt disposed to shed a salt tear or two into the mighty ocean; but when the smart passed away, she took to wallowing in the water, by way of making the most of her opportunities. Both Christian and Young heard the plunge. The former leaped up the companion ladder, the latter ran to the stern of the ship, but before either could gain the side one of the Otaheitan men, who had witnessed the accident, plunged into the sea and was soon close to Sally. The playful creature, after giving him a kick in the face, consented to be placed on his shoulders.

The ship of course was brought up to the wind and her topsails backed as quickly as possible, but the swimmers were left a considerable distance astern before this was accomplished.

"No need to lower a boat," remarked Christian, as he drew out the tubes of his telescope; "that fellow swims like a fish."

"So do all his countrymen," said Young.

"And the women and children too," added John Adams, who was at the helm.

"She's tugging at the man's woolly head as if it were a door mat," said Christian, laughing; "and I do believe—yes—the little thing is now reaching round—and pulling his nose. Look at them, Young."

Handing the glass to the midshipman, he turned to inquire for the child's mother, and to his astonishment found that brown lady sitting on the deck busy with her mat-making, as unconcerned as if nothing unusual were going on.

The fact was, that Sally's mother thought no more of Sally falling into the sea than a white mother might of her child falling on its nose—not so much, perhaps. She knew that the ship would wait to pick her up. She also knew that Sally was an expert swimmer for her age, and that the man who had gone to her rescue was thoroughly able for the duty, having, like all the South Sea Islanders, been accustomed from infancy to spend hours at a time in the water.

In a few minutes he came alongside, with Sally sitting astride his neck, holding on to both sides of his head, and lifting her large eyes with a gaze of ecstasy to those who looked over the vessel's side. She evidently regarded the adventure as one of the most charming that had up to that time gladdened her brief career. Not only so, but, no sooner had she been hauled on board with her deliverer, than she made straight for the porthole from which she had fallen, and attempted to repeat the manoeuvre, amid shouts of laughter from all who saw her. After that the various portholes had to be closed up, and the precocious baby to be more carefully watched.

"I have come to the conclusion," said Christian to Young, as they paced the deck by moonlight that same night, "that it is better to settle on Pitcairn's Island than on any of the Marquesas group. It is farther out of the track of ships than any known island of the Pacific, and if Carteret's account of it be correct, its precipitous sides will induce passers-by to continue their voyage without stopping."

"If we find it, and it should turn out to be suitable, what then!" asked Young.

"We shall land, form a settlement, and live and die there," answered Christian.

"A sad end to all our bright hopes and ambitions," said Young, as if speaking to himself, while he gazed far away on the rippling pathway made by the sun upon the sea.

Christian made no rejoinder. The subject was not a pleasant one to contemplate. He thought it best to confront the inevitable in silence.

Captain Carteret, the navigator who discovered the island and named it Pitcairn, after the young officer of his ship who was the first to see and report it, had placed it on his chart no less than three degrees out of its true longitude. Hence Christian cruised about unsuccessfully in search of it for several weeks. At last, when he was on the point of giving up the search in despair, a solitary rock was descried in the far distance rising out of the ocean.

"There it is at last!" said Christian, with a sigh that seemed to indicate the removal of a great weight from his spirit.

Immediately every man in the ship hurried to the bow of the vessel, and gazed with strangely mingled feelings on what was to be his future home. Even the natives, men and women, were roused to a feeling of interest by the evident excitement of the Europeans, and hastened to parts of the ship whence they could obtain a clear view. By degrees tongues began to loosen.

“It’s like a fortress, with its high perpendicular cliffs,” remarked John Adams.

“All the better for us,” said Quintal; “we’ll need some place that’s difficult to get at and easy to defend, if one o’ the King’s ships should find us out.”

“So we will,” laughed McCoy in gruff tones, “and it’s my notion that there’s a natural barrier round that island which will go further to defend us agin the King’s ships than anything that we could do. Isn’t that white line at the foot o’ the cliffs like a heavy surf, boys?”

“It looks like it,” answered John Mills, the gunner’s mate; “an’ wherever you find cliffs rising like high walls out o’ the sea, you may be pretty sure the water’s too deep for good anchorage.”

“That’s in our favour too,” returned Quintal; “nothin’ like a heavy surf and bad anchorage to indooce ships to give us a wide berth.”

“I hope,” said William Brown the botanist, “that there’s some vegetation on it. I don’t see much as yet.”

“Ain’t it a strange thing,” remarked long-legged Isaac Martin, in a more than usually sepulchral tone, “that land-lubbers invariably shows a fund of ignorance when at sea, even in regard to things they might be supposed to know somethin’ about?”

“How have I shown ignorance just now?” asked Brown, with a smile, for he was a good-humoured man, and could stand a great deal of chaffing.

“Why, how can you, bein’ a gardener,” returned Martin, “expect to see wegitation on the face of a perpindikler cliff?”

“You’re right, Martin; but then, you know, there is generally an interior as well as a face to a cliffy island, and one might expect to find vegetation there, don’t you see.”

“That’s true—to *find* it,” retorted Martin, “but not to *see* it through tons of solid rock, and from five or six miles out at sea.”

“But what if there’s niggers on it?” suggested Adams, who joined the party at this point.

“Fight ’em, of coorse,” said John Williams.

“An’ drive ’em into the sea,” added Quintal.

“Ay, the place ain’t big enough for more than one lot,” said McCoy. “It don’t seem more than four miles long, or thereabouts.”

An order to shorten sail stopped the conversation at this point.

"It is too late to attempt a landing to-night," said Christian to Young. "We'll dodge off and on till morning."

The *Bounty* was accordingly put about, and her crew spent the remainder of the night in chatting or dreaming about their future home.

Chapter Four.

The Island Explored.

A bright and pleasant morning forms a powerful antidote to the evils of a cheerless night. Few of the mutineers slept soundly on the night of their arrival off Pitcairn, and their dreams of that island were more or less unpleasantly mingled with manacles and barred windows, and men dangling from yard-arms. The blessed sunshine dissipated all this, rousing, in the hearts of some, feelings of hope and forgiveness, in the breasts of others, only those sensations of animal enjoyment which man shares in common with the brutes.

"Lower away the boat there," said Fletcher Christian, coming on deck with a more cheerful air than he had worn since the day of the mutiny; "we shall row round the island and search for a landing-place. You will take charge, Mr Young, during my absence. Put muskets and ammunition into the boat, John Adams; the place may be inhabited—there's no saying—and South Sea savages are not a hospitable race as a rule. Now then, look sharp, lads."

In a few minutes, Adams, Martin, McCoy, Brown, and Quintal were in the boat, with two of the Otaheitan men.

"Won't you take cutlasses?" asked Young, looking over the side.

"Well, yes, hand down half-a-dozen; and don't go far from this end of the island, Mr Young. Just keep dodging off and on."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the middy, touching his cap from the mere force of habit.

"Shove off," said Christian, seating himself at the helm.

In a few minutes the boat was skimming over the calm water towards the shore, while the *Bounty*, wearing round, went slowly out to sea.

As the boat neared the shore it soon became evident that it would be extremely difficult to effect a landing. Nothing could be seen but high precipitous cliffs without any sign of a harbour or creek sufficiently large or safe to afford anchorage for the ship. Worst of all, the only spot that seemed to offer any prospect of a landing-place, even for a boat, was guarded by tremendous breakers that seemed to bid defiance to man's feeble powers. These great waves, or rollers, were not the result of storm or wind, but of the mere ocean-swell of the great Pacific, which undulates over her broad breast even when becalmed. No signs of the coming waves were visible more than a few hundred yards from the shore. There, each roller gradually and silently arose when the undulating motion of the sea caught the bottom. A little farther in it assumed the form of a magnificent green wall of liquid glass, which became more and more vast and

perpendicular as it rolled on, until it curled over and rushed with a mighty roar and a snowy crest towards the beach. There it dashed itself in tumultuous foam among the rocks.

“Give way, lads,” said Christian, sitting down after a prolonged gaze at this scene; “we may find a better spot farther on.”

As they proceeded they were received with wild and plaintive cries by innumerable sea-birds, whose homes were on the cliffs, and who evidently resented this intrusion of strangers.

“Shall we give ’em a shot, sir?” asked McCoy, laying his hand on a musket.

“No, time enough for that,” replied Christian, shortly.

They pulled right round the island without seeing a single spot more available for a landing than the place they had first approached.

It was a very little bay, with a small clump of six cocoa-nut trees near the water’s edge on the right, and a single cocoa-nut tree on the left, about two hundred yards from the others. Above these, on a hill a little to the westward, there was a grove of the same species.

“We’ll have to try it, sir,” said John Adams, looking at his leader inquiringly.

“We’re sure to capsize,” observed McCoy.

“No matter,” said Christian; “we have at last reached *home*, and I’m bound not to be baffled at the door. Come, Ohoo, you know something about beaching canoes in a surf; there can’t be much difference with a boat. Get up in the bow and direct me how to steer.”

He spoke to one of the native in the imperfect jumble of Otaheitan and English with which the white men had learned to communicate with the natives. Ohoo understood, and at once went to the bow of the boat, the head of which was now directed towards a place in the cliffs where there seemed to be a small bay or creek. The native gave directions with his arms right or left, and did not require to speak. Christian steered with one of the oars instead of the rudder, to give him more power over the boat.

Soon they began to feel the influence of the in-going wave. It was a moment of intense anxiety. Christian ordered the men to cease rowing. Ohoo made a sudden and violent indication with his left arm. Christian obeyed.

“Give a gentle pull, boys,” he said.

They rose as he spoke on the top of a wave so high that they could look down for a moment on the seething foam that raged between them and the beach, and Christian was about to order the men to pull hard, when the native looked back and shook his head excitedly. They had not got sufficiently into the grasp of that wave; they must wait for the next.

“Back all!” shouted the steersman. The boat slid back into the trough of the sea, while the wave went roaring inward.

The succeeding wave was soon close astern. It seemed to curl over them, threatening destruction, but it lifted them, instead, on its high shoulders. There was a slight appearance of boiling on the surface of the moving billow as it caught them. It was about to break, and the boat was fairly in its grasp.

“Give way!” shouted Christian, in a sharp, loud voice.

A moment more, and they were rushing grandly in on a mountain of snow, with black rocks rising on either side. It was nervous work. A little to the right or a little to the left, and their frail bark would have been dashed to pieces. As it was, they were launched upon a strip of sand and gravel that lay at the foot of the towering cliffs.

“Hurrah!” cried Martin and Brown, in wild excitement, as they leaped over the bow after the natives, while Christian, Adams, Quintal, and McCoy went over the stern to prevent the boat being dragged back by the recoiling foam, and pushed it high and dry on the beach.

“Well done! Here we are at last in Bounty Bay!” exclaimed Christian, with a look of satisfaction, giving to the spot, for the first time, that name which it ever afterwards retained. “Make fast the painter—there; get your arms now, boys, and follow me.”

At the head of the bay there was a hill, almost a cliff, up which there wound something that had the appearance of a path, or the almost dry bed of a water-course. It was exceedingly steep, but seemed the only route by which the interior of the island could be reached. Up the tangled pass for about three hundred yards the explorers advanced in single file, all except Quintal, who was left in charge of the boat.

“It looks very like a path that has been made by men,” said Christian, pausing to breathe, and turning round when half-way up the height; “don’t you think so, Brown?”

Thus appealed to, the botanist, whose eyes had been enchained by the luxuriant and lovely herbage of the place, stooped to inspect the path.

“It does look a little like it, sir,” he replied, with some caution, “but it also looks not unlike a water-course. You see it is a little wet just hereabouts. Isn’t it? What think you, Isaac Martin?”

“I don’t think nothin’ about it,” returned Martin, solemnly, turning over the quid of tobacco that bulged his cheek; “but if I might ventur’ for to give an opinion, I should say it don’t much matter what it is, one way or another.”

“That’s true, Isaac,” said Christian, with a short laugh, as he resumed his march up the cliff.

On the way they were shaded and kept pleasantly cool by the neighbouring precipices but on gaining the top they came into a blaze of sunshine, and then became suddenly aware that they had discovered a perfect paradise. They stood on a table-land which was thickly covered with cocoa-nut trees. A quarter of a mile farther on lay a beautiful valley, the slopes and mounds of which were clothed with trees and beautiful flowering herbage of various kinds, in clumps and groves of picturesque form, with open glades and little meadows between, the whole being backed by a grand mountain-range which traversed the island, and rose to a height of more than a thousand feet.

“It is heaven upon earth!” exclaimed Brown, as they began to push into the heart of the lovely scene.

"Humph! It's not all gold that glitters," growled McCoy, with a sarcastic smile.

"It's pretty real, nevertheless," observed Isaac Martin; "I only hope there ain't none o' the rascally niggers livin' here."

Christian said nothing, but wandered on, looking about him like one in a dream.

Besides cocoa-nut palms and other trees and shrubs, there were banyan-trees, the branches of which dropped downwards to the earth and there took root, and other large timber-trees, and plantains, bananas, yams, taro-roots, mulberry, tee-plant, and other fruit-bearing plants in great profusion. Over this richly varied scene the eyes of William Brown wandered in rapture.

"Magnificent!" he exclaimed; "a perfect garden!"

"Rich enough soil, eh?" said Martin, turning some of it up with the point of his shoe.

"Rich enough, ay; couldn't be finer," said Brown. "I should think, from its deep red colour, that it is chiefly decomposed lava. The island is evidently volcanic in its origin. I hope we shall find fresh water. We've not seen much yet, but it's sure to be found somewhere, for such magnificent vegetation could not exist without it."

"What have we here?" said Christian, stooping to pick up something. "A stone implement of some kind, like a spear-head, I think. It seems to me that the island must have been inhabited once, although it does not appear to be so now."

After they had wandered about for some time, examining the land, and passing many a commentary, both grave and humorous, they turned to retrace their steps, when Brown, who had gone on in advance, was heard to cheer as he waved his hat above his head. He had discovered a spring. They all hastened towards the spot. It lay like a clear gem in the hollow of a rock a considerable distance up the mountain. It was unanimously named "Brown's Pool," but it did not contain much water at the time.

"Can we do better than dine here?" said Isaac Martin. "There's lots o' food around us."

This was true, for of the various fruits which grew wild in the island, the cocoa-nut, plantain, and banana were to be had all the year round.

Brown had brought a small hatchet with him, which enabled them to break open several cocoa-nuts, whose hard outer husks would not have yielded easily to a clasp-knife.

While they sat thus enjoying themselves beside Brown's Pool, a small lizard was observed to run over a rock near to them. It stopped for a moment to raise its little head and look at the visitors, apparently with great surprise. A rat was also seen, and chased without success, by Isaac Martin.

A small species of fly-catcher, of a whitey-brown colour, was likewise observed, and those creatures, it was afterwards ascertained, were the only living things to be found on the island, with the exception of a variety of insects and the innumerable gulls already mentioned.

"Here, then," said Christian, raising a piece of the cocoa-nut shell filled with water to his lips, "I drink to our health and happiness in our island home."

There was a strange mingling of pathos with heartiness in his tone, which did not fail to impress his companions, who cheerfully responded to the toast.

"I only wish we had something stronger than water to drink it in," said McCoy.

"Better without strong drink," remarked John Adams, who was naturally a temperate man.

"Worse without it, *I* think," growled McCoy, who was naturally contentious and quarrelsome; "don't it warm the heart and raise the spirits and strengthen the frame, and—"

"Ay, and clear the brain," interrupted Martin, with one of his most lugubrious looks, "an' steady the gait, specially w'en one's pretty far gone, an' beautify the expression, an'—an'—clear the int'leck, an' (hic) an' gen'r'ly in—in—tenshify sh' powers (hic) of c–converzashun, eh?"

Martin was a pretty fair mimic, and illustrated his meaning so well, not only with his tongue but with his solemn countenance, that the whole party burst into a laugh, with the exception of McCoy, who replied with the single word, "Bosh!"

To which Martin returned, "Bam!"

"Just so," said Christian, as he stooped to refill the cocoa-nut shell; "you may be said to have reduced that spirited question to an essence, which is much beyond proof, and closed it; we will therefore return to the shore, get on board as quickly as possible, and make arrangements for anchoring in the bay."

"I doubt it's too deep for anchoring," remarked Adams, as they walked down the hill.

"Well, then, we shall run the ship on shore," said Christian, curtly, "for here we must remain. There is no other island that I know of in these regions. Besides, this one seems the very thing we want. It has wood and water in abundance; fruits and roots of many kinds; a splendid soil, if we may believe our eyes, to say nothing of Brown's opinion; bad anchorage for ships, great difficulty and some danger in landing even in fine weather, and impossible to land at all, I should think, in bad; beautiful little valleys and hills; rugged mountains with passes so difficult that a few resolute men might defy a host, and caves to which we might retreat and sell our lives dearly if hard pushed. What more could we wish for?"

In a short time they reached the little narrow strip of shingly beach where the boat had been left in charge of Quintal. Here they had to encounter the great difficulty of forcing their way through the surf which had borne them shoreward in such grand style. The chief danger lay in the liability of the boat to be caught by the bow, turned broadside to the great tumbling billows, and overturned. Safety and success lay in keeping the boat's bow straight "end-on" to the seas, and pulling hard. To accomplish this, Fletcher Christian again took an oar to steer with, in preference to the rudder. Besides being the most powerful man of the party, he was the best boatman, and the most agile in his movements.

"Steady, now!" he said, as the boat lay in the seething foam partially sheltered by a rock, while the men sat with oars out, ready for instant action.

A bigger wave than usual had just hurled itself with a thunderous roar on the reverberating cliffs, and the great sheet of foaming water had just reached that momentary pause which indicated the turning-point previous to the backward rush, when Christian shouted—

"Give way!"

The boat leaped out, was kept end-on by a powerful stroke of the steersman, rushed on the back-draught as if down a cataract, and met the succeeding billow fairly. The bow was thrown up so high that it seemed as if the boat were standing on end, and must inevitably be thrown right over, but the impetus given by the willing men forced her half through and half over the crest of the watery mountain.

"With a will, boys, with a will!" cried Christian.

Another moment and they slid down the billow's back into the trough between the seas. A few more energetic strokes carried them over the next wave. After that the danger was past, and in less than half-an-hour they were once more on board the *Bounty*.

Chapter Five.

The Landing of the Livestock in Bounty Bay.

Preparations were now made for landing. The bay which they had discovered, and was the only one on the island, lay on its northern side. Into it they succeeded in running the *Bounty*, and cast anchor. Soon the women, with little Sally, were landed and sent up to the table-land above, to make some sort of encampment, under the charge of midshipman Young. The ship was warped close up to the cliffs, so close that she ran the end of her bowsprit against them and broke it off. Here there was a narrow ledge that seemed suitable for a landing-place. Night put a stop to their labours on board. While some lighted fires and encamped on the shore, others remained in the ship to guard her and to be ready for the debarkation that was to take place in the morning.

And a strange debarkation it was. It had been found that there was a rise of eight feet in the tide. This enabled Christian to lay the ship in such a position that it was possible to extend several long planks from the bow to the beach. Fortunately the weather was fine, otherwise the landing would have been difficult if not disastrous.

When all was complete, the goats were collected and driven over the bow to the shore. The procession was headed by an old billy-goat, who looked supremely philosophical as he went slowly along the rough gangway.

"It minds one o' pirates makin' the crew of a merchantman walk the plank," remarked John Williams, as he assisted to urge the unwilling flock along.

"Quite like a menadgeree," suggested Mills.

"More like old Noah comin' out o' the ark," said Williams, "on the top o' Mount—Mount—what was its name? I forget."

“Mount Sy-nee,” suggested Quintal.

“Not at all; it was Mount Arrowroot,” said Isaac Martin, with the air of an oracle.

“Clear the way, lads, for the poultry,” shouted midshipman Young.

A tremendous cackling in rear rendered further orders inaudible as well as unnecessary, while the men stood aside from the opening to the gangway of planks.

A considerable number of fowls had been taken on board at Otaheite, and these, besides being bewildered and uncertain as to the point to which they were being driven, and the precise duty that was required of them, were infected with the general obstinacy of the rest of the animal kingdom. At last, however, a splendid cock was persuaded to enter the gangway, down which he ran, and flew shrieking to the shore, followed by the rest of his kindred.

“Now for the hogs,” said Quintal, to whose domineering spirit the work was congenial.

But the hogs were not to be managed as easily as the goats and fowls had been. With native obstinacy and amazing energy they refused to do what they were bid, and shrieked defiance when force was attempted. The noise was further increased by the butting of a few goats and the cackling of some poultry, which had got mixed up with them.

First of all they declined to leave the enclosures, out of which they had tried pertinaciously to escape all the voyage. By way of overcoming this difficulty, Christian ordered the enclosures to be torn down, and the planks with which they had been formed were used as persuaders to urge the refractory creatures on. As each poke or slap produced a series of horrible yells, it may be understood that the operation was accompanied with noise.

At last some of the men, losing patience, rushed at the hogs, seized them by ears and tails, and forcibly dragged them to the gangway. McCoy and Quintal distinguished themselves in this service, hurling their animals on the planks with such violence that several of them fell over into the sea, and swam towards the shore in the surf from which they were rescued by the Otaheitan men, who danced about in the water, highly enjoying this part of their labour.

A profound calm seemed to succeed a wild storm when the last of the unruly pigs had left the ship.

“We’ve got ’em all out at last,” said one of the men, with a sigh, wiping the perspiration from his forehead with his sleeve.

“Bad luck to them,” growled another, tying up a slight wound received in the conflict.

“We’ve done with the live stock, anyhow, and that’s a comfort,” said a third.

“Done with the live stock!” exclaimed Martin. “Why, the worst lot has yet to come.”

“That must be yourself, then, Martin, my boy,” said Brown.

“I wish it was, Brown,” retorted Martin; “but you’ve forgotten the cats.”

"So we have!" exclaimed everybody.

"And you may be sure they'll give us some trouble," said Christian. "Come, let's go at 'em at once."

This estimate of the cats was fully justified by what followed. A considerable number of these useful creatures, black, white, and grey, had been brought from Otaheite for the purpose of keeping down the rats, with which many of the South Sea Islands are afflicted. During the voyage most of them had retired to the privacy of the hold, where they found holes and corners about the cargo, and came out only at night, like evil spirits, to pick up a precarious livelihood. During the recent conflict a few had found insecure refuge in holes and corners about the deck, where yelling and fugitive pigs had convulsed them with horror; and one, a huge grey cat, having taken madly to the rigging, rushed out to the end of the foresail-yard, where it was immediately roused to frenzy by a flock of astonished gulls. Now, these cats had to be rummaged out of their retreats by violence, in which work all the white men in the ship had to take part amid a chorus of awful skirling, serpentlike fuffing, ominous and deadly growling, and, generally, hideous caterwauling, that no pen, however gifted, could adequately describe.

"*I* see 'im," cried Mills, with his head thrust down between a nail-cask and a bundle of Otaheitan roots.

"Where?" from John Adams, who, with heels and legs in the air, and head and shoulders down somewhere about the keel, was poking a long stick into total darkness.

"There, right under you, with a pair of eyes blazing like green lamps."

A poke in the right direction caused a convulsion in the bowels of the cargo like a miniature earthquake. It was accompanied by a fearful yell.

"I've touched him at last," said Adams, quietly. "Look-out there, Brown, he's goin' to scramble up the bulkhead."

"There goes another," shouted Martin, whose head was so far down among the cargo that his voice had a muffled sound.

There was no occasion to ask where this time, for, with a wild shriek, a large black fellow left its retreat, sprang up the hatchway, and sought refuge in the rigging. At the same moment there came a sepulchral moan from a cat whose place of refuge was invaded by Quintal. The moan was followed by a cry, loud and deep, that would have done credit to a mad baby.

"Isn't it appalling to see creeturs so furious?" said Adams, solemnly, as he drew his head and shoulders out of the depths.

"They're fiendishly inclined, no doubt," said Christian, who stood hard by with a stick, ready to expedite the process of ejection when a cat ventured to show itself.

At last, with infinite trouble the whole body of the enemy were routed from the hold, and the hatches fastened down to prevent a return. But the end was not yet gained, for the creatures had found various refuges on deck, and some had taken to the rigging.

"Come out o' that," cried Martin, making a poke at the big grey cat, like a small tiger, which had fled to the foretop.

With a ferocious caterwaul and fuff the creature sprang down the shrouds on the opposite side as if it had been born and bred a sailor. Unfortunately it made a wild leap at a pendant rope in passing, missed it, and came down on the deck with a prodigious flop. Only one of its nine lives, apparently, was damaged. With the other eight it rushed to the opening in the bow, and soon gained the shore, where it immediately sprang to the leafy head of a cocoa-nut palm. At the same moment a black-and-white cat was sent flying in the same direction by Young. Quintal, indulging his savage nature, caught one of the cats by the neck and tried to strangle it into subjection, but received such punishment with teeth and claws that he was fain to fling it into the sea. It swam ashore, emerged a melancholy "drookit" spectacle, and dashed into the nearest underwood.

Thus, one by one, the cats were hunted out of the *Bounty*, and introduced to their future home. The last to give in was, appropriately, an enormous black Tom, which, with deadly yellow eyes, erect hair, bristling tail, curved back, extended claws, and flattened ears, rushed fuffing and squealing from one refuge to another, until at last, giving way to the concentrated attack of the assembled crew, it burst through the opening, scurried down the gangway, and went like a shot into the bushes, a confirmed maniac,—if not worse.

Chapter Six.

Settling down and Exploration.

The first few days were devoted by the mutineers to conveying ashore every article that was likely to prove useful. Not only were chests, boxes, tools, bedding, culinary implements, etcetera, removed from the vessel, but the planks that formed the bulkheads, much of the cordage, and all the loose spars and removable iron-work were carried ashore. In short, the vessel was completely gutted.

When this was finished, a council was called to decide what should be done with the *Bounty* herself, for although Christian was the acknowledged leader of the party, he took no important step without consulting his comrades.

"You see it is useless," he said, "to think of venturing again to sea in the *Bounty*; we are too short-handed for that. Besides, we could not find a more suitable island than this. I therefore propose that we should burn the ship, to prevent her being seen by any chance vessel that may pass this way. If she were observed, men might be tempted to land, and of course they would tell that we were here, and His Majesty would soon have a cruiser out in search of us. What say you?"

"I say wait a bit and consider," replied Young.

"Ditto," said Adams.

Some of the others thought with Christian. Quintal, in particular, who seemed to live in a chronic state of objection to being hanged, was strong for destroying the vessel. Eventually, after a good deal of delay and much discussion, the good ship *Bounty* finished her career by being burned to the water's edge in Bounty

Bay. This occurred on the 23rd January 1790. The lower part of the vessel, which would not burn, was towed out into deep water and sunk, so that not a vestige of her remained.

And now all was bustling activity. A spot some few hundred yards farther inland than that selected as their camping-ground on the day of arrival, was fixed on as suitable for their permanent location. It was beautifully situated, and pleasantly sheltered by trees, through between the stems of which the sea was visible. To this spot everything was conveyed, and several of the most powerful of the men began to clear the ground, and fell the trees with axes.

One morning, soon after landing, a party was organised to traverse the island and investigate its character and resources. As they were not yet quite sure that it was uninhabited, this party was a strong one and well armed. It consisted of Christian, Adams, Brown, Martin, and four of the Otaheitans. Edward Young stayed at the encampment with the remaining men and the women.

“In which direction shall we go?” asked Christian, appealing to Brown.

The botanist hesitated, and glanced round him.

“If I might make so bold, sir,” said Isaac Martin, “I would suggest that we go right up to the top o’ the mountains. There’s nothin’ like a bird’s-eye view for fillin’ the mind wi’ right notions o’ form, an’ size, an’ character.”

Following this advice, they traversed the lower ground, which was found very prolific everywhere. Then they ascended the undulating slopes of the mountain-sides until they reached the rugged and bare rocks of the higher ground.

On the way they found further and indisputable evidence of the island having been inhabited at some previous and probably long past era. Among these evidences were spear-heads, and axes of stone, and several warlike weapons.

“Hallo! here’s a circumstance,” exclaimed Martin, stopping in front of an object which lay on the ground.

On closer examination the “circumstance” turned out to be an image made of a hard and coarse red stone.

“It is evidently an idol,” said Christian; “and here are some smooth round stones, resembling those used by the Otaheitans in war.”

Not far from the spot, and in other places as they advanced, the exploring party found heaps of stone chips, as well as more images and tools.

“I’ve been thinking,” said Brown, turning for a moment to look down at the sea, which now lay spread out far below them like a blue plain, “I’ve been thinking that the proof of people having been here long ago lies not only in these stones, axes, spears, and images, but also in the fact that we find the cocoa-nut trees, bananas, plantains, breadfruit-trees, as well as yams and sweet potatoes, grow chiefly in the sunny and sheltered parts of the island, and gathered together as if they had been planted there.”

“Here’s the best proof of all,” exclaimed Martin, who had a tendency to poke about, with his long nose advanced, as if scenting out things.

They looked at the spot to which Martin pointed, and there saw a human skeleton in the last stage of decay, with a large pearl shell under the skull. Not far-off more human bones were discovered.

“That’s proof positive,” said Brown. “Now, I wonder why these natives came here, and why they went away.”

“P’r’aps they didn’t come, but was born’d here,” suggested Martin; “an’ mayhap they didn’t go away at all, but died here.”

“True, Martin,” said Adams; “and that shell reminds me of what Captain Bligh once told me, that the natives o’ the Gambier Islands, which must lie to wind’ard o’ this, have a custom of puttin’ a shell under the heads of the dead in this fashion. Moreover, he told me that these same Gambier chaps, long ago, used to put the people they vanquished in war on rafts, and turn ’em adrift to sink or swim, or fetch what land they might. No doubt some of these people got drifted here.”

As he spoke the party emerged from a somewhat rugged pass, close to the highest peak of the mountain-ranges. A few minutes’ scramble brought them to the summit, whence they obtained a magnificent view of the entire circuit of the island.

We have said that the peak is just over a thousand feet high. From this commanding position the Pacific was seen with a boundless horizon all round. Not a speck of land visible save the rocky isle on which they stood. Not a sail to mark the vast expanse of water, which, from that height, seemed perfectly flat and smooth, though a steady breeze was blowing, and the islet was fringed with a pure white ring of foam. Not a cloud even to break the monotony of the clear sky, and no sound to disturb the stillness of nature save the plaintive cries, mellowed by distance, of the myriads of sea-fowl which sailed round the cliffs, or dipped into the water far below.

“Solitude profound,” said Christian, in a low voice, breaking the silence which had fallen on the party as they gazed slowly round them.

Just then a loud and hideous yell issued from, apparently; the bowels of the earth, and rudely put to flight the feeling of profound solitude. The cry, although very loud, had a strangely muffled sound, and was repeated as if by an echo.

The explorers looked in each other’s faces inquiringly, and not without an expression of awe.

“Strange,” said Adams; “an’ it sounded very like some one in distress.”

It was observed suddenly that Isaac Martin was absent.

“But the voice was not like his,” said Brown.

The mysterious cry was repeated at the moment, and Christian ran quickly in the direction whence it seemed to come. As they neared a rugged mass of rocks which lay close to the peak on which they had been standing, the cry lost much of its mystery, and finally assumed the tones of Martin’s voice.

“Hallo! hi! murder! help! O my leg! Mr Christian, Adams, Brown, this way. Help! ho! hi!”

What between the muffled sound and the echo, Martin created a noise that would have set his friends into fits of laughter if they had not been greatly alarmed.

In a few seconds the party reached what seemed to be a dark hole, out of which the poor man's left leg was seen protruding. Christian and Adams grasped it. Brown and one of the Otaheitans lent a hand, and Martin was quickly dragged out of danger and set on his legs.

"I say, Martin," said Brown, anxiously, "sit down or you'll bu'st. Every drop o' blood in your body has gone to your head."

"No wonder," gasped Isaac, "if you'd bin hangin' by one fut half as long, your blood would have blowed your head off altogether."

"There now, sit down a minute, and you'll be all right," said Christian. "How did it happen?"

To this Martin replied that it was simple enough. He had fallen a few yards behind, and, taking a wrong turn, had come on a hole, into which he looked. Seeing something like a light at the bottom of it, he stooped down to look further, slipped on the rocks, and went in head foremost, but was arrested by his foot catching between two rocks and getting jammed.

In this position he would soon have perished had not his comrades come to the rescue.

With some curiosity they now proceeded to examine the hole. It turned out to be the entrance to a cave which opened towards the northern side of the island, and from which a splendid sweep of the sea could be seen, while in the immediate neighbourhood, far down the precipices, innumerable sea-birds were seen like flakes of snow circling round the cliffs. A few of the inquisitive among these mounted to the giddy height of the cave's seaward-mouth, and seemed to gaze in surprise at the unwonted sight of man.

"A most suitable cavern for a hermit or a monk," said Brown.

"More fit for a monkey," said Martin.

"Not a bad place of refuge in case our retreat should be discovered," observed Christian.

"H'm! the Mutineers' Retreat," muttered John Adams, in a slightly bitter tone.

"A few resolute men," continued Christian, taking no notice of the last remark, "could hold out here against a hundred—at least while their ammunition lasted."

He returned as he spoke to the cave's landward entrance, and clambered out with some difficulty, followed by his companions. Proceeding with their investigations, they found that, while a large part of the island was covered with rich soil, bearing fruit-trees and shrubs in abundance, the remainder of it was mountainous, rugged, and barren. They also ascertained that, although the place had been inhabited in times long past, there seemed to be no inhabitants at that time to dispute their taking possession. Satisfied with the result of their investigations, they descended to their encampment on the table-land close to the heights above Bounty Bay.

On drawing near to the clearing they heard the sound of voices raised as if in anger.

"It's Quintal and McCoy," said Adams; "I know the sound o' their ill-natured voices."

Presently the two men could be seen through the trees. Quintal was sitting on a felled tree, looking fiercely at McCoy, who stood beside him.

"I tell you the baccy is mine," said Quintal.

"It's nothin' o' the sort, it's mine," answered McCoy, snatching the coveted weed out of the other's hand.

Quintal jumped up, hit McCoy on the forehead, and knocked him down.

McCoy instantly rose, hit Quintal on the nose, and tumbled him over the log on which he had been sitting.

Not much the worse, Quintal sprang to his feet, and a furious set-to would have immediately followed if the arrival of Christian and his party had not prevented it. It was no easy matter to calm the ruffled spirits of the men who had treated each other so unceremoniously, and there is no doubt the bad feeling would have been kept up about the tobacco in dispute if Christian had not intervened. McCoy reiterated stoutly that the tobacco was his.

"You are wrong," said Christian, quietly; "it belongs to Quintal. I gave it to him this morning."

As there was no getting over this, McCoy returned the tobacco with a bad grace, and Christian was about to give the assembled party some good advice about not quarrelling, when the mother of little Sally appeared suddenly, wringing her hands, and exclaiming in her native tongue, "My child is lost! my child is lost!"

As every one of the party, even the roughest, was fond of Sally, there was an eager and anxious chorus of questioning.

"Where away did 'ee lose her?" asked McCoy; but the poor mother could only wring her hands and cry, "Lost! lost!"

"Has she gone over the cliffs?" asked Edward Young, who came up at the moment; but the woman would say nothing but "Lost! lost!" amid floods of tears.

Fortunately some of the other women, who had been away collecting cocoa-nuts, arrived just then, and somewhat relieved the men by prevailing on the mother to explain that, although she could not say positively her child had fallen over the cliffs, or come by any other mishap, Sally had nevertheless disappeared early in the forenoon, and that she had been searching for her ever since without success.

The process of interrogation was conducted chiefly by Isabella, *alias* Mainmast, the wife of Fletcher Christian, and Susannah, the wife of Edward Young; and it was interesting to note how anxious were the native men, Talaloo, Timoa, Ohoo, Nehow, Tetaheite, and Menalee. They were evidently as concerned about the safety of the child as were the white men.

"Now, lads," said Christian, after it was ascertained that the poor woman could give no information whatever, "we must search at once, but we must go about it according to a fixed plan. I remember once reading of a General having got lost in a great swamp one evening with his staff. It was near the sea, I

think, and the tide was making. He collected his officers and bade them radiate out from him in all directions, each one in a straight line, so as to make sure of at least one of them finding the right road out of the danger. We will do likewise."

Following out this plan, the entire party scattered themselves into the bush, each keeping in a straight line, searching as he went, and widening the field of search as his distance from the centre increased. There was no time to lose, for the shades of night had already begun to fall.

Anxiously did the poor mother and one or two of the other women sit in the clearing, listening for the expected shout which should indicate success. For a long time no shout of any kind was heard, though there was considerable noise when the searching party came upon the lairs of members of the livestock that had taken up their quarters in the bush.

We will follow only the line of search which ended in success. It was pursued by Christian himself. At first he came on spots where domestic fowls had taken up their abode. Then, while tramping through a mass of luxuriant ferns, he trod on the toes of a slumbering hog, which immediately set up a shriek comparable only to the brake of an ill-used locomotive. This uncalled-for disturbance roused and routed a considerable number of the same family which had taken refuge in the same locality. After that he came on a bevy of cats, seated at respectful distances from each other, in glaring and armed neutrality. His sudden and evidently unexpected appearance scattered these to the four points of the compass.

Presently he came upon a pretty open spot of small size, which was surrounded by shrubs and trees, through the leafy branches of which the setting sun streamed in a thousand rays. One of these rays dazzled the eyes, and another kissed the lips of a Nanny-goat. It was Sally's pet, lying down and dozing. Beside it lay Sally herself, sound asleep, with her pretty little face resting on its side, and one of her little fat hands holding on to a lock of its white hair.

With a loud shout Christian proclaimed his success to the Pitcairn world, and, picking up the still slumbering child, carried her home in triumph to her mother.

Chapter Seven.

Roasting, Foraging, and Fabricating.

One morning John Adams awoke from a pleasant dream and lay for some time on his back, in that lazy, half-conscious fashion in which some men love to lie on first awaking. The canopy above him was a leafy structure through which he could see the deep azure of the sky with its few clouds of fleecy white. Around him were the rude huts of leaves and boughs which his comrades had constructed for themselves more or less tastefully, and the lairs under bush and tree with which the Otaheitan natives were content. Just in front of his own hut was that of Fletcher Christian. It was more thoroughly built than the others, being partly formed of planks and other woodwork saved from the *Bounty*, and was well thatched with the broad leaves of tropical plants.

In front of the hut Christian's wife, Isabella, was busily engaged digging a hole in the ground. She was the only member of the party astir that morning.

"I wonder why Mainmast is up so early," murmured Adams, rousing himself and using his elbow as a prop while he observed her.

Mainmast, who was better known by that sobriquet than by the name which Christian had given to her on his wedding-day at Otaheite, was a very comely and naturally amiable creature, graceful in form, and although a so-called savage, possessing an air of simple dignity and refinement which might almost be termed lady-like. Indeed, several of the other native wives of the mutineers were similar to Mrs Christian in these respects, and, despite their brown complexions, were remarkably good-looking. One or two, however, were commonplace enough, especially the wives of the three married Otaheitan men, who seemed to be, as no doubt they were, of a lower social class than the others who had mingled with the best Otaheitan society, Edward Young's wife, for instance, being a sort of native princess—at least she was the daughter of a great chief.

The dress of these women was simple, like themselves, and not ungraceful. It consisted of a short petticoat of tapa, or native cloth, reaching below the knees, and a loose shawl or scarf of the same material thrown over the shoulders.

After gazing a short time, Adams perceived what Mainmast was about. She was preparing breakfast, which consisted of a hog. It had been shot by Christian the night before, partly because it annoyed him with pertinacious grunting in the neighbourhood of his hut, and partly because several families of hoglets having been born soon after their arrival on the island, he could not be charged with extravagance in giving the people a treat of flesh once in a way.

The process of cooking the hog was slow, hence the early move. It was also peculiar, therefore we shall describe it in detail, in order that the enterprising housewives of England may try the plan if convenient.

Mainmast's first act was to kindle a large fire, into which she put a number of goodly-sized and rounded stones. While these were heating, she dug a large hole in the ground with a broken shovel, which was the only implement of husbandry possessed at that time by the community. This hole was the oven. The bottom of it she covered with fresh plantain leaves. The stones having been heated, were spread over the bottom of the hole and then covered with leaves. On this hotbed the carcass of the pig was placed, and another layer of leaves spread over it. Some more hot stones were placed above that, over which green leaves were strewn in bunches, and, finally, the whole was covered up with earth and rubbish piled up so as to keep in the heat.

Just as she had accomplished this, Mainmast was joined by Mrs Young (Susannah) and Mrs McCoy.

"Good-morning," said Mrs Christian, using the words of salutation which she had learned from the Europeans. "The hog will not be ready for a long time; will you help me with the cakes?"

The women at once assented, and set to work. They spoke to each other in the Otaheitan tongue. To their husbands they spoke in a jumble of that tongue and English. For convenience we shall, throughout our tale, give their conversations in ordinary English.

While Mrs McCoy prepared some yams and sweet potatoes for baking, Mrs Young compounded a cake of yams and plantains, beaten up, to be baked in leaves. Mainmast also roasted some breadfruit.

This celebrated fruit—but for which the *Bounty*, would never have been sent forth, and the mutiny with its wonderful consequences would never have occurred—grows on a tree the size of a large apple-tree, the leaves of which are of a very deep green. The fruit, larger than an orange, has a thick rind, and if gathered before becoming ripe, and baked in an oven, the inside resembles the crumb of wheaten bread, and is very palatable. It lasts in season about eight months of the year.

While the culinary operations were going on, the precocious Sally, awaking from her slumbers, rose and staggered forth to survey the face of the newborn day. Her little body was clothed in an admirably fitting garment of light-brown skin, the gift of Nature. Having yawned and rubbed her eyes, she strayed towards the fire. Mrs Christian received her with an affable smile, and presented her with a pannikin of cocoa-nut milk to keep her quiet. Quaffing this beverage with evident delight, she dropped the pannikin, smacked her rosy lips, and toddled off to seek adventures. Her first act was to stand in front of Isaac Martin's hut, and gaze with a look not unmixed with awe at the long nose pointing to the sky, from which sonorous sounds were issuing.

It is said that familiarity breeds contempt. It was obvious that the awesome feeling passed from the infant's mind as she gazed. Under the impulse of a sudden inspiration she entered the hut, went up to the nose, and tweaked it.

"Hallo!" shouted Martin, springing up and tumbling Sally head over heels in the act. "Oh, poor thing, I haven't hurt you, have I?"

He caught the child in his arms and kissed her; but Sally seemed to care neither for the tumble nor the kisses. Having been released, she sallied from the hut in search of more adventures.

Martin, meanwhile, having been thoroughly aroused, got up and went towards the fire.

"You're bright and early, Mainmast," he said, slowly filling his pipe.

"Yes, hog takes time to cook."

"Hog is it, eh? That'll be first-rate. Got sauce for it?"

"Hog needs no sauce," said Mrs Christian, with a laugh. To say truth, it required very little to arouse her merriment, or that of her amiable sisterhood.

When Martin had lighted his pipe, he stood gazing at the fire profoundly, as if absorbed in meditation. Presently he seized a frying-pan which lay on the ground, and descended therewith by way of the steep cliffs to the sea.

While he was gone, one and another of the party came to the fire and began to chat or smoke, or both, according to fancy. Ere long Martin was seen slowly ascending the cliffs, holding the frying-pan with great care.

"What have you got there?" asked one.

"Oysters, eh?" said another, scrutinising the pan.

"More like jelly-fish," said Young.

"What in all the world is it?" asked Adams, as the pan was put on the fire.

"You'll see when it boils," said Martin.

"There's nothin' in it at all but water," said Quintal, somewhat contemptuously.

"Well, I've heerd of many a thing, but never fried water," remarked McCoy.

"I should think it indigestible," said Christian, coming up at the moment.

Whether the natives understood the jest or not we cannot say, but certain it is that all of them, men and women, burst into a fit of laughter at this, in which they were joined by Otaheitan Sally from mere sympathy.

"Well, what is to be the order of the day?" asked Christian, turning to Young. "Shall we proceed with our dwellings, or divide the island into locations?"

"I think," answered the midshipman, "that some of us at least should set up the forge. I know that Williams's fingers are tingling to grasp the sledge-hammer, and the sooner he goes at it, too, the better, for we're badly off for tools."

"If you don't require my services," said Brown, "I'll go plant some breadfruits and other things at that sheltered spot we fell upon yesterday."

"I intend to finish the thatching of my hut," said Quintal, in that off-hand tone of independence and disregard of the wishes of others which was one of his characteristics.

"Well, there are plenty of us to do all the work," said Christian. "Let every man do what pleases himself. I would only ask for one or two volunteers to cut the water-tanks I spoke of yesterday. The water we have discovered, although a plentiful supply for present needs, may run short or cease altogether if drought comes. So we must provide against a dry instead of a rainy day, by cutting a tank or two in the solid rock to hold a reserve."

Adams and Mills at once volunteered for this duty. Other arrangements were soon made, and they sat down to breakfast, some using plates saved from the *Bounty*, others flat stones as substitutes, while empty cocoa-nut shells served for drinking-cups.

"Your water pancake should be done brown by this time," said Young, as he sat down on the turf tailor-wise.

"Not quite, but nearly," returned Martin, as he stirred the furiously-boiling contents of the frying-pan.

