

Leper Isle

Rev. John Kennedy, D.D. (1819 – 1884)

Dr John Kennedy (1819-1884) was one of the greatest Calvinistic preachers of the nineteenth century. He was the Free Church Minister in the Highland town of Dingwall from 1844 to 1884, faithfully declaring, there and further afield, the Word of God in both the English and Gaelic languages.

He wrote several books but, in order to reach young people, he wrote the following rather unusual work. He entitled it "A Dream" and, in its written form, it is really an extended allegory; and, in order to help readers interpret and understand, a KEY is provided which will help to explain the meaning. This shows that, in a figurative way, it describes a sinner's reflection on his or her experience of salvation.

A KEY

1. The ISLAND is a picture of man's original, natural and sinful state in this fallen world.
2. The SHIP represents the Christian's condition as in the body, having sin in him during all his life, as surely as the grace and the presence of Christ, and exposed to many trials as he passes through this world to Heaven.
3. The CHARIOT is the Covenant of Grace, within which, however troubled the Christian's condition may be, his state is safe.
4. The CAPTAIN is Christ, whom, though unseen, the Christian loves, and with whom through faith he communes, and who is "all in all" in bringing vessels of mercy to glory.
5. The OFFICERS are the Understanding, the Conscience, the Will and the Memory.
6. The CREW are Opinions, Convictions, and Affections. To these might have been added a fourth company, wearing as their badge the figure of a Gleaner's Sheaf, representing Recollections, and associated with the officer in charge of the log-book.

7. The STRAITS are the difficulties, through which it would be well for converts safely to pass before entering on a public profession of faith. The first marks the narrow way between an unlawful use and a denial of the sovereignty of divine grace. The second indicates the course between licentiousness on the one hand, and slavish fear on the other. The third indicates the difficulty of avoiding the two extremes of asceticism and worldliness. And fourth, the danger of becoming either a rough bigot or a sleek coward.
8. The SEA-SICKNESS indicates the first effect of an experience of contact with the world, and the convert's state of feeling when his first joys depart.
9. The STORM represents an experience of persecution by the world, or of afflicting providences.
10. The CALM points to a season of outward ease and prosperity.
11. The "PIRATES' ATTACK" refers to an experience of Satan's assaults.
12. The account of the MUTINY indicates the mode and the effect of yielding to temptations to sin.

I AM to tell one of my waking dreams.

Although I was awake, when what I am to write was considered by me, my thinking was a dreaming, for what I had before my mind was as if it were also before my eye. And yet it was not a dream, if a dream is something that is both unreal and unmeaning; for I am to tell about the most important of all realities, and my story has a meaning, which I hope the reader will be able to discover.

In my dream I thought I had alighted, somehow from the air on a lonely island. There was with me a companion, who had always been my friend, to whose wisdom I deferred, and from whom, as "the man of my counsel," I had oft received instruction. This carried in his hand a lamp of marvellous brightness.

THE ISLAND

The island seemed strange, and yet some features of its scenery somehow appeared familiar. I felt from home (i.e. not at home) in it, and yet it was not new to me. I felt as if I had never been a native. This mixture of strangeness and familiarity in my feeling towards the place my friend explained as due to my having come, in thought, to a place in which I had once been in fact, having, in the interval, greatly forgotten what it was.

Ere I alighted on it, I observed it from an elevation which enabled me to discover that an island it really was, with a great blank of ocean all around it. My friend informed me that, though one might come down upon it as I did then, none could really leave it except by sea – that though aerial cars might carry thoughts to the island, they could not carry persons out of it, and that there was only one ship employed in bringing passengers away.

One of my first impressions was that the place was strangely dark. A dense mist, rising from the swamps, shrouded the whole region shutting out all sunlight and making it seem as if it knew no day. High mountains there were, always covered with clouds, streams that looked strangely red, as if the miracle that filled with blood the channels of Egypt's rivers in days of old, were of standing force in this isle of the sea, trees that seemed to be under a perpetual blight, and lakes that teemed with monsters, and all swathed in an atmosphere, thick with pestilential fumes, and peopled with ever-flitting creatures, having wings which could either fan or fret, inducing sleep or causing pain. Each person I saw was a leper, and "wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores" covered him all over. All this I discovered only in the light which my friend's lamp supplied. If I parted from him, and went outside the circle on which his lamp shed light, all seemed to be fair enough in the dimness, and even the lepers seemed healthy and glad. Speaking of this strange difference to one of the natives whom I met, he insisted that it was a false light that was given by my friend's lamp, and that the ghastliness that shocked me when I looked on their faces, as it shone on them, was no reality. He, and each one after, whom I met, was quite disposed to boast of the state of things in the island, and anxious for the removal of

the light which shewed their glorying to be groundless. But my friend whispered to me that those who hate the light are they who have some loathsomeness to hide.

