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A MEMORY OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS

From "Chinkie's Flat And Other Stories"

By Louis Becke

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CAPTAIN "BULLY" HAYES

In other works by the present writer frequent allusion has been made, either by the author or by other persons, to Captain Hayes. Perhaps the continuous appearance of his name may have been irritating to many of my readers; if so I can only plead that it is almost impossible when writing of wild life in the Southern Seas to avoid mentioning him. Every one who sailed the Austral seas between the "fifties" and "seventies," and thousands who had not, knew of him and had heard tales of him. In some cases these tales were to his credit; mostly they were not. However, the writer makes no further apology for reproducing the following sketch of the great "Bully" which he contributed to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and which, by the courtesy of the editor of that journal, he is able to include in this volume.

In a most interesting, though all too brief, sketch of the life of the late Rev. James Chalmers, the famous New Guinea missionary, which appeared in the January number of a popular religious magazine, the author, the Rev. Richard Lovett, gives us a brief glance of the notorious Captain "Bully" Hayes. Mr. Chalmers, in 1866, sailed for the South Seas with his wife in the missionary ship *John Williams*—the second vessel of that name, the present beautiful steamer being the fourth *John Williams*.

The second John Williams had but a brief existence, for on her first voyage she was wrecked on Nine Island (the "Savage" Island of Captain Cook). Hayes happened to be there with his vessel, and agreed to convey the shipwrecked missionaries to Samoa. No doubt he charged them a pretty stiff price, for he always said that missionaries "were teaching Kanakas the degrading doctrine that even if a man killed his enemy and cut out and ate his heart in public, and otherwise misconducted himself, he could yet secure a front seat in the Kingdom of Heaven if he said he was sorry and was then baptized as Aperamo (Abraham) or Lakopo (Jacob)."

"It is characteristic of Chalmers," writes Mr. Lovett, "that he was able to exert considerable influence over this ruffian, and even saw good points in him, not easily evident to others."

The present writer sailed with Hayes on four voyages as supercargo, and was with the big-bearded, heavy-handed, and alleged "terror of the South Seas" when his famous brig *Leonora* was wrecked on Strong's Island, one wild night in March, 1875. And he has nothing but kindly memories of a much-maligned man, who, with all his faults, was never the cold-blooded murderer whose fictitious atrocities once formed the theme of a highly blood-curdling melodrama staged in the old Victoria Theatre, in Pitt Street, Sydney, under the title of "The Pirate of the Pacific." In this lively production of dramatic genius Hayes was portrayed as something worse than Blackboard or Llonois, and committed more murders and abductions of beautiful women in two hours than ever fell to the luck in real life of the most gorgeous pirate on record. No one of the audience was more interested or applauded more vigorously the villain's downfall than "Bully" Hayes himself, who was seated in a private box with a lady. He had come to Sydney by steamer from Melbourne, where he had left his ship in the hands of brokers for sale, and almost the first thing he saw on arrival were the theatrical posters concerning himself and his career of crime.

"I would have gone for the theatre people," he told the writer, "if they had had any money, but the man who 'played' me was the lessee of the theatre and was hard up. I think his name was Hoskins. He was a big fat fellow, with a soapy, slithery kind of a voice, and I lent him ten pounds, which he spent on a dinner to myself and some of his company. I guess we had a real good time."

But let us hear what poor ill-fated Missionary Chalmers has to say about the alleged pirate:—

"Hayes seemed to take to me during the frequent meetings we had on shore" (this was when the shipwrecked missionaries and their wives were living on Savage Island), "and before going on board for good I met him one afternoon and said to him, 'Captain Hayes, I hope you will have no objection to our having morning and evening service on board, and twice on Sabbaths. All short, and only those who like need attend.' Certainly not. My ship is a missionary ship now' (humorous dog), 'and I hope you will feel it so. All on board will attend these services.' I replied, 'Only if they are inclined.'" (If they had shirked it, the redoubtable "Bully" would have made attendance compulsory with a belaying pin.)