In a few minutes more the sea water had boiled quite away, leaving a white residuum, which Martin scraped carefully off into a cocoa-nut cup.

"You see, boys," he said, setting down the salt thus procured, "I never could abide fresh meat without a pick o' salt to give it a relish. It may be weakness perhaps, but—"

"Being the weakness of an old salt," interrupted Christian, "it's excusable. Now, boys, fall-to with a will. We've got plenty of work before us, an' can't afford to waste time."

This exhortation was needless. The savoury smell of the roast pig, when it had been carefully disentombed, might have given appetite to a seasick man. They ate heartily, and for some time in silence.

The women, however, did not join in the feast at that time. It was the custom among the Otaheitans that the men should eat first, the women afterwards; and the mutineers, having become habituated to the custom, did not see fit to change it. When the men had finished and discussed the day's proceedings, the remainder of the pig, fruits, and vegetables, were consumed by the females, among whom, we are bound to state, Sally was the greatest gourmand.

When pipes were finished, and the digestion of healthy young men had been thus impaired as far as was possible in the circumstances, the party went off in several groups about their various avocations.

Among other things removed from the *Bounty* were a smith's anvil and bellows, with various hammers, files, etcetera, and a large quantity of iron-work and copper. One party, therefore, under Young and Williams the armourer, busied themselves in setting up a forge near their settlement, and preparing charcoal for the forge fire.

Another party, under Christian, proceeded to some neighbouring rocks, and there, with sledge-hammer and crowbars, which they used as jumpers, began the laborious task of boring the solid rock, intending afterwards to blast, and partly to cut it, into large water-tanks. Quintal continued the thatching of his hut, in which work his humble wife aided him effectively. Brown proceeded with the planting operations which he had begun almost immediately after landing; and the women busied themselves variously, some in preparing the mid-day meal, some in gathering fruits and roots for future use, and others in improving the internal arrangements of their various huts, or in clearing away the débris of the late feast. As for little Sally, she superintended generally the work of the home department, and when she tired of that, went further afield in search of adventures.

Chapter Eight.

Division of the Island—Moralisings, Misgivings, and a Great Event.

There was no difficulty in apportioning the new possessions to which the mutineers had served themselves heirs. In that free-and-easy mode in which men in power sometimes arrange matters for their own special behoof, they divided the island into nine equal parts, of which each appropriated one part. The six native men were not only ignored in this arrangement, but they were soon given to understand, by at least several of their captors, that they were to be regarded as slaves and treated as such.

It is, however, but just to Edward Young to say that he invariably treated the natives well and was much liked by them, from which it is to be supposed that he did not quite fall in with the views of his associates, although he made no objection to the unjust distribution of the land. John Adams, being an amiable and

kindly man, also treated the natives well, and so did Fletcher Christian; but the others were more or less tyrannical, and those kindred spirits, Matthew Quintal and William McCoy, treated them with great severity, sometimes with excessive cruelty.

At first, however, things went well. The novelty and romance of their situation kept them all in good spirits. The necessity for constant activity in laying out their gardens, clearing the land around the place of settlement, and erecting good log-houses,—all this, with fresh air and abundance of good food, kept them in excellent health and spirits, so that even the worst among them were for a time amiably disposed; and it seemed as if those nine men had, by their act of mutiny, really introduced themselves into a terrestrial paradise.

And so they had, as far as nature was concerned, but the seeds of evil in themselves began ere long to grow and bear fruit.

The fear of the avenger in the form of a man-of-war was constantly before their minds. We have said that the *Bounty* had been burnt, and her charred remnants sunk to remove all traces of their presence on the island. For the same end a fringe of trees was left standing on the seaward side of their clearing, and no erection of any kind was allowed upon the seaward cliffs or inland heights.

One afternoon, Christian, who had been labouring in his garden, threw down his tools, and taking up the musket which he seldom left far from his hand, betook himself to the hills. He was fond of going there, and often spent many hours in solitary watching in the cave near the precipitous mountain-peak.

On his way up he had to pass the hut of William McCoy. The others, conforming to the natural tendency of mankind to congregate together, had built their houses round the cleared space on the table-land above Bounty Bay, from which central point they were wont to sally forth each morning to their farms or gardens, which were scattered wide apart in separate valleys. McCoy, however, aspired to higher heights and grander solitudes. His dwelling, a substantial log-hut, was perched upon a knoll overlooking the particular valley which he cultivated with the aid of his Otaheitan wife and one of the native men.

“You are getting on well,” said Christian to McCoy, who was felling a tree when he came up to him.

“Ay, slowly, but I’d get on a deal faster if that lazy brown-skin Ohoo would work harder. Just look at him. He digs up that bit o’ ground as if he was paid by the number o’ minutes he took to do it. I had to give him a taste of a rope’s end this morning, but it don’t seem to have done him much good.”

“It didn’t seem to do much good to you when you got it on board the *Bounty*,” said Christian, gravely.

“P’r’aps not; but we’re not on board the *Bounty*, now,” returned McCoy, somewhat angrily.

“Depend on it, McCoy,” said Christian, softening his tone, “that the cat never made any man work well. It can only force a scoundrel to obedience, nothing more.”

“H’m, I b’lieve you’re not far wrong, sir,” returned the other, resuming his work.

Giving a friendly nod to Ohoo as he passed, and a cheerful “good-morning” to Mrs McCoy, who was busy inside the hut, Christian passed slowly on through the luxuriant herbage with which that part of the hillside was covered.

At first he walked in the shade of many-stemmed banyans and feathery-topped palms, while the leaves of tall and graceful ferns brushed his cheeks, and numerous luxuriant flowering plants perfumed the air. Then he came to a clump of bushes, into which darted one of the goats that had by this time become almost wild. The goat's rush disturbed a huge sow with a litter of quite new pigs, the gruntings and squeakings of which gave liveliness to an otherwise quiet and peaceful scene.

Coming out on the shoulder of the mountain just above the woods, he turned round to look back. It was a splendid panorama of tropical vegetation, rounded knolls, picturesque mounds, green patches, and rugged cliffs, extending downwards to Bounty Bay with its fringe of surf, and beyond—all round—the sleeping sea.

Two or three little brown, sparrow-like birds twittered in the bushes near, and looked askance, as if they would question the man's right to walk there. One or two active lizards ran across his path, pausing now and then, and glancing upwards as if in great surprise.

Christian smiled sadly as he looked at them, then turned to breast the hill.

It was a rugged climb. Towards the top, where he diverged to the cave, every step became more difficult.

Reaching the hole where Isaac Martin had come by his misadventure, Christian descended by means of a rude ladder which he had constructed and let down into it. Entering the cave, he rested his musket against the wall of rock, and sat down on a ledge near the opening towards the sea. It was a giddy height. As he sat there with hands clasped over one knee and eyes fixed wistfully on the horizon, his right foot, thrust a little beyond the edge of the rock, overhung a tremendous precipice, many hundred feet deep.

For a long time he gazed so steadfastly and remained so motionless as to seem a portion of the rock itself. Then he heaved a sigh that relieved the pent-up feelings of an overburdened soul.

"So early!" he muttered, in a scarcely audible voice. "At the very beginning of life, just when hope, health, manhood, and opportunity were at the flood."

He stopped, and again remained motionless for a long time. Then, continuing in the same low, sad tone, but without altering his position or his wistful gaze.

"And *now*, an outlaw, an outcast, doomed, if taken, to a felon's death! Comrades seduced to their ruin! The brand of Cain not more terrible than mine! Self-exiled for life! Never, *never* more to see friends, country, kindred, sisters—mother! God help me!"

He laid his face in his hands and groaned aloud. Again he was silent, and remained without motion for nearly an hour.

"*Can* it be true?" he cried in a voice of suppressed agony, looking up as if expecting an answer from heaven. "Shall I never, never, *never* awake from this hideous dream!"

The conscience-smitten young man laid strong constraint upon himself and became calmer. When the sun began to approach the horizon he rose, and with an air of stern resolution, set about making various arrangements in the cave.

From the first Fletcher Christian had fixed on this cavern as a retreat, in case his place of refuge should be discovered. His hope was that, if a man-of-war should come at last and search the island, he and his comrades might escape detection in such a sequestered and well-concealed cavern. If not, they could hold out to the last and sell their lives dearly. Already he had conveyed to it, by degrees, a considerable supply of ammunition, some of the arms and a quantity of such provisions as would not readily spoil with time. Among other things, he carried to that elevated outlook Carteret's book of voyages and some other works, which had formed the very small library of the *Bounty*, including a Bible and a Church of England Prayer-book.

When not gazing on the horizon, expecting yet fearing the appearance of a sail, he passed much of his time in reading.

On the evening of which we write he had beguiled some time with Carteret, when a slight sound was heard outside the cavern.

Starting up with the nervous susceptibility induced by a guilty conscience, he seized his musket and cocked it. As quickly he set it down again, and smiled at his weakness. Next moment he heard a voice shouting. It drew nearer.

"Hallo, sir! Mr Christian!" cried John Adams, stooping down at the entrance.

"Come down, Adams, come down; there's no occasion to keep shouting up there."

"True, sir; but do you come up. You're wanted immediately."

There was something in the man's voice which alarmed Christian. Grasping his musket, he sprang up the ladder and stood beside his comrade.

"Well?"

"It's—it's all right, sir," said Adams, panting with his exertions in climbing the hill; "it's—it's a *boy*!"

Without a word of reply Christian shouldered his weapon, and hurried down the mountain-side in the direction of home.

Chapter Nine.

Sally's Chief Joys—Dark Clouds Overspread the Pitcairn Sky, and Darker Deeds are done.

Just before John Adams left the settlement for the purpose of calling Christian, whose retreat at the mountain-top was by that time well-known to every one, little Sally had gone, as was her wont, to enjoy herself in her favourite playground. This was a spot close to the house of Edward Young, where the débris of material saved from the *Bounty* had been deposited. It formed a bristling pile of masts, spars, planks, cross-trees, oars, anchors, nails, copper-bolts, sails, and cordage.

No material compound could have been more dangerous to childhood, and nothing conceivable more attractive to Sally. The way in which that pretty little nude infant disported herself on that pile was absolutely tremendous. She sprang over things as if she had been made expressly to fly. She tumbled off things as if she had been created to fall. She insinuated herself among anchor-flukes and chains as if she had been born an eel. She rolled out from among the folds of sails as if she were a live dumpling. She seemed to dance upon upturned nails, and to spike herself on bristling bolts; but she never hurt herself,—at least if she did she never cried, except in exuberant glee.

Now, it was while thus engaged one day that Sally became suddenly conscious of a new sound. Young as she was, she was fully alive to the influence of a new sensation. She paused in an attitude of eager attention. The strange sound came from Christian's hut. Sally waddled thither and looked in. The first thing that met her gaze was her own mother with a live creature in her hands, which she was carefully wrapping up in a piece of cloth. It was a pitifully thin whitey-brown creature, with a puckered face, resembling that of a monkey; but Sally had never seen a monkey, and probably did not think of the comparison. Presently the creature opened its mouth, shut its eyes, and uttered a painfully weak squall.

Cause and effect are not infrequently involved in mystery. We cannot tell why Sally, who never cried, either when hurt or scolded, should, on beholding this sight, set up a tremendous howl; but she did, and she kept up the howl with such vigour that John Adams was attracted to the spot in some alarm.

Stopping only long enough to look at the infant and see that the mother was all right, Adams ran off at full speed to the mountain-top, as we have seen, to be the first to announce the joyful news to the father.

Thus came into the world the first "descendant" of the mutineers of the *Bounty*.

It was with unwonted animation that the men sat down to supper that evening, each having congratulated Christian and inquired at the hut for the baby and mother, as he came in from work.

"What will you call him?" inquired Young, after pledging the new arrival in a cup of cocoa-nut milk.

"What day is it?" asked Christian.

"Thursday," answered Martin.

"Then I'll call him Thursday," said Christian; "it will commemorate the day."

"You'd better add 'October,' and commemorate the month," said Adams.

"So I will," said Christian.

"An' stick on 'Seventeen-ninety' to commemorate the year," suggested Mills.

"No, there are limits to everything," returned Christian; "three names are enough. Come, fill up your cups, lads, and drink to Thursday October Christian!"

With enthusiasm and a shout of laughter, the toast was pledged in cocoa-nut milk, and once again Christian's hand was shaken by his comrades all round.

The advent of TOC, as Adams called him, (or Toc, as he afterwards came to be styled), was, as it were, the breaking of the ice. It was followed ere long by quite a crop of babies. In a few months more a Matthew Quintal was added to the roll. Then a Daniel McCoy furnished another voice in the chorus, and Sally ceased to disquiet herself because of that which had ceased to be a novelty. This all occurred in 1791. After that there was a pause for a brief period; then, in 1792, Elizabeth Mills burst upon the astonished gaze of her father, and was followed immediately by another Christian, whom Fletcher, discarding his eccentric taste for days and months, named Charles.

By this time Sally had developed such a degree of matronly solicitude, that she was absolutely intrusted at times with the care of the other children. In a special manner she devoted herself to little Charlie Christian, who was a particularly sedate infant. Indeed, solemnity was stamped upon that child's visage from his birth. This seemed to harmonise intensely with Sally's sense of fun. She was wont to take Charlie away from his mother, and set him up on a log, or the rusty shank of the *Bounty's* "best bower," prop him up with sticks or bushes—any rubbish that came to hand—and sit down in front of him to gaze. Charlie, after the first few months of precarious infancy, became extremely fat. He used to open his solemn eyes as wide as was possible in the circumstances, and return the gaze with interest. Unable to restrain herself, Sally would then open her pretty mouth, shut her gorgeous eyes, and give vent to the richest peals of laughter.

"Oh, you's so good, Charlie!"

She had learned by that time to speak broken English in an infantine fashion, and her assertion was absolutely true, for Charlie Christian was preternaturally good.

The same cannot be said of all the members of this little community. Ere long, a period approached when the harmony which had hitherto prevailed was about to be broken. Increasing life had marked their course hitherto. Death now stepped in to claim his share.

The wife of John Williams went out one day to gather gulls' eggs among the cliffs. The women were all in the habit of doing this at times, and they had become expert climbers, as were also the men, both white and brown.

When day began to close, they wondered why Mrs Williams was so late of returning. Soon her husband became uneasy; then, taking alarm, he went off to search for her, accompanied by all the men. The unfortunate woman was found dead at the base of the cliffs. She had missed her footing and fallen while searching for eggs.

This accident had at first a deeply solemnising effect on the whole community. Accustomed though these men were to the sight of death in some of its worst forms in war, they were awed by this sudden and unexpected assault of the great enemy. The poor mangled body lying so quietly among the rocks at the foot of the awful precipice, the sight of the husband's grief, the sad and silent procession with the ghastly burden in the deepening gloom of evening, the wailing of the women, and the awestruck gaze of such of the children as were old enough to know that something terrible had occurred, though unable to understand it,—all conspired to deepen the impression, even on those among the men who were least easily impressed; and it was with softened feelings of pity that Quintal and McCoy, volunteering their services on the occasion, dug the first grave at Pitcairn.

Time, however, soon wore away these feelings. Williams not only got over his bereavement easily, but soon began to wish for another wife. It was, of course, impossible to obtain one righteously in the circumstances; he therefore resolved to take the wife of Talaloo the Otaheitan.

It must not be supposed that all Williams', comrades supported him in this wicked design. Christian, Young, and Adams remonstrated with him strongly; but he was obstinate, and threatened to take the boat and leave the island if they interfered with him. As he was an expert blacksmith, his comrades could not afford to lose him, and ceased remonstrating. Eventually he carried out his intention.

This was, as might have been expected, the beginning of trouble. The coloured men made common cause of it, and from that time forward began to plot the destruction of their white masters. What made matters worse was that Talaloo's wife was not averse to the change, and from that time became a bitter enemy of her Otaheitan husband. It was owing to this wicked woman's preference for Williams that the plot was afterwards revealed.

One evening, while sitting in Christian's house, Talaloo's wife began to sing a sort of extempore song, the chorus to which was:—

"Why does black man sharpen axe?

To kill white man."

Hearing this, Christian, who was close at hand, entered the hut and demanded an explanation. On being informed of the plot of the Otaheitan men to murder all the whites, a dark frown overspread his face. Hastily seizing his musket, he loaded it, but it was observed that he put no bullet in.

The Otaheitans were assembled at the time in a neighbouring house. Christian went straight to the house, charged the men with their guilty intentions, pointed his gun at them, and pulled the trigger. The piece missed fire. Before he could re-cock, Talaloo leaped through the doorway, followed by his friend Timoa, and took shelter in the woods.

The other four men begged for mercy, said that the two who had just left were the instigators as well as ringleaders in the plot, and promised to hunt them down and murder them if their own lives should be spared. As Christian had probably no fixed intention to kill any of the men, and his sudden anger soon abated, he accepted their excuses and left them. It was impossible, however, for the mutineers to feel confidence in the natives after that. The two men who had fled for refuge to the bush did not return to the settlement, but remained in hiding.

One day Talaloo's wife went, with some of the other women, to the southern side of the island to fish from the rocks. They were soon busily at work. The lines used had been made by themselves from the fibrous husk of the cocoa-nut. The hooks had been brought on shore from the *Bounty*. Chattering and laughing with the free-and-easy gaiety of savages, they plied their work—it seemed more like play—with varying success.

Suddenly the wife of Talaloo heard a faint hiss behind her. Turning her head, she saw her former husband in the bushes. He beckoned to her, and disappeared. None of the other women appeared to have heard or observed the man. Presently, Talaloo's wife rose, and going into the woods, joined her husband. She found him in company with Timoa.

"Is Talaloo become a dog that he should be driven to live in the bush?" demanded the man, with a stern air.

"The white men are strong," answered his wife, with a subdued look; "the women can do nothing."

"You can stay with me here in the bush if you will," said Talaloo. "The white men are strong, but we are stronger. We will kill the white men."

He turned with an air of offended dignity, and strode away. His wife meekly followed, and Timoa went with them.

Now, there was one woman among the fishers whose eyes were sharp and her hearing was keen.

This was Susannah, the wife of the midshipman Edward Young. She had followed Talaloo's wife, saw what occurred, and carried back a report to the settlement. A council of war was at once held.

"If we leave these men at liberty," said Williams, "we shall never again be able to go to rest in security."

"Something must be done," said Christian, with the air of a man whose mind wanders far away from the subject in hand.

"Kill them," suggested McCoy.

"Yes," said Quintal; "I vote that we get up a grand hunt, run them to earth, and shoot them like dogs, as they are."

"Not so easy as you think to hunt down such men among these wild and wooded hills," said Young. "Besides, it is only Talaloo who has threatened us; Timoa is guiltless, I think."

"I'll tell you what we'll do, lads; we'll poison 'em," said Williams. "I've heard of such a thing bein' done at Otaheite by one of the women. She knows how to get the poison from some sort of plant, I believe, and I'm pretty sure that Menalee will help us."

The plan thus suggested was finally adopted. One of the women made three puddings, two of which were good, the third was poisoned. Menalee at once agreed to go to the fugitives, say he had stolen the puddings, and would be willing to share them. The two good puddings were to be given to Talaloo's wife and Timoa, the poisoned one to Talaloo himself. For further security Menalee was to carry a pistol with him, and use it if necessary.

The assassin was not long in tracking out his countrymen.

"You bring us food?" said Talaloo.

"Yes, I have stolen it. Will you have some?"

They all accepted the puddings, and Timoa and the woman began to eat; but Talaloo was quick witted. He observed something unusual in Menalee's manner, suspected poison, and would not eat his pudding. Laying it aside, he ate that of his wife along with her.

Menalee pretended not to notice this. After the others had done eating, he proposed that they should all go a little farther up into the bushes, where, he said, he had left his own wife among some breadfruit trees.

Talaloo agreeing to this, they rose and walked away. The footpath being narrow, they were obliged to go in single file. Menalee walked behind Talaloo. After having gone a few paces, the former drew his pistol, pointed it at the back of his countryman's head, and pulled the trigger, but it missed fire. Talaloo hearing the click, turned round, saw the pistol, and immediately fled; but his enemy was swift of foot, soon overtook him, and the two grappled. A severe struggle ensued, Timoa and the woman standing by and looking on, but rendering help to neither party.

The two combatants were pretty well matched. The pistol had fallen at the first onset, and for a few minutes it seemed doubtful which should prove the victor, as they swayed to and fro, straining their dark and sinewy forms in deadly conflict. At last the strength of Talaloo seemed to give way, but still he retained a vice-like grasp of his antagonist's right wrist.

"Won't you help me?" gasped Talaloo, turning an appealing glance on his wife.

"No," cried Menalee, "but she will help me to kill Talaloo."

The hardened woman picked up the pistol, and going towards her husband struck him on the head. Menalee quickly finished with his knife what the murderess had begun.

For a few minutes the three stood looking at the murdered man in silence, when they returned to the settlement and told what they had done. But the assassin's work was not yet over. Another of the natives, named Ohoo, had fled to the woods, threatening vengeance against the white men. It was deemed necessary that he too should be killed, and Menalee was again found to be a willing instrument. Timoa, who had exhibited such callous indifference at the murder of Talaloo, was his fitting companion. They soon found Ohoo, and succeeded in killing him.

Strange to say, the mutineers, after these foul deeds, dwelt for a long time in comparative peace and harmony. It seemed as if their worst feelings had found full vent and been expended in the double murder. No doubt this state of hollow peace was partly owing to the fact that the native men, now being reduced to four in number, felt themselves to be unable to cope with their masters, and quietly submitted to the inevitable.

But by degrees the evil spirits in some of the party began to reassert their power. McCoy and Quintal in particular became very savage and cruel. They never hesitated to flog or knock down a native on the slightest pretext, insomuch that these unhappy men were again driven to plot the destruction of their masters. Adams, Christian, and Young were free from the stain of wanton cruelty. Young in particular was kind to the natives, and a favourite both with men and women.

Chapter Ten.

Dangers, Joys, Trials, and Multiplication.

"I'm going to the cliffs to-day, Williams," said Young one morning. "Will you come?"

Williams was busy at the forge under the pleasant shade of the great banyan-tree. Resting his hammer on the anvil, he looked up.

“No,” he answered. “I can’t go till I’ve finished this spade. It’s the last bit of iron we have left that’ll serve for such a purpose.”

“That’s no reason why you should not let it lie till the afternoon or to-morrow.”

“True, but I’ve got another reason for pushing through with it. Isaac Martin says the want of a spade keeps him idle, and you know it’s a pity to encourage idleness in a lazy fellow.”

“You are right. What is Martin about just now?”

“Working at the big water-tank. It suits him, a heavy quiet sort of job with the pick, requiring no energy or thought,—only a sleepy sort o’ perseverance, of which long-legged Isaac has plenty.”

“Come, now,” returned Young, with a laugh. “I see you are getting jealous of Martin’s superior intellect. But where are Quintal and McCoy?”

“Diggin’ in their gardens, I suppose. Leastwise, I heerd Mr Christian say to Mainmast he’d seen ’em go off in that direction. Mr Christian himself has gone to his old outlook aloft on the mountains. If he don’t see a sail at last it won’t be for want o’ keepin’ a bright look-out.”

The armourer smiled grimly as he thrust the edge of the half-formed spade into the fire, and began to blow his bellows.

“You’ve got them to work again,” said Young, referring to the bellows which had belonged to the *Bounty*.

“Ay, patched ’em up after a fashion, though there’s a good deal o’ windage somewheres. If them rats git hold of ’em again, the blacksmith’s occupation’ll be gone. Here comes Bill Brown; p’r’aps *he* won’t object to go bird-nestin’ with ’ee.”

The armourer drew the glowing metal from the fire as he spoke, and sent the bright sparks flying up into the leaves of the banyan-tree while the botanist approached.

“I’ll go, with all my heart,” said Brown, on being invited by Young to accompany him. “We’d better take Nehow with us. He is the best cliff-man among the natives.”

“That’s just what I thought of doing,” said Young, “and—ah! here comes some one else who will be glad to go.”

The midshipman’s tone and manner changed suddenly as he held out both hands by way of invitation to Sally, who came skipping forward, and ran gleefully towards him.

Sally was no longer the nude cherub which had landed on the island. She had not only attained to maturer years, but was precocious both in body and mind,—had, as we have shown, become matronly in her ideas and actions, and was clothed in a short petticoat of native cloth, and a little scarf of the same, her pretty little head being decorated with a wreath of flowers culled and constructed by herself.

"No, I can't go," answered Sally to Young's invitation, with a solemn shake of her head.

"Why not?"

"'Cause I's got to look arter babby."

Up to this period Sally had shown a decided preference for the ungrammatical language of the seamen, though she associated freely with Young and Christian. Perhaps her particular fondness for John Adams may have had something to do with this.

"Which baby, Sall? You know your family is a pretty large one."

"Yes, there's a stunnin' lot of 'em—a'most too many for me; but I said *the* babby."

"Oh, I suppose you mean Charlie Christian?"

"In coorse I means Challie," replied the child, with a smile that displayed a dazzling set of teeth, the sparkle of which was only equalled by that of her eyes.

"Well, but you can bring Charlie along with you," said Young, "and I'll engage to carry him and you too if you get tired. There, run away; find him, and fetch him quick."

Little Sall went off like the wind, and soon returned with the redoubtable Charles in her arms. It was all she could do to stagger under the load; but Charlie Christian had not yet attained to facility in walking. He was still in the nude stage of childhood, and his faithful nurse, being afraid lest he should get badly scratched if dragged at a rapid pace through the bushes, had carried him.

Submitting, according to custom, in solemn and resigned surprise, Charlie was soon seated on the shoulders of our midshipman, who led the way to the cliffs. William Brown followed, leading Sally by the hand, for she refused to be carried, and Nehow brought up the rear.

The cliffs to which their steps were directed were not more than an hour's walk from the settlement at Bounty Bay, though, for Sally's sake, the time occupied in going was about half-an-hour longer. It was a wild spot which had been selected. The towering walls of rock were rugged with ledges, spurs, and indentations, where sea-birds in myriads gave life to the scene, and awakened millions of echoes to their plaintive cries. There was a pleasant appearance of sociability about the birds which was powerfully attractive. Even Nehow, accustomed as he was to such scenes, appeared to be impressed. The middy and the botanist were excited. As for Sally, she was in ecstasies, and the baby seemed lost in the profoundest fit of wonder he had experienced since the day of his birth.

"Oh, Challie," exclaimed his nurse in a burst of laughter, "what a face you's got! Jis' like de fig'r'ead o' the *Bounty*." (Sall quoted here!) "Ain't they bootiful birds?"

She effectually prevented reply, even if such had been intended, by suddenly seizing her little charge round the neck and kissing his right eye passionately. Master Charlie cared nothing for that. He gazed past her at the gulls with the unobliterated eye. When she kissed him on the left cheek, he gazed past her at the gulls with the other eye. When she let him go, he continued to gaze at the gulls with both eyes. He had often seen the same gulls at a distance, from the lower level of Bounty Bay, but he had never before stood

on their own giddy cliffs, and watched them from their own favourite bird's-eye-view point; for there were thousands of them sloping, diving, and wheeling in the airy abyss, pictured against the dark blue sea below, as well as thousands more circling upwards, floating and gyrating in the bright blue sky above. It seemed as if giant snowflakes were trembling in the air in all directions. Some of the gulls came so near to those who watched them that their black inquiring eyes became distinctly visible; others swept towards them with rustling wings, as if intending to strike, and then glanced sharply off, or upwards, with wild cries.

"Wouldn't it be fun to have wings?" asked Brown of Sally, as she stood there open-mouthed and eyed.

"Oh, *wouldn't* it?"

"If I had wings," said Young, with a touch of sadness in his tone, "I'd steer a straight course through the air for Old England."

"I didn't know you had such a strong desire to be hanged," said Brown.

"They'd never hang me," returned Young. "I'm innocent of the crime of mutiny, and Captain Bligh knows it."

"Bligh would be but a broken reed to lean on," rejoined Brown, with a shrug of contempt. "If he liked you, he'd favour you; if he didn't, he'd go dead against you. I wouldn't trust myself in *his* hands whether innocent or guilty. Depend upon it, Mr Young, Fletcher Christian would have been an honour to the service if he had not been driven all but mad by Bligh. I don't justify Mr Christian's act—it cannot be defended,—but I have great sympathy with him. The only man who deserves to be hanged for the mutiny of the *Bounty*, in my opinion, is Mr Bligh himself; but men seldom get their due in this world, either one way or another."

"That's a powerfully radical sentiment," said Young, laughing; "it's to be hoped that men will at all events get their due in the next world, and it is well for you that Pitcairn is a free republic. But come, we must go to work if we would have a kettle of fresh eggs. I see a ledge which seems accessible, and where there must be plenty of eggs, to judge from the row the gulls are making round it. I'll try. See, now, that you don't get yourself into a fix that you can't get out of. You know that the heads of you landsmen are not so steady as those of seamen."

"I know that the heads of landsmen are not stuffed with such conceit as the heads of you sailors," retorted Brown, as he went off to gather eggs.

"Now, Sally, do you stop here and take care of Charlie," said Young, leading the little girl to a soft grassy mound, as far back from the edge of the cliff as possible. "Mind that you don't leave this spot till I return. I know I can trust you, and as for Charlie—"

"Oh, he never moves a'most, 'xcept w'en I lifts 'im. He's *so* good!" interrupted Sally.

"Well, just keep a sharp eye on him, and we'll soon be back with lots of eggs."

While Edward Young was thus cautioning the child, William Brown was busy making his way down the cliffs to some promising ledges below, and Nehow, the Otaheitan, clambered up the almost perpendicular face of the part that rose above them. (See frontispiece.)

It was interesting to watch the movements of the three men. Each was, in his own way, venturesome, fearless, and more or less practised in cliff climbing. The midshipman ascended the perpendicular face with something of a nautical swagger, but inasmuch as the ledges, crevices, and projections were neither so well adapted to the hands nor so sure as ratlines and ropes, there was a wholesome degree of caution mingled with his confidence. When the wished-for ledge was gained, he gave relief to his feelings in a hearty British cheer that reverberated from cliff to cliff, causing the startled sea-gulls to drive the very echoes mad with their clangour.

The botanist, on the other hand, proceeded with the extreme care of a man who knew that a false step or uncertain grip might send him into the seething mass of foam and rocks below. But he did not hesitate or betray want of courage in attempting any difficulty which he had made up his mind to face.

The proceedings of Nehow, however, seemed little short of miraculous. He appeared to run up perpendicular places like a cat; to leap where the others crept, to scramble where his companions did not dare to venture, and, loosely speaking, to hang on occasionally to nothing by the point of his nose, his eyelids, or his finger-nails! We say that he appeared to do all this, but the gulls who watched and followed him in noisy indignation could have told you, if they had chosen, that his eye was quick, that his feet and hands were sure, and that he never trusted foot or hand for one moment on a doubtful projection or crevice.

For some time all went well. The three men soon returned, each with a few eggs which they laid on the grass in three little heaps, to be watched and guarded by Sally, and to be stared at in grave surprise by Charlie. They carried their eggs in three round baskets without lids, and with handles which folded over on one side, so that the baskets could be fitted into each other when not in use, or slung round the necks of the egg-collectors while they were climbing.

The last to return to the children was William Brown. He brought his basket nearly half full of fine eggs, and set it down beside the two heaps already brought in.

“Ain’t they lovely, Sall?” asked Brown, wiping the perspiration from his brow with the sleeve of his coat. That same coat, by the way, was very disreputable—threadbare and worn,—being four years old on the lowest calculation, and having seen much rough service, for Brown had an objection to the tapa cloth, and said he would stick to the old coat as long as it would stick to him. The truth is he felt it, with his worn canvas trousers and Guernsey shirt, to be in some sense a last link to “home,” and he was loath to part with them.

“Lovely!” exclaimed Sally, “they’s jus’ bootiful.” Nothing could exceed “bootiful” in Sally’s mind—she had paid the eggs the highest possible compliment.

Charlie did them, at the same moment, the greatest possible damage, by sitting down in the basket, unintentionally, with an awful crash.

From the gaze of horror that he cast upwards, it was evident that he was impressed with a strong belief that he had done something wrong, though the result did not seem to him unpleasant. The gaze of horror

quickly changed into one of alarm when he observed the shocked countenance of Sally, and he burst into uncontrollable tears.

"Poor thing," said Brown, lifting him out of the mess and setting him on his legs. "Never mind, old man, I'll fetch you a better basketful soon. You clean him up, Sall, and I'll be back in a jiffy."

So saying, Brown took up his basket, emptied out the mess, wiped it with a bunch of grass, and descended the short slope to the cliff edge, laughing as he went.

Poor Sally's shocked expression had not yet passed off when Charlie came to a sudden stop, shut his mouth tightly and opened his eyes, as though to say, "Well, how do you take it now?"

"Oh, Challie, but you *is* bad to-day."

This was enough. The shades of darkest night settled down on Charlie's miserable soul. Re-shutting his eyes and reopening his mouth, he poured forth the woe of his inconsolable heart in prolonged and passionate howling.

"No, no; O *don't*!" cried the repentant Sally, her arms round his neck and fondling him. "I didn't mean it. I'm *so* sorry. It's me that's bad—badder than you ever was."

But Charlie refused to be comforted. He flung himself on the grass in agony of spirit, to the alarm and grief of his poor nurse.

"Me's dood?" he cried, pausing suddenly, with a blaze of inquiry in his wet visage.

"Yes, yes, good as gold—gooder, far gooder!"

Sally did not possess an enlightened conscience at that time. She would have said anything to quiet him, but he would not be quieted.

"Me's dood—O *dood*! ah-o-ee-aw-ee!"

The noise was bad enough, but the way he flung himself about was worse. There was no occasion for Sally to clean him up. Rolling thus on the green turf made him as pure, if not bright, as a new pin; but it had another effect, which gave Sally a fright such as she had never up to that time conceived of, and never afterwards forgot.

In his rollings Charlie came to the edge of the knoll where a thick but soft bush concealed a ledge, or drop, of about two feet. Through this bush he passed in a moment. Sally leaped up and sprang to the spot, just in time to see her charge rolling helplessly down the slope to what appeared to be certain death.

There was but a short slope between the bush and the cliff. Rotund little Charlie "fetched way" as he advanced, despite one or two feeble clutches at the rocks.

If Sally had been a few years older she would have bounded after him like a goat, but she had only reached that period of life which rendered petrifaction possible. She stood ridged for a few moments with heart, head, and eyes apparently about to burst. At last her voice found vent in a shriek so awful that it

made the heart of Young, high on the cliffs above, stand still. It had quite the contrary effect on the legs of Brown. That cautious man chanced to be climbing the cliff slowly with a fresh basketful of eggs. Hearing the shriek, and knowing full well that it meant imminent danger, he leaped up the last few steps of the precipice with a degree of heedless agility that equalled that of Nehow himself. He was just in time to see Charlie coming straight at him like a cannon shot. It was really an awful situation. To have received the shock while his footing was still precarious would have insured his own destruction as well as that of the child. Feeling this, he made a kangaroo-like bound over the edge of the cliff, and succeeded in planting both feet and knees firmly on a grassy foundation, just in time. Letting go his burden, he spread out both arms. Charlie came into his bosom with extreme violence, but he remained firm, while the basket of eggs went wildly downward to destruction.

Meanwhile, Sally stood there with clasped hands and glazed eyes, sending up shriek after shriek, which sent successive stabs to the heart of Edward Young, as he scurried and tumbled, rather than ran, down from the upper cliffs towards her.

In a few minutes he came in pale and panting. A minute later and Nehow ran round a neighbouring point like a greyhound.

“All right?” gasped Young.

“All right,” replied Brown.

“Wheeaow-ho!” exclaimed Nehow, expanding his cavernous mouth with a grin of satisfaction.

It is worthy of record that little Sally did not revisit these particular cliffs for several years after that exciting and eventful day, and that she returned to the settlement with a beating and grateful heart.

It must not be supposed that Charlie Christian remained for any great length of time “the babby” of that infant colony. By no means. In a short time after the event which we have just described, there came to Pitcairn a little sister to Charlie. She was named Mary, despite the earnest suggestion of Isaac Martin, that as she was “born of a Wednesday,” she ought to be called by that name.

Of course Otaheitan Sally at once devoted herself to the newcomer, but she did not on that account forsake her first love. No; her little brown heart remained true to Charlie, though she necessarily gave him less of her society than before.

Then Mrs Quintal gave her husband the additional burden, as he styled it, of a daughter, whom he named Sarah, for no other reason, that any one could make out, than the fact that his wife did not like it, and his friend McCoy had advised him on no account to adopt it. Thus was little Matthew Quintal also provided with a sister.

Shortly after that, John Adams became a moderately happy father, and called the child Dinah, because he had never had a female relation of that name; indeed, he had never possessed a relation of any kind whatever that he knew of, having been a London street-boy, a mere waif, when he first became aware, so to speak, of his own existence.

About the same time that little Dinah was born, John Mills rushed one day into the yam-field of Edward Young, where the midshipman was at work, seized his hand, and exclaimed—"I wish you joy, sir, it's a *girl*!"

Not to be out-done in civility, Young carefully watched his opportunity, and, only four days later, rushed into the yam-garden of John Mills, where he was smoking, seized his hand, and exclaimed—"I congratulate you, Mills, it's a *boy*!" So, Young called his daughter Folly, because he had an old aunt of that name who had been kind to him; and Mills called his son John, after himself, who, he said, was the kindest friend he ever had.

By this time poor Otaheitan Sally became overburdened with care. It became evident that she could not manage to look after so large a family of helpless infants, even though her services should only be required when the mothers were busy in the gardens. Mrs Isabella Christian, *alias* Mainmast, was therefore relieved of part of her field duties, and set apart for infantry drill.

Thus the rising generation multiplied and grew apace; and merry innocent laughter and gleeful childlike shouts began to resound among the cliffs and groves of the lonely refuge of the mutineers.

Chapter Eleven.

Sporting, Schooling and Moralising.

Time flew by with rapid wing, and the infant colony prospered in many ways, though not in all.

One day John Adams took down his gun from the pegs on which it rested above the door of his hut. Saying to his wife that he was going to shoot a few cats and bring home a pig for supper, he sallied forth, and took the footpath that led to one of the darkest recesses of the lonely island.

Lest the reader should imagine that Adams was a cruel man, we must explain that, several years having elapsed since the landing of the mutineers on Pitcairn, the cats had by that time multiplied excessively, and instead of killing the rats, which was their duty, had taken to hunting and devouring the chickens. For this crime the race of cats was condemned to death, and the sentence was put in force whenever opportunity offered.

Fortunately, the poultry had also multiplied quickly, and the hogs had increased to such a degree that many of them had been allowed to take to a wild life in the woods, where they were hunted and shot when required for food. Sporting, however, was not often practised, because the gunpowder which had been saved from the *Bounty* had by this time sensibly diminished. Strange to say, it did not seem to occur to any of the men that the bow and arrow might become of use when guns became useless. Probably they looked upon such weapons with contempt, for they only made little bows, as playthings for the children, with harmless, blunt-headed arrows.

On turning from the clearing into the bush, Adams came on a sight which amused him not a little. In an open place, partially screened from the sun by the graceful leaves of palms and bananas, through which was obtained a glimpse of the sea, Otaheitan Sally was busily engaged in playing at "school." Seated on

the end of a felled tree was Thursday October Christian, who had become, as Isaac Martin expressed it, a great lout of a boy for his age.

Thursday was at the head of the class, not in virtue of his superior knowledge, but his size. He was a strong-made fellow, with a bright, intelligent, good-humoured face, like that of his father. Next to him sat little Matt Quintal, rather heavy and stupid in expression, but quiet and peaceable in temperament, like his mother. Next came Daniel McCoy, whose sharp sparkling countenance seemed the very embodiment of mischief, in which quality he resembled his father. Fortunately for little Dan, his mother was the gentlest and most unselfish of all the native women, and these qualities, transmitted to her son, were the means of neutralising the evil which he inherited from his father. After him came Elizabeth Mills, whose pretty little whitey-brown face was the counterpart of her mother's in expression. Indeed, all of these little ones inherited in a great degree that sweet pliability of character for which the Otaheitan women were, and we believe still are, famous. Last, but not least, sat Charlie Christian at the bottom of the class.

"Now, hol' up your heads an' pay 'tention," said the teacher, with the air of authority suitable to her position.

It may be observed here, that Sally's knowledge of schooling and class-work was derived from Edward Young, who sometimes amused himself and the children by playing at "school," and even imparted a little instruction in this way.

"Don't wink, Dan'l McCoy," said Sally, in a voice which was meant to be very stern, but was laughably sweet.

"P'ease, Missis, Toc's vinkin' too." Thus had Dan learned to express Thursday's name by his initials.

There was a touch of McCoy senior in this barefaced attempt to divert attention from himself by criminating another.

"I know that Toc is winking," replied Sally, holding up a finger of reproof; "but he winks with *both* eyes, an' you does it with only *one*, which is naughty. An' when you speaks to me, sir, don't say vink—say wink."

"Yis, mum," replied little Dan, casting down his eyes with a look of humility so intense that there was a sudden irruption of dazzling teeth along the whole class.

"Now, Toc, how much does two and three make?"

"Six," replied Thursday, without a moment's hesitation.

"Oh, you booby!" said Sally.

"P'ease, mum, he ain't booby, him's dux," said Dan.

"But he's a booby for all that, sir. You hold you tongue, Dan'l, an' tell me what three and two makes."

"P'ease, mum, I can't," answered Dan, folding his hands meekly; "but p'r'aps Charlie can; he's clebber you know. Won't you ax 'im?"

"Yes, I will ask 'im. Challie, what's three an' two?"

If Charlie had been asked how to square the circle, he could not have looked more innocently blank, but the desire to please Sally was in him a sort of passion. Gazing at her intently with reddening face, he made a desperate guess, and by the merest chance said, "Five."

Sally gave a little shriek of delight, and looked in triumph at Dan. That little creature, who seemed scarce old enough to receive a joke, much less to make one, looked first at Charlie and winked with his left eye, then at Thursday and winked with his right one.

"You're winkin' again, sir," cried Sally, sharply.

"Yis, mum, but with *bof* eyes this time, vich isn't naughty, you know."

"But it *is* naughty, sir, unless you do it with both eyes at *once*."

"Oh, with bof at vunce!" exclaimed Dan, who thereupon shut both eyes very tight indeed, and then opened them in the widest possible condition of surprise.

This was too much for Sally. She burst into a hearty fit of laughter. Her class, being ever ready to imitate such an example, followed suit. Charlie tumbled forward and rolled on the grass with delight, little Dan kicked up his heels and tumbled back over the log in ecstasy, and Thursday October swayed himself to and fro, while the other two got up and danced with glee.

It was while the school was in this disorganised state that John Adams came upon them.

"That's right, Sall," he said, heartily, as he patted the child's head. "You keep 'em at it. Nothin' like havin' their noses held to the grindstone when they're young. You didn't see anybody pass this way, did you?"

"No," replied the child, looking earnestly up into the seaman's countenance.

It was a peculiarity of these children that they could change from gay to grave with wonderful facility. The mere putting of the question had changed the current of their minds as they earnestly and gravely strove to recollect whether any one had been seen to pass during the morning.

"No," repeated Sally, "don't think nobody have pass this mornin'."

"Yis, there vas vun," said little Dan, who had become more profoundly thoughtful than the others.

"Ay, who was that, my little man?" said Adams.

"Isaac Martin's big sow," replied Dan, gravely.

The shout of laughter that followed this was not in proportion to the depth but the unexpectedness of the joke, and John Adams went on his way, chuckling at the impudence of what he called the precocious snipe.

In a short time the seaman found himself in a thicket, so dense that it was with difficulty he could make his way through the luxuriant underwood. On his left hand he could see the sky through the leaves, on his right the steep sides of the mountain ridge that divided the island.

Coming to a partially open space, he thought he saw the yellow side of a hog. He raised his gun to fire, when a squeaky grunt told him that this was a mother reposing with her family. He contented himself, therefore, with a look at them, and gave vent to a shout that sent them scampering down the hill.

Soon after that he came upon a solitary animal and shot it.

The report of the musket and the accompanying yell brought the Otaheitan man Tetaheite to his side.

“Well met, Tighty,” (so he styled him); “I want you to carry that pig to Mrs Adams. You didn’t see any cats about, did you?”

“No, sar.”

“Have you seen Mr Christian at the tanks this morning?”

“Yis, sar; but him’s no dere now. Him’s go to de mountain-top.”

“Ha! I thought so. Well, take the pig to my wife, Tighty, and say I’ll be back before dark.”

The native threw the animal over his broad shoulders, and Adams directed his steps to the well-known cave on the mountain-top, where the chief of the mutineers spent so much of his leisure time.

After the murder of the two natives, Talaloo and Ohoo, Fletcher Christian had become very morose. It seemed as if a fit of deep melancholy had taken entire possession of him. His temper had become greatly soured. He would scarcely condescend to hold intercourse with any one, and sought the retirement of his outlook in the cave on the mountain-top, where few of his comrades ventured to disturb him, save when matters of importance claimed his immediate attention.

Latterly, however, a change had been observed in his demeanour. He had become gentle, almost amiable, and much more like his former self before the blighting influence of Bligh had fallen on him. Though he seldom laughed, he would chat pleasantly with his companions, as in days gone by, and frequently took pains to amuse the children. In particular, he began to go frequently for long walks in the woods with his own sons—little Charlie on his back, and Thursday October gambolling by his side; also Otaheitan Sally, for that careful nurse refused to acknowledge any claim to the guardianship of Charlie as being superior to her own, not even that of a father.