THE CITY

All its inhabitants I found to be gathered in a city in the centre of the island. Its site was circular. Its main streets converged to the centre, where stood a temple and a market-place. Between the main streets were terraces and crescents. Each of these had its own distinctive name, which described the inhabitants rather than the locality. NEGLIGENCE Row was the first I observed. It was very densely peopled. In the light of my friend's lamp I observed, on the door of a very old house, the name Gallio; and I was told by my friend that this street is peopled by descendants of a man of that name who lived there in days of yore. POMP TERRACE was near to it, and a very pretentious place it was; but it was not a thoroughfare, for a strong gate at either end barred the access of the crowd. The next I saw was a dark, dingy, filthy street. My friend pointed out the name, which was placed out of sight as much as possible. ROTTEN ROW was the name, and the place accorded with its name, for all kinds of corruption were to be found there. GAIETY AVENUE was the next street to which I came. Paint had done much to make it showy, banners flaunted bright colours over it, and a merry crowd of grown-up children gambolled on its pavement. But when my friend shed the light of his lamp upon the scene, somehow the bright hues and the gilding vanished, and all the people on the street, who before seemed so happy, looked like a gathering of jaded maniacs. Not far away was PROPRIETY PLACE. The people whom I saw there were primarily clothed with those whom I had seen on Rotten Row. But again the lamp discovered to me the difference between the seeming and the real – between the body and the dress of things – for these last had quite the same cast of features with those whom I had seen before, and they were almost as gaunt as skeletons, as if enduring perpetual starvation.. The remaining streets which I examined were shorter than those I had passed through before, their houses being built in crescents around the temple. FORMALITY CRESCENT was a better-looking place than any I had yet seen. The houses showed good fronts on the temple side; but when we went to the back of them we saw, as the light of the lamp shone on them, that all was utterly neglected, ruinous and filthy. But as the tenants of these houses do not like to look out on that side there are no windows except in

front, and though there were doors behind by which they themselves could get out at night, they had put up gates to bar the access of the public to the rear. ZEALOT CRESCENT was the next. The houses here had showy fronts, like those in Formality Crescent, but the back courts were not quite so filthy. There was a constant stream of people at all hours from the crescent to the temple, and they all seemed much excited. Each one had a flushed face, a noisy tongue, a brisk step, a vacant expression, and a showy dress. But when the light fell on them they seemed quite as like maniacs as those in Gaiety Avenue. HYPOCRISY CRESCENT completed the circle around the temple. Its houses were ablaze with gilding in front, but worse behind there were not in all the city. Demure-looking enough were the faces of those who came from this crescent to the temple, as they first appeared, and their whole bearing seemed very grave. But when my friend flashed the light of his lamp in their faces, I was startled by seeing each face dividing into two, quite unlike each other, one directed towards the market. A sneer marked the expression of the former, and eager anxiety appeared in the aspect of the latter.

THE TEMPLE

After this hurried survey of the city we passed on to the temple and entered it. It was a dark place in which, but for the lamp, nothing could be rightly seen. Before us, as we passed the threshold, and at the further end of the building, on an elevated pedestal, stood what seemed to be a statue covered with a veil. Towards this object all the seats were arranged, and the faces of all the worshippers were directed. My friend told me that this was the great idol EGO, which was the supreme deity of the temple, whom all the natives of the island worshipped.