"Hayes was a perfect host and a thorough gentleman. His wife and children were on board. We had fearful weather all the time, yet I must say we enjoyed ourselves.... We had gone so far south that we could easily fetch Tahiti, and so we stood for it, causing us to be much longer on board. Hayes several times lost his temper and did very queer things, acting now and then more like a madman than a sane man. Much of his past life he related to us at table, especially of things (he did) to cheat Governments."

Poor "Bully!" He certainly did like to "cheat Governments," although he despised cheating private individuals—unless it was for a large amount. And he frequently "lost his temper" also; and when that occurred things were very uncomfortable for the man or men who caused it. On one occasion, during an electrical storm off New Guinea, a number of corposants appeared on the yards of his vessel, which was manned by Polynesians and some Portuguese. One of the latter was so terrified at the ghastly *corpo santo* that he fell on his knees and held a small leaden crucifix, which he wore on his neck, to his lips. His example was quickly followed by the rest of his countrymen; which so enraged Hayes that, seizing the first offender,

he tore the crucifix from his hand, and, rolling it into a lump, thrust it into his month *and made him swallow it.*

"You'll kill the man, sir," cried Hussey, his American mate, who, being a good Catholic, was horrified.

Hayes laughed savagely: "If that bit of lead is good externally it ought to be a darned sight better when taken internally."

He was a humorous man at times, even when he was cross. And he was one of the best sailor-men that ever trod a deck. A chronometer watch, which was committed to the care of the writer by Hayes, bore this inscription:—

"From Isaac Steuart, of New York, to Captain William Henry Hayes, of Cleveland, Ohio. A gift of esteem and respect for his bravery in saving the lives of seventeen persons at the risk of his own. Honor to the brave."

Hayes told me that story—modestly and simply as brave men only tell a tale of their own dauntless daring. And he told me other stories as well of his strange, wild career; of Gordon of Khartoum, whom he had known, and of Ward and Burgevine and the Taeping leaders; and how Burgevine and he quarrelled over a love affair and stood face to face, pistols in hand, when Ward sprang in between them and said that the woman was his, and that they were fools to fight over what belonged to neither of them and what he would gladly be rid of himself.

Peace to his *manes!* He died—in his sea-boots—from a blow on his big, bald head, superinduced by his attention to a lady who was "no better than she ought to have been," even for the islands of the North Pacific.

THE "WHALE CURE"

I once heard a man who for nearly six years had been a martyr to rheumatism say he would give a thousand pounds to have a cure effected.

"I wish, then, that we were in Australia or New Zealand during the shore whaling season," remarked a friend of the writer; "I should feel pretty certain of annexing that thousand pounds." And then he described the whale cure.

The "cure" is not fiction. It is a fact, so the whalers assert, and there are many people at the township of Eden, Twofold Bay, New South Wales, who, it is vouched, can tell of several cases of chronic rheumatism that have been absolutely perfectly cured by the treatment herewith briefly described. How it came to be discovered I do not know, but it has been known to American whalers for years.

When a whale is killed and towed ashore (it does not matter whether it is a "right," humpback, finback, or sperm whale) and while the interior of the carcass still retains a little warmth, a hole is cut through one side of the body sufficiently large to admit the patient, the lower part of whose body from the feet to the waist should sink in the whale's intestines, leaving the head, of course, outside the aperture. The latter is closed up as closely as possible, otherwise the patient would not be able to breathe through the volume of ammoniacal gases which would escape from every opening left uncovered. It is these gases, which are of an overpowering and atrocious odour, that bring about the cure, so the whalers say. Sometimes the patient cannot stand this horrible bath for more than an hour, and has to be lifted out in a fainting condition, to undergo a second, third, or perhaps fourth course on that or the following day. Twenty or thirty hours, it is said, will effect a radical cure in the most severe cases, provided there is no malformation or distortion of the joints, and even in such cases the treatment causes very great relief. One man who was put in up to his neck in the carcass of a small "humpback" stood it for sixteen hours, being taken out at two-hour intervals. He went off declaring himself to be cured. A year later he had a return of the complaint and underwent the treatment a second time.