But Fletcher Christian, although thus changed for the better in many respects, did not change in his desire for solitude. His visits to the outlook became not less but rather more frequent and prolonged than before.

He took no one into his confidence. The only man of the party who ever ventured to visit him in his “outlook” was Edward Young; but his visits were not frequent, though they were usually protracted when they did take place, and the midshipman always returned from them with an expression of seriousness, which, it was observed, never passed quickly away. But Young was not more disposed to be

communicative as to these visits than Christian himself, and his comrades soon ceased to think or care about the matter.

With his mind, meditating on these things, John Adams slowly wended his way up the mountain-side, until he drew near to the elevated hermitage of his once superior officer, now his comrade in disgrace and exile.

Stout John Adams felt his blunt, straightforward, seafaring spirit slightly abashed as he thus ventured to intrude on the privacy of one for whom, despite his sins and their terrible consequences, he had never lost respect. It felt like going into the captain's cabin without orders. The seaman's purpose was to remonstrate with Christian for thus daily giving himself up, as he expressed it, "to such a long spell o' the blues."

Drawing near to the entrance of the cavern, he was surprised to hear the sound of voices within.

"Humph, somebody here before me," he muttered, coming to an abrupt pause, and turning, as if with the intention of retracing his steps,—but the peculiarity of the sounds that issued from the cave held him as if spellbound.

Chapter Twelve.

Converse in the Cave—Cruelty, Punishment, and Revelry.

It was Fletcher Christian's voice,—there could be no doubt about that; but it was raised in very unfamiliar tones, and it went on steadily, with inflections, as if in pathos and entreaty.

"Can he be praying?" thought Adams, in surprise, for the tones, though audible, were not articulate. Suddenly they waxed louder, and "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" broke on the listener's ear. "Oh bless and deliver the men whom I have led astray—poor Edward Young, John Adams, Isaac Martin—"

The tones here sank and again became inarticulate, but Adams could not doubt that Christian was praying, by name, for the rest of his companions. Presently the name of Jesus was heard distinctly, and then the voice ceased.

Ashamed to have been thus unintentionally led into eavesdropping, Adams coughed, and made as much noise as possible while stooping to pass under the low entrance to the cave. There was no door of any kind, but a turn in the short passage concealed the cave itself from view. Before entering, Adams stopped.

"May I come in, sir?" he called out.

"Is that you, Adams? By all means come in."

Christian was seated, partly in the shadow, partly in the light that streamed in from the seaward opening. A quiet smile was on his lips, and his hand rested on an open book. It was the old Bible of the *Bounty*.

"Beg pardon, sir," said Adams, touching his hat. "Hope I don't intrude. I heard you was—was—"

"Praying," said Christian. "Yes, Adams, I have been praying."

"Well, sir," said Adams, feeling rather awkward, but assuming an air of encouragement, "you've got no reason to be ashamed of that."

"Quite true, Adams, and I'm *not* ashamed of it. I've not only got no reason to be ashamed of praying, but I have strong reason to be thankful that I'm inclined to pray. Sit down, Adams, on the ledge opposite. You've got something on your mind, I see, that you want to get rid of. Come, let's have it."

There was nothing but good-natured encouragement in Christian's look and tone; nevertheless, John Adams felt it extremely difficult to speak, and wished with all his heart that he had not come to the cave. But he was too bold and outspoken a man to be long oppressed with such feelings. Clearing his voice, he said, "Well, Mr Christian, here's what I've got to say. I've bin thinkin' for a long time past that it's of no manner of use your comin' up here day after day an' mopin' away about what can't be mended, an' goin' into the blues. You'll excuse me, sir, for bein' so free, but you shouldn't do it, sir. You can't alter what's bin done by cryin' over spilt milk, an' it comes heavy on the rest of us, like. Indeed it do. So I've made so bold as to come an' say you'd better drop it and come along with me for a day's shootin' of the cats an' pigs, and then we'll go home an' have a royal supper an' a song or two, or maybe a game at blind-man's-buff with the child'n. That's what'll do you good, sir, an' make you forget what's past, take my word for it, Mister Christian."

While Adams was speaking, Christian's expression varied, passing from the kindly smile with which he had received his friend to a look of profound gravity.

"You are both right and wrong, Adams, like the rest of us," he said, grasping the sailor's extended hand; "thank you all the same for your advice and good feeling. You are wrong in supposing that anything short of death can make me forget the past or lessen my feeling of self-condemnation; but you are right in urging me to cease moping here in solitude. I have been told that already much more strongly than you have put it."

"Have you, sir?" said Adams, with a look of surprise.

"Yes," said Christian, touching the open Bible, "God's book has told me. It has told me more than that. It has told me there is forgiveness for the chief of sinners."

"You say the truth, sir," returned Adams, with an approving nod. "Repenting as you do, sir, an' as I may say we all do, of what is past and can't be helped, a merciful God will no doubt forgive us all."

"That's not it, that's not it," said Christian, quickly. "Repentance is not enough. Why, man, do you think if I went to England just now, and said ever so earnestly or so truly, 'I repent,' that I'd escape swinging at the yard-arm?"

"Well, I can't say you would," replied the sailor, somewhat puzzled; "but then man's ways ain't the same as God's ways; are they, sir?"

"That's true, Adams; but justice is always the same, whether with God or man. Besides, if repentance alone would do, where is the need of a Saviour?"

Adams's puzzled look increased, and finally settled on the horizon. The matter had evidently never occurred to him before in that light. After a short silence he turned again to Christian.

"Well, sir, to be frank with you, I must say that I don't rightly understand it."

"But I do," said Christian, again laying his hand on the Bible, "at least I think I do. God has forgiven me for Jesus Christ's sake, and His Spirit has made me repent and accept the forgiveness, and now I feel that there is work, serious work, for me to do. I have just been praying that God would help me to do it. I'll explain more about this hereafter. Meanwhile, I will go with you to the settlement, and try at least some parts of your plan. Come."

There was a quiet yet cheerful air of alacrity about Fletcher Christian that day, so strongly in contrast with his previous sad and even moody deportment, that John Adams could only note it in silent surprise.

"Have you been readin' much o' that book up here, sir?" he asked, as they began to descend the hill.

"Do you mean God's book?"

"Yes."

"Well, yes, I've been reading it, off and on, for a considerable time past; but I didn't quite see the way of salvation until recently."

"Ha! that's it; that's what must have turned your head."

"What!" exclaimed Christian, with a smiling glance at his perplexed comrade. "Do you mean turned in the right or the wrong direction?"

"Well, whether right or wrong, it's not for me to say but for you to prove, Mr Christian."

This reply seemed to set the mind of the other wandering, for he continued to lead his companion down the hill in silence after that. At last he said—

"John Adams, whatever turn my head may have got, I shall have reason to thank God for it all the days of my life—ay, and afterwards throughout eternity."

The silence which ensued after this remark was broken soon after by a series of yells, which came from the direction of Matthew Quintal's house, and caused both Christian and Adams to frown as they hastened forward.

"There's one man that needs forgiveness," said Adams, sternly. "Whether he'll get it or not is a question."

Christian made no reply. He knew full well that both McCoy and Quintal were in the habit of flogging their slaves, Nehow and Timoa, and otherwise treating them with great cruelty. Indeed, there had reached him a report of treatment so shocking that he could scarcely credit it, and thought it best at the time to take no notice of the rumour; but afterwards he was told of a repetition of the cruelty, and now he seemed about to witness it with his own eyes. Burning indignation at first fired his soul, and he resolved to punish Quintal. Then came the thought, "Who was it that tempted Quintal to mutiny, and placed him in his

present circumstances?" The continued cries of agony, however, drove all connected thought from his brain as he ran with Adams towards the house.

They found poor Nehow tied to a cocoa-nut tree, and Quintal beside him. He had just finished giving him a cruel flogging, and was now engaged in rubbing salt into the wounds on his lacerated back.

With a furious shout Christian rushed forward. Quintal faced round quickly. He was livid with passion, and raised a heavy stick to strike the intruders; but Christian guarded the blow with his left arm, and with his right fist knocked the monster down. At the same time Adams cut the lashings that fastened Nehow, who instantly fled to the bush.

Quintal, although partially stunned, rose at once and faced his adversary, but although possessed of bulldog courage, he could not withstand the towering wrath of Christian. He shrank backward a step, with a growl like a cowed but not conquered tiger.

"The slave is *mine*!" he hissed between his teeth.

"He is *not*; he belongs to God," said Christian. "And hark 'ee, Matthew Quintal, if ever again you do such a dastardly, cowardly, brutal act, I'll take on myself the office of your executioner, and will beat out your brains. *You* know me, Quintal; I never threaten twice."

Christian's tone was calm, though firm, but there was something so deadly in the glare of his clear blue eyes, that Quintal retreated another step. In doing so he tripped over a root and fell prone upon the ground.

"Ha!" exclaimed Adams, with a bitter laugh, "you'd better lie still. It's your suitable position, you blackguard."

Without another word he and Christian turned on their heels and walked away.

"This is a bad beginning to my new resolves," said Christian, with a sigh, as they descended the hill.

"A bad beginning," echoed Adams, "to give a well-deserved blow to as great a rascal as ever walked?"

"No, not exactly that; but—Well, no matter, we'll dismiss the subject, and go have a lark with the children."

Christian said this with something like a return to his previous good-humour. A few minutes later they passed under the banyan-tree at the side of Adams's house, and entered the square of the village, where children, kittens, fowls, and pigs were disporting themselves in joyous revelry.

Chapter Thirteen.

Tyrants and Plotters.

Leaving Christian and Adams to carry out their philanthropic intentions, we return to Matthew Quintal, whom we left sprawling on the ground in his garden.

This garden was situated in one of the little valleys not far from Bounty Bay. Higher up in the same valley stood the hut of McCoy. Towards this hut Quintal, after gathering himself up, wended his way in a state of unenviable sulkiness.

His friend McCoy was engaged at the time in smoking his evening pipe, but that pipe did not now seem to render him much comfort, for he growled and puffed in a way that showed he was not soothed by it, the reason being that there was no tobacco in the pipe. That weed,—which many people deem so needful and so precious that one sometimes wonders how the world managed to exist before Sir Walter Raleigh put it to its unnatural use—had at last been exhausted on Pitcairn Island, and the mutineers had to learn to do without it. Some of them said they didn't care, and submitted with a good grace to the inevitable. Others growled and swore and fretted, saying that they knew they couldn't live without it. To their astonishment, and no doubt to their disgust, they did manage to live quite as healthily as before, and with obvious advantage to health and teeth. Two there were, however, namely, Quintal and McCoy, who would not give in, but vowed with their usual violence of language that they would smoke seaweed rather than want their pipes. Like most men of powerful tongue and weak will, they did not fulfil their vows. Seaweed was left to the gulls, but they tried almost every leaf and flower on the island without success. Then they scraped and dried various kinds of bark, and smoked that. Then they tried the fibrous husk of the cocoa-nut, and then the dried and pounded kernel, but all in vain. Smoke, indeed, they produced in huge volumes, but of satisfaction they had none. It was a sad case.

"If we could only taste the flavour o' baccy ever so mild," they were wont to say to their comrades, "the craving would be satisfied."

To which Isaac Martin, who had no mercy on them, would reply, "If ye hadn't created the cravin' boys, ye wouldn't have bin growlin' and hankerin' after satisfaction."

As we have said, McCoy was smoking, perhaps we should say agonising, over his evening pipe. His man, or slave, Timoa, was seated on the opposite side of the hut, playing an accompaniment on the flute to McCoy's wife and two other native women, who were singing. The flute was one of those rough-and-ready yellow things, like the leg of a chair, which might serve equally well as a policeman's baton or a musical instrument. It had been given by one of the sailors to Timoa, who developed a wonderful capacity for drawing unmusical sounds out of it. The singing was now low and plaintive, anon loud and harsh—always wild, like the song of the savages. The two combined assisted the pipe in soothing William McCoy—at least so we may assume, because he had commanded the music, and lay in his bunk in the attitude of one enjoying it. He sometimes even added to the harmony by uttering a bass growl at the pipe.

During a brief pause in the accompaniment Timoa became aware of a low hiss outside, as if of a serpent. With glistening eyes and head turned to one side he listened intently. The hiss was repeated, and Timoa became aware that one of his kinsmen wished to speak with him in secret. He did not dare, however, to move.

McCoy was so much taken up with his pipe that he failed to notice the hiss, but he observed the stoppage of the flute's wail.

"Why don't you go on, you brute!" he cried, angrily, at the same time throwing one of his shoes at the musician, which hit him on the shin and caused him a moment's sharp pain.

Timoa would not suffer his countenance to betray his feelings. He merely raised the flute to his lips, exchanged a glance with the women, and continued his dismal strain. His mind, however, was so engrossed with his comrade outside that the harmony became worse than ever. Even McCoy, who professed himself to be no judge of music, could not stand it, and he was contemplating the application of the other shoe, when a step was heard outside. Next moment his friend Quintal strode in and sat down on a stool beside the door.

“Oh, I say, Matt,” cried McCoy, “who put that cocoa-nut on the bridge of your nose?”

“Who?” grow led Quintal, with an oath. “Who on the island would dare to do it but that domineerin’ upstart, Christian?”

“Humph!” answered McCoy, with a slight sneer. He followed this up with a curse on domineerers in general, and on Fletcher Christian in particular.

It is right to observe here that though we have spoken of these two men as friends, it must not be understood that they were friendly. They had no personal regard for each other, and no tastes in common, save the taste for tobacco and drink; but finding that they disliked each other less than they disliked their comrades, they were thus drawn into a hollow friendship, as it were, under protest.

“How did it happen?” asked McCoy.

“Give us a whiff an’ I’ll tell ’ee. What sort o’ stuff are you tryin’ now?”

“Cocoa-nut chips ground small. The best o’ baccy, Matt, for lunatics, which we was when we cast anchor on this island. Here, fill your pipe an’ fire away. You won’t notice the difference if you don’t think about it. My! what a cropper you must have come down when you got that dab on your proboscis!”

“Stop your howlin’,” shouted Quintal to the musicians, in order to vent some of the spleen which his friend’s remark had stirred up.

Timoa, not feeling sure whether the command was meant for the women or himself, or, perhaps, regarding McCoy as the proper authority from whom such an order should come, continued his dismal blowing.

Quintal could not stand this in his roused condition. Leaping up, he sprang towards Timoa, snatched the flute from his hand, broke it over his head, and kicked him out of the hut.

Excepting the blow and the kick, this was just what the Otaheitan wanted. He ran straight into the bush, which was by that time growing dark under the shades of evening, and found Nehow leaning against a tree and groaning heavily, though in a suppressed tone.

“Quick, come with me to the spring and wash my back,” he cried, starting up.

They did not converse in broken English now, of course, but in their native tongue.

“What has happened?” asked Timoa, anxiously.

While Nehow explained the nature of the cruel treatment he had just received, they ran together to the nearest water-course. It chanced to be pretty full at the time, heavy rain having fallen the day before.

“There; oh! ha–a! not so hard,” groaned the unfortunate man, as his friend laved the water on his lacerated back.

In a few minutes the salt was washed out of the wounds, and Nehow began to feel easier.

“Where is Menalee?” he asked, abruptly, as he sat down under the deep shadow of a banyan-tree.

“In his master’s hut, I suppose,” answered Timoa. “Go find him and Tetaheite; fetch them both here,” he said, with an expression of ferocity on his dark face.

Timoa looked at him with an intelligent grin.

“The white men must die,” he said.

“Yes,” Nehow replied, “the white men shall die.”

Timoa pointed to the lump which had been raised on his shin, grinned again, and turning quickly round, glided into the underwood like an evil spirit of the night.

At that time Menalee was engaged in some menial work in the hut of John Mills. Managing to attract his attention, Timoa sent him into the woods to join Nehow.

When Timoa crept forward, Tetaheite was standing near to a large bush, watching with intense interest the ongoings of Christian, Adams, and Young. These three, in pursuance of the philanthropic principle which had begun to operate, were playing an uproarious game with the children round a huge bonfire; but there was no “method in their madness;” the children, excepting Thursday October Christian and Sally, were still too young for concerted play. They were still staggerers, and the game was simply one of romps.

Tetaheite’s good-humoured visage was glistening in the firelight, the mouth expanded from ear to ear, and the eyes almost closed.

Suddenly he became aware of a low hissing sound. The mouth closed, and the eyes opened so abruptly, that there seemed some necessary connection between the two acts. Moving quietly round the bush until he got into its shadow, his dark form melted from the scene without any one observing his disappearance.

Soon the four conspirators were seated in a dark group under shade of the trees.

“The time has come when the black man must be revenged,” said Nehow. “Look my back. Salt was rubbed into these wounds. It is not the first time. It shall be the last! Some of you have suffered in the same way.”

It scarcely needed this remark to call forth looks of deadly hate on the Otaheitan faces around him.

“The white men must die,” he continued. “They have no mercy. We will show none.”

Even in the darkness of that secluded spot the glistening of the eyes of these ill-treated men might have been seen as they gave ready assent to this proposal in low guttural tones.

“How is it to be done?” asked Menalee, after a short pause.

“That is what we have met to talk about,” returned Nehow. “I would hear what my brothers have to say. When they have spoken I will open my mouth.”

The group now drew closer together, and speaking in still lower tones, as if they feared that the very bushes might overhear and betray them, they secretly plotted the murder of the mutineers.

Chapter Fourteen.

The Influence of Infancy, also of Villainy.

While the dark plots referred to in the last chapter were being hatched, another life was introduced into the little community in the form of a third child to Fletcher Christian,—a little girl. Much though this man loved his two boys, a tenderer, though not, perhaps, a deeper region of his heart was touched by his daughter. He at once named her Mary. Who can tell the multitude of old memories and affections which were revived by this name? Might it not have been that a mother, a sister, some lost though not forgotten one, came forcibly to mind, and accounted, in some degree at least, for the wealth of affection which he lavished on the infant from the day of her birth? We cannot tell, but certain it is that there never was a more devoted father than this man, who in England had been branded with all that was ferocious, mean, desperate,—this hardened outlaw, this chief of the mutineers.

Otaheitan mothers are not particular in the matter of infant costume. Little Mary’s dress may be described in one word—nothing. Neither are such mothers much troubled with maternal anxieties. Long before a European baby would have been let out of the hands of mother or nurse, even for a moment, little Molly Christian was committed to the care of her delighted father, who daily bore her off to a favourite resort among the cliffs, and there played with her.

One day, on reaching his place of retirement, he was surprised to find a man in possession before him. Drawing nearer, he observed that the man also had a baby in his arms.

“Why, I declare, it’s Edward Young!” he exclaimed, on going up.

“Of course it is,” said the midshipman, smiling, as he held his own little daughter Jane aloft. “Do you think you are to have it all to yourself? And do you imagine that yours is the only baby in the world worth looking at?”

“You are right, Young,” returned Christian, with the nearest approach to a laugh he had made for years. “Come now,” he added, sitting down on a rock, and placing little Moll tenderly in the hollow of his left arm, so as to make her face his friend, “let’s set them up, and compare notes; isn’t she a beauty?”

“No doubt of it whatever; and isn’t mine ditto?” asked the midshipman, sitting down, and placing little Poll in a similar position on his right arm.

"But, I say, if you and I are to get on amicably, we mustn't praise our own babies. Let it be an agreement that you praise my Poll, and I'll praise your Moll. Don't they make lovely *pendants*! Come, let us change them for a bit."

Christian agreeing to this, the infants were exchanged, and thereupon these two fathers lay down on the soft grass, and perpetrated practical jokes upon, and talked as much ineffable nonsense to, those two whitey-brown balls, as if they had been splendid specimens of orthodox pink and white. It was observed, however, by the more sagacious of the wondering gulls that circled round them, that a state of perfect satisfaction was not attained until the babies were again exchanged, and each father had become exclusively engrossed with his own particular ball.

"Now, I say, Fletcher," remarked Young, rising, and placing himself nearer his friend, "it's all very well for you and me to waste our time and make fools of ourselves here; but I didn't merely come to show off my Polly. I came to ask what you think of that rumour we heard last night, that there has been some sort of plotting going on among the Otaheitan men."

"I don't think anything of it at all," replied Christian, whose countenance at once assumed that look of gravity which had become habitual to him since the day of the mutiny. "They have had too good reason to plot, poor fellows, but I have such faith in their native amiability of disposition, that I don't believe they will ever think of anything beyond a brief show of rebellion."

"I also have had faith in their amiability," rejoined Young; "but some of us, I fear, have tried them too severely. I don't like the looks they sometimes give us now. We did wrong at the first in treating them as servants."

"No doubt we did, but it would have been difficult to do otherwise," said Christian; "they fell so naturally into the position of servants of their own accord, regarding us, as they did, as superior beings. We should have considered their interests when we divided the land, no doubt. However, that can't well be remedied now."

"Perhaps not," remarked Young, in an absent tone. "It would be well, however, to take some precautions."

"Come, we can discuss this matter as we go home," said Christian, rising. "I have to work in my yam-plot to-day, and must deliver Molly to her mother."

They both rose and descended the slope that led to the village, chatting as they went.

Now, although the native men were of one mind as to the slaying of the Englishmen, they seemed to have some difference of opinion as to the best method of putting their bloody design in execution. Menalee, especially, had many objections to make to the various proposals of his countrymen. In fact, this wily savage was deceitful. Like Quintal and McCoy among the whites, he was among the blacks a bad specimen of humanity.

The consequence was that Timoa and Nehow, being resolved to submit no longer to the harsh treatment they had hitherto received, ran away from their persecutors, and took refuge in the bush.

To those who have travelled much about this world, it may sound absurd to talk of hiding away in an island of such small size; but it must be borne in mind that the miniature valleys and hills of the interior

were, in many places, very rugged and densely clothed with jungle, so that it was, in reality, about as difficult to catch an agile native among them as to catch a rabbit in a whin-field.

Moreover, the two desperate men carried off two muskets and ammunition, so that it was certain to be a work of danger to attempt their recapture. In these circumstances, Christian and Young thought it best to leave them alone for a time.

“You may be sure,” said the former, as they joined their comrades, “that they’ll soon tire of rambling, especially when their ammunition is spent.”

Quintal, who stood with all the other men by the forge watching John Williams as he wrought at a piece of red-hot iron, and overheard the remark, did not, he said, feel so sure of that. Them niggers was fond o’ their liberty, and it was his opinion they should get up a grand hunt, and shoot ’em down off-hand. There would be no peace till that was done.

“There would be no peace even after that was done,” said Isaac Martin, with a leer, “unless we shot you along wi’ them.”

“It’s impossible either to shoot or drown Matt Quintal, for he’s born to be hanged,” said McCoy, sucking viciously at his cocoa-nut-loaded pipe, which did not seem to draw well.

“That’s true,” cried Mills, with a laugh, in which all the party except Christian joined more or less sarcastically according to humour.

“Oh, mother,” exclaimed Otaheitan Sally, going into her hut on tiptoe a few minutes later, with her great eyes dilated in horror, “the white mens is talkin’ of shootin’ Timoa and Nehow!”

“Never mind, dear,” replied her mother in her own language, “it’s only talk. They’ll never do such a thing. I’m sure Mr Young did not agree to help in such a deed, did he?”

“O no, mother,” answered Sally, with tremendous emphasis; “he said it would be very *very*, wicked to do such tings.”

“So it would, dear. No fear. It’s only talk.”

Satisfied with this assurance, Sally went off with a cleared visage to superintend some operation in connection with her ever-increasing infantry charge, probably to pay some special attention to her favourite Charlie, or to chaff “that booby” Thursday October, though, to say truth, Thursday was no booby, but a smart intelligent fellow.

The very next day after that, Timoa and Nehow came down to Edward Young as he was at work alone in his yam-field. This field was at a considerable distance from the settlement, high up on the mountain-side. The two men had left their weapons behind them.

“We’s comed for give you a helpin’ hand, Missr Yong, if you no lay hands on us,” said Nehow.

"I have no wish to lay hands on you," replied Young; "besides, I have no right to do so. You know I never regarded you as slaves, nor did I approve of your bad treatment. But let me advise you to rejoin us peaceably, and I promise to do what I can to make things go easier."

"Nebber!" exclaimed Nehow, fiercely.

"Well, it will be the worse for yourselves in the long-run," said Young, "for Quintal and McCoy will be sure to go after you at last and shoot you."

The two men looked at each other when he said that, and smiled intelligently.

"However, if you choose to help me now," continued Young, "I'll be obliged to you, and will pay you for what you do."

The men set to work with a will, for they were fond of the kindly midshipman; but they kept a bright look-out all the time, lest any of the other Englishmen should come up and find them there.

For two or three evenings in succession Timoa and Nehow came to Young's field and acted in this way. Young made no secret of the fact, and Quintal, on hearing of it, at once suggested that he and McCoy should go up and lie in ambush for them.

"If you do," said Young, with indignation, "I'll shoot you both. I don't jest. You may depend on it, if I find either of you fellows skulking near my field when these men are at work there, your lives won't be worth a sixpence."

At this Quintal and McCoy both laughed, and said they were jesting. Nevertheless, while walking home together after that conversation, they planned the carrying out of their murderous intention.

Thus, with plot and counterplot, did the mutineers and Otaheitans render their lives wretched. What with the bitter enmity existing between the whites and blacks, and the mutual jealousies among themselves, both parties were kept in a state of perpetual anxiety, and the beautiful isle, which was fitted by its Maker to become a paradise, was turned into a place of torment.

Sometimes the other native men, Tetaheite and Menalee, joined Nehow and Timoa in working in Young's garden, and afterwards went with them into the bush, where they planned the attack which was afterwards made.

At last the lowering cloud was fully charged, and the thunderbolt fell.

Chapter Fifteen.

Murder!

The planting time came round at Pitcairn, and all was busy activity in the little settlement at Bounty Bay. The women, engaged in household work and in the preparation of food, scarcely troubled themselves to cast an anxious eye on the numerous children who, according to age and capacity, rolled, tumbled,

staggered, and jumped about in noisy play. The sun, streaming through the leaves of the woods, studded shady places with balls of quivering light, and blazed in fierce heat in the open where the men were at work, each in his respective garden. We have said that those gardens lay apart, at some distance from each other, and were partially concealed by shrubs or undulating knolls.

The garden of John Williams was farthest off from the settlement. He wrought in it alone on the day of which we write. Next to it was that of Fletcher Christian. He also worked alone that day.

About two hundred yards from his garden, and screened from it by a wooded rising ground, was a piece of plantation, in which John Mills, William McCoy, and Menalee were at work together. John Adams, William Brown, and Isaac Martin were working in their own gardens near their respective houses, and Quintal was resting in his hut. So was Edward Young, who, having been at work since early morning, had lain down and fallen into a deep slumber.

The three native men, Timoa, Nehow, and Tetaheite, were still away in the woods. If the unfortunate Englishmen had known what these men were about, they would not have toiled so quietly on that peaceful morning!

The Otaheitans met in a cocoa-nut grove at some distance to the eastward of the settlement. Each had a musket, which he loaded with ball. They did not speak much, and what they did say was uttered in a suppressed tone of voice.

“Come,” said Timoa, leading the way through the woods.

The others followed in single file, until they reached the garden where Williams was at work. Here their movements were more cautious. As they advanced, they crept along on their knees with the motion of cats, and with as little noise. They could hear the sound of the armourer’s spade, as he turned up the soil. Presently they came to an opening in the bushes, through which they could see him, not thirty yards off.

Timoa drew himself together, and in a crouching attitude levelled his musket.

During their absence in the woods, these men had practised shooting at a mark, doubtless in preparation for the occasion which had now arrived. The woods and cliffs rang to the loud report, and Williams fell forward without a cry or groan, shot through the heart.

The murderers rose and looked at each other, but uttered not a word, while Timoa recharged his gun.

The report had, of course, been heard by every one in the settlement, but it was a familiar sound, and caused neither surprise nor alarm. McCoy merely raised himself for a moment, remarked to Mills that some one must have taken a fancy for a bit of pork to supper, and then resumed his work.

Christian also heard the shot, but seemed to pay no regard to it. Ceasing his labour in a few minutes, he raised himself, wiped his forehead, and resting both hands on his spade, looked upwards at the bright blue sky. Fleecy clouds passed across it now and then, intensifying its depth, and apparently riveting Christian’s gaze, for he continued motionless for several minutes, with his clear eye fixed on the blue vault, and a sad, wistful expression on his handsome face, as if memory, busy with the past and future, had forgotten the present. It was his last look. A bullet from the bushes struck him at that moment on the breast. Uttering one short, sharp cry, he threw both hands high above his head, and fell backwards. The

spasm of pain was but momentary. The sad, wistful look was replaced by a quiet smile. He never knew who had released his spirit from the prison-house of clay, for the eyes remained fixed on the bright blue sky, clear and steadfast, until death descended. Then the light went out, just as his murderers came forward, but the quiet smile remained, and his spirit returned to God who gave it.

It seemed as if the murderers were, for a few moments, awestruck and horrified by what they had done; but they quickly recovered. What they had set their faces to accomplish must now be done at all hazards.

“Did you hear that cry?” said McCoy, raising himself from his work in the neighbouring garden.

“Yes; what then?” demanded Quintal.

“It sounded to me uncommon like the cry of a wounded man,” said McCoy.

“Didn’t sound like that to me,” returned Quintal; “more like Mainmast callin’ her husband to dinner.”

As he spoke, Tetaheite appeared at the edge of the garden with a musket in his hand, the other two natives remaining concealed in the bushes.

“Ho, Missr Mills,” he called out, in his broken English, “me have just shoot a large pig. Will you let Menalee help carry him home?”

“Yes;—you may go,” said Mills, turning to Menalee.

The Otaheitan threw down his tools, and joined his comrades in the bush, where he was at once told what had been done.

Menalee did not at first seem as much pleased as his comrades had expected, nevertheless, he agreed to go with them.

“How shall we kill Mills and McCoy?” asked Timoa, in a low whisper.

“Shoot them,” answered Menalee; “you have three muskets.”

“But they also have muskets,” objected Tetaheite, “and are good shots. If we miss them, some of us shall be dead men at once.”

“I’ll tell you what we’ll do,” said Nehow, who thereupon hastily detailed a plan, which they proceeded at once to carry out.

Creeping round through the woods, they managed to get into McCoy’s house by a back window, unobserved. Menalee then ran down to the garden, as if in a state of great excitement.

“Oh, Missr McCoy, Timoa and Nehow hab come down from mountain, an’ is robbin’ you house!”

The bait took. McCoy ran up to his house. As soon as he reached the door there was a volley from within, but McCoy remained untouched.

Seeing this, and, no doubt, supposing that he must be badly wounded, Menalee, who had followed him, seized him from behind. But McCoy, being the stronger man, twisted himself suddenly round, grasped Menalee by the waist with both hands, and flung him headlong into a neighbouring pig-sty. He then turned and ran back to his garden to warn Mills.

"Run for it, Mills," he cried; "run and take to the bush. All the black scoundrels have united to murder us."

He set the example by at once disappearing in the thick bush. But Mills did not believe him. He and Menalee had always been good friends, and he seemed to think it impossible that they would kill him. He hesitated, and the hesitation cost him his life, for next moment a bullet laid him low.

Meanwhile McCoy ran to warn Christian. Reaching his garden, he found him there, dead, with the tranquil smile still on his cold lips, and the now glazed eyes still gazing upwards. One glance sufficed. He turned and ran back to Christian's house to tell his wife what he had seen, but the poor woman was sick in bed at the time and could not move. Running then to Quintal's garden, he found him alive, but quite ignorant of what was going on.

"They seem to be wastin' a deal of powder to-day," he growled, without raising himself, as McCoy came up; "but—hallo! you're blowing hard. What's wrong?"

As soon as he heard the terrible story he ran to his wife, who chanced to be sitting near the edge of his garden.

"Up, old girl," he cried, "your nigger countrymen are murderin' us all. If you want to see any of us escape you'd better go and warn 'em. I shall look after number one."

Accordingly, with his friend of kindred spirit, he sought refuge in the bush.

Mrs Quintal had no desire to see all the white men slaughtered by her countrymen. She therefore started off at once, and in passing the garden of John Adams, called to him to take to the bush without delay, and ran on.

Unfortunately Adams did not understand what she meant. He, like the others, had heard the firing, but had only thought of it as a foolish waste of ammunition. Nothing was further from his thoughts on that peaceful day and hour than deeds of violence and bloodshed. He therefore continued at work.

The four murderers, meanwhile, ran down to Isaac Martin's house, found him in the garden, and pointing their muskets at him, pulled the triggers. The pieces missed fire, and poor Martin, thinking probably that it was a practical joke, laughed at them. They cocked again, however, and fired. Martin, although he fell mortally wounded, had strength to rise again and fly towards his house. The natives followed him into it. There was one of the sledge-hammers of the *Bounty* there. One of them seized it, and with one blow beat in the poor man's skull.

Roused, apparently, to madness by their bloody work, the Otaheitans now rushed in a body to Brown's garden. The botanist had been somewhat surprised at the frequent firing, but like his unfortunate fellow-countrymen, appeared to have not the remotest suspicion of what was going on. The sight of the natives, however, quickly opened his eyes. He turned as if to fly, but before he could gain the bushes, a well-aimed volley killed him.

Thus in little more than an hour were five of the Englishmen murdered.

It now seemed as if the revenge of the Otaheitans had been sated, for after the last tragic act they remained for some time in front of Brown's house talking, and resting their hands on the muzzles of their guns.

All this time Edward Young was lying asleep in ignorance of what was being done, and purposely kept in ignorance by the women. Having been told by Quintal's wife, they knew part of the terrible details of the massacre, but they had no power to check the murderers. They, however, adopted what means they could to shield Young, who, as we have said, was a favourite with all the natives, and closed the door of the hut in which he lay to prevent his being awakened.

The suspicions of Adams having at length been aroused, he went down to Brown's house to see what all the firing could be about. The children, meanwhile, having some vague fears that danger threatened, had run into their mother's huts. Everything passed so quickly, in fact, that few of the people had time to understand or think, or take action in any way.

Reaching the edge of Brown's garden, and seeing the four Otaheitans standing as we have described, Adams stopped and called out to know what was the matter.

"Silence," shouted one of them, pointing his gun. Being unarmed, and observing the body of Brown on the ground, Adams at once leaped into the bush and ran. He was hotly pursued by the four men, but being strong and swift of foot, he soon left them behind. In passing Williams's house, he went towards it, intending to snatch up some thick garments, and, if possible, a musket and ammunition, for he had no doubt now that some of his countrymen must have been killed, and that he would have to take to the bush along with them. An exclamation of horror escaped him when he came upon the armourer's body. It needed no second glance to tell that his comrade was dead. Passing into the house, he caught up an old blanket and a coat, but there was no musket. He knew that without arms he would be at the mercy of the savages. Being a cool and courageous man, he therefore made a long détour through the bush until he reached his own house, and entered by a back window. His sick wife received him with a look of glad surprise.

"Is it true they have killed some of the white men?" she asked.

"Ay, too true," he replied, quickly; "and I must take to the bush for a while. Where can I find a bag to hold some yams? Ah, here you are. There's no fear o' them hurting you, lass."

As he spoke a shot was heard. The natives had seen and followed him. A ball, coming through the window, entered the back of his neck and came out at the front. He fell, but instantly sprang up and leaped through the doorway, where he was met by the four natives.

Besides being a powerful man, Adams was very active, and the wound in his neck was only a flesh one. He knocked down Timoa, the foremost of the band, with one blow of his fist, and grappling with Nehow, threw him violently over his prostrate comrade; but Menalee, coming up at the moment, clubbed his musket and made a furious blow at Adams's head. He guarded it with one hand, and in so doing had one of his fingers broken. Tetaheite and Menalee then both sprang upon him, but he nearly throttled the one, tripped up the other, and, succeeding by a violent wrench in breaking loose, once more took to his heels.

In running, the Otaheitans were no match for him. He gradually left them behind. Then Timoa called out to him to stop.

“No, you scoundrels,” he shouted back in reply, “you want to kill me; but you’ll find it a harder job than you think.”

“No, no,” cried Nehow, vehemently, “we don’t want to kill you. Stop, and we won’t hurt you.”

Adams felt that loss of blood from his wound was quickly reducing his strength. His case was desperate. He formed a quick resolve and acted promptly. Stopping, he turned about and walked slowly but steadily back towards the natives, with his hands in his pockets and his eyes fixed sternly upon them.

“Well, I have stopped, you see,” he said, on coming up. “I will take you at your word.”

“We will do you no harm if you will follow us,” said Timoa.

They then went together to the house of Young. Here they found its owner, just roused by the noise of the scuffle with Adams, listening to the explanations of the women, who were purposely trying to lead him astray lest he should go out and be shot. The entrance of the four natives, armed and covered with blood, and Adams unarmed and wounded, at once showed him how matters stood.

“This is a terrible business,” he said in a low tone to Adams, while the murderers were disputing noisily about going into the woods to hunt down McCoy and Quintal. “Have they killed many of our comrades?”

“God knows,” said Adams, while Quintal’s wife bound up the wound in his neck. “There has been firin’ enough to have killed us all twice over. I thought some of you were spending the ammunition foolishly on hogs or gulls. Williams is dead, I know, and poor Brown, for I saw their bodies, but I can’t say—”

“Fletcher Christian is killed,” said Quintal’s wife, interrupting.

“Fletcher Christian!” exclaimed Adams and Young in the same breath.

“Ay, and Isaac Martin and John Mills,” continued the woman.

While she was speaking, the four Otaheitans, having apparently come to an agreement as to their future proceedings, loaded their muskets hastily, and rushing from the house soon disappeared in the woods.

We shall not harrow the reader’s feelings by following farther the bloody details of this massacre. Let it suffice to add, briefly, that after retiring from a fruitless search for the white men in the bush, Menalee quarrelled with Timoa and shot him. This roused the anger of the other two against Menalee, who fled to the bush and tried to make friends with McCoy and Quintal. This he appeared to succeed in doing, but when he was induced by them to give up his musket, he found out his mistake, for they soon turned it on himself and killed him. Then Young’s wife, Susannah, was induced to kill Tetaheite with an axe, and Young himself immediately after shot Nehow.

When McCoy and Quintal were told that all the Otaheitan men were dead they returned to the settlement. It was a terrible scene of desolation and woe. Even these two rough and heartless men were awed for a time into something like solemnity.

The men now left alive on the island were Young, Adams, Quintal, and McCoy. In the households of these four the widows and children of the slain were distributed. The evidences of the bloody tragedy were removed, the murdered men were buried, and thus came to a close the first great epoch in the chequered history of Pitcairn Island.

Chapter Sixteen.

Matt Quintal makes a Tremendous Discovery.

Upwards of four years had now elapsed since the mutiny of the *Bounty*, and of the nine mutineers who escaped to Pitcairn Island, only four remained, with eleven women and a number of children.

These latter had now become an important and remarkably noisy element in the colony. They and time together did much to efface the saddening effects of the gloomy epoch which had just come to a close. Time, however, did more than merely relieve the feelings of the surviving mutineers and widows. It increased the infantry force on the island considerably, so that in the course of a few years there were added to it a Robert, William, and Edward Young, with a little sister named Dolly Young, to keep them in countenance. There also came a Jane Quintal and an Arthur Quintal, who were closely followed by a Rebecca Adams and a James Young. So that the self-imposed cares and burdens of that pretty, active, and self-denying little creature, Otaheitan Sally, increased with her years and stature.

Before the most of these made their appearance, however, the poor Otaheitan wives and widows became downcast and discontented. One cannot wonder at this. Accustomed though they no doubt had been to war and bloodshed on their native island, they must have been shocked beyond measure by the scenes of brutality and murder through which they had passed. The most of them being now without husbands, and the men who remained being not on very amicable terms among themselves, these poor creatures seem to have been driven to a state of desperation, for they began to pine for their old home, and actually made up their minds to quit the island in one of the *Bounty's* old boats, and leave the white men and even the children behind them. See Note 1.

The old boat turned out to be so leaky, however, that they were compelled to return. But they did not cease to repine and to desire deliverance. Gentle-spirited and tractable though they undoubtedly were, they had evidently been tried beyond their powers of endurance. They were roused, and when meek people are roused they not unfrequently give their friends and acquaintances, (to say nothing of those nearer), a considerable surprise.

Matthew Quintal, who had a good deal of sly humour about him, eventually hit on a plan to quiet them, at least for a time.

"What makes you so grumpy, old girl?" he said one day to his wife, while eating his dinner under the shade of a palm-tree.

"We wiss to go home," she replied, in a plaintive tone.

"Well, well, you *shall* go home, so don't let your spirits go down. If you've got tired of me, lass, you're not worth keeping. We'll set to work and build you a new boat out o' the old un. We'll begin this very day, and when it's finished, you may up anchor and away to Otaheite, or Timbuctoo for all that I care."

The poor woman seemed pleased to hear this, and true to his word, Quintal set to work that very day, with McCoy, whom he persuaded to assist him. His friend thought that Quintal was only jesting about the women, and that in reality he meant to build a serviceable boat for fishing purposes. Young and Adams took little notice of what the other two were about; but one day when the former came down to the beach on Bounty Bay, he could not help remarking on the strange shape of the boat.

"It'll never float," he remarked, with a look of surprise.

"It's not wanted to float," replied Quintal, "at least not just yet. We can make it float well enough with a few improvements afterwards."

Young looked still more surprised, but when Quintal whispered something in his ear, he laughed and went away.

The boat was soon ready, for it was to some extent merely a modification of the old boat. Then all the women were desired to get into it and push off, to see how it did.

"Get in carefully now, old girls," said Quintal, with a leer. "Lay hold of the oars and we'll shove you through the first o' the surf. Lend a hand, McCoy. Now then, give way all—hi!"

With a vigorous shove the two men sent the boat shooting through the surf, which was unusually low that day. Young and Adams, with some of the children, stood on the rocks and looked on. The women lay to their oars like men, and the boat leaped like a flying-fish through the surf into deep water. Forgetting, in the excitement of the moment, the object they had in view, the poor things shouted and laughed with glee; but they dipped their oars with sad irregularity, and the boat began to rock in a violent manner. Then Young's wife, Susannah, caught what in nautical parlance is called "a crab;" that is, she missed her stroke and fell backwards into the bottom of the boat.

With that readiness to render help which was a characteristic of these women, Christian's widow, Mainmast, leaped up to assist the fallen Susannah. It only wanted this to destroy the equilibrium of the boat altogether. It turned bottom up in a moment, and left the female crew floundering in the sea.

To women of civilised lands this might have been a serious accident, but to these Otaheitan ladies it was a mere trifle. Each had been able to swim like a duck from earliest childhood. Indeed, it was evident that some of their own little ones were equally gifted, for several of them, led by Sally, plunged into the surf and went out to meet their parents as they swam ashore.

The men laughed heartily, and, after securing the boat and hauling it up on the beach, returned to the settlement, whither the women had gone before them to change their garments.

This incident effectually cured the native women of any intention to escape from the island, at least by boat, but it did not tend to calm their feelings. On the contrary, it seemed to have the effect of filling them with a thirst for vengeance, and they spent part of that day in whispered plottings against the men. They determined to take their lives that very night.

While they were thus engaged, their innocent offspring were playing about the settlement at different games, screaming at times with vehement delight, and making the palm-groves ring with laughter. The bright sun shone equally upon the heads that whirled with merriment and those that throbbed with dark despair.

Suddenly, in the midst of her play, little Sally came to an abrupt pause. She missed little Matt Quintal from the group.

“Where’s he gone, Charlie?” she demanded of her favourite playmate, whose name she had by that time learned to pronounce.

“I dunno,” answered Charlie, whose language partook more of the nautical tone of Quintal than of his late father.

“D’you know, Dan’l?” she asked of little McCoy.

“I dunno nuffin’,” replied Dan, “’xcep’ he’s not here.”

“Well, I must go an’ seek ’im. You stop an’ play here. I leave ’em in your care, Toc. See you be good.”

It would have amused you, reader, if you had seen with your bodily eyes the little creatures who were thus warned to be good. Even Dan McCoy, who was considered out and out the worst of them, might have sat to Rubens for a cherub; and as for the others, they were, we might almost say, appallingly good. Thursday October, in particular, was the very personification of innocence. It would have been much more appropriate to have named him Sunday July, because in his meek countenance goodness and beauty sat enthroned.

Of course we do not mean to say that these children were good from principle. They had no principle at that time. No, their actuating motive was selfishness; but it was not concentrated, regardless selfishness, and it was beautifully counteracted by natural amiability of temperament.

But they were quite capable of sin. For instance, when Sally had left them to search for her lost sheep, little Dan McCoy, moved by a desire for fun, went up behind little Charlie Christian and gave him an unmerited kick. It chanced to be a painful kick, and Charlie, without a thought of resentment or revenge, immediately opened his mouth, shut his eyes, and roared. Horrified by this unexpected result, little Dan also shut his eyes, opened his mouth, and roared.

The face that Charlie made in these circumstances was so ineffably funny, that Toc burst into uncontrollable laughter. Hearing this, the roarers opened their eyes, slid quickly into the same key, and tumbled head over heels on the grass, in which evolutions they were imitated by the whole party, except such as had not at that time passed beyond the staggering age.