Looking around, I saw various shrines, into which the people divided, as they came into the temple. On each of these there was a window looking towards the great idol. In each of them was seen an idol veiled like that which we had first seen, and each looked like a miniature of the great one. In front of each one of these miniature idols was an altar in each shrine. On one altar I saw various musical instruments and toys; on another skulls with silver tongues stuck between their gaping jaws; on a third rolls tied with red tape; on a fourth gum-flowers of various hues; on a fifth could be seen piles of gold and silver; on a sixth patchwork stained with

blood; and on a seventh there was nothing but stains which blood and tears had made. After having examined these shrines within I looked over them from the outside, and in the light of the trusty lamp observed and read their names. SENSATION shrine was the name of the first, ELOQUENCE shrine that of the second, ROUTINE shrine that of the third, the fourth was named DISPLAY shrine, DONATION shrine was the name of the fifth, the sixth was PENANCE shrine, and the seventh and last was CONVICTION shrine.

To the first of these repaired some of those who came from Gaiety Avenue, and the few who came from Negligence Row. From all parts of the city came worshippers to the second. Formality Crescent supplied worshippers for the third. Those who entered the fourth came chiefly from Gaiety Avenue. From Pomp Terrace came worshippers to the fifth. Those who frequented the sixth came from Zealot Crescent. And the few who entered the last usually came from Rotten Row.

THE MARKET-PLACE

After a hurried inspection of the temple, I passed on, sad in heart, to the market-place. One thing struck me at once on entering on this new scene – that my friend's lamp did not show such a difference between the aspect and the reality, as it did within the precincts of the temple. The people now seemed to be what they really were. They were less under restraint when buying than when worshipping. Approaching the market, I was startled by observing that on each parcel carried by those who were returning with their purchases, there were stains of blood. A third thing I noticed at the outset was how many came straight from the temple to the market, and how strangely changing the expression on their face as they approached the latter.

Reaching the market-place, directed by my friend, and aided by his lamp, I observed, raised high in the centre of the busy fair, a statue such as I had seen veiled in the temple. But here the wind had removed the most of the drapery that covered it, and the figure could be more distinctly seen. Towards it were directed all the stalls of the market, as I had before seen the

shrines of the temple; and in each stall here, as in each shrine there, there was a miniature central figure.

Approaching the pedestal on which the great statue stood I read, under the light shed on it by the lamp, the following market rules:-

- “1. All who come to buy and sell in this place must leave the decalogue (the Ten Commandments) and conscience at home.
- “2. All here must aim at doing the best they can for themselves, never looking on the others.
- “3. There must be no virtue but smartness practised here.
- “4. All who refuse to follow the foregoing rules shall not be tolerated here.”

Leaving the market-place I could not but be sad as I reflected on the condition of things in this miserable city. The wretched inhabitants seemed to know no better state of things than that in which they were. They appeared to be restless and wearied, but there was no longing and no hopefulness in the expression of their faces. They neither thought of nor desired a better place than this dismal island, and no hope of better ever brightened their eye or nerved their arm.

THE RESCUED ONE

While looking on a poor creature, whom after passing from the market, I observed sitting at a door of a hovel in Rotten Row, I saw a brightness hovering over him – a light that had come upon him from above – and as I looked the brightness shaped itself into the form of a dove, over his head, and I saw a scroll dropped into his lap, on which I read the words – “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” On reading these words he started at once to his feet, and rushed to the market-place. I at once followed him, and saw him mingle in the bustle there, evidently labouring to forget the words which startled him. He spoke to all he knew in the crowd, visited stall after stall, till the market was closed in the evening, and then I saw him returning with a scared look on his face, and tears, in spite of all his efforts to preserve his manliness, falling

from his eyes. He passed out of sight into his miserable home, but watching as I did all night beside the house, I heard frequent sobs and cries, which plainly told me that his terror was not gone.

Early next morning I saw him issue hurriedly from the house, and pass on to the temple, and I at once resolved to follow him. Entering the temple I saw him pass by Display and Sensation shrines, and that of the silver tongue. Nor did he stop at Routine shrine, and going past Donation shrine, as he had no gold or silver to bestow, he entered Penance shrine. There on his knees he threw himself before the idol, and laid rag after rag, red with blood. After a while he arose, and seemed more smoothed and easy. But ere he could go outside again, I saw the shining figure of a dove, which I had observed before, hovering above his head, and again a scroll was let down before him, on which were written the words, "Do this and live," and "The commandment is holy and just and good." No sooner had he read this than the expression of his face suddenly changed, and he sunk down on the floor. After an interval I saw him rise and pass on to the Conviction shrine, where he wept and prayed, till his voice became too weak for utterance, and his tears had ceased to flow. He then suddenly rose, and with an expression of blank despair on his face, rushed from the temple, through the streets and beyond the homes and haunts of men, till he reached the shore, on which he fell exhausted, and soon breathed his last. I sat to watch the dead on the desolate shore. I could not help him, and the spring of my sorrow was too deep to send tears up to my eyes.