All the "shore" whalers whom the writer has met thoroughly believe in the efficacy of the remedy, and by way of practical proof assert that no man who works at cutting-in and trying out a whale ever suffers from rheumatism. Furthermore, however, some of them maintain that the "deader" the whale is, the better the remedy. "More gas in him," they say. And any one who has been within a mile of a week-dead whale will believe *that*.

Anyway, if there is any person, rheumatic or otherwise, who wants to emulate Jonah's adventure in a safe manner (with a dead whale), let him write to the Davidson Brothers, Ben Boyd Point, Twofold Bay, N.S.W., or to the Messrs. Christian, Norfolk Island, and I am sure those valorous whalers would help him to achieve his desire.

THE SEA "SALMON" SEASON IN AUSTRALIA

The sea salmon make their appearance on the southern half of the eastern seaboard of Australia with undeviating regularity in the last week of October, and, entering the rivers and inlets, remain on the coast till the first week of December. As far as my knowledge goes, they come from the south and travel northwards, and do not appear to relish the tropical waters of the North Queensland coast, though I have heard that some years ago a vast "school" entered the waters of Port Denison.

Given a dear, sunny day and a smooth sea the advent of these fish to the bar harbours and rivers of New South Wales presents a truly extraordinary sight. From any moderately high bluff or headland one can discern their approach nearly two miles away. You see a dark patch upon the water, and were it not for the

attendant flocks of gulls and other aquatic birds, one would imagine it to be but the passing reflection of a cloud. But presently you see another and another; and, still farther out, a long black line flecked with white can be discerned with a good glass. Then you look above—the sky is cloudless blue, and you know that the dark moving patches are the advance battalions of countless thousands of sea salmon, and that the mile-long black and white streak behind them is the main body of the first mighty army; for others are to follow day by day for another fortnight.

Probably the look-out man at the pilot station is the first to see them, and in a few minutes the lazy little seaport town awakes from its morning lethargy, and even the butcher, and baker, and bootmaker, and bank manager, and other commercial magnates shut up shop and walk to the pilot station to watch the salmon “take” the bar, whilst the entire public school rushes home to prepare its rude tackle for the onslaught that will begin at dark.

The bar is a mile wide or more, and though there is but little surf, the ebbing tide, running at five knots, makes a great commotion, and the shallow water is thick with yellow sand swept seaward to the pale green beyond. Presently the first “school” of salmon reaches the protecting reef on the southern side—and then it stops. The fish well know that such a current as that cannot be stemmed, and wait, moving slowly to and fro, the dark blue compactness of their serried masses ever and anon broken by flashes of silver as some turn on their sides or make an occasional leap clear out of the water to avoid the pressure of their fellows.

An hour or so passes; then the tumult on the bar ceases, the incoming seas rise clear and sandless, and the fierce race of the current slows down to a gentle drift; it is slack water, and the fish begin to move. One after another the foremost masses sweep round the horn of the reef and head for the smooth water inside. On the starboard hand a line of yellow sandbank is drying in the sun, and the passage has now narrowed down to a width of fifty yards; in twenty minutes every inch of water, from the rocky headland on the south side of the entrance to where the river makes a sharp turn northward, half a mile away, is packed with a living, moving mass. Behind follows the main body, the two horns of the crescent shape which it had at first preserved now swimming swiftly ahead, and converging towards each other as the entrance to the bar is reached, and the centre falling back with the precision of well-trained troops. And then in a square, solid mass, thirty or forty feet in width, they begin the passage, and for two hours or more the long dark lines of fish pass steadily onward, only thrown into momentary confusion now and then by a heavy swell, which, however, does no more than gently undulate the rearmost lines of fish, and then subsides, overcome by the weight and solidity of the living wall.