Meanwhile Sally searched the neighbouring bush in vain; then bethinking her that Matt Quintal, who was fond of dangerous places, might have clambered down to the rocks to bathe, she made the best of her way to the beach, at a place which, being somewhat difficult of access from above, was seldom visited by any save the wild and venturesome.

She had only descended a few yards when she met the lost one clambering up in frantic haste, panting violently, his fat cheeks on fire, and his large eyes blazing.

“Oh, Matt, what is it?” she exclaimed, awestruck at the sight of him.

“Sip!—sip!” he cried, with labouring breath, as he pointed with one hand eagerly to the sea and with the other to the shore; “bin men down dare!—look, got suffin’! Oh!”

A prolonged groan of despair escaped the child as he fumbled in a trousers-pocket and pushed three fingers through a hole in the bottom of it.

“It’s hoed through!”

“What’s hoed through?” asked Sally, with quick sympathy, trying to console the urchin for some loss he had sustained.

“De knife!” exclaimed little Dan, with a face of blank woe.

“The knife! what knife? But don’t cry, dear; if you lost it through that hole it must be lying on the track, you know, somewhere between us and the beach.”

This happy thought did not seem to have occurred to Matt, whose cheeks at once resumed their flush and his eyes their blaze.

Taking his hand, Sally led him down the track.

They looked carefully as they went, and had not gone far when Matt sprang forward with a scream of delight and picked up a clasp-knife. It was by no means a valuable one. It had a buckhorn handle, and its solitary blade, besides being broken at the point, was affected with rust and tobacco in about equal proportions.

“Oh, Matt, where did you find it?”

“Come down and you see,” he exclaimed, pointing with greater excitement than ever to the beach below.

They were soon down, and there, on the margin of the woods, they found a heap of cocoa-nut shells scattered about.

“Found de knife dere,” said Matt, pointing to the midst of the shells, and speaking in a low earnest voice, as if the subject were a solemn one.

“Oh!” exclaimed Sally, under her breath.

“An’ look here,” said Matt, leading the girl to a sandy spot close by. They both stood transfixed and silent, for there were *strange foot-prints* on the sand.

They could not be mistaken. Sally and Matt knew every foot and every shoe, white or black, in Pitcairn. The marks before them had been made by unknown shoes.

Just in proportion as youth is more susceptible of astonishment than age, so was the surprise of those little ones immeasurably greater than that of Robinson Crusoe in similar circumstances. With awestruck faces they traced the foot-prints down to the water's edge. Then, for the first time, it struck Matt that he had forgotten something.

"Oh, me forget de sip—de sip!" he cried, and pointed out to sea.

Sally raised her eyes and uttered an exclamation of fresh astonishment, as well she might, for there, like a seagull on the blue wave, was a ship under full sail. It was far-off, nearly on the horizon, but quite distinct, and large enough to be recognised.

Of course the gazers were spellbound again. It was the first real ship they had ever seen, but they easily recognised it, being familiar with man's floating prisons from the frequent descriptions given to them by John Adams, and especially from a drawing made by him, years ago, on the back of an old letter, representing a full-rigged man-of-war. This masterpiece of fine art had been nailed up on the walls of John Adams's hut, and had been fully expounded to each child in succession, as soon after its birth as was consistent with common-sense—sometimes sooner.

Suddenly Otaheitan Sally recovered herself.

"Come, Matt, we must run home an' tell what we've seen."

Away they went like two goats up the cliffs. Panting and blazing, they charged down on their amazed playmates, shouting, "A sip! a sip!" but never turning aside nor slacking their pace until they burst with the news on the astonished mutineers.

Something more than astonishment, however, mingled with the feelings of the seamen, and it was not until they had handled the knife, and visited the sandy cove, and seen the foot-prints, and beheld the vessel herself, that they became fully convinced that she had really been close to the island, that men had apparently landed to gather cocoa-nuts, and had gone away without having discovered the settlement, which was hid from their view by the high cliffs to the eastward of Bounty Bay.

The vessel had increased her distance so much by the time the men reached the cove, that it was impossible to make out what she was.

"A man-o'-war, mayhap, sent to search for us," suggested Quintal.

"Not likely," said Adams. "If she'd bin sent to search for us, she wouldn't have contented herself with only pickin' a few nuts."

"I should say she is a trader that has got out of her course," said Young; "but whatever she is, we've seen the last of her. I'm not sure that I wouldn't have run the risk of having our hiding-place found out, and of being hung, for the sake of seeing once more the fresh face of a white man."

He spoke with a touch of sadness in his tone, which contrasted forcibly with the remark that followed.

"It's little *I* would care about the risk o' bein' scragged," said Quintal, "if I could only once more have a stiff glass o' grog an' a pipe o' good, strong, genuine baccy!"

"You'll maybe have the first sooner than you think," observed McCoy, with a look of intelligence.

"What d'ye mean?" asked Quintal.

"Ax no questions an' you'll be told no lies," was McCoy's polite rejoinder, to which Quintal returned a not less complimentary remark, and followed Young and Adams, who had already begun to reascend the cliffs.

This little glimpse of the great outer world was obtained by the mutineers in 1795, and was the only break of the kind that occurred during a residence of many years on the lonely island.

Note 1. We are led to this conclusion in regard to the children by the fact that in the various records which tell us of these women attempting their flight, no mention is made of the children being with them.

Chapter Seventeen.

The Clouds grow Thicker and Blacker.

This glimpse of a stray vessel left a deep impression on the minds of the exiles for many days, and it so far influenced the women that they postponed their scheme of vengeance for some time.

It must not be supposed, however, that all of those women, whom we have described as being so gentle in character, were suddenly transformed into demons. It was only two or three of the more energetic and passionate among them who stirred up the rest, and forced them to fall in with their views. These passionate ones were the widows of the men who had been slain. They not only felt their loss most bitterly, but became almost mad with the despair caused by their forlorn condition, and the apparent hopelessness of deliverance.

The sight of the passing ship had diverted their thoughts for a time, perhaps had infused a little hope; but when the excitement died down they renewed their plots against the men and at last made a desperate attempt to carry them out.

It was on a dark and stormy night. Thunder was rolling in the sky. Lightning flashed among the mountain-peaks. Rain, the first that had descended for many days, fell in fitful showers. It must have seemed to the women either that the elements sympathised with them, or that the extreme darkness was favourable to the execution of their plan, for about midnight one of them rose from her bed, and crept noiselessly to the corner of her hut, where she had seen Quintal deposit a loaded musket the previous day. Possessing herself of the weapon, she went straight to the widow of Fletcher Christian, and wakened her. She rose, somewhat reluctantly, and followed the woman, whose face was concealed in a kerchief of native cloth. The two then went cautiously to another hat, where two of the wives of the murdered Otaheitans awaited them, the one with a long knife, the other with an axe in her hand.

They whispered together for a few seconds. As they did so there came a tremendous crash of thunder, followed by a flash which revealed the dark heads and glistening eyeballs drawn together in a group.

"We had better not try to-night," said one voice, timidly.

"Faint heart, you may stay behind," replied another voice, firmly. "Come, let us not delay. They were cruel; we will be cruel too."

They all crouched down, and seemed to melt into the dark earth. When the next lightning-flash rent the heavens they were gone.

Lying in his bunk, opposite the door of his house, that night, John Adams lay half asleep and half-conscious of the storm outside. As he lay with closed eyes there came a glaring flash of light. It revealed in the open doorway several pallid faces and glistening eyeballs.

"A strange dream," thought Adams; "stranger still to dream of dreaming."

The thunder-clap that followed was mingled with a crash, a burst of smoke, and a shriek that caused Adams to leap from his couch as a bullet whistled past his ear. In the succeeding lightning-flash he beheld a woman near him with an uplifted axe, another with a gleaming knife, and Edward Young, who slept in his house that night, in the act of leaping upon her.

Adams was prompt to act on all occasions. He caught the uplifted axe, and wrenching it from her grasp, thrust the woman out of the door.

"There," he said, quietly, "go thy way, lass. I don't care to know which of 'ee's done it. Let the other one go too, Mr Young. It's not worth while making a work about it."

The midshipman obeyed, and going to a shelf in a corner, took down a torch made of small nuts strung on a palm-spine, struck a light, and kindled it.

"Poor things," he said, "I'm sorry for them. They've had hard times here."

"They won't try it again," remarked Adams, as he closed the door, and quietly turned again into his sleeping-bunk.

But John Adams was wrong. Foiled though they were on this occasion, and glad though some of them must have been at their failure, there were one or two who could not rest, and who afterwards made another attempt on the lives of the men. This also failed. The first offence had been freely forgiven, but this time it was intimated that if another attempt were made, they should all be put to death. Fortunately, the courage of even the most violent of the women had been exhausted. To the relief of the others they gave up their murderous designs, and settled down into that state of submission which was natural to them.

One might have thought that now, at last, the little colony of Pitcairn had passed its worst days, most of the disturbing elements having been removed; but there was yet one other cloud, the blackest of all, to burst over them. One of the world's greatest curses was about to be introduced among them. It happened thus:—

One night William McCoy went to his house up on the mountain-side, entered it, and shut and bolted the door. This was an unusual proceeding on his part, and had no connection with the recent attempts at

murder made by the women, because he was quite fearless in regard to that, and scoffed at the possibility of being killed by women. He also carefully fastened the window-shutters. He appeared to be somewhat excited, and went about his operations with an air at once of slyness and of mystery.

A small torch or nut-candle which he lighted and set on a bracket on the wall gave out a faint flickering light, which barely rendered darkness visible, and from its position threw parts of the chamber into deepest gloom. It looked not unlike what we suppose would be the laboratory of an alchemist of the olden time, and McCoy himself, with his eager yet frowning visage, a native-made hat slouched over his brows, and a piece of native cloth thrown over his shoulders like a plaid, was no bad representative of an old doctor toiling for the secrets that turn base metal into gold, and old age into youth—secrets, by the way, which have been lying open to man's hand for centuries in the Word of God.

Taking down from a shelf a large kettle which had formed part of the furniture of the *Bounty*, and a twisted metal pipe derived from the same source, he fitted them up on a species of stove or oven made of clay. The darkness of the place rendered his movements not very obvious; but he appeared to put something into the kettle, and fill it with water. Then he put charcoal into the oven, kindled it, and blew it laboriously with his mouth until it became red-hot. This flameless fire did not tend much to enlighten surrounding objects; it merely added to them a lurid tinge of red. The operator's face, being close in front of the fire as he blew, seemed almost as hot as the glowing coals.

With patient watchfulness he sat there crouching over the fire for several hours, occasionally blowing it up or adding more fuel.

As the experiment went on, McCoy's eyes seemed to dilate with expectation, and his breathing quickened. After a time he rose and lifted a bottle out of a tub of water near the stove. The bottle was attached to one end of the twisted tube, which was connected with the kettle on the fire. Detaching it therefrom, he raised it quickly to the light. Then he put it to his nose and smelt it. As he did so his face lit up with an expression of delight. Taking down from a shelf a cocoa-nut cup, he poured into it some sparkling liquid from the bottle. It is a question which at that moment sparkled most, McCoy's eyes or the liquid.

He sipped a little, and his rough visage broke into a beaming smile. He drank it all, and then he smacked his lips and laughed—not quite a joyous laugh, but a wild, fierce, triumphant laugh, such as one might imagine would issue from the panting lips of some stout victor of the olden time as he clutched a much-coveted prize, after slaying some half-dozen enemies.

"Ha ha! I've got it at last!" he cried aloud, smacking his lips again.

And so he had. Long and earnestly had he laboured to make use of a fatal piece of knowledge which he possessed. Among the hills of Scotland McCoy had learned the art of making ardent spirits. After many failures, he had on this night made a successful attempt with the ti-root, which grew in abundance on Pitcairn. The spirit was at last produced. As the liquid ran burning down his throat, the memory of a passion which he had not felt for years came back upon him with overwhelming force. In his new-born ecstasy he uttered a wild cheer, and filling more spirit into the cup, quaffed it again.

"Splendid!" he cried, "first-rate. Hurrah!"

A tremendous knocking at the door checked him, and arrested his hand as he was about to fill another cup.

"Who's that?" he demanded, angrily.

"Open the door an' you'll see."

The voice was that of Matthew Quintal. McCoy let him in at once.

"See here," he cried, eagerly, holding up the bottle with a leer, "I've got it at last!"

"So any deaf man might have found out by the way you've bin shoutin' it. Why didn't you open sooner?"

"Never heard you, Matt. Was too much engaged with my new friend, I suppose. Come, I'll introdooce him to you."

"Look alive, then," growled Quintal, impatiently, for he seemed to have smelt the spirit, as the warhorse is said to smell the battle from afar. "Give us hold o' the cup and fill up; fill up, I say, to the brim. None o' your half measures for me."

He took a mouthful, rolled it round and round with his tongue once or twice, and swallowed it.

"Heh, that's *it* once more! Come, here's your health, McCoy! We'll be better friends than ever now; good luck to 'ee."

McCoy thought that there was room for improvement in their friendship, but said nothing, as he watched his comrade pour the fiery liquid slowly down his throat, as if he wished to prolong the sensation.

"Another," he said, holding out the cup.

"No, no; drink fair, Matt Quintal; wotever you do, drink fair. It's my turn now."

"Your turn?" retorted Quintal, fiercely; "why, you've bin swillin' away for half-an-hour before I came."

"No, Matt, no; honour bright. I'd only just begun. But come, we won't quarrel over it. Here's the other half o' the nut, so we'll drink together. Now, hold steady."

"More need for me to give you that advice; you shake the bottle as if you'd got the ague. If you spill a drop, now, I'll—I'll flatten your big nose on your ugly face."

Not in the least hurt by such uncomplimentary threats, McCoy smiled as he filled the cup held by his comrade. The spirit was beginning to tell on him, and the smile was of that imbecile character which denotes perfect self-satisfaction and good-will. Having poured the remainder into his own cup, he refixed the bottle to the tube of the "still," and while more of the liquid was being extracted, the cronies sat down on low stools before the stove, to spend a pleasant evening in poisoning themselves!

It may be interesting and instructive, though somewhat sad, to trace the steps by which those two men, formed originally in God's image, reduced themselves, of their own free will, to a level much lower than that of the brutes.

"Doesn't the taste of it bring back old times?" said McCoy, holding his cup to the light as he might have held up a transparent glass.

"Ay," assented Quintal, gradually becoming amiable, "the good old times before that fool Fletcher Christian indooced us to jine him. Here's to 'ee, lad, once more."

"Why, when I think o' the jolly times I've had at the Blue Boar of Plymouth," said McCoy, "or at the Swan wi' the two throttles, in—in—I forget where, I feel—I feel—like—like—here's your health again, Matt Quintal. Give us your flipper, man. You're not a bad feller, if you wasn't given to grumpin' so much."

Quintal's amiability, even when roused to excess by drink, was easily dissipated. The free remarks of his comrade did not tend to increase it, but he said nothing, and refreshed himself with another sip.

"I really do think," continued McCoy, looking at his companion with an intensity of feeling which is not describable, "I really do think that—that—when I think o' that Blue Boar, I could a'most become poetical."

"If you did," growled Quintal, "you would not be the first that had become a big fool on a worse subjec'."

"I shay, Matt Quintal," returned the other, who was beginning to talk rather thickly, so powerful was the effect of the liquor on his unaccustomed nerves; "I shay, ole feller, you used to sing well once. Come g–give us a stave now."

"Bah!" was Quintal's reply, with a look of undisguised contempt.

"Jus-so. 'Xactly my opinion about it. Well, as you won't sing, I'll give you a ditty myself."

Hereupon McCoy struck up a song, which, being deficient in taste, while its execution was defective as well as tuneless, did not seem to produce much effect on Quintal. He bore it with equanimity, until McCoy came to a note so far beyond his powers that he broke into a shriek.

"Come, get some more drink," growled his comrade, pointing to the still; "it must be ready by this time."

"Shum more drink!" exclaimed McCoy, with a look of indignant surprise. Then, sliding into a smile of imbecile good-humour, "You shl-'ave-it, my boy, you shl-'ave-it."

He unfixed the bottle with an unsteady hand, and winking with dreadful solemnity, filled up his companion's cup. Then he filled his own, and sat down to resume his song. But Quintal could stand no more of it; he ordered his comrade to "stop his noise."

"Shtop my noise!" exclaimed McCoy, with a look of lofty disdain.

"Yes, stop it, an' let's talk."

"Well, I'm w–willin' t' talk," returned McCoy, after a grave and thoughtful pause.

They chose politics as a light, agreeable subject of conversation.

"Now, you see, 's my 'pinion, Matt, that them coves up't th' Admiralty don't know no more how to guv'n this country than they knows how to work a Turk's head on a man-rope."

"P'r'aps not," replied Quintal, with a look of wise solemnity.

"Nor'-a-bit—on it," continued McCoy, becoming earnest. "An' wot on earth's the use o' the Lords an' Commons an' War Office? W'y don't they slump 'em all together into one 'ouse, an' get the Archbishop o' Cantingbury to bless 'em all, right off, same as the Pope does. That's w'ere it is. D'ye see? That's w'ere the shoe pinches."

"Ah, an' what would you make o' the King?" demanded Quintal, with an argumentative frown.

"The King, eh?" said McCoy, bringing his fuddled mind to bear on this royal difficulty; "the King, eh? Why, I'd—I'd make lop-scouse o' the King."

"Come, that's treason. You shan't speak treason in *my* company, Bill McCoy. I'm a man-o'-war's man. It won't do to shove treason in the face of a mar-o'-wa-a-r. If I *am* a mutineer, w'at o' that? I'll let no other man haul down my colours. So don't go shovin' treason at me, Bill McCoy."

"I'll shove treason w'erever I please," said McCoy, fiercely.

"No you shan't."

"Yes I shall."

From this point the conversation became very contradictory in tone, then recriminative, and after that personally abusive. At last Quintal, losing temper, threw the remains of his last cup of spirits in his friend's face. McCoy at once hit Quintal on the nose. He returned wildly on the eye, and jumping up, the two grappled in fierce anger.

They were both powerful men, whose natural tendency to personal violence towards each other had, up to this time, been restrained by prudence; but now that the great destroyer of sense and sanity was once again coursing through their veins, there was nothing to check them. All the grudges and bitternesses of the past few years seemed to have been revived and concentrated on that night, and they struggled about the little room with the fury of madmen, striking out savagely, but with comparatively little effect, because of excessive passion, coupled with intoxication, clutching and tugging at each other's whiskers and hair, and cursing with dreadful sincerity.

There was little furniture in the room, but what there was they smashed in pieces. Quintal flung McCoy on the table, and jumping on the top of him, broke it down. The other managed to get on his legs again, clutched Quintal by the throat, and thrust him backward with such violence that he went crashing against the little window-shutters, split them up, and drove them out. In one of their wildest bursts they both fell into the fireplace, overturned the still, and scattered the fire. Fortunately, the embers were nearly out by this time. Tumbling over the stools and wreck, these men—who had begun the evening as friends, continued it as fools, and ended it as fiends—fell side by side into one of the sleeping-bunks, the bottom of which was driven down by the shock as they sank exhausted amid the wreck, foaming with passion, and covered with blood. This was the climax; they fell into a state of partial insensibility, which degenerated at last into a deep lethargic slumber.

Hitherto the quarrels and fights that had so disturbed the peace of Pitcairn, and darkened her moral sky, had been at least intelligently founded on hatred or revenge, with a definite object and murderous end in view. Now, for the first time, a furious battle had been fought for nothing, with no object to be gained, and no end in view; with besotted idiots for the champions, and with strong drink for the cause.

Chapter Eighteen.

Aquatic Amusements.

Now, it must not be supposed that the wives and widows of these mutineers gave themselves up to moping or sadness after the failure of their wild attempt to make their condition worse by slaying all the men. By no means. By degrees they recovered the natural tone of their mild yet hearty dispositions, and at last, we presume, came to wonder that they had ever been so mad or so bad.

Neither must it be imagined that these women were condemned to be the laborious drudges who are fitly described as "hewers of wood and drawers of water." They did indeed draw a good deal of water in the course of each day, but they spent much time also in making the tapa cloth with which they repaired the worn-out clothes of their husbands, or fabricated petticoats for themselves and such of the children as had grown old enough to require such garments. But besides these occupations, they spent a portion of their time in prattling gossip, which, whatever the subject might be, was always accompanied with a great deal of merriment and hearty laughter. They also spent no small portion of their time in the sea, for bathing was one of the favourite amusements of the Pitcairners, young and old.

Coming up one day to Susannah, the wife of Edward Young, Thursday October Christian begged that she would go with him and bathe.

Susannah was engaged in making the native cloth at the time, and laid down her mallet with a look of indecision. It may be remarked here that a mallet is used in the making of this cloth, which is not woven, but beaten out from a state of pulp; it is, in fact, rather a species of tough paper than cloth, and is produced from the bark of the paper mulberry.

"I's got to finish dis bit of cloth to-day, Toc," said Susannah, in broken English, for she knew that Master Thursday October preferred that tongue to Otaheitan, though he could speak both, "an' it's gettin' late."

"Oh, *what* a pity!" said TOC, with a look of mild disappointment.

Now Susannah was by far the youngest and most girlish among the Otaheitan women, and could not resist an appeal to her feelings even when uttered only by the eyes. Besides, little Toc was a great favourite with her. She therefore burst into a merry laugh, gently pulled Thursday's nose, and said, "Well, come along; but we'll git some o' the others for go too, an' have some fun. You go klect de jumpers. Me git de womans." Susannah referred to the older children by the term "Jumpers."

Highly pleased, the urchin started off at once. He found one of the jumpers, namely, Otaheitan Sally, nursing Polly Young, while she delivered an oracular discourse to Charlie Christian, who sat at her feet, meekly receiving and believing the most outrageous nonsense that ever was heard. It is but just to Sally, however, to say that she gave her information in all good faith, having been previously instructed by John

Adams, whose desire for the good of the young people was at that period stronger than his love of truth. Wishing to keep their minds as long as possible ignorant of the outer world, he had told them that ships came out of a hole in the clouds on the horizon.

“Yes, Charlie, it’s quite true; father Adams says so. They comes out of a hole on the horizon.”

Charlie’s huge eyes gazed in perplexity from his instructor’s face to the horizon, as if he expected to behold a ship emerging from a hole then and there. Then, turning to Sally again with a simple look, he asked—

“But why does sips come out of holes on de ’rizon?”

Sally was silenced. She was not the first knowing one who had been silenced by a child.

Little Daniel McCoy came up at the moment. Having passed the “staggering” period of life, he no longer walked the earth in a state of nudity, but was decorated with a pair of very short tapa trousers, cut in imitation of seafaring ducks, but reaching only to the knees. He also wore a little shirt.

“Me kin tell why ships come out ob de hole in de horizon,” he said, with a twinkle in his eyes; “just for notin’ else dan to turn about an’ go back into de hole again.”

“Nonsense, Dan’l!” cried Sally, with a laugh.

“Nonsense!” repeated Dan, with an injured look. “Didn’t you saw’d it happen jus’ t’other day?”

“Well, I did saw the ship go farer an’ farer away, an’ vanish,” admitted Sall; “but he didn’t go into a hole that time.”

“Pooh!” ejaculated little Dan, “dat’s ’cause de hole was too far away to be seen.”

Further discussion of the subject was prevented by the arrival of Thursday.

“Well, Toc, you’s in a hurry to-day,” said little Dan, with a look of innocent insolence.

“We’re all to go an’ bathe, child’n,” cried Thursday, with a look of delight; “Susannah’s goin’, an’ all the ’oomans, an’ she send me for you.”

“Hurrah!” shouted Dan and Sally.

“Goin’ to bave,” cried Charlie Christian to Lizzie Mills, who was attracted by the cheering, which also brought up Matt Quintal, who led his little sister Sarah by the hand. Sarah was yet a staggerer, and so was Dinah Adams, also Mary Christian; Polly Young and John Mills had not yet attained even to the staggering period—they were only what little Dan McCoy called sprawlers.

Before many minutes had elapsed, the whole colony of women, jumpers, staggerers, and sprawlers, were assembled on the beach at Bounty Bay.

It could scarcely be said that the women undressed—they merely threw off the light scarf or bodice that covered their shoulders, but kept on the short skirts, which were no impediment to their graceful movements in the water. The jumpers, of course, were only too glad of the excuse to get out of their very meagre allowance of clothing, and the rest were, so to speak, naturally ready for the plunge.

It was a splendid forenoon. There was not a zephyr to ruffle the calm breast of the Pacific, nevertheless the gentle undulation of that mighty bosom sent wave after wave like green liquid walls into the bay in ceaseless regularity. These, toppling over, and breaking, and coming in with a succession of magnificent roars, finally hissed in harmless foam on the shingly beach.

“Now, T’ursday,” said Mrs Adams, “you stop here an’ take care o’ de sprawlers.”

Adams’s helpmate was the oldest of the women, and defective in vision. Her commands were law. Thursday October would as soon have thought of disobeying Adams himself as his wife. It was not in his nature, despite its goodness, to help feeling disappointed at being left in charge of the little ones. However, he made up his mind at once to the sacrifice.

“Never mind, Toc,” said Young’s wife, with a bright smile, “I’ll stay an’ keep you company.”

This was ample compensation to Thursday. He immediately flung himself into the shallow surf, and turning his face to the land, held out his arms and dared the little ones to come to him. Two of them instantly accepted the challenge, crept down to the water, and were beaten back by the next rush of foam. But they were caught up and held aloft with a shout of glee by Susannah.

Meanwhile, the women advanced into the deep surf with the small children on their shoulders, while the others, being able to look after themselves, followed, panting with excitement for although able to swim like corks they found it extremely difficult to do battle with the rushing water.

Deeper and deeper the foremost women went, until they neared the unbroken glassy billows.

“I’ll go at de nixt,” muttered Mrs Adams to Mary Christian, who was on her back, clutching tight round her neck.

The “nixt” was a liquid wall that came rolling grandly in with ever-increasing force and volume, until it hovered to its fall almost over the heads of the daring women. Mrs Adams, Mainmast, and Mills’s widow, who were the foremost of the group, bent their heads forward, and with a graceful but vigorous plunge, sprang straight into the wall of water and went right through it. The others, though a moment later, were quite in time. The children also, uttering wild screams in varied keys, faced the billow gallantly, and pierced it like needles. Another moment, and they were all safe in deep water on the seaward side, while the wave went thundering to the shore in a tumultuous wilderness of foam, and spent its weakened force among the babies.

The moment the women were safe beyond the rolling influence of these great waves, in the calm sea beyond, they threw the staggerers from their shoulders and let them try their own unaided powers, while the jumpers swam and floated around to watch the result.

These wonderful infants disported themselves variously in the sea. Mary Christian wobbled about easily, as if too fat to sink, and Bessy Mills supported herself bravely, being much encouraged by the presence

and the cheering remarks of that humorous imp Dan McCoy. But Charlie Christian showed symptoms of alarm, and losing heart after a few moments, threw up his fat little arms and sank. Like the swooping eagle, his mother plunged forward, placed a hand under him, and lifted him on her shoulders, where he recovered equanimity in a few minutes, and soon wanted to be again sent afloat. When this had gone on for a little time, the women reshouldered their babies and swam boldly out to sea, followed at various distances by the youngsters. Of these latter, Sall of Otaheite was by far the best. She easily outstripped the other children, and could almost keep pace with the women.

Meanwhile Thursday October Christian and Susannah Young performed amazing feats with the infants in the shallow water on the beach. Sarah Quintal and Johnny Mills gave them some trouble, having a strong disposition to explore places beyond their depth; but Dinah Adams and Polly Young were as good as gold, spluttering towards their guardians when called, and showing no tendency to do anything of their own immediate free will, except sit on the sand and let the foam rush round and over them like soap-suds.

Now, it is well-known that every now and then there are waves of the sea which seem to have been born on a gigantic scale, and which, emerging somewhere from the great deep, come to shore with a grander roar and a higher rush than ordinary waves.

One such roller came in while no one was on the look-out for it. Its deep-toned roar first apprised Susannah of its approach, but before she could run to the rescue its white crest was careering up the beach in magnificent style. It caught the infants, each sitting with a look of innocent surprise on the sand. It turned them head over heels, and swept them up the shingly shore. It tumbled Susannah herself over in its might, and swept Thursday October fairly off his legs. Having terminated its career thus playfully, the big wave retired, carrying four babies in its embrace. But Susannah and Thursday had regained their footing and their presence of mind. With a brave and, for him, a rapid spring, Thursday caught little Sarah and Dinah as they were rolling helpless down the strand, the one by an arm, the other by a leg, and held on. At the same instant Susannah sprang forward and grasped Jack Mills by the hair of the head, but poor Polly Young was beyond her reach. Little Polly was the smallest, the neatest, and the dearest of the sprawling band. She was rolling to her doom. The case was desperate. In this emergency Susannah suddenly hurled Jack Mills at Thursday. The poor boy had to drop the other two in order to catch the flying Jack, but the other two, sliding down his body, held each to a Thursday October leg like limpets. The result was that the four remained firm and safe, while Susannah leaped into the surf and rescued little Poll.

It all happened so quickly that the actors had scarcely time to think. Having reached the dry land, they looked seaward, and there saw their more practised companions about to come in on the top of a wave. For a few seconds their heads were seen bobbing now on the top, now between the hollows of the waves. Then they were seen on a towering snowy crest which was just about to fall. On the summit of the roaring wave, as if on a snowy mountain, they came rushing on with railway speed. To an unpractised eye destruction among the rocks was their doom. But they had taken good aim, and came careering to the sandy patch where the little ones sprawled. In another moment they stood safe and sound upon the land.

This was but an everyday feat of the Pitcairners, who went up to their village chatting merrily, and thinking nothing more about the adventure than that it was capital fun.

Chapter Nineteen.

The Darkest Hour.

A long time after the events narrated in the last chapter, John Adams and Edward Young sat together one evening in the cave at the top of the mountain, where poor Fletcher Christian had been wont to hold his lonely vigils.

"I've bin thinkin' of late," said Young, "that it is very foolish of us to content ourselves with merely fishing from the rocks, when there are better fish to be had in deep water, and plenty of material at hand for making canoes."

"You're right, sir; we ought to try our hands at a canoe. Pity we didn't do so before the native men was all killed. They knew what sort o' trees to use, and how to split 'em up into planks, an' all that sort o' thing."

"But McCoy used to study that subject, and talk much about it, when we were in Otaheite," returned Young. "I've no doubt that with his aid we could build a good enough canoe, and the women would be as able as the men, no doubt, to direct us what to do if we were in a difficulty. McCoy is a handy fellow, you know, with tools, as he has proved more than once since the death of poor Williams."

Adams shook his head.

"No doubt, Mr Young, he's handy enough with the tools; but ever since he discovered how to make spirits, neither he nor Quintal, as you know, sir, are fit for anything."

"True," said Young, with a perplexed look; "it never occurred to me before that strong drink was such a curse. I begin now to understand why some men that I have known have been so enthusiastic in their outcry against it. Perhaps it would be right for you and me to refuse to drink with Quintal and McCoy, seeing that they are evidently killing themselves with it."

"I don't quite see that, sir," objected Adams. "A glass of grog don't do me no harm that I knows of, an' it wouldn't do them no good if we was to stop our allowance."

"It might; who can tell?" said Young. "I've not thought much about the matter, however, so we won't discuss it. But what would you say if we were to hide the kettle that McCoy makes it in, and refuse to give it up till the canoe is finished?"

Again Adams shook his head.

"They'd both go mad with DT," said he, by which letters he referred to the drunkard's awful disease, *delirium tremens*.

"Well, at all events, we will try to persuade him to go to work, and the sooner the better," said Young, rising and leaving the cave.

In pursuance of this plan, Young spoke to McCoy in one of his few sober moments, and got him persuaded to begin the work, and to drink less while engaged in it.

Under the impulse of this novelty in his occupation, the unhappy man did make an attempt to curb himself, and succeeded so far that he worked pretty steadily for several days, and made considerable progress with the canoe.

The wood was chosen, the tree felled, the trunk cut to the proper length and split up into very fair planks, which were further smoothed by means of a stone adze, brought by the natives from Otaheite, and it seemed as if the job would be quickly finished, when the terrible demon by whom McCoy had been enslaved suddenly asserted his tyrannical power. Quintal, who rendered no assistance in canoe-building, had employed himself in making a "new brew," as he expressed it, and McCoy went up to his hut in the mountain one evening to taste.

The result, of course, was that he was absolutely incapable of work next day; and then, giving way to the maddening desire, he and his comrade-in-debauchery went in, as they said, for a regular spree. It lasted for more than a week, and when it came to an end, the two men, with cracked lips, bloodshot eyes, and haggard faces, looked as if they had just escaped from a madhouse.

Edward Young now positively refused to drink any more of the spirits, and Adams, although he would not go quite to that length, restricted himself to one glass in the day.

This at first enraged both Quintal and McCoy. The former cursed his comrades in unmeasured terms, and drank more deeply just to spite them. The latter refused to work at the canoe, and both men became so uproarious, that Young and Adams were obliged to turn them out of the house where they were wont occasionally to meet for a social evening.

Thus things went on for many a day from bad to worse. Bad as things had been in former years, it seemed as if the profoundest depth of sin and misery had not yet been fathomed by these unhappy mutineers.

In all these doings, it would have gone hard with the poor women and children if Adams and Young had not increased in their kindness and consideration for them, as the other two men became more savage and tyrannical.

At last matters came to such a crisis that it became once more a matter of discussion with Young and Adams whether they should not destroy the machinery by which the spirits were made, and it is probable that they might have done this, if events had not occurred which rendered the act unnecessary.

One day William McCoy was proceeding with a very uncertain step along the winding footpath that led to his house up in the mountain. The man's face worked convulsively, and it seemed as if terrible thoughts filled his brain. Muttering to himself as he staggered along, he suddenly met his own son, who had grown apace by that time, being nearly seven years of age. Both father and son stopped abruptly, and looked intently at each other.

"What brings you here?" demanded the father, with a look of as much dignity as it was in his power to assume.

The poor boy hesitated, and looked frightened. His natural spirit of fun and frolic seemed of late to have forsaken him.

"What are 'ee afraid of?" roared McCoy, who had not quite recovered from his last fit of *delirium tremens*. "Why don't 'ee speak?"

"Mother's not well," said Daniel, softly; "she bid me come and tell you."

"What's that to me?" cried McCoy, savagely. "Come here, Dan." He lowered his tone, and held out his hand, but the poor boy was afraid to approach.

Uttering a low growl, the father made a rush at him, stumbled over a tree-root, and fell heavily to the earth. Little Dan darted into the bush, and fled home.

Rising slowly, McCoy looked half-stunned at first, but speedily recovering himself, staggered on till he reached the hut, when he wildly seized the bottle from its shelf, and put it to his lips, which were bleeding from the fall, and covered with dust.

"Ha ha!" he shouted, while the light of delirium rekindled in his eyes, "this is the grand cure for everything. My own son's afraid o' me now, but who cares? What's that to Bill McCoy! an' his mother's ill too—ha!—"

He checked himself in the middle of a fierce laugh, and stared before him as if horror-stricken.

"No, no!" he gasped. "I—I didn't. Oh! God be merciful to me!"

Again he stopped, raised both hands high above his head, uttered a wild laugh which terminated in a prolonged yell, as he dashed the bottle on the floor, and darted from the hut.

All the strength and vigour which the wretched man had squandered seemed to come back to him in that hour. The swiftness of youth returned to his limbs. He ran down the path by which he had just come, and passed Quintal on the way.

"Hallo, Bill! you're pretty bad to-night," said his comrade, looking after him. He then followed at a smart run, as if some new idea had suddenly occurred to him. Two of the women met McCoy further down, but as if to evade them, he darted away to the right along the track leading to the eastward cliffs. The women joined Quintal in pursuit, but before they came near him, they saw him rush to the highest part of the cliffs and leap up into the air, turning completely over as he vanished from their sight.

At that spot the cliff appeared to overhang its base, and was several hundred feet high. Far down there was a projecting rock, where sea-gulls clustered in great numbers. McCoy, like the lightning-flash, came in contact with the rock, and was dashed violently out into space, while the affrighted sea-birds fled shrieking from the spot. Next moment the man's mangled body cleft the dark water like an arrow, leaving only a little spot of foam behind to mark for a few seconds his watery grave.

It might have been thought that this terrible event would have had a sobering effect upon Matthew Quintal, but instead of that it made him worse. The death of his wife, too, by a fall from the cliffs about the same time, seemed only to have the effect of rendering him more savage; insomuch that he became a terror to the whole community, and frequently threatened to take the lives of his remaining comrades. In short, the man seemed to have gone mad, and Young and Adams resolved, in self-defence, to put him to death.

We spare the reader the sickening details. They accomplished the terrible deed with an axe, and thus the number of the male refugees on Pitcairn was reduced to two. The darkest hour of the lonely island had been reached—the hour before the dawn.

Chapter Twenty.

The Dawn of a Better Day.

The eighteenth century passed away, and as the nineteenth began its course, a great and marvellous change came over the dwellers on the lonely island in that almost unknown region of the Southern Seas. It was a change both spiritual and physical, the latter resulting from the former, and both having their roots, as all things good must have, in the blessed laws of God.

The change did not come instantaneously. It rose upon Pitcairn with the sure but gradual influence of the morning dawn, and its progress, like its advent, was unique in the history of the Church of God.

No preacher went forth to the ignorant people, armed with the powers of a more or less correct theology. No prejudices had to be overcome, or pre-existing forms of idolatry uprooted, and the people who had to be changed were what might have been deemed most unlikely soil—mutineers, murderers, and their descendants. The one hopeful characteristic among them was the natural amiability of the women, for Young and Adams did not display more than the average good-humour of men, yet these amiable women, as we have seen, twice plotted and attempted the destruction of the men, and two of them murdered in cold blood two of their own kinsmen.

It may, perhaps, have already been seen that Young and Adams were of a grave and earnest turn of mind. The terrible scenes which they had passed through naturally deepened this characteristic, especially when they thought of the dreadful necessity which had been forced on them—the deliberate slaying of Matthew Quintal, an act which caused them to *feel* like murderers, however justifiable it may have seemed to them.

Like most men who are under deep and serious impressions, they kept their thoughts to themselves. Indeed, John Adams, with his grave matter-of-fact tendencies and undemonstrative disposition, would probably never have opened his lips on spiritual things to his companion if Young had not broken the ice; and even when the latter did venture to do so, Adams resisted at first with the dogged resolution of an unbelieving man.

“We’ve been awful sinners, John Adams,” said Young one afternoon as they were sauntering home from their plantations to dinner.

“Well, sir, no doubt there’s some truth in what you say,” replied Adams, slowly, “but then, d’ye see, we’ve bin placed in what you may call awful circumstances.”

“That’s true, that’s true,” returned Young, with a perplexed look, “and I’ve said the same thing, or something like it, to myself many a time; but, man, the Bible doesn’t seem to harmonise with that idea somehow. It seems to make no difference between big and little sinners, so to speak, at least as far as the matter of salvation is concerned; and yet I can’t help feeling somehow that men who have sinned much ought to repent much.”

"Just so, sir," said John Adams, with a self-satisfied air, "you're right, sir. We have been awful sinners, as you say, an' now we've got to repent as hard as we can and lead better lives, though, of course, we can't make much difference in our style o' livin', seein' that our circumstances don't allow o' much change, an' neither of us has bin much given to drink or swearin'."

"Strange!" rejoined Young. "You almost echo what I've been saying to myself over and over again, yet I can't feel quite easy, for if we have only got to repent and try to lead better lives, what's the use of our talking about 'Our Saviour?' and what does the Bible mean in such words as these: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' 'Only believe.' 'By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.' 'By the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified.'"

"Do you mean to say, sir, that them words are all out of the Bible?" asked Adams.

"Yes, I know they are, for I read them all this morning. I had a long hunt after the Bible before I found it, for poor Christian never told me where he kept it. I turned it up at last under a bit of tarpaulin in the cave, and I've been reading it a good deal since, and I confess that I've been much puzzled. Hold on a bit here," he added, stopping and seating himself on a flowering bank beside the path; "that old complaint of mine has been troubling me a good deal of late. Let's rest a bit."

Young referred here to an asthmatic affection to which he was subject, and which had begun to give him more annoyance since the catching of a severe cold while out shooting among the hills a year before.

"From what you say, sir," said Adams, thoughtfully, after they had sat down, "it seems to me that if we can do *nothing* in the matter o' workin' out our salvation, and have nothin' to do but sit still an' receive it, we can't be to blame if we don't get it."

"But we may be to blame for refusing it when it's offered," returned Young. "Besides, the Bible says, 'Ask and ye shall receive,' so that knocks away the ground from under your notion of sitting still."

"P'r'aps you're right, sir," continued Adams, after a few minutes' thought, during which he shook his head slowly as if not convinced; "but I can't help thinkin' that if a man only does his best to do his dooty, it'll be all right with him. That's all that's required in His Majesty's service, you know, of any man."

"True, but if a man *doesn't* do his best, what then? Or if he is so careless about learning his duty that he scarce knows what it is, and in consequence falls into sundry gross mistakes, what then? Moreover, suppose that you and I, having both done our duty perfectly up to the time of the mutiny, were now to go back to England and say, like the bad boys, 'We will never do it again,' what would come of it, think you?"

"We'd both be hanged for certain," answered Adams, with emphasis.

"Well, then, the matter isn't as simple an you thought it, at least according to *your* view."

"It is more puzzlin' than I thought it," returned Adams; "but then that's no great wonder, for if it puzzles you it's no wonder that it should puzzle me, who has had no edication whatever 'xcep what I've picked up in the streets. But it surprises me—you'll excuse me, Mr Young—that you who's bin at school shouldn't have your mind more clear about religion. Don't they teach it at school?"

"They used to read a few verses of the Bible where I was at school," said Young, "and the master, who didn't seem to have any religion in himself, read over a formal prayer; but I fear that that didn't do us much good, for we never listened to it. Anyhow, it could not be called religious teaching. But were you never at school, Adams?"

"No, sir, not I," answered the seaman, with a quiet laugh; "leastwise not at a reg'lar true-blue school. I was brought up chiefly in the streets of London, though that's a pretty good school too of its kind. It teaches lads to be uncommon smart, I tell you, and up to a thing or two, but it don't do much for us in the book-larnin' way. I can scarcely read even now, an' what I have of it was got through spellin' out the playbills in the public-house windows. But what d'ye say, sir, now that we both seem inclined to turn over a new leaf, if you was to turn schoolmaster an' teach me to read and write a bit better than I can do at present? I'd promise to be a willin' scholar an' a good boy."

"Not a bad idea," said Young, with a laugh, as he rose and continued the descent of the track leading to the settlement.

The village had by this time improved very much in appearance, good substantial cottages, made of the tafano or flower wood, and the aruni, having taken the place of the original huts run up at the period of landing. Some of the cottages were from forty to fifty feet long, by fifteen wide and thirteen high. It was evident that ships were, partly at least, the model on which they had been constructed; for the sleeping-places were a row of berths opposite the door, each with its separate little window or porthole. There were no fireplaces, the range of the thermometer on the island being from 55 degrees to 85 degrees, and all cooking operations were performed in detached outhouses and ovens.

In the chief of these cottages might have been found, among the many miscellaneous objects of use and ornament, two articles which lay apart on a shelf, and were guarded by Young and Adams with almost reverential care. These were the chronometer and the azimuth compass of the *Bounty*.

The cottages, some of which had two stories, were arranged so as to enclose a large grassy square, which was guarded by a strong palisade from the encroachments of errant hogs, goats, and fowls. This spot, among other uses, served as a convenient day-nursery for the babies, and also a place of occasional frolic and recreation to the elder children.

To the first of these was added, not long after the death of their respective fathers, Edward Quintal and Catherine McCoy. To John Adams, also, a daughter was born, whom he named Hannah, after a poor girl who had been in the habit of chucking him under the chin, and giving him sugar-plums when he was an arab in the streets of London—at least so he jestingly remarked to his spouse on the day she presented the new baby to his notice.

On the day of which we write, Young and Adams found the square above-mentioned in possession of the infantry, under command of their self-elected captain, Otaheitan Sally, who was now, according to John Adams, "no longer a chicken." Being in her eleventh year, and, like her country-women generally at that age, far advanced towards big girlhood, she presented a tall, slight, graceful, and beautifully moulded figure, with a sweet sprightly face, and a smile that was ever disclosing her fine white teeth. Her profusion of black hair was gathered into a knot which hung low on the back of her pretty round head. She was crowned with a wreath of wild-flowers, made and presented by her troops. It is needless to say that every one of these, big and little, was passionately attached to Sally.

Chief among her admirers now, as of old, was Charlie Christian, who, being about eight years of age, well grown and stalwart like his father, was now almost as tall as his former nurse.

Charlie had not with years lost one jot of that intensely innocent and guileless look of childhood, which inclined one to laugh while he merely cast earnest gaze into one's face; but years had given to him a certain gravity and air of self-possession which commanded respect, even from that volatile imp, his contemporary, Dan McCoy.