But as I sat I saw the dove now nestling on the bosom of the dead. I heard, too, a voice shouting, "Come to me." The dead had also heard the cry, for he arose, stretched out his arms, and the cry came from his lips, "Save me, I perish." In the light which my friend's lamp shed on the margin of the sea, beside which the dead had lain, I saw a harbour, which my friend called Port Vocation, and quite beside the shore a ship such as I had never seen before. It seemed like a chariot with wheels, high enough to move on the rocky bed of the ocean, and within a framework resting on these wheels, there was a ship that floated on the water. It looked as if no wind or wave could move the chariot, though the enclosed ship must yield to every breeze that blew, and to every wave that rolled. They were quite distinct, and yet not separate.

Towards this strange chariot-ship the quickened islander strained his gaze and stretched his

hands. I then saw on deck the person who called to the dead, standing with open arms ready to embrace him if he came. But he, though now alive, was too faint to move. But he who called him threw a golden chain towards him, which twined around him, and with this he drew him, till at last I saw them mutually embrace, and both together went down into the reception room of the food ship "FOEDUS GRATIAE" ("The Covenant of Grace") in which they started on the voyage to "the land that is very far off."

The details of that voyage, as they were presented to me in my dream, I may take some other time to write.

THE VOYAGE

Having gone with my friend on board the strange ship, I found myself suddenly transferred into the position of the rescued islander, as if I myself were the person, the story of whose deliverance I have already told.

No sooner had this transformation taken place, than I found myself listening to the Captain's voice as I lay prostrate in front of a veil through which I saw "darkly" His face. It was thus our intercourse was conducted all throughout the voyage. I often heard His voice speaking to me, but He never showed Himself to me, except through the veil. And I, on speaking to Him, could sometimes pour out my heart before Him, knowing that He heard me. When He did not answer, I just came back again and again, until He was pleased to speak to me.

Oh, it was sweetly bitter, and bitterly sweet, to listen then to all that my Counsellor had to tell me of the toil and trial through which the Captain of my salvation passed, ere He could find me in the dismal island, and bring me out of it. The effect of this, combined with the impression made by the beauty of His face, and the grace of His words, quite broke and ravished my heart at once.

THE STRANGE CHARIOT SHIP

I began to look over the strange ship. The more I examined the connection between the vessel and the enclosing chariot, the more strange it seemed. Each was so different from the other, and yet the two so associated that the kind of connection between them was a puzzle to me all throughout the voyage. The one was contained within the other, and I could pass from the ship to the chariot and back again, and sometimes I felt as if I were in both at once. But it often gave me delight to see that there was no passing outside of both. All through the voyage, too, I found that there could be no rest, no feeding, no gladness, except as I passed from ship to chariot, for all that could give relief, and strength and comfort, was to be found only there.

Thinking of the intimate connection between them, it seemed strange to me how very different they were from one another. The chariot movement never wavered, while the ship scarce knew any steadfastness. Notwithstanding, too, the perfectness of all I saw about the chariot, the ship was a very crazy bark, its hull very weak and very leaky, and continuing to become more and more so while it remained at sea.

Another strange thing which the connection, between the ship and chariot, presented to me was that, though the course of the former was always according to the movement of the latter, its navigation had to be managed as if there were no such rigid determination of its course; and that, while there could be no deviation in the course of the one, there could be in that of the other, arising from the unskilfulness of the officers and crew.

Very early I made a discovery, which greatly perplexed and troubled me. I found that there was in the hold of the ship an accumulation of stones and filthy rubbish taken from the island. The presence of this was so offensive to me on shipboard, as it had never been on shore. The savour it gave forth, when first it reached me, quite sickened me; and this was a frequent experience

during all the voyage. But, in course of time, I learned that it served the part of ballast. I found, too, that the more it disgusted me, the more it made me long to reach the further shore. It also helped to reconcile me to the idea that the voyage must end in shipwreck, ere it could end in peace, when I knew that in that closing experience I would part with this loathsomeness, and be sickened no more for ever.