Along the beach on the southern side of the river stand a hundred or more yelling urchins, with stout lines fitted with many baitless hooks and weighted with a stone. As the swarming fish press steadily on within ten feet or less of the shore the children fling their lines across, and draw them quickly in. Sometimes two or three fish are “jagged” at once, and as the average weight is 10 lb. the jagger takes a turn of the line around his waist and straggles up the beach. Even if he has but one fish hooked amidships he has all he can do to drag him out from the countless thousands and land him. It is not an eminently ideal or sportsmanlike sort of fishing, this “jagging,” but it possesses a marvellous enjoyment and fascination for the youth of ten, and older people as well; for a full-grown salmon is a powerful fellow, and his big, fluke-like tail enables him to make a terrific rush when under the influence of terror or when chasing his prey.

Once over the bar and into the placid waters of the tidal river, the vanguards of the hundreds of thousands to follow pursue their way steadily up the shallow flats and numberless blind creeks, where they remain till spawning is over. Every day some fresh accessions to their numbers, and at night time strange, indescribable sounds are heard, caused by the movements of the fishes' tails and fins as they swim to and fro, and one section, meeting another, endeavours to force a right-of-way. On the third or fourth evening the sharks and porpoises appear, having followed the “schools” in from the sea, and wreak fearful havoc among them. Sometimes in a deep pool or quiet reach of the river one may see a school of perhaps five or six thousand terrified salmon, wedged one up against the other, unable to move from their very numbers, while half a dozen sharks dash in among them and devour them by the score; and often as the current runs seaward hundreds of half bodies of salmon can be seen going out over the bar. At night time the townspeople appear on the scene in boats with lanterns and spears, and for no other purpose than the mere love of useless slaughter kill the fish till their arms are exhausted. At places within easy access of Sydney by steamer or rail some few thousands of salmon are sent to market, but as the flesh is somewhat coarse, they are only bought by the poorer members of the community, 4d. and 6d. each being considered a good retail price for a 10 lb. fish. The roes, however, are excellent eating, and some attempt has been made to smoke them on a large scale, but like everything else connected with the fishing industry (or rather want of industry) in New South Wales, has failed. It sometimes happens (as I once witnessed in Trial Bay, on the coast of New South Wales) that heavy weather will set in when the salmon are either passing inwards over the bars or are returning to sea. The destruction that is then wrought among them is terrific. On the occasion of which I speak, every heavy roller that reared and then dashed upon the beach flung upon the sands hundreds of the fish, stunned and bleeding. At one spot where the beach had but a very slight inclination towards the water from the line of scrub above high-water mark there were literally many thousands of salmon, lying three and four deep, and in places piled up in irregular ridges and firmly packed together with sand and seaweed.

“JACK SHARK”

“What is the greatest number of sharks that you have ever seen together at one time?” asked an English lady in San Francisco of Captain Allen, of the New Bedford barque *Acorn Barnes*.

“Two or three hundred when we have been cutting-in a whale; two or three thousand in Christmas Island lagoon.”

Some of the hardy old seaman's listeners smiled somewhat incredulously at the "two or three thousand," but nevertheless he was not only not exaggerating, but might have said five or six thousand. The Christmas Island to which he referred must not be mistaken for the island of the same name in the Indian Ocean—the Cocos-Keeling group. It is in the North Pacific, two degrees north of the equator and 157.30 W., and is a low, sandy atoll, encompassing a spacious but rather shallow lagoon, teeming with non-poisonous fish. It is leased from the Colonial Office by a London firm, who are planting the barren soil with coconut trees and fishing the lagoon for pearl-shell. Like many other of the isolated atolls in the North Pacific, such as the Fannings, Palmyra, and Providence Groups, the lagoon is resorted to by sharks in incredible numbers; and even at the present time the native labourers employed by the firm alluded to make a considerable sum of money by catching sharks and drying the fins and tails for export to Sydney, and thence to China, where they command a price ranging from 6d. to 1s. 6d. per pound, according to quality.