Thursday October Christian, who was less than a year younger than Sally, had also shot up into a long-legged boy, and bade fair to become a tall and sturdy man. He, like his brother, was naturally grave and earnest, but was easily roused to action, and if he did not himself originate fun, was ever ready to appreciate the antics and mild wickedness of Dan McCoy, or to burst into sudden and uproarious laughter at the tumbles or ludicrous doings of the sprawlers, who rolled their plump-made forms on the soft grass.

Not one of the band, however, had yet attained to the age which renders young people ashamed of childish play. When Young and Adams appeared on the scene, Sally, her hair broken loose and the wreath confusedly mingled with it, was flying round the square with Dolly Young on her shoulder, and chased by Charlie Christian, who pretended, in the most obvious manner, that he could not catch her. Toc was sitting on the fence watching them, and perceiving his brother's transparent hypocrisy, was chuckling to himself with great delight.

Matt Quintal and Dan McCoy, at the head of two opposing groups, were engaged in playing French and English, each group endeavouring to pull the other over a rope laid on the grass between them.

Several of the others, being too little, were not allowed to join in the game, and contented themselves with general scrimmaging and skylarking, while Edward Quintal, Catherine McCoy, and Hannah Adams, the most recent additions to the community, rolled about in meaningless felicity.

"Hold on hard," shouted Dan McCoy, whose flushed face and blue eyes beamed and flashed under a mass of curling yellow hair, and who was the foremost boy of the French band.

"I'm holdin' on," cried Matt Quintal, who was intellectually rather obtuse.

"Tight," cried Dan.

"Tight," repeated Matt.

"There, don't let go—oh! hup!"

The grasp of Dan suddenly relaxed when Matt and his Englishmen were straining their utmost. Of course they went back on the top of each other in a wild jumble, while Dan, having put a foot well back, was prepared, and stood comparatively firm.

"You did that a-purpose," cried Matt, springing up and glaring.

"I know you did it a-purpose," retorted Dan.

"But—but I said that—that *you* did it a-purpose," stammered Matt.

"Well, an' didn't I say that you said that I said *you* did it a-purpose?"

A yell of delight followed this reply, in which, however, Matt did not join.

Like his father, Matt Quintal was short in the temper—at least, short for a Pitcairn boy. He suddenly gave Dan McCoy a dab on the nose with his fist. Now, as every one must know, a dab on the nose is painful; moreover, it sometimes produces blood. Dan McCoy, who also inherited a shortish temper from his father, feeling the pain, and seeing the blood, suddenly flushed to the temples, and administered to Matt a sounding slap on the side of the head, which sent him tumbling on the grass. But Matt was not conquered, though overturned. Jumping up, he made a rush at Dan, who stood on the defensive. The other children, being more gentle in their natures, stood by, and anticipated with feelings of awe the threatened encounter; but Thursday October Christian, who had listened with eager ears, ever since his intelligence dawned, to the conversations of the mutineers, here stepped between the combatants.

"Come, come," said he, authoritatively, in virtue of his greater age and superior size, "let's have fair play. If you must fight, do it ship-shape, an', accordin' to the articles of war. We must form a ring first, you know, an' get a bottle an' a sponge and—"

An appalling yell at this point nearly froze the marrow in everybody's bones. It was caused by a huge pig, which, observing that the gate had been left open, had entered the square, and gone up to snuff at one of the nude babies, who, seated like a whitey-brown petrifaction, gazed with a look of horror in the pig's placid face.

If ever a pig in this sublunary sphere regretted a foolish act, that Pitcairn pig must have been steeped in repentance to the latest day of its life. With one howl in unison, the entire field, *minus* the infants, ran at that pig like a human tornado. It was of no avail that the pig made straight for the gate by which it had entered. That gate had either removed or shut itself. In frantic haste, the unhappy creature coursed round the square, followed by its pursuers, who soon caught it by the tail, then by an ear, then by the nose and the other ear, and a fore leg and two hind ones, and finally hurled it over the fence, amid a torrent of shrieks which only a Pitcairn pig could utter or a Pitcairn mind conceive. It fell with a bursting squeak, and retired in grumpy silence to ruminate over the dire consequences of a too earnest gaze in the face of a child.

"Well done, child'n!" cried John Adams. "Sarves him right. Come, now, to grub, all of you."

Even though the Pitcairn children had been disobedient by nature, they would have obeyed that order with alacrity. In a few brief minutes a profound silence proclaimed, more clearly than could a trumpet-tongue, that the inhabitants of the lonely island were at dinner.

Chapter Twenty One.

The Last Man.

One morning John Adams, instead of going to work in his garden, as was his wont, took down his musket from its accustomed pegs above the door, and sallied forth into the woods behind the village. He had not

gone far when he heard a rustling of the leaves, and looking back, beheld the graceful form of Sally bounding towards him.

“Are you going to shoot, father?” she said, on coming up.

The young people of the village had by this time got into the habit of calling Adams “father,” and regarded him as the head of the community; not because of his age, for at this time he was only between thirty and forty years, but because of his sedate, quiet character, and a certain air of elderly wisdom which distinguished him. Even Edward Young, who was about the same age, but more juvenile both in feeling and appearance, felt the influence of his solid, unpretending temperament, and laughingly acknowledged him King of Pitcairn.

“No, dear, I’m not goin’ to shoot,” said Adams, in reply, “I’m only going up to Christian’s outlook to try if I can find somethin’ there, an’ I always like to have the old blunderbuss with me. It feels sort of company, you know, an’ minds me of old times; but you’ll not understand what I mean, Sall.”

“No, because I’ve no old times to mind about,” said Sally, with a peculiar smile. “May I go with you, father?”

“Of course you may. Come along, lass.”

Adams held out his strong hand. Sally put her peculiarly small one into it, and the two went slowly up the mountain-track together.

On reaching the top of a little knoll or plateau, they stopped, and turned to look back. They could see over the tops of the palm-groves from that place. The track by which they had ascended was visible here and there, winding among the flowering shrubs and trees. The village lay far below, like a gem in a setting of bright green, which contrasted pleasantly with the warm clouds and the blue sea beyond. The sun was bright and the air was calm—so calm that the voices of the children at play came up to them distinctly in silvery ripples.

“How comes it, Sall, that you’ve deserted your post to-day?”

“Because the guard has been relieved; same as you say they do on board a man-of-war. I left the sprawlers in charge of Bessy Mills, and the staggerers are shut into the green. You see, I’m feeling a little tired to-day, and thought I would like to have a quiet walk in the woods.”

She finished this explanation with a little sigh.

“Dear, dear me!” exclaimed Adams, with a look of amused surprise, “you’re not becomin’ sentimental are you, Sally?”

“What is sentimental, father!”

“Why, it’s a—it’s a sort of a feelin’—a sensation, you know, a kind of all-overishness, that—d’ye see—”

He stopped short and stared with a perplexed air at the girl, who burst into a merry laugh.

"That's one of your puzzlers, I think," she said, looking up slyly from the corners of her eyes.

"Well, Sall, that *is* a puzzler," returned Adams, with a self-condemning shake of the head. "I never before felt so powerfully the want o' dictionary knowledge. I'll be shot if I can tell you what sentimental is, though I *know* what it is as well as I know what six-water grog or plum-duff is. We must ask Mr Young to explain it. He's bin to school, you know, an' that's more than I have—more's the pity."

"Well," said Sally, as they proceeded on their way, "whatever senti—senti—"

"Mental," said Adams.

"Whatever sentimental is, I'm not that, because I'm just the same as ever I was, for I often want to be quiet and alone, and I often am quiet and alone in the bush."

"And what do you think about, Sall, when you're alone in the bush?" said the seaman, looking down with more interest than usual at the innocent face beside him.

"Oh, about heaps and heaps of things. I couldn't tell you in a month all I think about; but one thing I think most about is a man-of-war."

"A man-of-war, Sall?"

"Yes; I would give anything to see a man-of-war, what you've so often told us about, with all its masts and sails, and bunks and guns and anchors, and officers and men. I often wonder *so* much what new faces would be like. You see I'm so used to the faces of yourself and Mr Young, and Mainmast and Susannah, and Toc and Matt and Dan and—"

"Just say the rest o' the youngsters, dear," interrupted Adams. "There's no use in goin' over 'em all by name."

"Well, I'm so used to them that I can't fancy how any other faces can be different, and yet I heard Mr Young say the other day that there's no two faces in the world exactly alike, and you know there must be hundreds and hundreds of faces in the world."

"Ay, there's thousands and thousands—for the matter o' that, there's millions and millions of 'em—an it's quite true that you can't ever pick out two that would fit into the same mould. Of course," continued Adams, in an argumentative tone, "I'm not goin' for to say but that you could find a dozen men any day with hook noses an' black eyes an' lanky hair, just as you can find another dozen with turn-up noses an' grey eyes an' carroty hair; but what I mean to say is, that you won't find no two of 'em that han't got a difference of some sort somewheres. It's very odd, but it's a fact."

"Another puzzler," said Sally, with a laugh.

"*Just* so. But what else do you think about, Sall?"

"Sometimes I think about those fine ladies you've told us of, who drive about in grand carriages with horses. Oh, these horses; what I would give to see horses! Have they got tails, father?"

"Tails!" cried Adams, with a laugh, "of course they have; long hairy ones, and manes too; that's hair down the back o' their necks, dear. See here, fetch me that bit of red stone and I'll draw you a horse."

Sally brought the piece of red stone, and her companion, sitting down beside a smooth rock, from which he wiped the dust with the sleeve of his shirt, began, slowly and with compressed lips, frowning eyebrows, and many a hard-drawn sigh, to draw the portrait of a horse.

Adams was not an artist. The drawing might have served almost equally well for an ass, or even for a cow, but Sally watched it with intense interest.

"You see, dear," said the artist, commenting as the work proceeded, "this is his head, with a turn-up—there—like that, for his nose. A little too bluff, no doubt, but no matter. Then comes the ears, two of 'em, somewhat longish—so, not exactly fore an' aft, as I've made 'em, but ath'ort ships, so to speak, only I never could understand how painters manage to make one thing look as if it was behind another. I can't get behind the one ear to put on the other one nohow."

"A puzzler!" ejaculated Sally.

"Just so. Well, you have them both, anyhow, only fore an' aft, as I said before. Well, then comes his back with a hollow—so, for people to sit in when they go cruisin' about on shore; then here's his legs—somethin' like that, the fore ones straight an' the aft ones crooked."

"Has he only two legs," asked Sally, in surprise, "one before an' one behind?"

"No, dear, he's got four, but I've the same difficulty wi' them that I had wi' the ears—one behind the other, you know. However, there you have 'em—so, in the fore-an'-aft style. Then he's got hoofs at the end o' the legs, like the goats, you know, only not split up the middle, though why they're not split is more than I can tell; an' there's a sort o' curl behind, a little above it—the fetlock I think they call it, but that's far beyond my powers o' drawin'."

"But you've forgot the tail," said Sally.

"So I have; think o' that now, to forget his tail! He'd never do that himself if he was alive. It sticks out from hereabouts. There you have it, flowin' quite graceful down a'most to his heels. Now, Sally, that's a horse, an' not much to boast of after all in the way of a likeness, though I say it that shouldn't."

"How I *should* like to see a real one!" said the girl, gazing intently at the wild caricature, while her instructor looked on with a benignant smile.

"Then I often think of the poor people Mr Young is so fond of telling us stories about," continued Sally, as they resumed their upward path, "though I'm much puzzled about them. Why are they poor? Why are they not rich like other people?"

"There's a many reasons why, dear," continued Adams, whose knowledge of political economy was limited; "some of 'em don't work, an' some of 'em won't work, and some of 'em can't work, an' what between one thing an' another, there's a powerful lot of 'em everywhere."

Sally, whose thirst for knowledge was great, continued to ply poor John Adams with questions regarding the poor, until he became so involved in "puzzlers" that he was fain to change the subject, and for a time they talked pleasantly on many themes. Then they came to the steep parts of the mountains, and relapsed into silence. On reaching another plateau or flat knoll, where they turned to survey the magnificent panorama spread out before them, Sally said, slowly—

"Sometimes when I'm alone in the bush I think of God. Mr Young has been talking to me about Him lately, and I am wondering and wanting to know more about Him. Do you know anything about Him, father?"

John Adams had looked at his simple interrogator with surprise and not a little perplexity.

"Well, to tell you the honest truth," said he, "I can't say that I do know much about Him, more shame to me; an' some talks I've had lately with Mr Young have made me see that I know even less than I thought I did. But we'll ask Mr Young to explain these matters to us when we return home. As it happens. I've come up here to search for the very book that tells us about God—His own book, the Bible. Mr Christian used to read it, an' kept it in his cave."

Soon afterwards the man and child reached the cave referred to. On entering, they were surprised to find Young himself there before them. He was reading the Bible, and Adams could not help recalling his previous visit, when he had found poor Fletcher Christian similarly occupied.

"I didn't know you was here, Mr Young, else I wouldn't have disturbed you," said Adams. "I just came up to see if I could find the book, for it seems to me that if you agree to carry out your notion of turnin' schoolmaster, it would be as well to have the school-book down beside us."

"*My* notion of turning schoolmaster," said Young, with a faint smile; "it was *your* notion, Adams. However, I've no objection to fall in with it, and I quite agree about carrying the Bible home with us, for, to say truth, I don't feel the climbing of the mountain as easy as I used to."

Again the faint smile played on the midshipman's lips for a moment or two.

"I'm sorry to hear you say that, sir," said Adams, with a look of concern.

"And it can't be age, you know," continued Young, in a tone of pleasantry, "for I'm not much above thirty. I suspect it's that asthmatic affection that has troubled me of late. However," he added, in a heartier tone, "it won't do to get downhearted about that. Come, what say you to begin school at once? We'll put you at the bottom of the class, being so stupid, and we'll put Sally at the top. Will you join, Sall?"

We need scarcely say that Sally, who was always ready for anything, whether agreeable to her or otherwise, assented heartily to the proposition, and then and there began to learn to read out of the Bible, with John Adams for a class-fellow.

Of course it was uphill work at first. It was found that Adams could blunder on pretty well with the small words, but made sad havoc among the long ones. Still his condition was pronounced hopeful. As to Sally, she seemed to take up the letters at the first sitting, and even began to form some correct notion of the power of syllables. After a short trial, Young said that that was quite enough for the first day, and then went on to read a passage or two from the Bible himself.

And now, for the first time, Otaheitan Sally heard the old, old story of the love of God to man in the gift of Jesus Christ. The name of Jesus was, indeed, not quite unfamiliar to her; but it was chiefly as an oath that her associations presented it to her. Now she learned that it was the name of Immanuel, God with us, the Just One, who died that sinful man might be justified and saved from the power of sin.

She did not, indeed, learn all this at that time; but she had her receptive mind opened to the first lessons of the glorious truth on than summer evening on the mountain-top.

From this date forward, Edward Young became a real schoolmaster; for he not only taught Adams to read better than he had ever yet read, but he daily assembled all the children, except the very little ones, and gave them instruction in reading out of the Word of God. In all this John Adams gave him hearty assistance, and, when not acting as a pupil, did good service in teaching the smaller children their letters.

But Young went a step further.

"John Adams," said he, one morning, "it has been much on my mind of late that God has spared you and me in order that we may teach these women and children the way of salvation through Jesus Christ."

"It may be as you say, sir," returned Adams, "but I can't exactly feel that I'm fit to say much to 'em about that. I can only give the little uns their A B C, an' p'r'aps a little figurin'. But I'll go in with you, Mr Young, an' do my best."

"Thank you, Adams, thank you. I feel sure that you will do well, and that God will bless our efforts. Do you know, John, I think my difficulties about the *way* are somewhat cleared up. It's simpler than I thought. The whole work of our salvation is already accomplished by our blessed Lord Jesus. All we have got to *do* is, *not to refuse it.* You see, whatever I know about it is got from the Bible, an' you can judge of that as well as I. Besides the passages that I have already shown you about believing, I find this, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;' and this, 'Whosoever will, let him come;' and this, 'Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die.' So you see there's no doubt the *offer* is made to every one who will; and then it is written that the Holy Spirit is able to make us willing. If God entreats us to 'come,' and provides the 'way,' what is it that hinders but unwillingness? Indeed, the Word says as much, for I find it written, 'Ye *will* not come to me, that ye might have life.'"

"What you say seems very true, sir," replied Adams, knitting his brows and shaking his head dubiously; "but then, sir, do you mean to say a man's good behaviour has nothin' to do with his salvation at all?"

"Nothing whatever, John, as far as I can make out from the Bible—at least, not in the matter of *procuring* his salvation. As a consequence of salvation, yes. Why, is it not said by the Lord, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments?' What could be plainer or stronger than that? If I won't behave myself because of love to my Lord, I'll not do it on any lower ground."

Still John Adams shook his head. He admitted that the arguments of his friend did seem unanswerable, but,—in short, he became an illustration of the truth of the proverb, 'A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.' He had promised, however, to render all the aid in his power, and he was not the man to draw back from his word. When, therefore, Edward Young proposed to read daily prayers out of the Church of England Prayer-book, which had been taken from the *Bounty* with the Bible and Carteret's *Voyages*, he made no objection; and he was similarly 'agreeable,' as he expressed it, when Young further proposed to have service forenoon and afternoon on Sundays.

For some months these various occupations and duties were carried on with great vigour, much to the interest of all concerned, the native women being quite as tractable scholars as the children.

We cannot tell now whether it was the extra labour thus undertaken by Young, or some other cause, that threw him into bad health; but certain it is, that a very few months later, he began to feel his strength give way, and a severe attack of his old complaint, asthma, at last obliged him to give up the work for a time. It is equally certain that at this important period in the history of the lonely island, the 'good seed' was sown in 'good ground,' for Young had laboured in the name of the Lord Jesus, and the promise regarding such work is sure: "Your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

"I must knock under for a time, John," he said, with a wearied look, on the occasion of his ceasing to work. He had of late taken to calling Adams by his Christian name, and the latter had been made unaccountably uneasy thereby.

"Never mind, sir," said the bluff seaman, in an encouraging tone. "You just rest yourself for a bit, an' I'll carry on the school business, Sunday services an' all. I ain't much of a parson, no doubt, but I'll do my best, and a man can't do no more."

"All right, John, I hand it over to you. A short time of loafing about and taking it easy will set me all to rights again, and I'll resume office as fresh as ever."

Alas! poor Edward Young's day of labour was ended. He never more resumed office on earth.

Shortly after the above conversation he had another and extremely violent attack of asthma. It prostrated him completely, so that for several days he could not speak. Afterwards he became a little better, but it was evident to every one that he was dying, and it was touching to see the earnest way in which the tearful women, who were so fond of him, vied with each other in seeking to relieve his sufferings.

John Adams sat by his bedside almost continually at last. He seemed to require neither food nor rest, but kept watching on hour after hour, sometimes moistening the patient's lips with water, sometimes reading a few verses out of the Bible to him.

"John," said the poor invalid one afternoon, faintly, "your hand. I'm going—John—to be—for ever with the Lord—the dear Lord!"

There was a long pause, then—

"You'll—carry on—the work, John; not in your own strength, John—in His?"

Adams promised earnestly in a choking voice, and the sick man seemed to sink to rest with a smile on his lips. He never spoke again. Next day he was buried under the palm-trees, far from the home of his childhood, from the land which had condemned him as a heartless mutineer.

Chapter Twenty Two.

John Adams longs for a Chum and becomes a Story-Teller.

Faithful to his promise, John Adams, after the death of Young, did his best to carry on the good work that had been begun.

But at first his spirit was very heavy. It had not before occurred to him that there was a solitude far more profound and overwhelming than anything he had hitherto experienced. The difference between ten companions and one companion is not very great, but the difference between one and none is immeasurable. Of course we refer to that companionship which is capable of intelligent sympathy. The solitary seaman still had his Otaheitan wife and the bright children of the mutineers around him, and the death of Young had drawn out his heart more powerfully than ever towards these, but they could not in any degree fill the place of one who could talk intelligently of home, of Old England, of British battles fought and won, of ships and men, and things that might have belonged, as far as the women and children were concerned, to another world. They could only in a slight degree appreciate the nautical phraseology in which he had been wont to convey some of his strongest sentiments, and they could not in any degree enter into his feelings when, forgetting for a moment his circumstances, he came out with a pithy forecastle allusion to the politics or the Government of his native land.

“Oh, you meek-faced brute, if you could only speak!” he exclaimed one day, dropping his eyes from the sea, on which he had been gazing, to the eyes of a pet goat that had been looking up in his face. “What’s the use of having a tongue in your head if you can’t use it!”

As may be imagined, the goat made no reply to this remark, but continued its gaze with somewhat of the solemnity of the man himself.

For want of a companion, poor Adams at this time took to talking frequently in a quiet undertone to himself. He also fell a good deal into Fletcher Christian’s habit of retiring to the cave on the mountain-top, but he did not read the Bible while there. He merely communed with his own spirit, meditated sadly on the past, and wondered a good deal as to the probable future.

“It’s not that I ain’t happy enough here,” he muttered softly to himself one evening, while he gazed wistfully at the horizon as Christian had been wont to gaze. “I’m happy enough—more so than what I deserve to be, God knows—with them good—natured women an’ jolly bit things of child’n, but—but I’m awful hard up for a chum! I do believe that if Bill McCoy, or even Matt Quintal, was here, I’d get along pretty well with either of ’em. Ah, poor Quintal! I feel as if I’d never git over that. If it wasn’t murder, it feels awful like it; an’ yet I can’t see that they could call it murder. If we hadn’t done it he would certainly have killed both me an’ Mr Young, for Matt never threatened without performin’, and then he’d have gone mad an’ done for the women an’ child’n as well. No, it wasn’t murder. It was necessity.”

He remained silent for some time, and then his thoughts appeared to revert to the former channel.

“If only a ship would come an’ be wrecked here, now, we could start fresh once more with a new lot maybe, but I’m not so sure about that either. P’r’aps we’d quarrel an’ fight an’ go through the bloody business all over again. No, it’s better as it is. But a ship might touch in passin’, an’ we could prevail on two or three of the crew, or even one, to stop with us. What would I not give to hear a man’s voice once more, a good growlin’ bass. I wouldn’t be partickler as to sentiments or grammar, not I, if it was only gruff, an’ well spiced with sea-lingo an’ smelt o’ baccy. Not that I cares for baccy myself now, or grog either. Humph! it do make me a’most laugh to think o’ the times I’ve said, ay, and thought, that I couldn’t git along nohow without my pipe an’ my glass. Why, I wouldn’t give a chip of a brass farden for a pipe now, an’ as to grog, after what I’ve seen of its cursed natur’, I wouldn’t taste a drop even if they was to

offer to make me Lord High Admiral o' the British fleet for so doin'. But I *would* like once more to see a bearded man; even an unbearded one would be better than nothin'. Ah, well, it's no manner o' use sighin', any more than cryin', over spilt milk. Here I am, an' I suppose here I shall be to the end o' the chapter."

Again he was silent for a long time, while his eyes remained fixed, as usual, on the horizon. Suddenly the gaze became intent, and, leaning forward with an eager expression, he shaded his eyes with his hand.

"It's not creditable," he murmured, as he fell back again into his former listless attitude, "it's not creditable for an old salt like me to go mistakin' sea-gulls for sails, as I've bin doin' so often of late. I'm out o' practice, that's where it is."

"Come, John Adams," he added, after another pause, and jumping up smartly, "this will never do. Rouse yourself, John, an' give up this mumble-bumble style o' thing. Why, it'll kill you in the long-run if you don't. Besides, you promised Mr Young to carry on the work, and you must keep your promise, old boy."

"Yes," rang out a clear sweet voice from the inner end of the cave, "and you promised to give up coming here to mope; so you must keep your promise to me as well, father."

Otaheitan Sally tripped into the cave, and seating herself on the stone ledge opposite, beamed up in the sailor's face.

"You're a good girl, Sall, an' I'll keep my promise to you from this day forth; see if I don't. I'll make a note of it in the log."

The log to which Adams here referred was a journal or register, which Edward Young had begun to keep, and in which were inserted the incidents of chief interest, including the births and deaths, that took place on the island from the day of landing. After Young's death, John Adams continued to post it up from time to time.

The promise to Sally was faithfully kept. From that time forward, Adams gave up going to the outlook, except now and then when anything unusual appeared on the sea, but never again to mope. He also devoted himself with increased assiduity to the instruction of the women and children in Bible truths, although still himself not very clear in his own mind as to the great central truth of all. In this work he was ably assisted by Sally, and also by Young's widow, Susannah.

We have mentioned this woman as being one of the youngest of the Otaheitans. She was also one of the most graceful, and, strange to say, though it was she who killed Tetaheite, she was by nature one of the gentlest of them all.

The school never became a prison-house to these islanders, either women or children. Adams had wisdom enough at first to start it as a sort of play, and never fell into the civilised error of giving the pupils too much to do at a time. All the children answered the daily summons to school with equal alacrity, though it cannot be said that their performances there were equally creditable. Some were quick and intelligent, others were slow and stupid, while a few were slow but by no means stupid. Charlie Christian was among these last.

"Oh, Charlie, you *are* such a booby!" one day exclaimed Otaheitan Sally, who, being advanced to the dignity of monitor, devoted much of her time to the instruction of her old favourite. "What *can* be the matter with your brains?"

The innocent gaze of blank wonder with which the "Challie" of infancy had been wont to receive his companion's laughing questions, had not quite departed; but it was chastened by this time with a slight puckering of the mouth and a faint twinkle of the eyes that were suggestive.

Sitting modestly on the low bench, with his hands clasped before him, this strapping pupil looked at his teacher, and said that really he did not know what was wrong with his brains.

"Perhaps," he added, looking thoughtfully into the girl's upturned orbs, "perhaps I haven't got any brains at all."

"O yes, you have," cried Sall, with a laugh; "you have got plenty, if you'd only use them."

"Ah!" sighed Charlie, stretching out one of his strong muscular arms and hands, "if brains were only things that one could lay hold of like an oar, or an axe, or a sledge-hammer, I'd soon let you see me use them; but bein' only a soft kind o' stuff in one's skull, you know—"

A burst of laughter from Sally not only cut short the sentence, but stopped the general hum of the school, and drew the attention of the master.

"Hallo, Sall, I say, you know," said Adams, in remonstrative tone, "you forget that you're a monitor. If you go on like that we'll have to make a school-girl of you again."

"Please, father, I couldn't help it," said Sally, while her cheeks flushed crimson, "Charlie is such a—"

She stopped short, covered her face with both hands, and bending forward till she hid her confusion on her knees, went into an uncontrollable giggle, the only evidences of which, however, were the convulsive movements of her shoulders and an occasional squeak in the region of her little nose.

"Come now, child'n," cried Adams, seating himself on an inverted tea-box, which formed his official chair, "time's up, so we'll have a slap at Carteret before dismissing. Thursday October Christian will bring the book."

There was a general hum of satisfaction when this was said, for Carteret's Voyages, which, with the Bible and Prayer-book, formed the only class-books of that singular school, were highly appreciated by young and old alike, especially as read to them by Adams, who accompanied his reading with a free running commentary of explanation, which infused great additional interest into that old writer's book. TOC rose with alacrity, displaying in the act the immense relative difference between his very long legs and his ordinary body, in regard to which Adams used to console him by saying, "Never mind, Toc, your legs'll stop growin' at last, and when they do, your body will come out like a telescope. You'll be a six-footer yet. Why, you're taller than I am already by two inches."

In process of time Carteret was finished; it was then begun a second time, and once more read through. After that Adams felt a chill feeling of helplessness steal over him, for Carteret could not be read over and over again like the Bible, and he could not quite see his way to reading the Church of England prayers by

way of recreation. In his extremity he had recourse to Sally for advice. Indeed, now that Sall was approaching young womanhood, not only the children but all the grown people of the island, including their chief or "father," found themselves when in trouble gravitating, as if by instinct, to the sympathetic heart and the ready hand.

"I'll tell you what to do," said Sally, when appealed to, as she took the seaman's rough hand and fondled it; "just try to invent stories, and tell them to us as if you was readin' a book. You might even turn Carteret upside down and pretend that you was readin'."

Adams shook his head.

"I never could invent anything, Sall, 'xcept w'en I was tellin' lies, an' that's a long while ago now—a long, long while. No; I doubt that I couldn't invent, but I'll tell 'ee what; I'll try to remember some old yarns, and spin them off as well as I can."

The new idea broke on Adams's mind so suddenly that his eyes sparkled, and he bestowed a nautical slap on his thigh.

"The very thing!" cried Sally, whose eyes sparkled fully more than those of the sailor, while she clapped her hands; "nothing could be better. What will you begin with?"

"Let me see," said Adams, seating himself on a tree-stump, and knitting his brows with a severe strain of memory. "There's Cinderella; an' there's Ally Babby or the fifty thieves—if it wasn't forty—I'm not rightly sure which, but it don't much matter; an' there's Jack the Giant-killer, an' Jack and the Pea-stalk—no; let me see; it was a beanstalk, I think—anyhow, it was the stalk of a vegetable o' some sort. Why, I wonder it never struck me before to tell you all about them tales."

Reader, if you had seen the joy depicted on Sally's face, and the rich flush of her cheek, and her half-open mouth with its double row of pearls, while Adams ran over this familiar list, you would have thought it well worth that seaman's while to tax his memory even more severely than he did.

"And then," he continued, knitting his brows still more severely, "there's Gulliver an' the Lillycups or putts, an' the Pilgrim's Progress—though, of course, I don't mean for to say I knows 'em all right off by heart, but that's no odds. An' there's Robinson Crusoe—ha! *that's* the story for you, Sall; that's the tale that'll make your hair stand on end, an' a'most split your sides open, an' cause the very marrow in your spine to wriggle. Yes; we'll begin with Robinson Crusoe."

Having settled this point to their mutual and entire satisfaction, the two went off for a short walk before supper. On the way, they met Elizabeth Mills and Mary Christian, both of whom were now no longer staggerers, but far advanced as jumpers. They led between them Adams's little daughter Dinah, who, being still very small, could not take long walks without assistance and an occasional carry.

"Di, my pet," cried her father, seizing the willing child, and hoisting her on his shoulder. "Come, you shall go along with us. And you too, lassies, if you have no other business in hand."

"Yes, we'll go with you," cried Bessy Mills. "May was just saying it was too soon to go home to supper."

"Come along, then," cried Adams, tossing his child in the air as he went. "My beauty, you'll beat your mammy in looks yet, eh? an' when you're old enough we'll tell you all about Rob—"

He checked himself abruptly, cleared his voice, and looked at Sally.

"Well, father," said May Christian, quickly, "about Rob who?"

"Ahem! eh? well, yes, about Rob—ha, but we won't talk about him just now, dear. Sally and I were havin' some private conversation just now about Rob, though that isn't the whole of his name neither, but we won't make it public at present. You'll hear about him time enough—eh, Sall?"

The girls were so little accustomed to anything approaching to mystery or secrecy in John Adams, that they looked at him in silent wonder. Then they glanced at Sally, whose suppressed smile and downcast eyes told eloquently that there was, as Adams would have said, "something in the wind," and they tried to get her to reveal the secret, but Sall was immovable. She would not add a single syllable to the information given inadvertently by Adams, but she and he laughed a good deal in a quiet way, and made frequent references to Rob in the course of the walk.

Of course, when the mysterious word was pronounced in the village in the evening, and what had been said and hinted about it was repeated, curiosity was kindled into a violent flame; and when the entire colony was invited to a feast that night, the excitement was intense. From the oldest to the youngest, excluding the more recently arrived sprawlers, every eye was fixed on John Adams during the whole course of supper, except at the commencement, when the customary blessing was asked, at which point every eye was tightly closed.

Adams, conscious of increased importance, spoke little during the meal, and maintained an air of profounder gravity than usual until the dishes were cleared away. Then he looked round the assembled circle, and said, "Women an' child'n, I'm goin' to tell 'ee a story."

Chapter Twenty Three.

The Pitcairners have a Night of it.

Although John Adams had often, in the course of his residence on Pitcairn, jested and chatted and taken his share in relating many an anecdote, he had never up till that time resolved to "go in," as he said, "for a regular story, like a book."

"Women an' child'n," he began, "it may be that I'm goin' to attempt more than I'm fit to carry out in this business, for my memory's none o' the best. However, that won't matter much, for I tell 'ee, fair an' aboveboard at the beginnin', that when I come to gaps that I can't fill up from memory, I'll just bridge 'em over from imagination, d'ye see?"

"What's imagination?" demanded Dan McCoy, whose tendency to pert interruption and reply nothing yet discovered could restrain.

"It's a puzzler," said Otaheitan Sally, in a low tone, which called forth a laugh from the others.

It did not take much to make these people laugh, as the observant reader will have perceived.

“Well, it *is* a puzzler,” said Adams, with a quiet smile and a perplexed look. “I may say, Dan McCoy, in an off-hand rough-an’-ready sort o’ way, that imagination is that power o’ the mind which enables a man to tell lies.”

There was a general opening of juvenile eyes at this, as if recent biblical instruction had led them to believe that the use of such a power must be naughty.

“You see,” explained Adams, “when a man, usin’ his imagination, tells what’s not true, just to deceive people an’ mislead ’em, we call it lyin’, but when his imagination invents what’s not true merely for the fun o’ the thing, an’ tells it as a joke, never pretendin’ that it’s true, he ain’t lyin’, he’s only tellin’ a story, or a anecdote, or a parable. Now, Dan, put that in your pipe an’ smoke it. Likewise shut your potato-trap, and let me go on wi’ my story, which is, (he looked impressively round, while every eye gazed, and ear listened, and mouth opened in breathless attention), the Adventure of Robinson Crusoe an’ his man Friday!”

All eyes were turned, as if by magic, on Thursday,—as if there must be some strange connection here. Toc suddenly shut his mouth and hung his head in confusion at this unexpected concentration of attention on himself.

“You’ve no need to be ashamed, Thursday,” said Adams, with a laugh. “You’ve got the advantage of Friday, anyhow, bein’ a day in advance of him. Well, as I was about to say, boys an’ girls, this Robinson Crusoe was a seafarin’ man, just like myself; an’ he went to sea, an’ was shipwrecked on a desolate island just like this, but there was nobody whatever on that island, not even a woman or a babby. Poor Robinson was all alone, an’ it wasn’t till a consid’rable time after he had gone ashore that he discovered Friday, (who was a black savage), through seein’ his footprint in the sand.”

Adams having burst thus suddenly into the very marrow of his story, had no reason thereafter to complain either of interruption or inattention. Neither had he reason to find fault with the wealth of his prolific imagination. It would have done the soul of a painter good to have watched the faces of that rapt, eager, breathless audience, and it would have afforded much material for reflection to a student of mind, had he, knowing the original story of Robinson Crusoe, been permitted to trace the ingenious sinuosities and astounding creations by which Adams wove his meagre amount of original matter into a magnificent tale, which not only thrilled his audience, but amazed himself.

In short, he quite justified the assurance formerly given to Sally, that the story of Robinson Crusoe would make the hair of his hearers stand on end, their sides almost split open, and the very marrow in their spines wriggle. Indeed, his version of the tale might have caused similar results in Robinson Crusoe himself, had he been there to hear it, besides causing his eyebrows to rise and vanish evermore among the hair of his head with astonishment.

It was the same with the Pilgrim’s Progress, which he often told to them afterwards. Simple justice to Adams, however, requires us to state that he was particularly careful to impress on his hearers that the Pilgrim’s Progress was a religious tale.

“It’s a allegory, you must know,” he said, on first introducing it, “which means a story intended to teach some good lesson—a story which says one thing and means another.”

He looked pointedly at Dan McCoy here, as if to say, "That's an exhaustive explanation, which takes the wind out o' *your* sails, young man," but Dan was not to be so easily silenced.

"What's the use, father," he asked, with an air of affected simplicity, "of a story sayin' one thing an' meanin' another? Wouldn't it be more honest like if it said what it meant at once, straight off?"

"P'r'aps it would," returned Adams, who secretly enjoyed Dan's irrepressible impudence; "but, then, if it did, Dan, it would take away your chance of askin' questions, d'ye see? Anyhow, *this* story don't say what it means straight off, an' that gives me a chance to expound it."

Now, it was in the expounding of the Pilgrim's Progress that John Adams's peculiar talents shone out brilliantly, for not only did he "misremember," jumble, and confuse the whole allegory, but he so misapprehended its meaning in many points, that the lessons taught and the morals drawn were very wide of the mark indeed. In regard to some particular points, too, he felt himself at liberty to let his genius have free untrammelled scope, as, for instance, in the celebrated battle between Christian and Apollyon. Arguing with himself that it was not possible for any man to overdo a fight with the devil, Adams made up his mind to "go well in" for that incident, and spent a whole evening over it, keeping his audience glaring and on the rack of expectation the whole time. Taking, perhaps, an unfair advantage of his minute knowledge as a man-of-war's-man of cutlass-drill and of fighting in general, from pugilistic encounters to great-gun exercise, including all the intermediate performances with rapiers, swords, muskets, pistols, blunderbusses, and other weapons for "general scrimmaging," he so wrought upon the nerves of his hearers that they quivered with emotion, and when at last he drove Apollyon discomfited from the field, like chaff before the wind, there burst forth a united cheer of triumph and relief, Dan McCoy, in particular, jumping up with tumbled yellow locks and glittering eyes in a perfect yell of exultation.

But, to return from this digression to the story of Robinson Crusoe. It must not be supposed that Adams exhausted that tale in one night. No; soon discovering that he had struck an intellectual vein, so to speak, he resolved to work it out economically, and with that end in view, devoted the first evening to a minute dissection of Crusoe's character as a man and a seaman, to the supposed fitting out and provisioning of his ship, to the imaginary cause of the disaster to the ship, which, (with Bligh, no doubt, in memory), he referred to the incompetence and wickedness of the skipper, and to the terrible incidents of the wreck, winding up with the landing of his hero, half-dead and alone, on the uninhabited island.

"Now, child'n," he concluded, "that'll do for one night; and as it's of no manner of use sending you all to bed to dream of bein' shipwrecked and drownded, we'll finish off with a game of blind-man's-buff."

Need we say that the disappointment at the cutting short of the story was fully compensated by the game? Leaping up with another cheer, taught them by the best authorities, and given with true British fervour, they scattered about the room.

Otaheitan Sally was, as a matter of course, the first to be blindfolded.

And really, reader, it was wonderful how like that game, as played at Pitcairn, was to the same as performed in England. To justify this remark, let us describe it, and see whether there were any points of material difference.

The apartment, let it be understood, was a pretty large one, lighted by two nut-candles in brackets on the walls. There was little furniture in it, only a few stools and two small tables, which were quickly thrust

into a corner. Then Sally was taken to the centre of the room by Adams, and there blindfolded with a snuff-coloured silken bandana handkerchief, which had seen much service on board of the *Bounty*.

“Now, Sall, can you see?” asks Adams.

“No, not one bit.”

“Oh, yes you can,” from Charlie Christian, who hovers round her like the moth round the candle.

“No, really, I can’t.”

“Yes you can,” from Dan McCoy, who is on the alert; “I see your piercin’ black eyes comin’ right through the hankitchif.”

“Get along, then,” cries Adams, twirling Sally round, and skipping out of the way.

It is not the first time the women have played at that game, and their short garments, reaching little below the knees, seem admirably adapted to it, while they glide about with motions little less easy and agile than those of the children, and cause the roof to ring with laughter at the various misadventures that occur.

Mrs Adams, however, does not join. Besides being considerably older than her husband, that good woman has become prematurely short-sighted and deaf. This being so, she sits in a corner, not inappropriately, to act the part of grandmother to the players, and to serve as an occasional buffer to such of the children as are hurled against her.

Now, Otaheitan Sally, having gone rather cautiously about without catching any one except Charlie—whom she pretends not to know, examines from head to foot, and then guesses wrong on purpose—becomes suddenly wild, makes a desperate lunge, as she thinks, at Dan McCoy, and tumbles into Mrs Adams’s lap, amid shouts of delight.

Of course Dan brought about this incident by wise forethought. His next success is unpremeditated. Making a pull at Sally’s skirt, he glides quickly out of her way as she wheels round, and hits Mainmast an unintentional backhander on the nose. This is received by Mainmast with a little scream, and by the children with an “Oh! o–o” of consternation, while Sally, pulling down the handkerchief, hastens to give needless assurance that she is “*so* vexed,” etcetera. Susannah joins her in condoling, and so does widow Martin; but Mainmast, with tears in her eyes, (drawn by the blow), and a smile on her lips, declares that she “don’t care a button.” Sally is therefore blindfolded again. She catches Charlie Christian immediately, and feeling that there is no other way of escaping from him, names him.

Then Charlie, being blindfolded, sets to work with one solitary end in view, namely, to capture Sally. The injustice to the others of this proceeding never enters his innocent mind. He hears no voice but Sally’s; he clutches at nobody but Sally. When he is compelled to lay hold of any one else, he guesses wrong, not on purpose, but because he is thinking of Sally. Perceiving this, Sally retires quietly behind Mrs Adams’s chair, and Charlie, growing desperate, makes wild dashes, tumbling into the corner among the tables and stools, sending the staggerers spinning in all directions, and finally pitching headlong into Mrs Adams’s lap.

At last he catches John Adams himself and as there is no possibility of mistaking him, the handkerchief is changed, and the game becomes more sedate, at the same time more nervous, for the stride of the seaman is awful, and the sweep of his outstretched arms comprehensive. Besides, he has a way of listening and making sudden darts in unexpected directions, which is very perplexing.

After a few failures, Adams makes what he calls a wild roll to starboard, followed instantly by a heavy lurch to port, and pins Dan McCoy into a corner.

“Ha! I’ve grabbed you at last, have I?” says he.

“Who is it?” shout half-a-dozen voices.

“Who but Dan’l? There’s impudence in the very feel of his hair.”

So Dan is blindfolded. And now comes the tug of war. If it was fast and furious before, it is maniacal madness now. The noise is indescribable, yet it fails to waken two infants, who, with expressions of perfect peace on their innocent faces, repose in two bunks at one side of the room.

At last Thursday October tumbles into one of these bunks, and all but immolates an infant. Mrs Adams is fairly overturned; one table comes by a damaged leg, the other is split lengthwise, and one of the candles is blown out. These symptoms are as good as a weather-glass to Adams.

“Now, then, one and all, it’s time for bed,” he says.

Instantly the rioting comes to a close, and still panting from their exertions, the elder children carry out the tables and rectify their damages as well as may be, while the younger range the stools round the wall and sit down on them or on the floor.

“Fetch the Bible and Prayer-book, Matt Quintal,” says Adams.

They are about to close the evening with worship. It has become habitual now, and there is no difficulty in calming the spirits of the children to the proper tone, for they have been trained by a man who is unaffected and sincere. They slide easily, because naturally, from gay to grave; and they would as soon think of going to work without breakfast, as of going to rest without worship.

A chapter is read with comparative ease by John Adams, for he has applied himself heartily to his task, and overcome most of his old difficulties. Then he reads a short prayer, selected from the Prayer-book. The Lord’s Prayer follows, in which they all join, and the evening comes to a close.

Trooping from Adams’s house, they dispersed to their respective homes. The lights are extinguished. Only the quiet stars remain to shed a soft radiance over the pleasant scene; and in a few minutes more the people of Pitcairn are wrapped in deep, healthy, sound repose.

Chapter Twenty Four.

Refers to Things Spiritual and Physical.

It was not until some years had elapsed after the death of Edward Young, that John Adams became *seriously* impressed with the great responsibility of his position.

In the year 1804 a son was born to him, whom he named George, whether after the King of England or a relative of his own we are not prepared to state. After the King very likely, for Adams, although a mutineer, was a loyal subject at heart, and never ceased to condemn and deplore the act of mutiny into which, after all, he had been surprised rather than willingly led.

This infant, George, was the last of this first generation, and his father was extremely proud and fond of him. Having already three daughters, he seemed to have peculiar satisfaction in the advent of a son; and having latterly acquired the habit of mingling a dash of Scriptural language with his usual phraseology, he went about the first day or two after the child's birth, murmuring, "I've gotten a man-child from the Lord—a man-child, let's be thankful; an' a regular ship-shape, trim little craft he is too."

There can be no doubt that the seaman's naturally serious mind became more profoundly impressed with religion shortly after this event. A dream which he appears to have had deepened his impressions. Like most dreams, it was not in itself very definite or noteworthy, but we have no doubt it was used as a means towards perfecting the good work which had been already begun. At all events, it is certain that about this time Adams began to understand the way of life more clearly, and to teach it more zealously to the little community which was fast growing up around him. The duties which he had undertaken to fulfil were now no longer carried on merely because of his promise to Edward Young and a sense of honour. While these motives did indeed continue to operate with all their original force, he was now attracted to his labour out of regard to the commands of God, and a strong desire for the welfare of the souls committed to his charge.

Naturally he fell into one or two errors of judgment. Among other things, he at first imagined that it was his duty to attempt the keeping of all the Jewish festivals, and to institute a fast twice in the week. These errors were, however, corrected by increased knowledge in the course of time.

But it must not be supposed that this earnest searcher after truth became ascetic or morose. Despite his mistakes, and the somewhat severe discipline which he was thereby led to impose on himself and the community, the effect on him and his large family of the Scriptures—pure, unadulterated, and without note or comment—was to create love to God, to intensify their love for each other, to render them anxious to imitate the example and walk in the footsteps of Jesus, and to cause them to *rejoice* at all times. It was quite evident, ere long, that the whole community had drunk deeply into the spirit of such passages in the Word as these:— "Delight thyself in the Lord,"—"By love serve one another,"—"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, rejoice,"—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, as unto the Lord and not unto men,"—"Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you,"—"Let each esteem other better than himself."—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."—"Love is the fulfilling of the law,"—"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

The last text was a favourite one with Adams, who occasionally found that even among the tractable and kindly troop he had to deal with, sin was by no means extinct.