THE OFFICERS AND CREW

1. There was an officer, whose place was on the look-out, at the bow of the vessel, where he could usually be seen with a chart spread out before him, and a telescope to his eye. His work was to furnish such information as the other officers required for guidance in their work. His name was GINOSKON, for he was a Greek, as were all on board besides.
2. The Pilot, who was very stern-looking, had his place at the helm, and seemed to hold a particular relation to the other officers of the ship. He was dependent for information on the officer at the look-out, for he himself was under cover and he could be trusted only as he consulted, and was led by, the Captain. He was not over all the other officers, yet he seemed to claim an authority that could not consist with his being subordinate to any but the Captain; and though not quite apart from the others, he often acted as if he were not of them. His name was SUNEIDON.
3. The Mate, who held first place under the Captain, and was responsible to him for all that took place. Apart from him none, of all on board, could bring their individual bias to bear, either on the course or on the management of the ship. His name was THELON.
4. An officer, whose name was MNAON, and whose duty it was to make regular entries in the log-book.

Under these was a numerous crew, divided into three companies, each wearing a distinctive badge. On the head-dress of the first appeared, in crystal, the figure of a lamp; and those who wore this badge attended the officer on the look-out:- On that of the second, in amber, the figure of a heart, and those who were thus marked were especially associated with the Mate:-

On that of the third, in gold, the figure of a mace, and those thus distinguished were placed under the Pilot.

I cannot attempt to give the names of the individuals composing the crew. But without any hesitation I can affirm that during the voyage they often proved themselves to be an unruly set, whom none but the Captain could control.

THE BEGINNING OF THE VOYAGE

The ship moved off, and I felt no sorrow in leaving behind me for ever my “own people” and my “father’s house.” Oh, how smoothly the vessel glided then! I had leisure, on the still water of the harbour, to examine all around me, I found myself under a purple canopy resting on pillars of silver, supported by a basement of gold, with a table before me covered with all kinds of dainties. I heard the Captain’s voice saying, “Let thy soul delight itself in fatness” and I wondered, till my heart became faint with joy, to find myself in such a place. Remembering what I had escaped from, I could not but sing, but neither could I refrain from tears.

Looking at the great framework, around the ship, I saw a golden plate, on which was written by ELOHIM, the builder, words certifying the chariot to be “everlasting,” “well ordered in all things and sure.” Under this I saw a long list of the names of the passengers who subscribed this writing. The first name I could read was that of Abel. There was room above it for two more names, but I failed to discover that there was any writing on that space. The last in that list was John the son of Zebedee. There was, however, another long list on a wooden board, beneath the gold plate, but the names were written by a different hand, and were not at all so legible. How I wished that in due time I could write my own name at the foot of that roll! I could not then refrain from singing, “It is well to be here,” and I foolishly imagined that it would be with me always as it was then.

PASSING THROUGH STRAITS

In passing from the harbour basin to the open sea, our course lay through a succession of straits. As we came near to the first of these the land on either side of the passage seemed to meet and utterly block up the way. But coming still nearer, a streak of water appeared winding through narrow, rugged rocks on the right hand and on the left.

The first strait was formed by a great sunken rock, on the one side, over which no vessel could pass, and on the other by a headland that thrust itself far out into the sea, with a harbour, on the side opposite to us, from which came pilots who offered to guide us to an anchorage in front of a town composed of factories of all sorts and sizes. The pilots were so urgent, assuring us that there was no passage through the strait, and the landsman's craving was still so strong in my heart, that I felt anxious to stop here. I at the same time saw the officers were beginning to falter in their parley with the pilots. But the Captain's voice was heard giving orders to hold off, and so peremptory was his tone that the officers in their scare put the ship so far about that she struck once and again on the sunken rock on the other side of the strait.

It was becoming dark, and the steering was all the more difficult; but by directing the ship towards a light that appeared beyond the channel, a safe narrow passage was found, and the ship went through. This passed, we reached a second. There was a bluff precipice, on the one side, and a promontory with a high wall all along its shore, on the other. On the top of the former appeared wild birds, free to fly in the air or to rest on the rock or water. On the wall along the shore of the latter, I saw cages hanging, each of them containing a bird, but among all these winged captives I saw not one that was not songless. Between these the passage was so narrow that the vessel struck often, sometimes on the one shore and sometimes on the other, but of this strait, also the farthest side was at last reached.

We soon thereafter reached a third. High on one side, on top of a hill, apart and bare, there appeared a building with no windows in its walls, and on the other a town lying low, of easy access from all sides, and surrounded with fields and groves and villages. Between these the line of water was very narrow and we seemed often as if we must be stranded on either shore. I

somehow learned that the castle of MONACHOS was the building that topped the hill on the one side, and that KOSMIKOS was the name of the town on the other.

There was a very little interval between this strait and a fourth, on either side of which was seen a tower. On the banner waving over the tower on the right was seen a figure of a bear, and on that displayed from the other, the figure of a hare. So near were the two shores that it seemed at first sight impossible to get through this strait at all. But the direction given to the steersman was to keep the bow of the ship on two lights in line – the one a clear lamp-light, and the other a glowing firelight. As the lamp and the fire were kept in line the ship was safe; and, thus guided, the vessel at last passed through and reached the open sea.

FIRST EXPERIENCE OF SEA-SICKNESS

The bar was passed, and the heaving of the troubled sea began. All was now changed. The delightful rest of the harbour, and the excitement of the difficult passage through the straits were gone, and the disquiet and nausea of sea-sickness took their place. I could not taste, I could not even look on, food. No dainties could then provoke my appetite. I was alone, too, and in the dark, for I had gone down below when the sickness came on. I lost sight of all I had admired, and relish for all that I had enjoyed before. Faintness at last came over me, and all seemed an illusion that had lately cheered me. I could not now realise that I ever had been glad or busy. I felt only the poverty and ailments I had brought with me from the dismal island; and the pollution that sent its loathsome savour from the hold, added to the sickness caused by the rolling of the sea. In my desperation, I tried, by my grasp, to steady the heaving of the ship, that I might be still, but I found myself as weak as I was foolish, I knew not how to pass from the rocking ship to the steadfast chariot, and felt as if this fearful unrest must continue all through the voyage. But after all, I could not wish myself in my native place again. I rather feared that I had not rightly left it, and that my latter end might be worse than my beginning. I could only sigh amidst the overpowering tossing. Oh, how my heart sank within me! It felt drowned though the vessel floated still.

At last I heard a voice, which I recognised as the Captain's, saying, "Be not afraid, only believe." No sooner had I heard His voice than I felt revived. I began to think again of the grace and skill of the Captain, the strength of the chariot, and the glory of the land to which we were going; and though I missed the rest, and the feast, and the song, my courage was restored, and I ceased to mope. I went on deck; I looked out without quailing on the troubled sea. I even began to enjoy the state of things that gave me an opportunity of showing that I trusted in the Captain, and was satisfied as to the safety of the ship of which He had the command.

I was then called by name to "lend a hand," and I began to work. I found it good to do so. It kept me from sinking under sea-sickness, and I enjoyed to do the bidding of Him to whom I owed so much. A kind word from the Captain often cheered me in my work then, and though my condition differed greatly from what it was on the smooth water of the harbour, I began to think of the greater rest at the end of the voyage, and sometimes I even sang as I worked.

THE STORM

Suddenly a gale began to blow. The ship was not only tossed upon the waves that rolled around, but filled by them as they poured into it. As billow after billow broke over us, I felt all sensation of drowning, and the sinking of my heart in the depth of fear was far more trying than the soaking of my clothes with water. Amidst the storm I somehow ceased to think of the steadfast framework within which the ship was tossing, and I felt as if nothing interposed between the ship and destruction by the fury of the storm. I had parted from my friend and his lamp and had gone to hide myself in darkness. My views took shape entirely from what I felt, and my state of feeling was determined by the pitching of the vessel and the howling of the storm. My heart quite sank within me.

But my friend, who was always under the guidance of the Captain, came to me when I was fainting through my craven fear, guided me to a resting-place in the chariot, and shed the light of his lamp on the steadfast framework of the ship. Then I at once revived. Within such security as now was seen around me, I felt that I had no cause to fear. While still the storm was raging, I

arose and shook off my cowardice. I even mingled the notes of a song with the dismal noises of the wind and waves. I rejoiced in tribulation because I rejoiced in hope.