Do not suppose, good reader, that we are now attempting to depict a species of exceptional innocence which never existed, an Arcadia which never really had a local habitation. On the contrary, we are taking pains to analyse the cause of a state of human goodness and felicity, springing up in the midst of

exceptionally unpromising circumstances, which has no parallel, we think, in the history of mankind; which not only did exist, but which, with modifications, does still exist, and has been borne witness to through more than half a century by men of varied and unquestionable authority, including merchant-skippers, discoverers, travellers, captains and admirals in the Royal Navy. The point that we wish to press is, not that the enviable condition of things we have described is essentially true, but that this condition has been brought about by the unaided Word of God; that Word which so many now-a-days would fain underrate, but which for those who are taught by the Holy Spirit is still the power of God unto salvation.

The hilarity of the Pitcairners increased rather than diminished as their love for the Bible deepened. Fun and solemnity are not necessarily, and never need be, antagonistic. Hand in hand these two have walked the earth together since Adam and Eve bid each other good-morning in the peaceful groves of Paradise. They are subject, no doubt, to the universal laws which make it impossible for two things to fill the same place at the same time, and they sometimes do get, as it were, out of step, and jostle each other slightly, which calls forth a gentle shake of the head from the one and a deprecatory smile from the other; but they seldom disagree, and never fight.

Thus it came to pass that though John Adams, as time went on, read more than ever of the Bible to his audiences, and dilated much on the parables, he did not dismiss Robinson Crusoe, or expel Gulliver, or put a stop to blind-man's-buff. On the contrary, waxing courageous under the influence of success, he cast off his moorings from the skeletons of the stories to which he had at first timidly attached himself, and crowding all sail alow and aloft, swept out into the unexplored seas of pure, unadulterated, and outrageous fiction of his own invention.

"Them's the stories for me," Daniel McCoy was wont to say, when commenting on this subject. "Truth is all very well in its way, you know, but it's a great bother when you've got to stick to it; of course I mean when story-tellin'."

Neither John Adams nor his pupils knew at that time, though doubtless their descendants have learned long ere now, that after all truth is in very deed stranger than fiction.

As time passed changes more or less momentous occurred in the lonely island. True, none of those convulsions which rack and overturn the larger communities of men on earth visited that favoured spot; but forces of Nature were being slowly yet surely developed, which began to tell with considerable effect on the people of Pitcairn.

They were not, however, much troubled by the ills that flesh is heir to. Leading, as they did, natural and healthy lives, eating simple and to a large extent vegetable fare, and knowing nothing of the abominations of tobacco or strong drink, their maladies were few and seldom fatal.

John Adams himself had the constitution of a horse. Nevertheless, he was troubled now and then with a bad tooth, and once had a regular attack of raging toothache. As none of the people had ever even heard of this malady, they were much alarmed and not a little solemnised by its effects on their chief.

Walking up and down the floor of his house, holding his afflicted jaw with both hands, the poor man endeavoured to endure it with fortitude; but when the quivering nerve began, as it were, to dance a hornpipe inside of his tooth, irrepressible groans burst from him and awed the community.

"Is it *very* bad, John?" asked his sympathetic wife, who was cleaning up the house at the time.

"Ho–o–o–rible!" answered John.

"I'm *very* sorry, John," said the wife.

"Oh–o–o–o-oh!" groaned the husband.

When it became known in the village that Adams was suffering from some mysterious complaint that nearly drove him mad, two or three of the children, unable to restrain their curiosity, ran to his house and peeped in at the open door and windows. The sufferer either disregarded or did not see them.

In a few minutes the poor man's steps became more frantic, and another groan burst from him. Then he stopped in the middle of the room, uttered a deep growl, and stamped.

At this the heads of the peeping children disappeared. They gazed at each other in solemn wonder. They had never seen the like of this before. To stamp on the floor without an apparent reason, and without being done in fun, was beyond their comprehension.

"Where's the tool-box, lass?" gasped Adams suddenly.

His helpmate brought to him an old hand-box for nails and small tools, which had once done service in the *Bounty*.

With eager haste Adams selected a pair of pincers, and, seizing his tooth therewith, he began to twist.

At the same time his features began to screw up into an expression of agony.

"Howgh!" he exclaimed, between a gasp and a short roar, as the pincers slipped. And no wonder, for it was a three-fanged grinder of the largest size, situate in the remote backwoods of the under jaw.

He tried again, and again failed. Then a third time, and then discovered that, up to a certain point, his will was free to act, but that beyond that point, the agony was so intense that the muscles of the hand and arm refused to act responsive to the will. In other circumstances he might have moralised on this curious fact. As it was he only moaned aloud. Two of the children, of peculiarly sympathetic natures, echoed the moan unintentionally. They immediately vanished, but soon peeped up again in irresistible curiosity.

"Old 'ooman," said Adams, "this is out o' sight the worst fit as ever I had. Just fetch me a bit of that small strong cord out o' the cupboard there."

Mrs Adams did as she was bid, and her husband, making a sailor-like loop on it, fastened the same round his tooth, which was not difficult, for the evil grinder stood unsupported and isolated in the jaw.

"Now," said her husband, "you take hold o' the end o' this and haul; haul hard,—don't be afraid."

Mrs Adams felt nervous, and remonstrated, but being persuaded after a time to try again, she gave a vigorous pull, which drew from the unhappy man a terrible yell, but did not draw the tooth.

"This'll never do," groaned John, feeling the rebellious molar with his finger; "it's as firm as a copper bolt yet. Come, wife, I'll try another plan. You go outside that door an' do what I bid you. Mind, never you heed what it means; you just obey orders exactly."

It was not necessary thus to caution poor tractable Mrs Adams. She went outside the door as bid.

"Now, then," said her husband, "when I cry, 'Pull,' you shut the door with all your might—with a bang. D'ye hear?"

"Yes," replied the wife, faintly.

Fastening the cord once more round the tooth, the wretched sailor attached the other end to the handle of the door, and retiring till there was only about eight inches or a foot of "slack" cord left, stood up and drew a long breath. The glaring children also drew long breaths. One very small one, who had been lifted on to the window-sill by an amiable companion, lay there on his breast visibly affected by alarm.

"Shut the door!" cried Adams.

There was a tremendous bang, followed by an instantaneous yell. The children jumped nearly out of their own skins, and the little one on the window-sill fell flat on the ground in speechless horror; but the tooth was not yet out. The cord had slipped again.

"This is becomin' terrible," said Adams, with a solemn look. "I'll tell 'ee what, lass; you run round to the smiddy an' tell Thursday that I want him d'rectly, an' look alive, old girl."

Mrs Adams hastened out, and scattering the children, soon returned with the desired youth.

And a most respectable youth had Thursday October Christian become at that time. He was over six feet high, though not quite sixteen years of age, with a breadth of shoulder and depth of chest that would have befitted a man of six-and-twenty. He had no beard, but he possessed a deep bass voice, which more than satisfied John Adams's oft-expressed wish of earlier days to hear the "sound of a man."

"Toc," said Adams, holding his jaw with one hand and the pincers in the other, "I've got a most astoundin' fit o' the toothache, and *must* git rid o' this grinder; but it's an awful one to hold on. I've tried it three times myself wi' them pincers, an' my old 'ooman has tried it wi' this here cable—once with her fist an' once wi' the door as a sort o' capstan; but it's still hard an' fast, like the sheet-anchor of a seventy-four. Now, Toc, my lad, you're a stout young chap for your age. Just you take them pincers, lay hold o' the rascally thing, an' haul him out. Don't be afeared. He *must* come if you only heave with a will."

"What, father, do you mean that I'm to lay hold o' that tooth wi' them pincers an' wrench it bodily out of your head?"

"That's just about what I do mean, Toc," returned Adams, with a grim smile. "Moreover, I want you to make no bungle of it. Don't let your narves come into play. Just take a grip like a brave man, heave away wi' the force of a windlass, an' don't stop for my yellin'."

Thus adjured, Thursday October took the pincers, and gazed with a look of great anxiety into the cavernous mouth that Adams opened to his view.

"Which one is it, father, asked Toc," rolling up his shirt sleeves to the shoulder and displaying arms worthy of Vulcan.

"Man alive! don't you see it? The one furthest aft, with a black hole in it big enough a'most to stuff my George into."

Thursday applied the pincers gently. Adams, unable to use clear speech in the circumstances, said chokingly, "'At's 'e un—'ool away!" which, interpreted, is, "That's the one—pull away."

Toc pulled, Adams roared, the children quaked, and the pincers slipped.

"Oh, Toc, Toc!" cried Adams, with a remonstrative look, such as martyrs are said to give when their heads are not properly cut off; "is that all you can do with your big strong arms? Fie, man, fie!"

This disparaging reference to his strength put poor Thursday on his mettle.

"I'll try again, father," he said.

"Well, do; an' see you make a better job of it this time."

The powerful youth got hold of the tooth a second time, and gave it a terrible wrench. Adams roared like a bull of Bashan, but Toc's heart was hardened now; he wrenched again—a long, strong, and steady pull. The martyr howled as if his spinal marrow were being extracted. Toc suddenly staggered back; his arm flew up, displaying a bloody tooth with three enormous fangs. The "old 'ooman" shrieked, the child on the window-sill fell again therefrom in convulsions, and the others fled panic-struck into the woods, where they displayed their imitative tendencies and relieved their feelings by tearing up wild shrubs by the roots, amid yells and roars of agony, during the remainder of the day.

Chapter Twenty Five.

Tells of an Important Matter.

Not very long after this, Thursday October Christian experienced at the hands of John Adams treatment which bore some slight resemblance to a species of tooth-drawing. In fact, Adams may be said to have had his revenge. It happened thus:—

Adams was seated, one afternoon, in front of his house on a low stool, where he was wont to sun himself and smoke an imaginary pipe, while the children were at play in the grassy square. He was absorbed, apparently, in what he used to term a brown study. Thursday October, making his appearance from among the bushes on the opposite side of the square, leaped the four-foot fence like a greyhound, without a run, and crossed over.

Whether it was the leap or the rate at which he had walked home through the woods, we cannot say; but his handsome face was unusually flushed, and he stopped once or twice on nearing Adams, as if undecided what to do. At last he seemed to make up his mind, walked straight up to the seaman, and stood before him with folded arms.

"Hallo, Toc," said Adams, rousing himself; "you've caught me napping. The truth is, I've bin inventin' a lot of awful whackers to spin a yarn out o' for the child'n. This is Friday, you know, an' as they've bin fastin', poor things, I want to give 'em what you may call mental food, to keep their bread-baskets quiet, d'ye see? But you've got somethin' to tell me, Toc; what is it?"

"Father," said Thursday,—and then followed a long pause, during which the youth shifted from one leg to the other.

"Well, now, Toc," said Adams, eyeing the lad with a twinkling expression, "d'ye know, I *have* heard it said or writ somewhere, that brevity is the soul of wit. If that sayin's true, an' I've no reason for to suppose that it isn't, I should say that that observation of yours was wit without either soul or body, it's so uncommon short; too witty, in short. Couldn't you manage to add something more to it?"

"Yes, father," said Thursday, with a deprecating smile, "I have come to ask—to ask you for leave to—to—to—"

"Well, Toc, you have my cheerful leave to—to—to, and tootle too, as much as you please," replied Adams, with a bland smile.

"In short," said Thursday, with a desperate air, "I—I—want leave to marry."

"Whew!" whistled Adams, with a larger display of eyeball than he had made since he settled on the island. "You've come to the point *now*, and no mistake. You—want—leave—to—marry, Thursday October Christian, eh?"

"Yes, father, if you've no objection."

"Hem! no objection, marry—eh?" said Adams, while his eyebrows began to return slowly to their wonted position. "Ha! well, now, let's hear; *who* do you want to marry?"

Having fairly broken the ice, the bashful youth said quickly, "Susannah."

Again John Adams uttered a prolonged whistle, while his eyebrows sprang once more to the roots of his hair.

"What! the widdy?"

"Yes, Mr Young's widow," replied Thursday, covered with confusion.

"Well, I never! But this *does* beat cock-fightin'." He gave his thigh a sounding slap, and seemed about to give way to irrepressible laughter, when he suddenly checked himself and became grave.

"I say, Toc," said he, earnestly, "hand me down the Prayer-book."

Somewhat surprised, the lad took the book from its shelf, and placed it on the sailor's knees.

"Look 'ee here, Toc; there's somethin' here that touches on your case, if I don't misremember where. Let me see. Ah, here it is, 'A man may not marry his grandmother,' much less a boy," he added, looking up.

"But, father, Susannah ain't my grandmother," said Toc, stoutly feeling that he had got an advantage here.

"True, lad, but she might be your mother. She's to the full sixteen years older than yourself. But seriously, boy, do you mean it, and is she willin'?"

"Yes, father, I do mean it, an' she is quite willin'. Susannah has bin kinder to me than any one else I ever knew, and I love her better than everybody else put together. She did laugh a bit at first when I spoke to her about it, an' told me not to talk so foolishly, an' said, just as you did, that she might be my mother; but that made no odds to me, for she's not one bit like my mother, you know."

"No, she's not," said Adams, with an assenting nod. "She's not like Mainmast by any means, bein' a deal younger an' better lookin'. Well, now, Toc, you've given me matter to put in my pipe, (if I had one), an' smoke it for some time to come—food for reflection, so to speak. Just you go to work, my lad, as if there was nothin' in the wind, an' when I've turned it over, looked at it on all sides, gone right round the compass with it, worked at it, so to speak, like a cooper round a cask, I'll send for you an' let you know how the land lies."

When Adams had anything perplexing on his mind, he generally retired to the outlook cave at the mountain-top. Thither he went upon this occasion. The result was, that on the following day he sent for Thursday, and made him the following oration:—

"Thursday, my lad, it's not for the likes o' me to fly in the face o' Providence. If you still remain in earnest about this little matter, an' Susannah's mind ain't changed, I'll throw no difficulty in your way. I've bin searchin' the Book in reference to it, an' I see nothin' particular there regardin' age one way or another. It's usual in Old England, Toc, for the man to be a deal older than the wife, but there's no law against its bein' the other way, as I knows on. All I can find on the subject is, that a man must leave his father and mother, an' cleave to his wife. You han't got no father to leave, my boy, more's the pity, an' as for Mainmast, you can leave her when you like, though, in the circumstances, you can't go very far away from her, your tether bein' somewhat limited. As to the ceremony, I can't find nothin' about that in the Bible, but there's full directions in the Prayer-book; so I'll marry you off all ship-shape, fair an' above board, when the time comes. But there's one point. Toc, that I feel bound to settle, and it's this: That you can't be married till you've got a good bit of ground under cultivation, so that you may be able to keep your wife comfortably without callin' on her to work too hard. You've bin a busy enough fellow, I admit, since ever you was able to do a hand's turn, but you haven't got a garden of your own yet. Now, I'll go up with you to-morrow, an' mark off a bit o' your father's property, which you can go to work on, an' when you've got it into something of a for'ard state, I'll marry you. So—that's a good job settled."

When Adams finished, he turned away with a profound sigh of relief, as if he felt that he had not only disposed of a particular and knotty case, but had laid down a great general principle by which he should steer his course in all time to come.

It need scarcely be said that Thursday October was quite prepared to undertake this probationary work; that the new garden was quickly got into a sufficiently "for'ard state;" and that, ere long, the first wedding on Pitcairn was celebrated under circumstances of jubilant rejoicing.

Chapter Twenty Six.

Treats of a Birth and of Devastation.

More than eighteen years had now elapsed without the dwellers on that little isle of the Southern Sea having beheld a visitant from the great world around them. That world, meanwhile, had been convulsed with useless wars. The great Napoleon had run through a considerable portion of his withering career, drenching the earth with blood, and heaping heavy burdens of debt on the unfortunate nations of Europe. Nelson had shattered his fleets, and Wellington was on the eve of commencing that victorious career which was destined, ere long, to scatter his armies; but no echo of the turmoil in which all this was being accomplished had reached the peaceful dwellers on Pitcairn, who went on the even tenor of their way, proving, in the most convincing and interesting manner, that after all "love is the fulfilling of the law."

But the year 1808 had now arrived, a year fraught with novelty, interest, and importance to the Pitcairners.

The first great event of that year was the birth of a son to Thursday October Christian, and if ever there was a juvenile papa who opened his eyes to the uttermost, stared in sceptical wonder, pinched himself to see if he were awake, and went away into the bush to laugh and rejoice in secret, that man was TOC.

"Boys and girls," said Thursday, about a month after the birth, "we'll celebrate this event with a picnic to Martin's Cove, if you would like it."

There was an assumption of fine paternal dignity about Toc when he said this, which was quite beautiful to behold. His making the proposal, too, without any reference to John Adams, was noted as being unusual.

"Don't you think we'd better ask father first?" suggested Otaheitan Sally.

"Of course I do," said Toc, on whose ear the word "father" fell pleasantly. "You don't suppose, do you, that I'd propose to do anything of importance without his consent?"

It may strike the supercilious reader here that a picnic, even on Pitcairn, was not a matter of profound importance, but he must remember that that particular picnic was to be held in honour of Thursday's baby. It may be that this remark is thrown away on those who are not in the position of Thursday. If so, let it pass.

"We will invite Father Adams to go with us," continued Toc, ingeniously referring to Adams in a manner suggestive of the idea that there were other fathers on the island as well as he.

When Father Adams was invited, he accepted the invitation heartily, and, slapping Toc on his huge broad back, wished him joy of the "noo babby," and hoped he might live to see it grow up to have "a babby of its own similar to itself, d'ye see?" at which remark Toc laughed with evident delight.

Well, the whole thing was arranged, and they proceeded to carry the picnic into effect. It was settled that some were to go by land, though the descent from the cliffs to the cove was not an easy or safe one. Others were to go by water, and the water-party was sub-divided into two bands. One band, which included Susannah and the amazing baby, was to go in canoes; the other was to swim. The distance by water might be about eight miles, but that was a mere trifle to the Pitcairners, some of whom could swim right round their island.

It turned out, however, that that charming island was not altogether exempt from those vicissitudes of weather which play such a prominent part in the picnicry of other and less favoured lands, for while they were yet discussing the arrangements of the day, a typhoon stepped in unexpectedly to arrest them.

It may be that there are some persons in Britain who do not know precisely what a typhoon is. If they saw or felt one, they would not be apt to forget it. Roughly speaking, a typhoon is a terrific storm. Cyclopaedias, which are supposed to tell us about everything, say that the Chinese name such a storm "Tei-fun," or "hot-wind." No-fun would seem to be a more appropriate term, if one were to name it from results. One writer says of typhoons, "They are storms which rage with such intensity and fury that those who have never seen them can form no conception of them; you would say that heaven and earth wished to return to their original chaos."

Obviously, if this writer be correct, there would be no use in our attempting to enlighten those "who can form no conception" of the thing. Nevertheless, in the hope that the writer referred to may be as ignorant on this point as he is in regard to the "wishes" of "heaven and earth," we will attempt a brief description of the event which put such a sudden stop to what may be called the Toc-baby-picnic.

For several days previously the weather had been rather cloudy, and there had been a few showers; but this would not have checked the proceedings if the wind had not risen so as to render it dangerous to launch the canoes into the surf on the beach of Bounty Bay. As the day advanced it blew a gale, and Toc congratulated himself on having resisted the urgent advice of the volatile Dan McCoy to stick at nothing.

About sunset the gale increased to a hurricane. John Adams, with several of the older youths, went to the edge of the precipice, near the eastern part of the village, where a deep ravine ran up into the mountains. There, under the shelter of a rock, they discussed the situation.

"Lucky that you didn't go, Toc," said Adams, pointing at the sea, whose waves were lashed and churned into seething foam.

"Yes, thanks be to God," replied Thursday.

"It will blow harder yet, I think," said Charlie Christian, who had grown into a tall stripling of about seventeen. He resembled his father in the bright expression of his handsome face and in the vigour of his lithe frame.

"Looks like it, Charlie. It minds me o' a regular typhoon we had when you was quite a babby, that blew down a lot o' trees, an' almost took the roofs off our huts."

As he spoke it seemed as if the wind grew savage at having been recognised, for it came round the corner of the rock with a tremendous roar, and nearly swept Adams's old seafaring hat into the rising sea.

"I'd ha' bin sorry to lose 'ee," muttered John, as he thrust the glazed and battered covering well down on his brows. "I wore you in the *Bounty*, and I expect, with care, to make you last out my time, an' leave you as a legacy to my son George."

"Look-out, father!" shouted Matt Quintal and Jack Mills in the same breath.

The whole party crouched close in beside the rock, and looked anxiously upwards, where a loud rending sound was going on. Another moment and a large cocoa-nut palm, growing in an exposed situation, was wrenched from its hold and hurled like a feather over the cliffs, carrying a mass of earth and stones along with it.

"It's well the rock overhangs a bit, or we'd have got the benefit o' that shower," said Adams. "Come, boys, it's clear that we're goin' to have a dirty night of it, an' I think we'd better look to our roofs an' make all snug. If our ground-tackle ain't better than that o' the tree which has just gone by the board, we shall have a poor look-out."

There was much cause for the anxiety which the seaman expressed regarding the roofs of the houses. Already, before they got back to the village, part of the roof of one of the oldest huts had been stripped off, and the women were beginning to look anxiously upwards as they heard the clattering overhead.

"Now, lads, all hands to work. Not a moment too soon either. Out wi' the old tacklin' o' the *Bounty*. Get the tarpaulins up. Lash one over Toc's hut. Clap some big stones on Quintal's. Fetch the ladders, some o' you youngsters. Out o' the way, boys. Here, Mainmast; you get the little 'uns off to their bunks. Fetch me the big sledge-hammer, Charlie. Look alive, lads!"

While he shouted these directions, John Adams went to work as actively as the youngest among them. Every one wrought with a will. In a few minutes all moveables were carried under shelter, heavy stones were placed where they were required, tarpaulins and stout ropes were lashed over roofs and pegged to the ground, shutters and doors were made fast, and, in short, the whole village was "made snug" for a "dirty night" with almost as much celerity as if it had been a fully-manned and well-disciplined ship of the line.

As John Adams had said, it was not begun a moment too soon. They had barely finished, indeed, when the heavens appeared to rend with a blinding flash of lightning. Then came a thunder crash, or, rather, a series of crashes and flashes, that seemed to imply the final crack of doom. This was followed by rain in sheets so heavy that it seemed as if the ocean had been lifted and poured upon the island. To render the confusion worse confounded, the wind came in what may be called swirls, overturning trees as if they were straws, and mixing up rain, mud, stones, and branches in the great hurly-burly, until ancient chaos seemed to reign on land and sea.

"It's an awful night," said John Adams, as he sat beside his wife and listened, while the children, unable to sleep, peeped in awe and wonder from their several bunks round the room. "God save them that's at sea this night."

"Amen!" said Mrs Adams.

By midnight the typhoon had reached its height. The timbers of the houses appeared to groan under the strain to which they were subjected. The whole heavens seemed in a continual blaze, and the thunder came, not in bursts, but in one incessant roar, with intermittent cracks now and then. Occasionally there were louder crashes than usual, which were supposed to be only more violent thunder, but they were afterwards found to be the results of very different causes.

"Now, old 'ooman, you turn in," said Adams, when the small hours of morning had advanced a little. "You'll only be unfit for work to-morrow if you sit up bobbin' about on your stool like that."

Mrs Adams obediently and literally tumbled into her bunk without taking the trouble to undress, while her anxious husband trimmed the lamp, took down the *Bounty's* Bible, and made up his mind to spend the remainder of the night in study.

Away at the other end of the village, near the margin of the ravine before referred to, there stood a cottage, in which there was evidently a watcher, for the rays of his light could be seen through the chinks of the shutters. This was the house occupied by Thursday October Christian and his wife and baby.

Thursday, like Adams, felt the anxieties of fatherhood strong upon him, and was unable to sleep. He therefore, also like Adams, made up his mind to sit up and read. Carteret's Voyages claimed his attention, and he was soon deep in this old book, while his wife lay sound asleep, with the baby in her arms in the same condition. Both were quite deaf to the elemental turmoil going on around them.

The watchful husband and father was still poring over his book, when there came a noise so deafening that it caused him to start to his feet, and awoke his wife. "*That* can't be thunder," he exclaimed, and sprang to the door.

The sight that met his gale when he looked out was sufficiently terrible. Day had begun to dawn, and the grey light showed him a large mass of earth and trees moving down the ravine. The latter were crashing and overturning. As he gazed they went bodily over the cliffs, a mighty avalanche, into the sea. The whole had evidently been loosened from the rocks by the action of the wind on the trees, coupled with the deluges of rain.

But this was not the worst of it. While Thursday was gazing at this sight, another crash was heard higher up the ravine. Turning quickly in that direction, he saw the land moving slowly towards him. Immense masses of rock were borne along with slow but irresistible violence. Many cocoa-nut trees were torn up by the roots and carried bodily along with the tough stream of mud and stones and general débris. Some of these trees advanced several yards in an upright position, and then fell in dire confusion.

Suddenly Toc observed to his horror that the mass was slowly bearing down straight towards his hut. Indeed, so much had his mind been impressed with the general wreck, that he had failed to observe a few tons of stones and rubbish which even then appeared on the point of overwhelming him.

Without uttering a word he sprang into the hut.

"What's wrong, Thursday?" asked his wife, in some alarm.

"Never mind. Hold your tongue, an' hold tight to Dumplin'."

The baby had been named Charles, after Toc's young brother, and the inelegant name of "Dumplin'" had been given him to prevent his being confounded with Charlie, senior.

Susannah did as she was bid, and the young giant, rolling her and the baby and the bedclothes into one bundle, lifted them in his wide-spreading arms and rushed out of the house.

He had to pass a neighbour's house on the way, which also stood dangerously near the ravine. Kicking its door open, he shouted, "All hands, ahoy! Turn out! turn out!" and passed on.

A few seconds later John Adams, who had gone to sleep with his nose flattened on the Bible, was startled by the bursting in of his door.

“Hallo, Toc!” he cried, starting up; “what’s wrong, eh?”

“All right, father, but the ravine is bearin’ down on us.”

Thrusting his living bundle into an empty bunk, the stout youth left it to look after itself, and rushed out with Adams to the scene of devastation.

The avalanche was still advancing when they reached the spot, but a fortunate obstruction had turned it away from the houses. It moved slowly but steadily downwards like genuine lava, and in the course of a few hours swept some hundreds of cocoa-nut trees, a yam ground, containing nearly a thousand yams, one of the canoes, and a great mass of heterogeneous material, over the cliffs into the sea. Then the stream ceased to flow, the consternation of the people began to abate, and they commenced to repair, as far as possible, the damage caused by that memorable typhoon.

Chapter Twenty Seven.

A Picnic and a Surprise.

But the cyclone, terrible though it was, did not altogether put an end to the Dumplin’ picnic, if we may be allowed the phrase. It only delayed it. As soon as the weather cleared up, that interesting event came off.

“Who’ll go by land and who’ll go by water?” asked Thursday, when the heads of houses were assembled in consultation on the morning of the great day, for great it was in more ways than one in the annals of Pitcairn.

“I’ll go by water,” said Charlie Christian, who was one of the “heads,” inasmuch as he had been appointed to take charge of the hut which had been nearly carried away.

“Does any one know how the girls are going?” asked Matt Quintal.

“I’m not sure,” said John Adams, with one of those significant glances for which he was noted. “I did hear say that Sally meant to go by land, but, of course, I can’t tell. Girls will be girls, you know, an’ there’s no knowing when you have them.”

“Well, perhaps the land road will be pleasanter,” said Charlie. “Yes, now I think of it, I’ll go by land.”

“I think, also,” continued Adams, without noticing Charlie’s remark, “that some one said Bessy Mills was going by water.”

“You’re all wrong, Charlie, about the land road,” said Matt Quintal; “the water is far better. *I* shall go by water.”

“Dan’l, my lad,” said Adams, addressing young McCoy, “which way did *you* say you’d go?”

"I didn't say I'd go any way, father," answered Dan.

"That may be so, lad, but you'll have to go one way or other."

"Not of necessity, father. Mightn't I stay at home and take care of the pigs?"

"You might," said Adams, with a smile, "if you think they would be suitable company for you. Well, now, the sooner we start the better. I mean to go by water myself, for I'm gettin' rather stiff in the legs for cliff-work. Besides, I promised to give Sarah Quintal a lesson in deep-sea fishing, so she's goin' with me."

"Perhaps," observed Dan McCoy, after a pause, "I might as well go by water too, and if you've no objection to take me in your canoe, I would lend you a hand wi' the paddle. I would be suitable company for you, father, you know, and I'm very anxious to improve in deep-sea fishin'."

"It don't take much fishin' to find out how the wind blows, you blessed innocents," thought John Adams, with a quiet chuckle, which somewhat disconcerted Dan; but he only said aloud, "Well, yes, you may come, but only on condition that you swim alongside, for I mean to carry a cargo of staggerers and sprawlers."

"There's only one staggerer and one sprawler now," said Dan, with a laugh; "your own George and Toc's Dumplin'."

"Just so, but ain't these a host in themselves? You keep your tongue under hatches, Dan, or I'll have to lash it to your jaw with a bit o' rope-yarn."

"Oh, *what* a yarn I'd spin with it if you did!" retorted the incorrigible Dan. "But how are the jumpers to go, and where are they?"

"They may go as they please," returned Adams, as he led the way to the footpath down the cliffs; "they went to help the women wi' the victuals, an' I've no doubt are at their favourite game of slidin' on the waves."

He was right in this conjecture. While the younger women and girls of the village were busy carrying the provisions to the beach, those active little members of the community who were styled jumpers, and of whom there were still half-a-dozen, were engaged in their favourite game. It was conducted amid shouts and screams of delight, which rose above the thunder of the mighty waves that rolled in grand procession into the bay.

Ned Quintal, the stoutest and most daring, as well as the oldest of these jumpers, being over eight years, was the best slider. He was on the point of dashing into the sea when Adams and the others arrived on the scene.

Clothed only with a little piece of tapa cloth formed into breeches reaching to about the knees, his muscular little frame was shown to full advantage, as he stood with streaming curly hair, having a thin board under his arm, about three feet long, and shaped like a canoe.

He watched a mighty wave which was coming majestically towards him. Just as it was on the point of falling, little Ned held up the board in front of him, and with one vigorous leap dived right through the

wave, and came out at the other side. Thus he escaped being carried by it to the shore, and swam over the rolling backs of the waves that followed it until he got out to sea. Then, turning his face landward, he laid his board on the water, and pushing it under himself, came slowly in, watching for a larger wave than usual. As he moved along, little Billy Young ranged alongside.

"Here's a big un, Billy," cried Ned, panting with excitement and exertion, as he looked eagerly over his shoulder at a billow which seemed big enough to have wrecked an East Indiaman.

Billy did not reply, for, having a spice of Dan McCoy's fun-loving spirit in him, he was intent on giving Ned's board a tip and turning it over.

As the wave came up under them, it began as it were to boil on the surface, a sure sign that it was about to break. With a shout Ned thrust his board along, and actually mounted it in a sitting posture. Billy made a violent kick, missed his aim, lost hold of his own board, and was left ignominiously behind. Ned, caught on the wave's crest, was carried with a terrific rush towards the shore. He retained his position for a few seconds, then tumbled over in the tumult of water, but got the board under him again as he was swept along.

How that boy escaped being dashed to pieces on the rocks which studded Bounty Bay is more than we can comprehend, much more, therefore, than we can describe. Suffice it to say, that he arrived, somehow, on his legs, and was turning to repeat the manoeuvre, when Adams called to him and all the others to come ashore an' get their sailin' orders.

Things having been finally arranged, Adams said, "By the way, who's stopping to take charge of poor Jimmy Young?"

A sympathetic look from every one and a sudden cessation of merriment followed the question, for poor little James Young, the only invalid on Pitcairn, was afflicted with a complaint somewhat resembling that which carried off his father.

"Of course," continued Adams, "I know that my old 'ooman an' Mainmast are with him, but I mean who of the young folk?"

"May Christian," said Sally, who had come down to see the water-party start. "Two or three of us offered also to stay, father, but Jim wouldn't hear of it, an' said he would cry all the time if we stayed. He said that May was all he wanted."

"Dear little Jim," said Adams, "I do believe he's got more o' God's book into him, small though he is, than all the rest of us put together. An' he's not far wrong, neither, about May. She's worth a dozen or'nary girls. Now then, lend a hand wi' the canoe. Are you ready, Mistress Toc?"

"Quite," replied the heroine of the day, with a pleased glance in Thursday's somewhat sheepish face.

"An' Dumplin', is *he* ready?" said the seaman.

The hero of the day was held up in the arms of his proud father.

"Now then, lads, shove off!"

In a few minutes the canoe, with its precious freight and Thursday at the steering-paddle, was thrust through the wild surf, and went skimming over the smooth sea beyond. Immediately thereafter another canoe was launched, with John Adams and a miscellaneous cargo of children, women, and girls, including graceful Bessy Mills and pretty Sarah Quintal.

“Now then, here goes,” cried Matt Quintal, wading deep into the surf. “Are you coming, Dan?”

“I’m your man,” said Dan, following.

Both youths raised their hands and leaped together. They went through the first wave like two stalwart eels, and were soon speeding after the canoes, spurning the water behind them, and conversing as comfortably on the voyage as though the sea were their native element.

Close on their heels went two of the most athletic among the smaller boys, while one bold infant was arrested in a reckless attempt to follow by Otaheitan Sally, who had to rush into the surf after him.

Descended though he was of an amiable race, it is highly probable that this infant would have displayed the presence of white blood in his veins had his detainer been any other than Sally; but she possessed a power to charm the wildest spirit on the island. So the child consented to “be good,” and go along with her overland.

“Now, are you ready to go?” said Sally to Charlie, who was the only other one of the band left on the beach besides herself.

Poor Charlie stood looking innocently into the sparkling face of the brunette. He did not know what was the matter with him, still less did he care. He knew that he was supremely happy. That was enough. Sally, who knew quite well what was the matter—quite as well, almost, as if she had gone through a regular civilised education—laughed heartily, grasped the infant’s fat paw, and led him up the hill.

Truly it was a pleasant picnic these people had that day. Healthy and hearty, they probably came as near to the realisation of heaven upon earth as it is ever given to poor sinful man to know, for they had love in their hearts, and their religion, drawn direct from the pure fountain-head, was neither dimmed by false sentimentality on the one hand, nor by hypocrisy on the other.

Perhaps John Adams was the only one of the band who wondered at the sight, and thanked God for undeserved and unexpected mercy, for he alone fully understood the polluted stock from which they had all sprung, and the terrible pit of heathenish wickedness from which they had been rescued, not by *him* (the humbled mutineer had long since escaped from that delusion), but by the Word of God.

After proceeding a considerable distance along the rocky coast of their little isle, John Adams ordered the canoes to lie-to, while he made an attempt to catch a fresh cod for dinner.

Of course, Matt Quintal and Dan McCoy ranged up alongside, and were speedily joined by some of the adventurous small boys. Adams took these latter into the canoe, but the former he ordered away.

“No, no,” he said, while Sarah Quintal assisted to get out the bait and Bessy Mills to arrange the line. “No, no, we don’t want no idlers here. You be off to the rocks, Matt and Dan, an’ see what you can catch.

Remember, he who won't work shall not eat. There should be lots o' crawfish about, or you might try for a red-snapper. Now, be off, both of you."

"Ay, ay, father," replied the youths, pushing off and swimming shoreward rather unwillingly.

"I don't feel much inclined to go after crawfish or red-snappers to-day, Matt, do you?" asked Dan, brushing the curls out of his eyes with his right hand.

"No, not I; but we're bound to do something towards the dinner, you know."

At that moment there was a loud shouting and screaming from the canoe. They looked quickly back. Adams was evidently struggling with something in the water.

"He has hooked something big," cried Matt; "let's go see."

Dan said nothing, but turned and made for the canoe with the speed of a porpoise. His companion followed.

Adams had indeed hooked a large cod, or something like it, and had hauled it near to the surface when the youths came up.

"Have a care. He bolts about like a mad cracker," cried Adams. "There, I have him now. Stand clear all!"

Gently did the seaman raise the big fish to the surface, and very tenderly did he play him, on observing that he was not well hooked.

"Come along, my beauty! What a wopper! Won't he go down without sauce? Pity I've got no kleek to gaff him. Not quite so close, Dan, he'll get—Hah!"

The weight of the fish tore it from the hook at that moment, and it dropped.

Dropped, ay, but not exactly into its native element. It dropped into Dan's bosom! With a convulsive grasp Dan embraced it in his strong arms and sank. Matt Quintal dived, also caught hold of the fish with both hands and worked his two thumbs deep into its gills. By the process called treading water, the two soon regained the surface. Sarah Quintal seized Dan McCoy by the hair, Bessy Mills made a grasp at Matt and caught him by the ear, while John Adams made a grab at the fish, got him by the nose, thrust a hand into his mouth, which was wide open with surprise or something else, as well it might be, and caught it by the tongue.

Another moment, and a wild cheer from the boys announced that the fish was safe in the canoe.

"We're entitled to dinner now, father," said Dan, laughing.

"Not a bit of it, you lazy boys; that fish is only big enough for the girls. We want something for the men and child'n. Be off again."

With much more readiness the youths, now gratified by their success, turned to the outlying rocks of a low promontory which jutted from the inaccessible cliffs at that part. Effecting a landing with some difficulty, they proceeded to look for crawfish, a species of lobster which abounds there.

Leaning over a ledge of rock, and peering keenly down into a clear pool which was sheltered from the surf, Dan suddenly exclaimed, “There’s one, Matt; I see his feelers.”

As he spoke he dived into the water and disappeared. Even a pearl diver might have wondered at the length of time he remained below. Presently he reappeared, puffing like a grampus, and holding a huge lobster-like creature in his hands.

“That’ll stop the mouths of two or three of us, Matt!” he exclaimed, looking round.

But Matt Quintal was nowhere to be seen. He, too, had seen a fish, and gone to beard the lobster in his den. In a few seconds he reappeared with another crawfish.

Thus, in the course of a short time, these youths captured four fine fish, and returned to the canoe, swimming on their backs, with one in each hand.

While things were progressing thus favourably at sea, matters were being conducted not less admirably, though with less noise, on land.

The canoe containing Mrs Toc and the celebrated baby went direct to the landing-place at Martin’s Cove, which was a mere spot of sand in a narrow creek, where landing was by no means easy even for these expert canoemen.

Here the women kindled a fire and heated the culinary stones, while Toc and some of the others clambered up the cliffs to obtain gulls’ eggs and cocoa-nuts.

Meanwhile Charlie Christian and Otaheitan Sally and the staggerer wended their way overland to the same rendezvous slowly—remarkably slowly. They had so much to talk about; not of politics, you may be sure, nor yet of love, for they were somewhat shy of that, being, so to speak, new to it.

“I wonder,” said Charlie, sitting down for the fiftieth time, on a bank “whereon time grew” to such an extent that he seemed to take no account of it whatever; “I wonder if the people in the big world we’ve heard so much of from father lead as pleasant lives as we do.”

“Some of ’em do, of course,” said Sally. “You know there are plenty of busy people among them who go about working, read their Bible, an’ try to make other people happy, so of course they must be happy themselves.”

“That’s true, Sall; but then they have many things to worry them, an’ you know *we* haven’t.”

“Yes, they’ve many things to worry them, I suppose,” rejoined Sall, with a pensive look at the ground. “I wonder what sort of things worry them most? It can’t be dressin’ up grand, an’ goin’ out to great parties, an’ drivin’ in lovely carriages. Nobody could be worried by that, you know.”

Charlie nodded his head, and agreed with her entirely.

"Neither can it be money," resumed Sall, "for money buys everything you want, as father says, and that can be nothin' but pleasure. If their yam-fields went wrong, I could understand that, because even you and I know somethin' about such worries; but, you see, they haven't got no yam-fields. Then father says the rich ones among 'em eat an' drink whatever they like, and as much as they like, and sleep as long as they like, an' *we* know that eatin' an' drinkin' an' sleepin' don't worry us, do they, Charlie?"

Again Charlie accorded unmeasured assent to Sall's propositions.

"I can understand better," continued Sall, "how the poor ones among 'em are worried. It must worry 'em a good deal, I should think, to see some people with far more than they want, when they haven't got half as much as they want; an' father says some of 'em are sometimes well-nigh starvin'. Now, it must be a dreadful worry to starve. Just think how funny it would feel to have nothin' to eat at all, not even a yam! Then it must be a dreadful thing for the poor to see their child'n without enough to eat. Yes, the poor child'n of the poor must be a worry to 'em, though the child'n of the rich never are."

At this point a wild shriek from the little child caused Sally's heart to bound. She looked up, and beheld the fat legs of her charge fly up as he went headlong over a precipice. Fortunately the precipice was only three feet high, so that when Sally and Charlie ran panting to the spot, he was already on his feet, looking much surprised, but none the worse for his tumble.

This incident sobered the inquisitive friends, and brought them back from fanciful to actual life. They hurried over the remainder of the journey, and arrived at Martin's Cove just as the picnic party were beginning dinner.

Feasting is a commonplace and rather gross subject, having many points of similitude in all lands. We shall therefore pass over this part of the day's enjoyment, merely remarking that, what with fish and lobster, and yams and cocoa-nuts, and bananas and plantains, and sundry compounds of the same made into cakes, and clear water from the mountain-side, there was ample provision for the wants of nature. There was no lack, either, of that feast which is said to flow from "reason" and "soul" There was incident, also, to enliven the proceedings; for the child who had come by the overland route with Sally fell into something resembling a yam-pie, and the hero of the day managed to roll into the oven which had cooked the victuals. Fortunately, it had cooled somewhat by that time, and seemed to tickle his fancy rather than otherwise.

Dinner was concluded; and as it had been preceded by asking a blessing, it was now closed with thanksgiving. Then Dinah Adams began to show a tendency to clear up the débris, when Dan McCoy, who had wandered away with Sarah Quintal in search of shells to a neighbouring promontory, suddenly uttered a tremendous and altogether new cry.

"What *is* he up to now?" said John Adams, rising hastily and shading his eyes with his hand.

Dan was seen to be gesticulating frantically on the rocks, and pointing wildly out to sea.

The whole party ran towards him, and soon became as wildly excited as himself, for there, at long last, was a *ship*, far away on the horizon!

To launch the canoes and make for home was the work of a very few minutes. No one thought of swimming now. Those who did not go in the canoes went by the land road as fast as they could run and clamber. In a short time the gulls were left in undisturbed possession of Martin's Cove.

Chapter Twenty Eight.

The First Ship, and News of Home.

No wonder that there was wild excitement on the lonely island at the sight of this sail, for, with the exception of the ship that had been seen years before, and only for a few minutes, by Sally and Matt Quintal, no vessel of any kind had visited them during the space of nineteen years.

"I've longed for it, old 'ooman, as nobody but myself can understand," said Adams, in a low, earnest voice to his wife, who stood on the cliffs beside him. Although nearly blind, Mrs Adams was straining her eyes in the direction of the strange sail. "And now that it's come," continued her husband, "I confess to you, lass, I'm somewhat afeared to face it. It's not that I fear to die more than other men, but I'd feel it awful hard to be took away from you an' all them dear child'n. But God's will be done."

"They'd never take you from us, father," exclaimed Dinah Adams, who overheard this speech.

"There's no sayin', Di. I've forfeited my life to the laws of England. I tell 'ee what it is, Thursday," said Adams, going up to the youth, who was gazing wistfully like the others at the rapidly approaching vessel, "it may be a man-o'-war, an' they may p'r'aps want to ship me off to England on rather short notice. If so, I must go; but I'd rather not. So I'll retire into the bushes, Toc, while you go aboard in the canoe. I'll have time to think over matters before you come back with word who they are, an' where they hail from."

While Thursday went down to the beach, accompanied by Charlie, to prepare a canoe for this mission, the ship drew rapidly near the island, and soon after hove to, just outside of Bounty Bay. As she showed no colours, and did not look like a man-of-war, Adams began to feel easier in his mind, and again going out on the cliffs, watched the canoe as it dashed through the surf.

Under the vigorous strokes of Thursday and Charlie Christian, it was soon alongside the strange ship. To judge from the extent to which the men opened their eyes, there is reason to believe that those on board of that strange ship were filled with unusual surprise; and well they might be, for the appearance of our two heroes was not that which voyagers in the South Pacific were accustomed to expect. The remarks of two of the surprised ones, as the canoe approached, will explain their state of mind better than any commentary.

"I say, Jack, it ain't a boat; I guess it's a canoe."

"Yes, Bill, it's a canoe."

"What d'ye make 'em out to be, Jack?"

"Men, I think; leastwise they're not much like monkeys; though, of coorse, a feller can't be sure till they stand up an' show their tails,—or the want of 'em."

"Well, now," remarked Bill, as the canoe drew nearer, "that's the most puzzlin' lot I've seen since I was raised. They ain't niggers, that's plain; they're too light-coloured for that, an' has none o' the nigger brick-dust in their faces. One on 'em, moreover, seems to have fair curly hair, an' they wears jackets an' hats with something of a sailor-cut about 'em. Why, I do b'lieve they're shipwrecked sailors."