BECALMED

The storm having quite passed away, we reached a smooth sea, and a warm latitude. We were now in a region of calm and sunshine, and the weather was very warm. A listlessness began to creep over me and I became quite drowsy. I lost appetite for food and heart for work. I felt disposed only to lie down and sleep. I began to forget the Captain, and I desired no conference with Him. The sea-sickness and the excitement and terror of the storm were better than the dull stupor which fell upon me then. All enjoyment and all energy were gone. I cared only to be idle and to sleep. Had I kept on deck and continued to work, or had I cared to have lessons from my friend in the cabin, or had I lain before the veil and sighed what I could not speak to the Captain, it had been well with me, even in that sultry weather. But utter torpor overpowered me, for I yielded without a struggle to its influence. Oh, it was a full dead time then! My love of slumber was all I cared to gratify.

I heard a voice calling me to arise, but I slept its power over me away. Again I heard a call to arise, and I knew it to be the Captain's voice that uttered it, but I closed the dullness of my slumber over my waking heart, and did not allow it to respond. But He sought me while I sought Him not. With His call He gave me a waking touch, and I was moved to arise and seek Him. But I could not find Him. He had gone away and I knew not whither. "I called but he gave me no answer." At last my counsellor came to me and made me quite ashamed by speaking to me of the character, and telling of the love of Him whose fellowship I had despised, and in the wistfulness and fear and sorrow I fell before the veil of the Captain's state-room, and cried. At last He spoke to me, and I let His words of grace sink into my heart, at once to cheer it into hope and melt it into sorrow. Oh, it was sweet to lie there before Him. I confessed the guilt of my slumber, and He frankly forgave me! How happy was I then, when all quiet without, there were peace and love within! I learned then that neither in storm nor in calm, could it be well with me, except I communed with the Captain and did His bidding.

THE PIRATES' ATTACK

But the bliss of that season was suddenly and rudely broken. The sound of guns was heard, and I knew, when I rushed on deck, that we were being attacked by Pirates. Already the smoke of their guns enveloped the ship. Looking out, I could only see the darkness, out of which came flashes of flame, as gun after gun was fired. Stinkpots were flung on board, and fiery darts were being showered upon us, and some of them both pierced and scorched me. The roar of cannon was deafening, and so near did the loudness of the reports tell the attacking force to be, that I felt sure we must very soon be boarded. I was so confounded that I knew not my own voice amidst the din, and felt as if from my own throat were coming the horrid shouts of the Pirates. How I wondered that they had managed to come so near for, I felt as if they were just coming on board! I at one time thought that the framework around the ship would have kept them quite away but here they were so near that it seemed as if they were already on the deck. Oh, the confusion and fume of this awful hour! I felt as if now surely all were gone. How I survived I cannot yet quite tell. I saw not, amidst the smoke which wrapped its folds around us, what was being done in defence – I only knew that I did nothing. I gave myself up as lost. I thought I heard the shout of victory from the Pirate ship. A hideous shout I heard, in which blasphemings of the Captain mingled with mockings of my hope and safety. I even felt somehow as if I were absorbed into the attacking party, with one half of me taking sides with them, and myself, in the other half, the victim of their fury. But at length, amidst the din, the Captain's voice was heard. It reached me wounded, scorched, bleeding and prostrate as I was, and when I knew not where I was – whether with “the Captain of Salvation” on the good ship FOEDUS GRATIAE (The Covenant of Grace), or away with the pirates a prisoner in their power. All at once I was relieved and hopeful. The pirates were scared away by the voice of a power; the fumes cleared off; and I found myself again in safety on board the ship in which I was passing to the land of glory. How sweet was the rest thereafter, as I lay near to the Captain, looking towards Him, and hearing His voice, wounds bound up according to His direction, and thinking of the defence that made capture impossible, though it admitted an attack, by the roving of the pirates of the deep.

THE MUTINY

Repeatedly during the voyage I had a painful experience of a mutiny of the crew against the officers of the ship. The first of these only will I describe.

Taking unwise advantage of a calm, the officers became remiss, and failed to attend to their respective duties. They ceased to refer to the Captain, and He ceased to make His presence felt among them. There were at the same time prowling about the ship some smugglers' boats, and the keen eyes of those who were on board of them discovered the state of things in the ship. So, in the darkness of the night, they drew near, and got stealthily into communication with some of the crew, whom they induced to buy some extra contraband spirits from them. Soon thereafter the crew, intoxicated rushed on deck and seized the officers. The pilot they gagged, they blind-folded the officer on the look-out, and put the mate in arms. Thereafter all was riot and confusion on board the ship. I felt very strangely all the time this mutiny continued. I felt sometimes as if I were taking sides with the mutineers, and anon with the Captain, till I found it difficult to decide on which side the Captain would find me when he again appeared. But at last the Captain's voice was heard. The crew were scared below by His word of authority; and, having set the officers free, after rebuking them for their unwatchfulness, He placed them at their posts again. I felt that the rebuke, which He administered to them, was deserved by myself; and the remembrance of that mutiny caused my head to bow and my face to blush during the remainder of my voyage.

THE END IN SIGHT

Right ahead there appeared a very formidable surf, which my friend informed me was caused by the meeting of two seas. The ship's course was directed towards this surging, foaming whirl of waters. I felt scared into utter faintness of heart as I looked towards it. I wondered sometimes why the Captain should not endeavour to find a course aside from this frightful surf. But my friend informed me that our passing through it was inevitable, and that our ship could not encounter the raging of the sea there without being broken up. He, however, at the same time, endeavoured to assure me that there could be a safe landing for passengers on the shore

beyond. This inevitable experience of the shipwreck at the end quite terrified me. My only relief was derived from thinking of the Captain's grace and power, of the land so glorious that, even through shipwreck, it would be ineffable bliss to reach it, the promise of a safe landing which the Captain had given me, the steadfastness of that wherein our frail vessel was enclosed, and the prospect of parting with all that was loathsome in the hold, and with all the changefulness of the unresting sea. When I ceased to think of these things, and looked forward to the coming shipwreck, a tremor went all through me, that so drove out of my heart its strength and hope, that only power to sigh remained within me. To forecast shipwreck was to have experience of present hope-wreck in these dark hours of fainting.

Mounting the rigging, I looked through a telescope towards the soaring surf, and observed other vessels besides my own approaching it. I saw one moving towards it on a part of the sea that seemed very smooth. There seemed to be no care taken on board to meet the crisis that was approaching. The sails were set, but no one seemed stirring on the deck. No one appeared to be at the helm; it seemed as if all on board were fast asleep; and the course of the vessel was only directed by the current which bore it on. But all at once, as I looked, it was drawn into the surf, and dashed to pieces on the rocks over which the meeting seas were raging. I was too distant to hear a shriek from the spot where the vessel was broken and engulfed, and darkness soon settled down on the scene of the shipwreck, and all was hidden out of sight. What affected me greatly was that the ship whose wreck I witnessed had shown the same ensign as the ship on board of which I was; and on that account my fear was all the stronger that it would fare with me as it fared with those whose destruction I had witnessed.

Looking out again, I saw another vessel, on a very troubled part of the sea, moving towards the surf. But I thought I saw, in this case, what I had not in the other, a framework around the tossing ship. Already it seemed to have been subjected to such tossing as was fitted to shatter all its timbers, and to wreck it ere it reached the crisis. Shaken and shattered, it entered the seething surf. But just when it was in the midst of it, and was all broken in pieces, I observed a white flag waving over the spot where it had gone down, and I saw written on it the words, "Grace and Glory."

Mounting still higher in the rigging, I could see through the glass, though but dimly, what was taking place beyond the surf. I saw a passenger rising naked and winged out of the midst of the shipwreck, who was received by a company of bright beings, who bore him up and away. I followed with my gaze the procession till it entered an opening in the clouds, through which shone a light so brilliant that my eyes were dazzled, and in that direction I could see no more.

There is no more dream to tell. Before the end, and near to it, I was so affected that all my mood of dreaming passed away. When what remains of the voyage is passed through, it cannot be in a dream; and if I ever in reality come to know what a safe landing is on the shore of Glory, I cannot thereafter, any more for ever, return to tell of it on earth.