"No," returned Jack, with a critical frown, "they're not just the colour o' white men. Mayhap, they're a noo style o' savage, this bein' raither an out-o'-the-way quarter."

"Stand by with a rope there," cried the captain of the vessel, cutting short the discussion, while the canoe ranged longside.

"Ship ahoy!" shouted Thursday, in the true nautical style which he had learned from Adams.

If the eyes of the men who looked over the side of the ship were wide open with surprise before, they seemed to blaze with amazement at the next remark by Thursday.

"Where d'ye hail from, an' what's your name?" he asked, as Charlie made fast to the rope which was thrown to them.

"The *Topaz*, from America, Captain Folger," answered the captain, with a smile.

With an agility worthy of monkeys, and that might have justified Jack and Bill looking for tails, the brothers immediately stood on the deck, and holding out their hands, offered with affable smiles to shake hands. We need scarcely say the offer was heartily accepted by every one of the crew.

"And who may *you* be, my good fellows?" asked Captain Folger, with an amused expression.

"I am Thursday October Christian," answered the youth, drawing himself up as if he were announcing himself the king of the Cannibal Islands. "I'm the oldest son of Fletcher Christian, one of the mutineers of the *Bounty*, an' this is my brother Charlie."

The sailors glanced at each other and then at the stalwart youths, as if they doubted the truth of the assertion.

"I've heard of that mutiny," said Captain Folger. "It was celebrated enough to make a noise even on our side of the Atlantic. If I remember rightly, most of the mutineers were caught on Otaheite and taken to England, being wrecked and some drowned on the way; the rest were tried, and some acquitted, some pardoned, and some hanged."

"I know nothin' about all that," said Thursday, with an interested but perplexed look.

"But I do, sir," said the man whom we have styled Jack, touching his hat to the captain. "I'm an Englishman, as you knows, an' chanced to be in England at the very time when the mutineers was tried. There was nine o' the mutineers, sir, as went off wi' the *Bounty* from Otaheite, an' they've never bin heard on from that day to this."

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed Thursday, with sudden animation, "that's *us*. The nine mutineers came to our island here, Pitcairn, an' remained here ever since, an' we've all bin born here; there's lots more of us,—boys and girls."

"You *don't* say so!" exclaimed the captain, whose interest was now thoroughly aroused. "Are the nine mutineers all on Pitcairn still?"

Thursday's mobile countenance at once became profoundly sad, and he shook his head slowly.

"No," said he, "they're all dead but one. John Adams is his name."

"Don't remember that name among the nine said to be lost," remarked the Englishman.

"I've heard father say he was sometimes called John Smith," said Thursday.

"Ah, yes! I remember the name of Smith," said Jack. "*He* was one of 'em."

"And is he the only man left on the island?" asked the captain.

"Yes, the only man," replied Thursday, who had never yet thought of himself in any other light than a boy; "an' if you'll come ashore in our canoe, father'll take you to his house an' treat you to the best he's got. He'll be right glad to see you too, for he's not seen a soul except ourselves for nigh twenty years."

"Not seen a soul! D'ye mean to say no ship has touched here for that length of time?" asked the captain in surprise.

"No, except one that only touched an' went off without discovering that we were here, an' none of us found out she had bin here till we chanced to see her sailin' away far out to sea. That was five years ago."

"That's very strange and interestin'. I'd like well to visit old Adams, lad, an' I thank 'ee for the invitation; but I won't run my ship through such a surf as that, an' don't like to risk leavin' her to go ashore in your canoe."

"If you please, sir, I'd be very glad to go, an' bring off what news there is," said Jack, the English sailor, whose surname was Brace.

At first Captain Folger refused this offer, but on consideration he allowed Jack to go, promising at the same time to keep as near to the shore as possible, so that if there was anything like treachery he might have a chance of swimming off.

"So your father is dead?" asked the captain, as he walked with Thursday to the side.

"Yes, long, long ago."

"But you called Adams 'father' just now. How's that?"

"Oh, we all calls 'im that. It's only a way we've got into."

"What made your father call you Thursday?"

"'Cause I was born on a Thursday."

"H'm I an' I suppose if you'd bin born on a Tuesday or Saturday, he'd have called you by one or other of these days?"

"S'pose so," said Thursday, with much simplicity.

"Are you married, Thursday?"

"Yes, I'm married to Susannah," said Thursday, with a pleased smile; "she's a dear girl, though she's a deal older than me—old enough to be my mother. And I've got a babby too—a *splendid* babby!"

Thursday passed ever the side as he said this, and fortunately did not see the merriment which him remarks created.

Jack Brace followed him into the canoe, and in less than half-an-hour he found himself among the wondering, admiring, almost awestruck, islanders of Pitcairn.

"It's a *man*!" whispered poor Mainmast to Susannah, with the memory of Fletcher Christian strong upon her.

"What a lovely beard he has!" murmured Sally to Bessy Mills.

Charlie Christian and Matt Quintal chancing, curiously enough, to be near Sally and Bessy, overheard the whisper, and for the first time each received a painful stab from the green-eyed demon, jealousy.

But the children did not whisper their comments. They crowded round the seaman eagerly.

"You've come to live with us?" asked Dolly Young, looking up in his face with an innocent smile, and taking his rough hand.

"To tell us stories?" said little Arthur Quintal, with an equally innocent smile.

"Well, no, my dears, not exactly," answered the seaman, looking in a dazed manner at the pretty faces and graceful forms around him; "but if I only had the chance to remain here, it's my belief that I would."

Further remark was stopped by the appearance of John Adams coming towards the group. He walked slowly, and kept his eyes steadily, yet wistfully, fastened on the seaman. Holding out his hand, he said in a low tone, as if he were soliloquising, "At last! It's like a dream!" Then, as the sailor grasped his hand and shook it warmly, he added aloud a hearty "Welcome, welcome to Pitcairn."

"Thank 'ee, thank 'ee," said Jack Brace, not less heartily; "an' may I ax if you *are* one o' the *Bounty* mutineers, an' no mistake?"

"The old tone," murmured Adams, "and the old lingo, an' the old cut o' the jib, an'—an'—the old toggery."

He took hold of a flap of Jack's pea-jacket, and almost fondled it.

"Oh, man, but it does my heart good to see you! Come, come away up to my house an' have some grub. Yes, yes—axin' your pardon for not answerin' right off—I *am* one o' the *Bounty* mutineers; the last one—John Smith once, better known now as John Adams. But where do you hail from, friend?"

Jack at once gave him the desired information, told him on the way up all he knew about the fate of the mutineers who had remained at Otaheite, and received in exchange a brief outline of the history of the nine mutineers who had landed on Pitcairn.

The excitement of the two men and their interest in each other increased every moment; the one being full of the idea of having made a wonderful discovery of, as it were, a lost community, the other being equally full of the delight of once more talking to a man—a seaman—a messmate, he might soon say, for he meant to feed him like a prince.

"Get a pig cooked, Molly," he said, during a brief interval in the conversation, "an' do it as fast as you can."

"There's one a'most ready-baked now," replied Mrs Adams.

"All right, send the girls for fruit, and make a glorious spread—outside; he'll like it better than in the house—under the banyan-tree. Sit down, sit down, messmate." Turning to the sailor, "Man, *what* a time it is since I've used that blessed word! Sit down and have a glass."

Jack Brace smacked his lips in anticipation, thanked Adams in advance, and drew his sleeve across his mouth in preparation, while his host set a cocoa-nut-cup filled with a whitish substance before him.

"That's a noo sort of a glass, John Adams," remarked the man, as he raised and smelt it; "also a strange kind o' tipple."

He sipped, and seemed disappointed. Then he sipped again, and seemed pleased.

"What is it, may I ax?"

"It's milk of the cocoa-nut," answered Adams.

"Milk o' the ko-ko-nut, eh? Well, now, that is queer. If you'd 'a called it the milk o' the cow-cow-nut, I could have believed it. Hows'ever, it ain't bad, tho' raither wishy-washy. Got no stronger tipple than that?"

"Nothin' stronger than that, 'xcept water," said John, with one of his sly glances; "but it's a toss up which is the strongest."

"Well, it'll be a toss down with me whichever is the strongest," said the accommodating tar, as he once more raised the cup to his lips, and drained it.

"But, I say, you unhung mutineer, do you mean for to tell me that all them good-lookin' boys an' girls are yours?"

He looked round on the crowd of open-mouthed young people, who, from six-foot Toc down to the youngest staggerer, gazed at him solemnly, all eyes and ears.

"No, they ain't," answered Adams, with a laugh. "What makes you ask?"

"'Cause they all calls you father."

"Oh!" replied his host, "that's only a way they have; but there's only four of 'em mine, three girls an' a boy. The rest are the descendants of my eight comrades, who are now dead and gone."

"Well, now, d'ye know, John Adams, *alias* Smith, mutineer, as ought to have bin hung but wasn't, an' as nobody would have the heart to hang now, even if they had the chance, this here adventur is out o' sight one o' the most extraor'nar circumstances as ever did happen to me since I was the length of a marlinspike."

As Mainmast here entered to announce that the pig was ready for consumption, the amazed mariner was led to a rich repast under the neighbouring banyan-tree. Here he was bereft of speech for a considerable time, whether owing to the application of his jaws to food, or increased astonishment, it is difficult to say.

Before the repast began, Adams, according to custom, stood up, removed his hat, and briefly asked a blessing. To which all assembled, with clasped hands and closed eyes, responded Amen.

This, no doubt, was another source of profound wonder to Jack Brace, but he made no remark at the time. Neither did he remark on the fact that the women did not sit down to eat with the males of the party, but stood behind and served them, conversing pleasantly the while.

After dinner was concluded, and thanks had been returned, Jack Brace leaned his back against one of the descending branches of the banyan-tree, and with a look of supreme satisfaction drew forth a short black pipe.

At sight of this the countenance of Adams flushed, and his eyes almost sparkled.

"There it is again," he murmured; "the old pipe once more! Let me look at it, Jack Brace; it's not the first by a long way that I've handled."

Jack handed over the pipe, a good deal amused at the manner of his host, who took the implement of fumigation and examined it carefully, handling it with tender care, as if it were a living and delicate creature. Then he smelt it, then put it in his mouth and gave it a gentle draw, while an expression of pathetic satisfaction passed over his somewhat care-worn countenance.

"The old taste, not a bit changed," he murmured, shutting his eyes. "Brings back the old ships, and the old messmates, and the old times, and Old England."

"Come, old feller," said Jack Brace, "if it's so powerful, why not light it and have a real good pull, for old acquaintance sake?"

He drew from his pocket flint and tinder, matches being unknown in those days, and began to strike a light, when Adams took the pipe hastily from his mouth and handed it back.

"No, no," he said, with decision, "it's only the old associations that it calls up, that's all. As for baccy, I've bin so long without it now, that I don't want it; and it would only be foolish in me to rouse up the old cravin'. There, you light it, Jack. I'll content myself wi' the smell of it."

"Well, John Adams, have your way. You are king here, you know; nobody to contradict you. So I'll smoke instead of you, if these young ladies won't object."

The young ladies referred to were so far from objecting, that they were burning with impatience to see a real smoker go to work, for the tobacco of the mutineers had been exhausted, and all the pipes broken or lost, before most of them were born.

"And let me tell you, John Adams," continued the sailor, when the pipe was fairly alight, "I've not smoked a pipe in such koorious circumstances since I lit one, an' had my right fore-finger shot off when I was stuffin' down the baccy, in the main-top o' the *Victory* at the battle o' Trafalgar. But it was against all rules to smoke in action, an' served me right. Hows'ever, it got me my discharge, and that's how I come to be in a Yankee merchantman this good day."

At the mention of battle and being wounded in action, the old professional sympathies of John Adams were awakened.

"What battle might that have been?" he asked.

"Which?" said Jack.

"Traflegar," said the other.

Jack Brace took the pipe out of his mouth and looked at Adams, as though he had asked where Adam and Eve had been born. For some time he could not make up his mind how to reply.

"You don't mean to tell me," he said at length, "that you've never heard of the—battle—of—Trafalgar?"

"Never," answered Adams, with a faint smile.

"Nor of the great Lord Nelson?"

"Never heard his name till to-day. You forget, Jack, that I've not seen a mortal man from Old England, or any other part o' the civilised world, since the 28th day of April 1789, and that's full nineteen years ago."

"That's true, John; that's true," said the seaman, slowly, as if endeavouring to obtain some comprehension of what depths of ignorance the fact implied. "So, I suppose you've never heerd tell of—hold on; let me rake up my brain-pan a bit."

He tilted his straw hat, and scratched his head for a few minutes, puffing the while immense clouds of smoke, to the inexpressible delight of the open-mouthed youngsters around him.

"You—you've never heerd tell of Lord Howe, who licked the French off Ushant, somewheres about sixteen years gone by?"

"Never."

"Nor of the great victories gained in the '95 by Sir Edward Pellew, an' Admiral Hotham, an' Admiral Cornwallis, an' Lord Bridgeport?"

"No, of coorse ye couldn't; nor yet of Admiral Duncan, who, in the '97, (I think it was), beat the Dutch fleet near Camperdown all to sticks. Nor yet of that tremendous fight off Cape Saint Vincent in the same year, when Sir John Jervis, with nothin' more than fifteen sail o' the Mediterranean fleet, attacked the Spaniards wi' their twenty-seven ships o' the line—line-o'-battle ships, you'll observe, John Adams—an' took four of 'em, knocked half of the remainder into universal smash, an' sunk all the rest?"

"That was splendid!" exclaimed Adams, his martial spirit rising, while the eyes of the young listeners around kept pace with their mouths in dilating.

"Splendid? Pooh!" said Jack Brace, delivering puffs between sentences that resembled the shots of miniature seventy-fours, "that was nothin' to what followed. Nelson was in that fight, he was, an' Nelson began to shove out his horns a bit soon after that, *I* tell you. Well, well," continued the British tar with a resigned look, "to think of meetin' a man out of Bedlam who hasn't heerd of Nelson and the Nile, w'ich, of coorse, ye haven't. It's worth while comin' all this way to see you."

Adams smiled and said, "Let's hear all about it."

"All about it, John? Why, it would take me all night to tell you all about it," (there was an audible gasp of delight among the listeners), "and I haven't time for that; but you must know that Lord Nelson, bein' Sir Horatio Nelson at that time, chased the French fleet, under Admiral Brueys, into Aboukir Bay, (that's on the coast of Egypt), sailed in after 'em, anchored alongside of 'em, opened on 'em wi' both broadsides at once, an' blew them all to bits."

"You don't say that, Jack Brace!"

"Yes, I do, John Adams; an' nine French line-o'-battle ships was took, two was burnt, two escaped, and the biggest o' the lot, the great three-decker, the *Orient*, was blowed up, an' sent to the bottom. It was a thorough-goin' piece o' business that, *I* tell you, an' Nelson meant it to be, for w'en he gave the signal to go into close action, he shouted, 'Victory or Westminster Abbey.'"

"What did he mean by that?" asked Adams.

"Why, don't you see, Westminster Abbey is the old church in London where they bury the great nobs o' the nation in; there's none but *great* nobs there, you know—snobs not allowed on no account whatever. So he meant, of coorse, victory or death, d'ye see? After which he'd be put into Westminster Abbey. An' death it was to many a good man that day. Why, if you take even the *Orient* alone, w'en she was blowed up, Admiral Brueys himself an' a thousand men went up along with her, an' never came down again, so far as *we* know."

"It must have bin bloody work," said Adams.

"I believe you, my boy," continued the sailor, "it *was* bloody work. There was some of our chaps that was always for reasonin' about things, an' would never take anything on trust, 'xcept their own inventions,

who used to argufy that it was an awful waste o' human life, to say nothin' o' treasure, (as they called it), all for *nothin'*. I used to wonder sometimes why them *reasoners* jined the sarvice at all, but to be sure most of 'em had been pressed. To my thinkin', war wouldn't be worth a brass farthin' if there wasn't a deal o' blood and thunder about it; an', of coorse, if we're goin' to have that sort o' thing we must pay for it. Then, we didn't do it for *nothin'*. Is it nothin' to have the honour an' glory of lickin' the Mounseers an' bein' able to sing 'Britannia rules the waves?'"

John Adams, who was not fond of argument, and did not agree with some of Jack's reasoning, said, "P'r'aps;" and then, drawing closer to his new friend with deepening interest, said, "Well, Jack, what more has happened?"

"What more? Why, I'll have to start a fresh pipe before I can answer that."

Having started a fresh pipe he proceeded, and the group settled down again to devour his words, and watch and smell the smoke.

"Well, then, there was—but you know I ain't a diction'ry, or a cyclopodia, or a gazinteer—let me see. After the battle o' the Nile there came the Irish Rebellion."

"Did that do 'em much good, Jack?"

"O yes, John; it united 'em immediately after to Old England, so that we're now Great Britain an' Ireland. Then Sir Ralph Abercromby, he gave the French an awful lickin' on land in Egypt at Aboukir, where Nelson had wopped 'em on the sea, and, last of all came the glorious battle of Trafalgar. But it wasn't all glory, for we lost Lord Nelson there. He was killed."

"That was a bad business," said Adams, with a look of sympathy. "And you was in that battle, was you?"

"In it! I should just think so," replied Jack Brace, looking contemplatively at his mutilated finger. "Why, I was in Lord Nelson's own ship, the *Victory*. Come, I'll give you an outline of it. This is how it began."

The ex-man-of-war's-man puffed vigorously for a few seconds, to get the pipe well alight, he remarked, and collect his thoughts.

Chapter Twenty Nine.

Jack Brace stirs up the War Spirit of Adams.

"You must know, John Adams," said Jack Brace, with a look and a clearing of the throat that raised great expectations in the breasts of the listeners, "you must know that for a long while before the battle Lord Nelson had bin scourin' the seas, far and near, in search o' the French and Spanish fleets, but do what he would, he could never fall in with 'em. At last he got wind of 'em in Cadiz Harbour, and made all sail to catch 'em. It was on the 19th of October 1805 that Villeneuve, that was the French admiral, put to sea with the combined fleets o' France and Spain. It wasn't till daybreak of the 21st that we got sight of 'em, right ahead, formed in close line, about twelve miles to lee'ard, standin' to the s'uth'ard, off Cape Trafalgar.

"Ha, John Adams, an' boys an' girls all, you should have seen that sight; it would have done you good. An' you should have felt our buzzums; they was fit to bust, *I* tell you! You see, we'd bin chasin' of 'em so long, that we could scarce believe our eyes when we saw 'em at long last. They wor bigger ships and more of 'em than ours; but what cared Nelson for that? not the shank of a brass button! he rather liked that sort o' thing; for, you know, one Englishman is equal to three Frenchmen any day."

"No, no, Jack Brace," said John Adams, with a quiet smile and shake of the head; "'snot quite so many as that."

"Not *quite*!" repeated Brace, vehemently; "why, it's my opinion that I could lick any six o' the Mounseers myself. Thursday November Christian there—"

"He ain't November yet," interrupted Adams, quietly, "he's only October."

"No matter, it's all the same. I tell 'ee, John, that he could wallop twenty of 'em, easy. There ain't no go in 'em at all."

"Didn't you tell me, Jack Brace, that Trafalgar was a glorious battle?"

"In coorse I did, for so it was."

"Didn't the Frenchmen stick to their guns like men?"

"No doubt of it."

"An' they didn't haul down their colours, I suppose, till they was about blown to shivers?"

"You're about right there, John Adams."

"Well, then, you can't say they've got no go in 'em. Don't underrate your enemy, whatever you do, for it's not fair; besides, in so doin' you underrate your own deeds. Moreover, we don't allow boastin' aboard of this island; so go ahead, Jack Brace, and tell us what you did do, without referrin' to what you think you could do. Mind, I'm king here, and I'll have to clap you in irons if you let your tongue wag too freely."

"All right, your majesty," replied Brace, with a bow of graceful humility, which deeply impressed his juvenile audience; "I'll behave better in futur' if you'll forgive me this time. Well, as I was about to say, when you sent that round shot across my bows and brought me up, Nelson he would have fought 'em if they'd had ten times the number o' ships that we had. As it was, the enemy had thirty-three sail of the line and seven frigates. We had only twenty-seven sail of the line and four frigates, so we was outnumbered by nine vessels. Moreover the enemy had 4000 lobsters on board—"

"Lobsters bein' land sodgers, my dears," remarked Adams, in explanation, "so-called 'cause of their bein' all red-coated; but the French sodgers are only red-trousered, coats bein' blue. Axin' your pardon, Brace, go on."

The seaman, who had availed himself of the interruption to stir up and stuff down his pipe, resumed.

"Likewise one of their line-o'-battle ships was a huge four-decker, called the *Santissima Trinidad*, and they had some of the best Tyrolese riflemen that could be got scattered throughout the fleet, as we afterwards came to find out to our cost.

"Soon after daylight Nelson came on deck. I see him as plain as if he was before me at this moment, for, bein' stationed in the mizzen-top o' the *Victory*—that was Nelson's ship, you know—I could see everything quite plain. He stood there for a minute or so, with his admiral's frock-coat covered with orders on the left breast, and his empty right sleeve fastened up to it; for you must know he had lost his right arm in action before that, and also his right eye, but the arm and eye that were left were quite enough for him to work with. After a word or two with the officers, he signalled to bear down on the enemy in two lines.

"Then it seemed to have occurred to him that the smoke of battle might render the signals difficult or impossible to make out, for he immediately made one that would serve for everything. It was this: 'if signals can't be seen, no captain can do wrong if he places his ship alongside an enemy.' Of coorse we all knew that he meant to win that battle; but, for the matter of that, every soul in the fleet, from the admiral to the smallest powder-monkey, meant—"

"Boasting not allowed," said Dan McCoy, displaying his fine teeth from ear to ear.

The seaman looked at him with a heavy frown.

"You young slip of a pump-handle, what d'ye mean?"

"The king's orders," said Dan, pointing to Adams, while the rest of the Pitcairners seemed awestruck by his presumption.

The frown slowly left the visage of Jack Brace. He shut his eyes, smiled benignly, and delivered a series of heavy puffs from the starboard side of his mouth.

Then a little squeak that had been bottled up in the nose of Otaheitan Sally forced a vent, and the whole party burst into hilarious laughter.

"Just so," resumed Brace, when they had recovered, "that is exactly what we did in the mizzen-top o' the *Victory* when we made out the signal, only we stuck a cheer on to the end o' the laugh. After that came another signal, just as we were about to go into action, 'England expects that every man will this day do his duty.' The effect of that signal was just treemendious, *I* tell you.

"I noticed at this time that some of Nelson's officers were botherin' him,—tryin' to persuade him, so to speak, to do somethin' he didn't want to. I afterwards found out that they were tryin' to persuade him not to wear his orders, but he wouldn't listen to 'em. Then they tried to convince him it would be wise for him to keep out of action as long as possible. He seemed to give in to this, for he immediately signalled the *Temeraire* and *Leviathan*, which were abreast of us, to pass ahead; but in *my* opinion this was nothin' more than a sly joke of the Admiral, for he kept carrying on all sail on the *Victory*, so that it wasn't possible for these ships to obey the order.

"We made the attack in two lines. The *Victory* led the weather-line of fourteen ships, and Collingwood, in the *Royal Sovereign*, led the lee-line of thirteen ships.

"As we bore down, the enemy opened the ball. We held our breath, for, as no doubt you know, messmate, just before the beginnin' of a fight, when a man is standin' still an' doin' nothin', he's got time to think; an' he *does* think, too, in a way, mayhap, that he's not much used to think."

"That's true, Jack Brace," responded Adams, with a grave nod; "an', d'ye know, it strikes me that it would be better for all of us if we'd think oftener in that fashion when we've got time to do it."

"You're right, John Adams; you're right. Hows'ever, we hadn't much time to think that morning, for the shot soon began to tell. One round shot came, as it seemed, straight for my head, but it missed me by a shave, an' only took off the hat of a man beside me that was about a fut shorter than myself.

"'You see the advantage,' says he, 'o' bein' a little feller.' 'That's so,' says I, but I didn't say or think no more that I knows on after that, for we had got within musket range, and the small bullets went whistling about our heads, pickin' off or woundin' a man here an' there.

"It was just then that I thought it time to put my pipe in my pocket, for, you see, I had been havin' a puff on the sly as we was bearin' down; an' I put up my fore-finger to shove the baccy down, when one o' them stingin' little things comes along, whips my best cutty out o' my mouth, an' carries the finger along with it. Of coorse I warn't goin' below for such a small matter, so I pulls out my hankerchief, an' says I to the little man that lost his hat, 'Just take a round turn here, Jim,' says I, 'an' I'll be ready for action again in two minutes.' Jim, he tied it up, but before he quite done it, the round shot was pitchin' into us like hail, cuttin' up the sails and riggin' most awful.

"They told me afterwards that Nelson gave orders to steer straight for the bow of the great *Santissima Trinidad*, and remarked, 'It's too warm work to last long,' but he did not return a single shot, though about fifty of our men had been killed and wounded. You see, he never was fond of wastin' powder an' shot. He generally reserved his fire till it could be delivered with stunnin' effect.

"Just then a round shot carried away our main-topmast with all her stun-s'ls an' booms. By good luck, however, we were close alongside o' the enemy's ship *Redoubtable* by that time. Our tiller ropes were shot away too, but it didn't matter much now. The word was given, and we opened with both broadsides at once. You should have felt the *Victory* tremble, John Adams. We tackled the *Redoubtable* with the starboard guns, and the *Bucentaur* and *Santissima Trinidad* with the port guns. Of course they gave it us hot and strong in reply. At the same time Captain Hardy, in the *Temeraire*, fell on board the *Redoubtable* on her other side, and the *Fougueux*, another o' the enemy, fell on board the *Temeraire*; so there we were four ships abreast—a compact tier—blazin' into each other like mad, with the muzzles of the guns touchin' the sides when they were run out, an' men stationed with buckets at the ports, to throw water into the shot-holes to prevent their takin' fire.

"It was awful work, I tell you, with the never-stopping roar of great guns and rattle of small arms, an' the smoke, an' the decks slippery with blood. The order was given to depress our guns and load with light charges of powder, to prevent the shot going right through the enemy into our own ship on the other side.

"The *Redoubtable* flew no colours, so we couldn't tell when she struck, and twice the Admiral, wishing to spare life, gave orders to cease firing, thinking she had given in. But she had not done so, and soon after a ball from her mizzen-top struck Nelson on the left shoulder, and he fell. They took him below at once.

"Of course we in the mizzen-top knew nothing of this, for we couldn't see almost anything for the smoke, only here and there a bit of a mast, or a yard-arm, or a bowsprit, while the very air trembled with the tremendous and continuous roar.

"We were most of us wounded by that time, more or less, but kept blazing away as long as we could stand. Then there came cheers of triumph mingling with the shouts and cries of battle. The ships of the enemy were beginning to strike. One after another the flags went down. Before long the cry was, 'Five have struck!' then 'Ten, hurrah!' then fifteen, then twenty, hurrah!"

"Hurrah! Old England for ever!" cried Adams, starting to his feet and waving his hat in a burst of irrepressible excitement, which roused the spirits of the youths around, who, leaping up with flushed faces and glittering eyes, sent up from the groves of Pitcairn a vigorous British cheer in honour of the great victory of Trafalgar.

"But," continued Jack Brace, when the excitement had abated, "there was great sorrow mingled with our triumph that day, for Nelson, the hero of a hundred fights, was dead. The ball had entered his spine. He lived just long enough to know that our victory was complete, and died thanking God that he had done his duty."

"That was truly a great battle," said Adams, while Brace, having concluded, was refilling his pipe.

"Right you are, John," said the other; "about the greatest victory we ever gained. It has settled the fleets of France and Spain, I guess, for the next fifty years."

"But what was it all for?" asked Bessy Mills, looking up in the sailor's face with much simplicity.

"What was it for?" repeated Brace, with a perplexed look. "Why, my dear, it was—it was for the honour and glory of Old England, to be sure."

"No, no, Jack, not quite that," interposed Adams, with a laugh, "it was to clap a stopper on the ambition of the French, as far as I can make out; or rather to snub that rascal Napoleon Bonnypart, an' keep him within bounds."

"But he ain't easy to keep within bounds," said Brace, putting his pipe in his pocket and rising; "for he's been knockin' the lobsters of Europe over like ninepins of late years. Hows'ever, we'll lick him yet on land, as we've licked him already on the sea, or my name's not—"

He stopped abruptly, having caught sight of Dan McCoy's twinkling eye.

"Now, John Adams, I must go, else the Cap'n'll think I've deserted altogether."

"Oh, *don't* go yet; please don't!" pleaded Dolly Young, as she grasped and fondled the seaman's huge hand.

Dolly was at that time about nine years of age, and full of enthusiasm. She was seconded in her entreaties by Dinah Adams, who seized the other hand, while several of the older girls sought to influence him by words and smiles; but Jack Brace was not to be overcome.

"I'll be ashore again to-morrow, p'r'aps, with the Captain, if he lands," said Brace, "and spin you some more yarns about the wars."

With this promise they were obliged to rest content. In a few minutes the visitor was carried over the surf by Toc and Charlie in their canoe, and soon put on board the *Topaz*, which stood inshore to receive him.

Chapter Thirty.

Adams and the Girls.

Great was the interest aroused on board the *Topaz* when Jack Brace narrated his experiences among the islanders, and Captain Folger resolved to pay them a visit. He did so next day, accompanied by the Englishman and some of the other men, the sight of whom gladdened the eyes and hearts of Adams and his large family.

Besides assuring himself of the truth of Brace's statements, the Captain obtained additional proof of the truth of Adams's account of himself and his community in the form of the chronometer and azimuth compass of the *Bounty*.

"How many did you say your colony consists of?" asked Folger.

"Thirty-five all told, sir," answered Adams; "but I fear we shall be only thirty-four soon."

"How so?"

"One of our lads, a dear boy of about eight years of age, is dying, I fear," returned Adams, sadly.

"I'm sorry to hear it, and still more sorry that I have no doctor in my ship," said Folger, "but I have a smatterin' of doctors' work myself. Let me see him."

Adams led the way to the hut where poor James Young lay, tenderly nursed by Mary Christian. The boy was lying on his bed as they entered, gazing wistfully out at the little window which opened from the side of it like the port-lights or bull's-eyes of a ship's berth. His young nurse sat beside him with the *Bounty* Bible open on her knees. She shut it and rose as the strangers entered.

The poor invalid was too weak to take much interest in them. He was extremely thin, and breathed with great difficulty. Nevertheless his face flushed, and a gleam of surprise shot from his eyes as he turned languidly towards the Captain.

"My poor boy," said Folger, taking his hand and gently feeling his pulse, "do you suffer much?"

"Yes,—very much," said little James, with a sickly smile.

"Can you rest at all?" asked the Captain.

"I am—always—resting," he replied, with a pause between each word; "resting—on Jesus."

The Captain was evidently surprised by the answer.

“Who told you about Jesus?” he asked.

“God’s book—and—the Holy—Spirit.”

It was obvious that the exertion of thinking and talking was not good for poor little James. Captain Folger therefore, after smoothing the hair on his forehead once or twice very tenderly, bade him good-bye, and went out.

“Doctors could do nothing for the child,” he said, while returning with Adams to his house; “but he is rather to be envied than pitied. I would give much for the *rest* which he apparently has found.”

“*Give* much!” exclaimed Adams, with an earnest look. “Rest in the Lord is not to be purchased by gifts. Itself is the grand free gift of God to man, to be had for the asking.”

“I know it,” was the Captain’s curt reply, as he entered Adams’s house. “Where got you the chronometer and azimuth compass?” he said, on observing these instruments.

“They belonged to the *Bounty*. You are heartily welcome to both of them if you choose; they are of no use to me.” (See Note.)

Folger accepted the gift, and promised to write to England and acquaint the Government with his discovery of the colony.

“You see, sir,” said Adams, with a grave look, while hospitably entertaining his visitor that afternoon, “we are increasing at a great rate, and although they may perhaps take me home and swing me up to the yard-arm, I think it better to run the risk o’ that than to leave all these poor young things here unprotected. Why, just think what might happen if one o’ them traders which are little better than pirates were to come an’ find us here.”

He looked at the Captain earnestly.

“Now, if we were under the protection o’ the British flag—only just recognised, as it were,—that would go a long way to help us, and prevent mischief.”

At this point the importunities of some of the young people to hear about the outside world prevailed, and Folger began, as Jack Brace had done the day before, to tell them some of the most stirring events in the history of his own land.

But he soon found out that the mental capacity of the Pitcairners was like a bottomless pit. However much they got, they wanted more. Anecdote after anecdote, story after story, fact after fact, was thrown into the gulf, and still the cry was, “More! more!”

At last he tore himself away.

“Good-bye, and God bless you all,” he said, while stepping into the canoe which was to carry him off. “I won’t forget my promise.”

"And tell 'em to send us story-books," shouted Daniel McCoy, as the canoe rose on the back of the breakers.

The Captain waved his hand. Most of the women and children wiped their eyes, and then they all ran to the heights to watch the *Topaz* as she sailed away. They watched her till she vanished over that mysterious horizon which seemed to the Pitcairners the utmost boundary of the world, and some of them continued to gaze until the stars came out, and the gulls retired to bed, and the soft black mantle of night descended like a blessing of tranquillity on land and sea.

Before bidding the *Topaz* farewell, we may remark that Captain Folger faithfully fulfilled his promise. He wrote a letter to England giving a full account of his discovery of the retreat of the mutineers, which aroused much interest all over the land; but at that time the stirring events of warfare filled the minds of men in Europe so exclusively, that the lonely island and its inhabitants were soon forgotten—at least no action was taken by the Government—and six years elapsed before another vessel sailed out of the great world into the circle of vision around Pitcairn.

Meanwhile the Pitcairners, knowing that, even at the shortest, a long, long time must pass before Folger could communicate with the "old country," continued the even tenor of their innocent lives.

The school prospered and became a vigorous institution. The church not less so. More children were born to Thursday October, insomuch that he at last had one for every working-day in the week; more yam-fields were cultivated, and more marriages took place—but hold, this is anticipating.

We have said that the school prospered. The entire community went to it, male and female, old and young. John Adams not only taught his pupils all he knew, but set himself laboriously to acquire all the knowledge that was to be obtained by severe study of the Bible, the Prayer-book. Carteret's Voyages, and by original meditation. From the first mine he gathered and taught the grand, plain, and blessed truths about salvation through Jesus, together with a few tares of error resulting from misconception and imperfect reasoning. From the second he adopted the forms of worship of the Church of England. From the third he gleaned and amplified a modicum of nautical, geographical, and general information; and from the fourth he extracted a flood of miscellaneous, incomplete, and disjointed facts, fancies, and fallacies, which at all events served the good purpose of interesting his pupils and exercising their mental powers.

But into the midst of all this life death stepped and claimed a victim. The great destroyer came not, however, as an enemy but as a friend, to raise little James Young to that perfect rest of which he had already had a foretaste on the island.

It was the first death among the second generation, and naturally had a deeply solemnising effect on the young people. This occurred soon after the departure of the *Topaz*. The little grave was made under the shade of a palm-grove, where wild-flowers grew in abundance, and openings in the leafy canopy let in the glance of heaven's blue eye.

One evening, about six months after this event, Adams went up the hill to an eminence to which he was fond of retiring when a knotty problem in arithmetic had to be tackled. Arithmetic was his chief difficulty. The soliloquy which he uttered on reaching his place of meditation will explain his perplexities.

"That 'rithmetic do bother me, an' no mistake," he said, with a grave shake of the head at a lively lizard which was looking up in his face. "You see, history is easy. What I knows I knows an' can teach, an' what I don't know I let alone, an there's an end on't. There's no makin' a better o' *that*. Then, as to writin', though my hand is crabbed enough, and my pot-hooks are shaky and sprawly, still I know the shapes o' things, an' the youngsters are so quick that they can most of 'em write better than myself; but in regard to that 'rithmetic, it's a heartbreak altogether, for I've only just got enough of it to puzzle me. Wi' the use o' my fingers I can do simple addition pretty well, an' I can screw round subtraction, but multiplication's a terrible business. Unfort'nitely my edication has carried me only the length o' the fourth line, an' that ain't enough."

He paused, and the lively lizard, ready to fly at a moment's notice, put its head on one side as if interested in the man's difficulty.

"Seven times eight, now," continued Adams. "I've no more notion what that is than the man in the moon. An' I've no table to tell me, an' no way o' findin' it out—eh? Why, yes I have. I'll mark 'em down one at a time an' count 'em up."

He gave his thigh a slap, which sent the lively lizard into his hole, horrified.

"Poor thing, I didn't mean that," he said to the absent animal. "Hows'ever, I'll try it. Why, I'll make a multiplication-table for myself. Strange that that way never struck me before."

As he went on muttering he busied himself in rubbing clean a flat surface of rock, on which, with a piece of reddish stone, he made a row of eight marks, one below another. Alongside of that he made another row of eight marks, and so on till he had put down seven rows, when he counted them up, and found the result to be fifty-six. This piece of acquired knowledge he jotted down in a little notebook, which, with a quantity of other stationery, had originally belonged to that great fountain of wealth, the *Bounty*.

"Why, I'll make out the whole table in this way," he said, quite heartily, as he sat down again on the flat rock and went to work.

Of course he found the process laborious, especially when he got among the higher numbers; but Adams was not a man to be turned from his purpose by trifles. He persevered until his efforts were crowned with success.

While he was engaged with the multiplication problem on that day, he was interrupted by the sound of merry voices, and soon Otaheitan Sally, Bessy Mills, May Christian, Sarah Quintal, and his own daughter Dinah, came tripping up the hill towards him.

These five, ranging from fifteen to nineteen, were fond of rambling through the woods in company, being not only the older members of the young flock, but like-minded in many things. Sally was looked up to by the other four as being the eldest and wisest, as well as the most beautiful; and truly, the fine clear complexion of the pretty brunette contrasted well with their fairer skins and golden or light-brown locks.

"We came up to have a chat with you, father," said Sally, as they drew near. "Are you too busy to be bothered with us?"

"Never too busy to chat with such dear girls," said the gallant seaman, throwing down his piece of red chalk, and taking one of Sally's hands in his. "Sit down, Sall; sit down, May, on the other side—there. Now, what have you come to chat about?"

"About that dear *Topaz*, of course, and that darling Captain Folger, and Jack Brace, and all the rest of them," answered Sarah Quintal, with sparkling eyes.

"Hallo, Sarah! you've sent your heart away with them, I fear," said Adams.

"Not quite, but nearly," returned Sarah. "I would give anything if the whole crew would only have stayed with us altogether."

"Oh! how charming! delightful! *so* nice!" exclaimed three of the others. Sally said nothing, but gave a little smile, which sent a sparkle from her pearly teeth that harmonised well with the gleam of her laughter-loving eyes.

"No doubt," said Adams, with a peculiar laugh; "but, I say, girls, you must not go on thinking for ever about that ship. Why, it is six months or more since it left us, and you are all as full of it as if it had sailed but yesterday."

"How can we help it, father?" said Sally. "It is about the most wonderful thing that has happened since we were born, and you can't expect us to get it out of our heads easily."

"And how can we help thinking, and talking too," said Bessy Mills, "about all the new and strange things that Jack Brace related to us?"

"Besides, father," said Dinah, "you are quite as bad as we are, for you talk about nothing else now, almost, except Lord Nelson and the battles of the Nile and Trafalgar."

"Come, come, Di; don't be hard on me. I don't say much about them battles now."

"Indeed you do," cried May Christian, "and it is only last night that I heard you muttering something about Trafalgar in your sleep, and you suddenly broke out with a half-muttered shout like this: 'Englan' 'specs every man'll do's dooty!'"

May was not a bad mimic. This was received with a shout of laughter by the other girls.

While they were conversing thus two tall and slim but broad-shouldered youths were seen climbing the hill towards them, engaged in very earnest conversation. And this reference to conversation reminds us of the curious fact that the language of the young Pitcairners had greatly improved of late. As they had no other living model to improve upon than John Adams, this must have been entirely the result of reading. Although the books they had were few, they proved to be sufficient not only to fill their minds with higher thoughts, but their mouths with purer English than that nautical type which had been peculiar to the mutineers.

The tall striplings who now approached were Daniel McCoy and Charlie Christian. These two were great friends and confidants. We will not reveal the subject of their remarkably earnest conversation, but merely give the concluding sentences.

"Well, Charlie," said Dan, as they came in view of the knoll on which Adams and the girls were seated, "we will pluck up courage and make a dash at it together."

"Ye-es," said Charlie, with hesitation.

"And shall we break the ice by referring to Toc's condition, eh?" said Dan.

"Well, it seems to me the easiest plan; perhaps I should say the least difficult," returned Charlie, with a faint smile.

"Come, don't lose heart, Charlie," said Dan, with an attempt to look humorous, which signally failed.

"Hallo, lads! where away?" said Adams, as they came up.

"Just bin havin' a walk and a talk, father," answered Dan. "We saw you up here, and came to walk back with you."

"I'm not so sure that we'll let you. The girls and I have been having a pleasant confab, an' p'r'aps they don't want to be interrupted."

"Oh, we don't mind; they may come," said Di Adams, with a laugh.

So the youths joined the party, and they all descended the mountain in company.

A footnote in Lady Belcher's book tells us that this chronometer had been twice carried out by Captain Cook on his voyages of discovery. It was afterwards supplied to the *Bounty* when she was fitted out for what was to be her last voyage, and carried by the mutineers to Pitcairn Island. Captain Folger brought it away, but it was taken from him the same year by the governor of Juan Fernandez, and sold in Chili to A Caldeleugh, Esquire, of Valparaiso, from whom it was purchased by Captain, (afterwards Admiral), Sir T. Herbert for fifty guineas. That officer took it to China, and in 1843 brought it to England and transmitted it to the Admiralty, by which department it was presented to the United Service Museum, in Great Scotland Yard, where the writer saw it only a few days ago, and was told that it keeps excellent time still.

Chapter Thirty One.

Treats of Interesting Matters.

Of course Charlie Christian gravitated towards Sally, and these two, falling slowly behind the rest, soon turned aside, and descended by another of the numerous paths which traversed that part of the mountain.

Of course, also, Daniel McCoy drew near to Sarah Quintal, and these two, falling slowly behind, sought another of the mountain-paths. It will be seen that these young people were charmingly unsophisticated.

For a considerable time Charlie walked beside Sally without uttering a word, and Sally, seeing that there was something on his mind, kept silence. At last Charlie lifted his eyes from the ground, and with the same innocent gaze with which, as an infant, he had been wont to look up to his guardian, he now looked down at her, and said, “Sally.”

“Well, Charlie?”

There was a little smile lurking about the corners of the girl’s mouth, which seemed to play hide-and-seek with the twinkle in her downcast eyes.

“Well, Charlie, what are you going to tell me?”

“Isn’t Toc—very—happy?”

He blushed to the roots of his hair when he said this, and dropped his eyes again on the ground.

“Of course he is,” replied Sally, with a touch of surprise.

“But—but—I mean, as—”

“Well, why don’t you go on, Charlie?”

“I mean as a—a married man.”

“Every one sees and knows that, Charlie.” There was another silence, during which the timid youth cleared his throat several times. At last he became desperate.

“And—and—Sally, don’t you think that *other* people might be happy too if they were married?”

“To be sure they might,” said the girl, with provoking coolness. “There’s Dan McCoy, now, and Sarah Quintal, they will be very happy when—”

“Why, how do *you* know?”—Charlie spoke with a look of surprise and stopped short.

The girl laughed in a low tone, but did not reply, and the youth, becoming still more desperate, said—

“But I—I didn’t mean Dan and Sarah, when I—Oh, Sally, don’t you *know* that I love you?”

“Yes, I know that,” replied the girl, with a blush and a little tremulous smile. “I couldn’t help knowing that.”

“Have I made it so plain, then?” he asked, in surprise.

“Haven’t you followed me ever since you were a staggerer?” asked Sally, with a simple look.

“O yes, of course—but—but I love you far *far* more now. In short, I want to marry you, Sally.”

He had reached the culminating point at last. “Well, Charlie, why don’t you ask father’s leave?” said the maiden.

“And you agree?” he exclaimed, timidly taking her hand.

“Oh, Charlie,” returned Sally, looking up in his face, with an arch smile, “how stupid you are! Nothing goes into your dear head without such a deal of hammering. Will you never become wise, and—”

Charlie became wise at last, and stopped her impudent mouth effectively; but she broke from him and ran into the woods, while he went down to the village to tell Adams.

Meanwhile Daniel McCoy led Sarah Quintal by a round-about path to the cliffs above Pitcairn.

Pretty little Sarah was timid, and had a vague suspicion of something that caused her heart to flutter.

“I say, Sarah,” said the bold and stalwart Dan, “did you ever see such a jolly couple as Toc and his wife before?”

“I never saw any couple before, you know,” replied the girl, simply, “except father Adams and his wife.”

“Well, they are an oldish couple,” returned Dan, with a laugh; “but it’s my opinion that before long you’ll see a good many more couples—young ones, too.”

“Indeed,” said Sarah, becoming much interested, for this was the first time that any young man had ventured to refer to such a subject, though she and her female companions had often canvassed the possibilities that surrounded them.

“Yes, indeed,” returned Dan. “Let me see, now. There’s Charlie Christian and Otaheitan Sally—”

“Why, how did you come to know *that*?” asked Sarah, in genuine surprise.

Dan laughed heartily. “Come to know what?” he asked.

“That—that he is fond of Sally,” stammered Sarah.

“Why, everybody knows that,” returned Dan; “the very gulls must be aware of it by this time, unless they are geese.”

“Yes, of course,” said the poor girl, blushing crimson at the thought of having been led almost to betray her friend’s confidences.

“Well, then,” continued Dan, “Charlie and Sall bein’ so fond o’ one another—”

“I did not say that Sally was fond of Charlie,” interrupted Sarah, quickly.

“Oh *dear* no!” said Dan, with deep solemnity; “of *course* you didn’t; nevertheless I know it, and it wouldn’t surprise me much if something came of it—a wedding, for instance.”

Sarah, being afraid to commit herself in some way if she opened her lips, said nothing, but gazed intently at the ground as they walked slowly among the sweet-scented shrubs.

“But there’s one o’ the boys that wants to marry *you*, Sarah Quintal, and it is for him I want to put in a good word to-day.”

A flutter of surprise, mingled with dismay at her heart, tended still further to confuse the poor girl. Not knowing what to say, she stammered, “Indeed! Who can it—it—” and stopped short.

“They sometimes call him Dan,” said the youth, suddenly grasping Sarah’s hand and passing an arm round her waist, “but his full name is Daniel McCoy.”

Sarah Quintal became as suddenly pale now as she had formerly become red, and struggled to get free.

“Oh, Dan, Dan, don’t!” she cried, earnestly; “*do* let me go, if you love me!”

“Well, I will, if you say I may speak to Father Adams about it.”

Sarah’s answer was quite inaudible to ordinary ears, but it caused Dan to loosen his hold; and the girl, bounding away like a frightened gazelle, disappeared among the palm-groves.

“Well,” exclaimed Dan, thrusting both hands into his trousers-pockets as he walked smartly down the hill, “you *are* the dearest girl in all the world. There can’t be two opinions on that point.”

Dan’s world was a remarkably small one, as worlds go, but it was quite large enough to fill his heart to overflowing at that time.

In turning into another path he almost ran against Charlie Christian.

“Well?” exclaimed Charlie, with a brilliant smile. “Well?” repeated Dan, with a beaming countenance.

“All right,” said Charlie.

“Ditto,” said Dan, as he took his friend’s arm, and hastened to the abode of John Adams, the great referee in all important matters.

They found him seated at his table, with the big Bible open before him.

“Well, my lads,” he said, with a kindly smile as they entered, “you find me meditatin’ over a verse that seems to me full o’ suggestive thoughts.”

“Yes, father, what is it?” asked Dan.

“‘A prudent wife is from the Lord.’ You’ll find it in the nineteenth chapter o’ Proverbs.”

The youths looked at each other in great surprise. “It is very strange,” said Charlie, “that you should hit upon that text to-day.”

"Why so, Charlie?"

"Because—because—we came to—that is to say, we want to—"

"Get spliced, Charlie; out with it, man. You keep shuffling about the edge like a timid boy goin' to dive into deep water for the first time."

"Well, and so it *is* deep water," replied Charlie; "so deep that we can't fathom it easily; and this *is* the first time too."

"The fact is, you've come to tell me," said Adams, looking at Charlie, "that you want to marry Otaheitan Sally, and that Dan there wants to marry Sarah Quintal. Is it not so?"

"I think, father, you must be a wizard," said Dan, with a surprised look. "How did you come to guess it?"

"I didn't guess it, lad; I saw it as plain as the nose on your own face. Anybody could see it with half an eye. Why, I've seen it for years past; but that's not the point. The first question is, Are you able to feed your wives without requirin' them to work too hard in the fields?"

"Yes, father," answered Dan, promptly. "Charlie helped me, and I helped him, and so we've both got enough of land enclosed and stocked to keep our—our—wives comfortably," (even Dan looked modest here!) "without requiring them to work at all, for a long time at least."

"Well. I don't want 'em not to work at all—that's good for neither man, nor woman, nor beast. Even child'n work hard, poor things, while playin' at pretendin' to work. However, I'm glad to hear you are ready. Of course I knew what you were up to all along. Now, you'll want to borrow a few odds an' ends from the general stock, therefore go an' make out lists of what you require, and I'll see about it. Is it long since you arranged it wi' the girls?"

"About half-an-hour," returned Dan.

"H'm! sharp practice. You'll be the better of meditation for a week or two. Now, get along with you, lads, and think of the word I have given you from God's book about marriage. I'll not keep you waitin' longer than I think right."

So Dan and Charlie left the presence-chamber of their nautical ruler, quite content to wait for a couple of weeks, having plenty to keep them employed, body and mind, in labouring in their gardens, perfecting the arrangements of their respective cottages, and making out lists of the various things they required to borrow. In all of which operations they were lovingly assisted by their intended wives, with a matter-of-fact gravity that would have been quite touching if it had not been half ridiculous.

The list of things to be borrowed was made out in accordance with a system of barter, exchange, and loan, which had begun in necessity, and was afterwards conducted on regular principles by Adams, who kept a systematic journal and record of accounts, in which he entered the nature and quantity of work performed by each family, what each had received, and what each was due on account. The exchanges also were made in a systematic manner. Thus, when one family had too many salt fish, and another had too much fruit or vegetables, a fair exchange restored the equilibrium to the satisfaction of both parties; and when the stores of one family were exhausted, a fresh supply was raised for it from the general possessions of

all the rest, to be repaid, however, in exact measure when the suffering family should be again in affluence, through good harvests and hard work. All details were minutely noted down by Adams, so that injustice to individuals or to the community at large was avoided.

It is interesting to trace, in this well-conducted colony, the great root-principles on which the colossal system of the world's commerce and trade has been reared, and to recognise in John Adams the germs of those principles of equity and method which have raised England to her high commercial position. But still more interesting is it to recognise in him that good seed, the love of God and His truth, spiritual, intellectual, and material, which, originated by the Holy Spirit, and founded in Jesus Christ, produces the "righteousness that exalteth a nation."

When the short period of probation was past, Charlie Christian became the happy husband of the girl whom he had all but worshipped from the earliest rememberable days of infancy, and Dan McCoy was united to Sarah Quintal. As in the first case of marriage, Otaheitan Sall was older than her husband; but in her case the difference was so slight as scarcely to be worth mentioning. As to appearance, tall, serious, strapping Charlie *looked* old enough to have been Sally's father.

The wedding-day was a day of great rejoicing, considerable solemnity, and not a little fun; for the religion of the Pitcairners, being drawn direct from the inspired Word, was the reverse of dolorous. Indeed, the simplicity of their faith was extreme, for it consisted in merely asking the question, "What does God wish me to do?" and *doing it.*

Of course the simplicity of this rule was, in Pitcairn as elsewhere, unrecognised by ignorance, or rendered hazy and involved by stupidity. Adams had his own difficulties in combating the effects of evil in the hearts of his children, for, as we have said before, they were by no means perfect, though unusually good.

For instance, one day one of those boys who was passing into the hobbledehoy stage of life, came with a perplexed air, and said—

"Didn't you tell us in school yesterday, father, that if we were good Jesus would save us?"

"No, Jack Mills, I told you just the reverse. I told you that if Jesus saved you you would be good."

"Then why doesn't He save me and make me good?" asked Jack, anxious to cast the blame of his indecision about his salvation off his own shoulders.

"Because you refuse to be saved," said Adams, pointedly.

Jack Mills felt and looked somewhat hurt at this. He was one of the steadiest boys at the school, always learned his tasks well, and was generally pretty well behaved; but there was in him an ugly, half-hidden root of selfishness, which he did not himself perceive.

"Do you remember going to the shore yesterday?" asked Adams, replying to the look,—for the boy did not speak.

"Yes, father."

"And you remember that two little boys had just got into a canoe, and were pushing off to enjoy themselves, when you ran down, turned them out, and took the canoe to yourself?"

Jack did not reply; but his flushed face told that he had not forgotten the incident.

"That's right, dear boy," continued Adam, "Your blood tells the truth for you, and your tongue don't contradict it. So long's you keep the unruly member straight you'll get along. Well, now, Jack, that was a sin of unkindness, and a sort of robbery, too, for the canoe belonged to the boys while they had possession. Did you want to be saved from that sin, my boy?"

Jack was still silent. He knew that he had not wished to be saved at the time, because, if he had, he would have at once returned to the shore and restored the canoe, with an apology for having taken it by force.

"But I was sorry afterwards, father," pleaded the boy.

"I know you were, Jack, and your guilty conscience longed for forgiveness. But Jesus did not come to this world to forgive us. He came to save us—to save this people from their sins; *His* people,—*forgiven* people, my boy,—from their sins. If you had looked to Jesus, He would have sent His Spirit into you, and brought His Word to your mind, 'Be ye kind one to another,' or, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:' or in some way or other He would have turned you back and saved you from sin, but you did not look to Jesus; in short, you refused to be saved just then, and thought to make up for it by being sorry afterwards. Isn't that the way of it, Jack?"

"Yes, father," said Jack, with downcast but no longer hurt looks, for Adams's tone and manner were very kind.

"Then you know now, Jack Mills, why you're not yet saved, and you can't be good till you *are* saved, any more than you can fly till you've got wings. But don't be cast down, my lad; He will save you yet. All you've got to do is to *cease your opposition*, and let Him take you in hand."

Thus, or in some such way, did this God-appointed pastor lead his little flock from day to day and year to year.

But to return from this digression.

We have said that the double wedding-day was one of mingled rejoicing, solemnity, and fun. If you insist on further explanation, good reader, and want to know something more about the rejoicing, we can only direct you to yonder clump of blossoming plants in the shade of the palm-grove. There you will find Charlie Christian looking timidly down into the gorgeous orbs of Otaheitan Sally as they hold sweet converse of things past, present, and to come. They have been so trained in ways of righteousness, that the omission of the world-to-come from their love-making, (not flirtation, observe), would be as ridiculous as the absence of reference to the wedding-day.

On the other side of the same knoll Daniel McCoy sits by the side of modest Sarah Quintal, his only half-tamed spirit torn by the conflicting emotions aroused by a compound of jollity, love, joy, thankfulness, and fun, which render his words too incoherent to be worthy of record.

In regard to solemnity, reader, we refer you to the little school-room, which also serves for a chapel, where John Adams, in tones befitting a bishop and with feelings worthy of an apostle, reads the marriage service in the midst of the assembled population of the island. He has a brass curtain-ring which did duty at the marriage of Thursday October Christian, and which is destined to do duty in similar circumstances in many coming years. The knots are soon tied. There are no sad tears, for at Pitcairn there are no partings of parents and children, but there are many tears of joy, for Adams's words are telling though few, and his prayers are brief but deeply impressive, while the people, young and middle-aged, are powerfully sympathetic. The most of the girls break down when Adams draws to an abrupt close, and most of the youths find it hard to behave like men.

They succeed, however, and then the wedding party goes off to have a spell of fun.

If you had been there, reader, to behold things for yourself, it is not improbable that some of the solemnity of the wedding would have been scattered, (for you, at least), and some of the fun introduced too soon, for the costumes of the chief actors were not perfect; indeed, not quite appropriate, according to our ideas of the fitness of things.

It is not that we could object to the bare feet of nearly all the party, for to such we are accustomed among our own poor. Neither could we find the slightest fault with the brides. Their simple loose robes, flowing hair, and wreaths of natural flowers, were in perfect keeping with the beauty of their faces. But the garb of guileless Charlie Christian was incongruous, to say the least of it. During the visit of the *Topaz* a few old clothes had been given by the seamen to the islanders, and Charlie had become the proud possessor of a huge black beaver hat, which had to be put on sidewise to prevent its settling down on the back of his neck; also, of a blue dress-coat with brass buttons, the waist and sleeves of which were much too short, and the tails unaccountably long; likewise, of a pair of Wellington boots, the tops of which did not, by four inches, reach the legs of his native trousers, and therefore displayed that amount of brawny, well-made limbs, while the absence of a vest and the impossibility of buttoning the coat left a broad, sunburnt expanse of manly chest exposed to view. But such is the difference of opinion resulting from difference of custom, that not a muscle of any face moved when he appeared, save in open admiration, though there was just the shade of a twinkle for one moment in the eye of John Adams, for he had seen other, though not better, days.

Even Dan's excitable sense of the ridiculous was not touched. Himself, indeed, was a greater guy than Charlie, for he wore a richly-flowered vest, so tight that it would hardly button, and had been split up the back while being put on. As he wore a shell-jacket, much too short for him, this accident to the vest and a portion of his powerful back were clearly revealed.

But these things were trifles on that great day, and when the fun did begin, it was kept up with spirit. First, the greater part of the population went to the beach for a little surf-sliding. It is not necessary to repeat our description of that exercise. The waves were in splendid order.

It seemed as if the great Pacific itself were pulsating with unwonted joy. The billows were bigger grander, almost slower and more sedate than usual. Outside it was dead calm. The fall of each liquid wall was more thunderous, its roar more deep-toned, and the confusion of the surf more riotous than ever. For average rejoicers this exercise might in itself have sufficed for one day, but they were used to it, and wanted variety; so the youths took to racing on the sands, and the maidens to applauding, while the elderly looked on and criticised. The small children went, loosely speaking, mad.

Some there were who went off on their own accounts, and cast a few of those shadows which are said to precede “coming events.” Others, less poetically inclined just then, remained in the village to prepare roast pig, yam-pie, and those various delicacies compounded of fruits and vegetables, which they knew from experience would be in great demand ere long.

As evening descended they all returned to the village, and at sunset hauled down their flag.

This flag, by the way, was another souvenir of the *Topaz*. It was an old Union Jack, for which Adams had set up a flagstaff, having by that time ceased to dread the approach of a ship. By Jack Brace he had been reminded of the date of the king’s birthday, and by a strange coincidence that happened to be the very day on which the two couples were united. Hence there was a double, (perhaps we should say a treble), reason for rejoicing. As John Adams was now endeavouring to undo the evils of his former life, he naturally became an enthusiastic loyalist. On passing the flagstaff he called for three cheers for the British king, and with his own voice led off the first verse of the national anthem before hauling down the colours. Thereafter, assembling round the festive board in the school-room, they proceeded to take physical nourishment, with the memory of mental food strong upon them. Before the meal a profound hush fell on all the scene, and the deep voice of Adams was heard asking a blessing on the food they were about to receive. Thanks were returned with equal solemnity after meat. Then the tables were cleared, and games became the order of the evening. When a point of semi-exhaustion was reached, a story was called for, and the nautical pastor at once launched into oceans of imagination and fancy, in which he bid fair to be wrecked and drowned. During the recital of this the falling of a pin would have been heard, if there had been such a thing as a pin at Pitcairn to fall.

Last, but not least, came blind-man’s-buff. This exhausted the last spark of physical energy left even in the strongest. But the mental and spiritual powers were still vigorous, so that when they all sat down in quiescence round the room, and Toc took down the family Bible from its accustomed shelf and set it before Adams, they were all, young and old, in a suitable state of mind to join in the worship of Him who had given them the capacity, as well as the opportunity, to enjoy that glorious and ever memorable day.

Chapter Thirty Two.

Another Visit from the Great World.

If ever there had been a doubt of the truth of the proverb that example is better than precept, the behaviour of the young men and maidens of Pitcairn, after the wedding just described, would have cleared that doubt away for ever.

The demands upon poor Adams’s services became ridiculous, insomuch that he began to make laws somewhat in the spirit of the Medo-Persic lawmakers, and sternly refused to allow any man to marry under the age of twenty years, or any woman under eighteen. Even with this drag on the wheels, the evil—if evil it were—did not abate, but as time went on, steadily increased. It seemed as if, the ice having been broken, the entire population kept on tumbling into the water.

Among others, our once little friend Matthew Quintal married Bessy Mills.

The cares of the little colony now began to tell heavily on John Adams, for he was what is termed a willing horse, and would not turn over to another the duties which he could perform with his own hands. Besides acting the part of pastor, schoolmaster, law-maker, and law-enforcer, he had to become the sympathetic counsellor of all who chose to call upon him; also public registrar of events, baptiser of infants, and medical practitioner. It is a question whether there ever was a man placed in so difficult and arduous a position as this last mutineer of the *Bounty*, and it is not a question at all, but an amazing and memorable fact, that he filled his unique post with statesmanlike ability.

As time went on, he, of course, obtained help, sympathy, and counsel from the men and women whom he had been training for God around him; but he seems to have been loath formally to hand over the helm, either wholly or in part, to any one else as long as he had strength to steer the ship.

We have said that England was too much engaged with her European wars to give much thought to this gem in her crown, which was thus gradually being polished to such a dazzling brightness. She knew it was but a little gem, if gem at all, and at such a distance did not see its brilliant sheen. Amid the smoke and turmoil of war she forgot it; yet the God of Battles and the Prince of Peace were winning a grand, moral, bloodless victory in that lonely little island.

It was not till the year 1814, six years after the visit of the *Topaz*, that the solitude of Pitcairn was again broken in upon by visitors from the outside world.

In that year two frigates, H.M.S. *Britain* and *Tagus*, commanded respectively by Captain Sir F. Staines and Captain Pipon, came unexpectedly on Pitcairn Island while in pursuit of an American ship, the *Essex*, which had been doing mischief among the British whalers.

It was evening when the ships sighted Pitcairn, and were observed by one of the almost innumerable youngsters with which the island had by that time been peopled. With blazing eyes and labouring breath, the boy rushed down the cliffs, bounded over the level ground, and burst into the village, shouting, "Ships!"

No warwhoop of Red Indians ever created greater excitement. Pitcairn swarmed at once to the cliffs with flushed faces, glittering eyes, and hopeful looks. Yes, there they were, and no mistake,—two ships!

"They're men-o'-war, father," said Thursday October Christian, a little anxiously.

"So I see, lad; but I won't hide *this* time. I don't believe they'd think it worth while hangin' me now. Anyhow, I'll risk it."

Many of the people spent the whole of that night on the cliffs, for, as it was too late to attempt a landing, Captain Staines did not venture to approach till the following morning.

Soon after daybreak the ships were seen to stand inshore, and a canoe was launched through the surf to meet them. As on the occasion of the visit of the *Topaz*, Thursday was deputed to represent the islanders. He was accompanied by Edward Young, now a handsome youth of eighteen years of age. As on the previous boarding of a ship, Toc amazed the sailors by shouting in English to "throw him a rope." Being now possessed of a wardrobe, he had in his heart resolved to appear in a costume worthy of the great occasion. For this end he had put on a vest without sleeves, trousers that had done duty in the *Topaz*, and

were much too short, and a beaver hat which he had jauntily ornamented with cock-tail feathers, and wore very much on the back of his head.

Thursday met the eager inquiries of Sir F. Staines with his usual good-humoured off-hand urbanity, and gave his name in full; but a sudden change came over his face while he spoke—a look of amazement, mingled with alarm.

“Look! look there, Ned,” he said, in a low tone, laying his hand on his comrade’s shoulder and pointing towards a certain part of the ship. “What is that?”

Ned looked with an expression of awe in the direction indicated.

“What is it that puzzles you?” asked the Captain, not a little amused by their looks.

“The beast! the beast!” said Toc.

“What, d’you mean the cow?”

“Is it a cow?” asked Toc in wonder.

“Of course it is. Did you never see a cow before?”

“No, never. I thought it was a big goat, or a horned sow,” returned the young man, as he approached the quiet animal cautiously. “I say, Ned, it’s a *cow*! It don’t look much like the things that father Adams used to draw, do it?”

Ned agreed that Adams’s representation fell far short of the original, and for some time they stood cautiously examining the strange creature, and gently touching its sides.

Just then a little black terrier came bounding forward and frisked round the Captain.

“Ha!” exclaimed Edward Young, with an intelligent look, “I know that beast, Toc; it’s a dog! I’m sure it is, for I have read of such things in Carteret, and father has described ’em often, so have the women. They have dogs, you know, on some islands.”

But the surprise and interest raised in them by two animals were nothing to what they felt on being conducted over the ship and shown all the details of stores and armament in a man-of-war. The surprise changed sides, however, when, on being asked to partake of luncheon, these men stood up, clasped their hands, shut their eyes, and asked a blessing before commencing to eat, in the familiar phrase, “For what we are about to receive,” etcetera.

Of course Captains Staines and Pipon went on shore, where they were received by Adams, hat in hand, and by the rest of the population down to the minutest infant, for no one would consent to miss the sight, and there was no sick person to be looked after. Up at the village the pigs and poultry had it all their own way, and made the most of their opportunity.

It was curious to mark the air of respect with which Adams regarded the naval uniform which had once been so familiar. As he stood conversing with the officers, he occasionally, in sailor-like fashion,

smoothed down his scanty locks, for although little more than fifty at that time, care, sorrow, and anxiety had given his countenance an aged and worn look, though his frame was still robust and healthy.

In the course of the interview, Captain Pipon offered to give him a passage to England, with any of his family who chose to accompany him. To his surprise Adams at once expressed a desire to go.

We know not whether this was a piece of pleasantry on Adams's part, but when he sent for his old wife and daughters to tell them of it, the scene of distress that ensued baffles description. The old woman was in despair. Dinah Adams burst into tears, and entreated the officers not to take her dear father away. Her sister Rachel flung her arms round her father's neck and held on. Hannah Adams clasped her hands and wept in silent despair, and even George, at that time about ten years of age, and not at all given to the melting mood, felt a tear of sympathy trickling down his nose. Of course, when the cause of the ebullition became known, the whole Pitcairn colony was dissolved in tears or lamentations, insomuch that Adams gave up all idea of leaving them. We firmly believe that he never had any intention of doing so, but had merely thrown out the hint to see what effect it would have.

Like Captain Folger of the *Topaz*, the captains of the *Britain* and *Tagus* wrote eloquent and enthusiastic letters to the Admiralty about their discovery, but the dogs of war were still loose in Europe. Their Lordships at Whitehall had no time to devote to such matters, and once again the lonely island was forgotten.

It is a curious coincidence that death came close on the heels of this visit, as it had come on that of the *Topaz*. Scarcely had the two frigates left when Matthew Quintal took a fit while out fishing in his canoe and was drowned. About the same time Jack Mills was killed by falling from the rocks when out after gulls' eggs. Thus poor Bessy Quintal lost her husband and brother in the same year, but she was not without comfort. She had been early taught to carry her cares to Jesus, and found Him now a very present help. Besides, she had now two little sons, John and Matthew, who were old enough to fondle her and sympathise with her to some extent, though they scarce understood her sorrow; and her fast friend and comforter, Sally Christian, did not fail her in the hour of need. Indeed, that warm-hearted Otaheitan would have taken poor Bessy into her house to live with her and Charlie, but for the difficulty that six riotous little creatures of her own, named Fletcher, Edward, Charles, Isaac, Sarah, and Maria, already filled it to overflowing.

A little more than six years after this, there came a visitant of a rare and heart-gladdening kind, namely, a parcel of *books*. Although the Government of England was too busy to think of the far-off isle, there were Englishmen who did not forget her. The *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, happening, in 1819, to hear of an opportunity of communicating with Pitcairn, made up and despatched to it a parcel of books, containing, besides Bibles and Prayer-books, "works of instruction fitted for all ages." Who can imagine the delight produced by this gift to minds which had been well educated and were thirsting for more knowledge? It must have been as food to the starving; as water to the dry ground.

Four years after that, a whale-ship from London, named the *Cyrus*, touched in passing.

As this visit was a noteworthy epoch in the lonely island, we shall devote a new chapter to it.

Chapter Thirty Three.

New Arrivals and Strange Adventures.

"My dear," said Adams one morning to his spouse, as he was about to go forth to superintend the working of his busy hive, "I'm beginnin' to feel as if I was gettin' old, and would soon have to lay up like an old hulk."

"You've done good service for the Master, John; perhaps He thinks you should rest now," answered his wife. "You've got plenty able helpers to take the heavy work off your hands."

"True, old woman, able, willin', and good helpers, thank God, but they want a headpiece still. However, there's a deal of life in the old dog yet. If that dear angel, Otaheitan Sally, were only a man, now, I could resign the command of the ship without a thought. But I've committed the matter to the Lord. He will provide in His own good time. Good-day, old girl. If any one wants me, you know where to send 'em."

Not many days after that in which these remarks were made a sail was seen on the horizon. So few and far between had these visitants been that the excitement of the people was as wild as when the first ship appeared, and much more noisy, seeing that the juveniles had now become so very numerous.

The ship soon drew near. Canoes were sent off to board her. Thursday October, as of old, introduced himself, and soon the captain and several men were brought on shore, to the intense joy of the inhabitants.

One of the sailors who landed attracted Adams's attention in a special manner, not so much because of his appearance, which was nothing uncommon, as because of a certain grave, kindly, serious air which distinguished him. This man's name was John Buffett. Another of the men, named John Evans, less serious in manner, but not less hearty and open, made himself very agreeable to the women, especially to old Mrs Adams, to whom he told a number of nautical anecdotes in an undertone while the captain was chatting with Adams himself. Buffett spoke little.

After spending an agreeable day on shore, the sailors walked down to the beach towards evening to return to their ship.

"You lead a happy life here, Mr Adams," said Buffett, in an earnest tone. "Would you object to a stranger staying among you!"

"Object!" said Adams, with a quick, pleasant glance. "I only wish the Lord would send us one; one at least who is a follower of Himself."

John Buffett said no more, but that same evening he expressed to his captain so strong a desire to remain behind that he obtained leave, and next day was sent on shore.

The sailor named John Evans accompanied him to see him all right and bring off the latest news; but Evans himself had become so delighted with the appearance of the place and people, that he deserted into the mountains, and the ship had to sail without him.

Thus were two new names added to the muster-roll of Pitcairn.

John Buffett in particular turned out to be an invaluable acquisition. He was a man of earnest piety, and had obtained a fairly good education. Adams and he drew together at once.

"You'll not object, p'r'aps," said the former on the occasion of their first talk over future plans, "to give me a lift wi' the school?"

"Nothing would please me better," answered Buffett. "I'm rather fond o' teachin', to say truth, and am ready to begin work at once."

Not only did Buffett thereafter become to Adams as a right arm in the school, but he assisted in the church services on Sundays, and eventually came to read sermons, which, for the fixing of them more effectually on the minds of the people, he was wont to deliver three times over.

But Buffett could tell stories as well as read sermons. One afternoon some of the youngsters caught him meditating under a cocoa-nut tree, and insisted on his telling the story of his life.

"It ain't a long story, boys an' girls," said he, "for I've only lived some six-and-twenty years yet. I was born in 1797, near Bristol, and was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker. Not takin' kindly to that sort o' work, I gave it up an' went to sea. However, I'm bound to say, that the experience I had with the saw and plane has been of the greatest service to me ever since; and it's my opinion, that what ever a man is, or whoever he may be, he should learn a trade; ay, even though he should be a king."

The Pitcairn juveniles did not see the full force of this remark, but nevertheless they believed it heartily.

"It was the American merchant service I entered," continued Buffett, "an' my first voyage was to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. I was wrecked there, and most o' the crew perished; but I swam ashore and was saved, through God's mercy. Mark that, child'n. It wasn't by good luck, or good swimmin', or chance, or fate, or anything else in the shape of a second cause, but it was the good God himself that saved, or rather spared me. Now, I say that because there's plenty of people who don't like to give their Maker credit for anything, 'cept when they do it in a humdrum, matter-of-course way at church."

These last remarks were quite thrown away upon the children, whose training from birth had been to acknowledge the goodness of God in everything, and who could not, of course, comprehend the allusions to formalism.

"Well," he continued, "after suffering a good deal, I was picked up by some Canadian fishermen, and again went to sea, to be once again wrecked and saved. That was in the year 1821. Then I went to England, and entered on board a ship bound for China, from which we proceeded to Manilla, and afterwards to California, where I stayed some time. Then I entered an English whaler homeward bound, intendin' to go home, and the Lord *did* bring me home, for he brought me here, and here I mean to stay."

"And we're all *so* glad!" exclaimed Dolly Young, who had now become an enthusiastic, warm-hearted, pretty young woman of twenty-three summers.

Dolly blushed as she spoke, but not with consciousness. It was but innocent truthfulness. John Buffett paused, and looked at her steadily. What John Buffett thought we are not prepared to say, but it may be guessed, when we state that within two months of that date, he and Dolly Young were united in marriage by old Adams, with all the usual ceremonial, including the curtain-ring which did duty on all such occasions, and the unfailing game of blind-man's-buff.

John Evans was encouraged, a few months later, to take heart and do likewise. He was even bolder than Buffett, for he wooed and won a princess; at least, if John Adams was in any sense a king, his second daughter Rachel must have been a princess! Be this as it may, Evans married her, and became a respected member of the little community.

And now another of these angel-like visits was looming in the distance. About twelve years after the departure of the *Britain* and *Tagus*, one of H.M. cruisers, the *Blossom*, Captain Beechy, sailed out of the Great Unknown into the circlet of Pitcairn, and threw the islanders into a more intense flutter than ever, for there were now upwards of fifty souls there, many of whom had not only never seen a man-of-war, but had had their imaginations excited by the glowing descriptions of those who had. This was in 1825.

The *Blossom* had been fitted out for discovery. When Buffett first recognised her pennant he was in great trepidation lest they had come to carry off Adams, but such was not the case. It was merely a passing visit. Three weeks the *Blossom* stayed, during which the captain and officers were entertained in turn at the different houses; and it seems to have been to both parties like a brief foretaste of the land of Beulah.

Naturally, Captain Beechy was anxious to test the truth of the glowing testimony of former visitors. He had ample opportunity, and afterwards sent home letters quite as enthusiastic as those of his predecessors in regard to the simplicity, truthfulness, and genuine piety alike of old and young.

If a few hours' visit had on former occasions given the community food for talk and reflection, you may be sure that the three weeks' of the *Blossom's* sojourn gave them a large supply for future years. It seemed to Otaheitan Sally, and Dinah Adams, and Dolly and Polly Young, and the rest of them, that the island was not large enough now to contain all their new ideas, and they said so to John Adams one evening.

"My dears," said John, in reply, laying his hand on that of Sally, who sat beside him on their favourite confabulation-knoll, which overlooked Bounty Bay, "ideas don't take up much room, and if they did, we could send 'em out on the sea, for they won't drown. Ah! Sall, Sall—"

"What are you thinking of, dear father?" asked Sally, with a sympathetic look, as the old man stopped.

"That my time can't be long now. I feel as if I was about worn-out."

"Oh, *don't* say that, father!" cried his daughter Hannah, laying her cheek on his arm, and hugging it. "There's ever so much life in you yet."

"It may be so. It *shall* be so if the Lord will," said Adams, with a little smile; "but I'm not the man I was."

Poor John Adams spoke truly. He had landed on Pitcairn a slim young fellow with broad shoulders, powerful frame, and curling brown hair. He was now growing feeble and rather corpulent; his brow was bald, his scanty locks were grey, and his countenance deeply care-worn. No wonder, considering all he had gone through, and the severe wound he had received upwards of thirty years before.

Nevertheless, Hannah was right when she said there was a good deal of life in the old man yet. He lived after that day to tie the wedding-knot between his own youngest child George, and Polly Young. More than that, he lived to dandle George's eldest son, Johnny, on his knees, and to dismiss him in favour of his little brother Jonathan when that child made his appearance.

But before this latter event the crowning joy of John Adams's life was vouchsafed to him, in the shape of a worthy successor to his Pitcairn throne.

The successor's name was neither pretty nor suggestive of romance, yet was closely allied with both. It was George Nobbs. He arrived at the island in very peculiar circumstances, on the 15th of November 1828, and told his story one afternoon under the banyan-tree to Adams and Buffett, and as many of the young generation as could conveniently get near him, as follows:—

"Entering the navy at an early period of life, I went through many vicissitudes and experiences in various quarters of the globe. But circumstances induced me to quit the navy, and for a short time I remained inactive, until my old commander offered to procure me a berth on board a ship of eighteen guns, designed for the use of the patriots in South America.

"Accepting the offer, I left England early in 1816 for Valparaiso, and cruised there for sixteen months, taking many prizes. While on board of one of our prizes I was taken prisoner, and carried into Callao, where I and my comrades were exposed to the gaze and insults of the people. Here, for many months, I walked about the streets with fifty pounds weight of iron attached to me, on a spare diet of beans and Chili peppers, with a stone at night for a pillow. We were made to carry stones to repair the forts of the place. There were seventeen of us. Five or six of our party died of fever and exposure to the sun, after which our guardians became careless about us. We managed to get rid of our irons by degrees, and at length were left to shift for ourselves. Soon after, with some of my comrades, I escaped on board a vessel in the bay, and succeeded in getting put on board our own vessel again, which was still cruising in these seas.

"Entering Valparaiso in the latter part of 1817, I had now an opportunity of forwarding about 140 pounds to my poor mother in England, who was sorely in need of help at the time. Some time after that I went with a number of men in a launch to attempt the cutting out of a large merchant ship from Cadiz. We were successful, and my share of the prize-money came to about 200 pounds, one hundred of which I also sent to my mother. After this I took a situation as prize-master on board a vessel commanded by a Frenchman. Deserting from it, I sought to discover a road to Guayaquil through the woods, where I suffered great hardships, and failed in the attempt."

The adventurer paused a few seconds, and looked earnestly in Adams's countenance.

"I am not justifying my conduct," he said, "still less boasting."

"Right you are, Nobbs," said Adams, with an approving nod. "Your line of life won't stand justification according to the rule of God's book."

"I know it, Adams; I am merely telling you a few of the facts of my life, which you have a right to know from one who seeks an asylum among your people. Well, returning to the coast, I went on board an English whaler, by the captain of which I was kindly treated and landed at Talcahuans. I had not been long there, when, at midnight, on the 7th May, in the year 1819, the Chilian garrison, fifteen in number, was attacked by Benevades and his Indian troops. A number of the inhabitants were killed, the town was sacked, and a large number of prisoners, myself included, carried off. Next morning troops from Concepcion came in pursuit, and rescued us as we were crossing a river.

"Soon after this affair I returned to Valparaiso, and engaged as first officer of a ship named the *Minerva*, which had been hired by the Chilian Government as a transport to carry out troops to Peru. Having landed

the troops, I took part, on 5th November, in cutting out a Spanish frigate named the *Esmeraldas* from under the Callao batteries. This affair was planned and headed by Lord Cochrane. Owing to my being in this affair I was appointed to a Chilian sloop of war, and received a lieutenant's commission.

"I will not take up your time at present with an account of the various cuttings-out and other warlike expeditions I was engaged in while in the Chilian service. It is enough to refer to the last, which ended my connection with that service. Having been sent in charge of a boat up a river, to recover a quantity of property belonging to British and American merchants, which had been seized by the miscreant Benevades, we set off and pulled up unmolested, but finding nothing of consequence, turned to pull back again, when volleys of musketry were poured into us from both banks. We saw no one, and could do nothing but pull down as fast as possible, losing many men as we went. At last a few horsemen showed themselves. We had a carronade in the bow, which we instantly turned on them and discharged. This was just what they wanted. At the signal, a large boat filled with soldiers shoved out and boarded us. We fought, of course; but with so many wounded, and assailed by superior numbers, we had no chance, and were soon beaten. I received a tremendous blow on the back of the neck, which nearly killed me. Fortunately I did not fall. Those who did, or were too badly wounded to walk, were at once thrown into the river. The rest of us had our clothes stripped off, and some rags given us in exchange. A pair of trousers cut off at the knees, a ragged poncho, and a sombrero fell to my share. We were marched off to prison, where we lay three weeks. Every Chilian of our party was shot, while I and three other Europeans were exchanged for four of Benevades's officers.

"Soon after this event, while at Valparaiso, I received a letter from my dear mother telling me that she was ill. I quitted the Chilian navy at once, and went home, alas! to see her die.

"In 1822 I went to Naples, and was wrecked while on my way to Messina. In the following year I went to Sierra Leone as chief mate of a ship called the *Gambia*. Of nineteen persons who went out in that ship, only the captain, two coloured men, and myself lived to return."

"Why, Mr Nobbs," interrupted John Buffett at this point, "I used to think I'd seen a deal o' rough service, but I couldn't hold a candle to you, sir."

"It is an unenviable advantage to have of you," returned the other, with a sad smile. "However, I'm getting near the end now. In all that I have said I have not told you what the Lord has done for my soul. Another time I will tell that to you. At present it is enough to say, that I had heard of your little island here, and of the wonderful accounts of it brought home at various times. I had an intense longing to reach it and devote my life to the service of Jesus. I sold all my little possessions, resolving to quit England for ever. But I could find no means of getting to Pitcairn. Leaving England, however, in November 1825, I reached Calcutta in May 1826, sailed thence for Valparaiso in 1827, and proceeded on to Callao. Here I fell in with Bunker, to whom you have all been so kind. Finding no vessel going in this direction, and my finances being nearly exhausted, I agreed on a plan with him. He had a launch of eighteen tons, a mere boat, as you know, but, being in bad health and without means, could not fit her out. I agreed to spend my all in fitting this launch for sea, on the understanding that I should become part proprietor, and that Bunker should accompany me to Pitcairn.

"Well, you see, friends, we have managed it. Through the mercy of God we have, by our two selves, made this voyage of 3500 miles, and now I hope that my days of wandering are over, and that I shall begin here to do the work of the Prince of Peace; but, alas! I fear that my poor friend Bunker's days are numbered."

He was right. This bold adventurer, about whose history we know nothing, died a few weeks after his arrival at Pitcairn.

Chapter Thirty Four.

Farewell!

And now, at last, approached a crisis in the Life of Pitcairn, which had indeed been long foreseen, long dreaded, and often thought of, but seldom hinted at by the islanders.

Good, patient, long-enduring John Adams began to draw towards the end of his strange, unique, and glorious career. For him to live had been Christ, to die was gain. And he knew it.

"George Nobbs," said he, about four months after the arrival of the former, "the Lord's ways are wonderful, past finding out, but always sure and *safe*. Nothing puzzles me so much as my own want of faith, when there's such good ground for confidence. But God's book tells me to expect even that," he added, after a pause, with a faint smile. "Does it not tell of the *desperately* wicked and deceitful heart?"

"True, Mr Adams," replied his friend, with the term of respect which he felt constrained to use, "but it also tells of salvation to the *uttermost*."

"Ay. I know that too," returned Adams, with a cheery smile. "*Well* do I know that. But don't mister me, George. There are times when the little titles of this world are ridiculous. Such a time is now. I am going to leave you, George. The hour of my departure is at hand. Strange, how anxious I used to feel! I used to think, what if I am killed by a fall from the cliffs, or by sickness, and these poor helpless children should be left fatherless! The dear Lord sent me a rebuke. He sent John Buffett to help me. But John Buffett has not the experience, or the education that's needful. Not that I had education myself, but, somehow, my experience, beginnin' as it did from the *very* beginnin', went a long way to counterbalance that. Then, anxious thoughts *would* rise up again. Want of faith, nothing else, George, nothing else. So the Lord rebuked me again, for he sent *you*."

"Ah, father, I hope it is as you say. I dare hardly believe it, yet I earnestly hope so."

"*I* have no doubt, now," resumed Adams. "You have got just the qualities that are wanted. Regularly stored and victualled for the cruise. They'll be far better off than ever they were before. If I had only trusted more I should have suffered less. But I was always thinking of John Adams. Ah! that has been the great curse of my life—*John Adams*!—as if everything depended on him. Why," continued the old man, kindling with a sudden burst of indignation, "could *I* have saved these souls by merely teaching 'em readin' and writin', or even by readin' God's book to 'em? Isn't it read every day by thousands to millions, against whom it falls like the sea on a great rock? Can the absence of temptation be pleaded, when here, in full force, there have been the most powerful temptations to disobedience continually? If that would have done, why were not all my brother mutineers saved from sin? It was not even when we read the Bible that deliverance came. I read it for ten years as a sealed book. No, George, no; it was when God's Holy Spirit opened the eyes and the heart, that I an' the dear women an' child'n became nothin', and fell in with His ways."

He stopped suddenly, as if exhausted, and his new friend led him gently to his house. Many loving eyes watched him as he went along, and many tender hearts beat for him, but better still, many true hearts prayed for him.

That night he became weaker, and next day he did not rise.

When this became known, all the settlement crowded to his house, while from his bed there was a constant coming and going of those who had the right to be nearest to him. Nursed by the loving women whom he had led—and whose children's children he had led—to Jesus, and surrounded by men whom he had dandled, played with, reared, and counselled, he passed into the presence of God, to behold "the King in his beauty," to be "for ever with the Lord."

May we join him, reader, you and I, when our time comes!

On a tombstone over a grave under the banyan-tree near his house, is the simple record, "John Adams, died 5th March 1829, aged 65."

And here our tale must end, for the good work which we have sought to describe has no end. Yet, for the sake of those who have a regard for higher things than a mere tale, we would add a few words before making our farewell bow.

The colony of Pitcairn still exists and flourishes. But many changes have occurred since Adams left the scene, though the simple, guileless spirit of the people remains unchanged.

Here is a brief summary of its history since 1829.

George Nobbs had gained the affections of the people before Adams's death, and he at once filled the vacant place as well as it was possible for a stranger to do so.

In 1830 the colony consisted of nearly ninety souls, and it had for some time been a matter of grave consideration that the failure of water by drought might perhaps prove a terrible calamity. It was therefore proposed by Government that the people of Pitcairn should remove to Otaheite, or, to give the island its modern name, Tahiti. There was much division of opinion among the islanders, and Mr Nobbs objected. However, the experiment was tried, and it failed signally. The whole community was transported in a ship to Tahiti in March 1831.

But the loose manners and evil habits of many of the people there had such an effect on the Pitcairners that they took the first opportunity of returning to their much-loved island. John Buffett and a few families went first. The remainder soon followed in an American brig.

Thereafter, life on the Lonely Island flowed as happily as ever for many years, with the exception of a brief but dark interval, when a scoundrel, named Joshua Hill, went to the island, passed himself off as an agent of the British Government, misled the trusting inhabitants, and established a reign of terror, ill-treating Nobbs, Buffett, and Evans, whom for a time he compelled to quit the place. Fortunately this impostor was soon found out and removed. The banished men returned, and all went well again.

Rear-Admiral Moresby visited Pitcairn in 1851, and experienced a warm reception. Finding that the people wished Mr Nobbs to be ordained, he took him to England for this purpose. The faithful pastor did not fail to interest the English public in the romantic isle of which God had given him the oversight. During his visit he was presented to the Queen, who gave him portraits of herself and the Royal family. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel placed Mr Nobbs on their missionary list, with a salary of 50 pounds per annum.

Soon after this the increasing population of Pitcairn Island rendered it necessary that the islanders should find a wider home. Government, therefore, offered them houses and land in Norfolk Island, a penal settlement from which the convicts had been removed. Of course the people shrank from the idea of leaving Pitcairn when it was first proposed, but ultimately assented, and were landed on Norfolk Island, hundreds of miles from their old home, in June 1856. On this lovely spot the descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty* have lived ever since, under the care of that loved pastor on whom John Adams had dropped his mantle.

We believe that the Reverend George H. Nobbs is still alive. At all events he was so last year, (1879), having written a letter in June to the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in which, among other things, he speaks of the “rapidly increasing community, now numbering 370 persons.” He adds—“I am becoming very feeble from age, and my memory fails me in consequence of an operation at the back of my neck for carbuncle two years since;” and goes on to tell of the flourishing condition of his flock.

In regard to the other personages who have figured in our little tale, very few, perhaps none, now survive. So late as the year 1872 we read in a pamphlet of the “Melanesian Mission,” that George Adams and his sister, Rachel Evans, (both over seventy years of age), were present at an evening service in Norfolk Island, and that Arthur Quintal was still alive, though quite imbecile. But dear Otaheitan Sally and her loving Charlie and all the rest had long before joined the Church above.

There was, however, a home-sick party of the Pitcairners who could by no means reconcile themselves to the new home. These left it not very long after landing in 1856, and returned to their beloved Pitcairn. Multiplying by degrees, as the first settlers had done, they gradually became an organised community; and now, while we write, the palm-groves of Pitcairn resound with the shouts of children’s merriment and with the hymn of praise as in days of yore. A.J.R. McCoy is chief magistrate, and a Simon Young acts as minister, doctor, and schoolmaster, while his daughter, Rosalind Amelia, assists in the school.

In a report from the chief magistrate, we learn that, although still out of the beaten track of commerce, the Pitcairners are more frequently visited by whalers than they used to be. Their simplicity of life, manners, and piety appears to be unchanged. He says, among other things:—

“No work is done on the Sabbath-day. We have a Bible-class every Wednesday, and a prayer-meeting the first Friday of each month. Every family has morning and evening prayers without intermission. We have a public or church library, at which all may read. Clothing we generally get from whalers who call in for refreshments. No alcoholic liquors of any kind are used on the island, except for medical purposes. A drunkard is unknown here.”

So the good seed sown under such peculiar circumstances at the beginning of the century continues to grow and spread and flourish, bringing forth fruit to the glory of God. Thus He causes light to spring out of darkness, good to arise out of evil; and the Lonely Island, once an almost unknown rock in the Pacific

Ocean, was made a centre of blessed Christian influence soon after the time when it became—the refuge of the mutineers.