The lagoon sharks are of a different species to the short, thick, wide-jawed "man-eaters," although they are equally dangerous at night time as the deep-sea prowlers. The present writer was for a long time engaged with a native crew in the shark-catching industry in the North Pacific, and therefore had every opportunity of studying Jack Shark and his manners.

On Providence Lagoon (the Ujilong of the natives), once the secret rendezvous of the notorious Captain "Bully" Hayes and his associate adventurer, Captain Ben Peese, I have, at low tide, stood on the edge of the coral reef on one side of South Passage, and gazed in astonishment at the extraordinary numbers of sharks entering the lagoon for their nightly onslaught on the vast bodies of fish with which the water teems. They came on in droves, like sheep, in scores at first, then in hundreds, and then in packed masses, their sharp, black-tipped fins stretching from one side of the passage to the other. As they gained the inside of the lagoon they branched off, some to right and left, others swimming straight on towards the sandy beaches of the chain of islets. From where I stood I could have killed scores of them with a whale lance, or even a club, for they were packed so closely that they literally scraped against the coral walls of the passage; and some Gilbert Islanders who were with me amused themselves by seizing several by their tails and dragging them out upon the reef. They were nearly all of the same size, about seven feet, with long slender bodies, and their markings, shape, and general appearance were those of the shark called by the Samoans *moemoeao* ("sleeps all day"), though not much more than half their length. The Gilbert Islanders informed me that this species were also *bàkwa mata te ao* (sleepers by day) at certain seasons of the year, but usually sought their prey by night at all times; and a few months later I had an opportunity afforded me of seeing some hundreds of them asleep. This was outside the barrier reef of the little island of Ailuk, in the Marshall Group. We were endeavouring to find and recover a lost anchor, and were drifting along in a boat in about six fathoms of water; there was not a breath of wind, and consequently we had no need to use water glasses, for even minute objects could be very easily discerned through the crystal water.

"Hallo! look here," said the mate, "we're right on top of a nice little family party of sharks. It's their watch below."

Lying closely together on a bottom of sand and coral *débris* were about a dozen sharks, heads and tails in perfect line. Their skins were a mottled brown and yellow, like the crustacean-feeding "tiger shark" of Port Jack-son. They lay so perfectly still that the mate lowered a grapnel right on the back of one. He switched his long, thin tail lazily, "shoved" himself along for a few feet, and settled down again to sleep, his bedmates taking no notice of the intruding grapnel. Further on we came across many more—all in parties of from ten to twenty, and all preserving in their slumber a due sense of regularity of outline in the disposition of their long bodies.

The natives of the low-lying equatorial islands—the Kingsmill, Gilbert, Ellice, and Tokelau or Union Groups—are all expert shark fishermen; but the wild people of Paanopa (Ocean Island) stand *facile princeps*. I have frequently seen four men in a small canoe kill eight or ten sharks (each of which was as long as their frail little craft) within three hours.

SOME PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHES

Of all the food-fishes inhabiting the reefs, lagoons, and tidal waters of the islands of the North and South Pacific, there are none that are prized more than the numerous varieties of sand-mullet. Unlike the same fishes in British and other colder waters, they frequently reach a great size, some of them attaining two feet in length, and weighing up to ten pounds; and another notable feature is the great diversity of colour characterising the whole family. The writer is familiar with at least ten varieties, and the natives gave me the names of several others which, however, are seldom taken in sufficient numbers to make them a common article of diet. The larger kind are caught with hook and line in water ranging from three to five fathoms in depth, the smaller kinds are always to be found in the very shallow waters of the lagoons, where they are taken by nets. At night, by the aid of torches made of dried coconut leaf, the women and children capture them in hundreds as they lie on the clear, sandy bottom. In the picturesque lagoons of the Ellice Group (South Pacific), and especially in that of Nanomea, these fish afford excellent sport with either rod or hand-line, and sport, too, with surroundings of the greatest beauty imaginable; for the little lagoon of Nanomea is perfectly landlocked, except where there are breaks of reef—dry at low water—which is as clear as crystal, and the low-lying belt of land is a verdant girdle of coco and pandanus palms, growing with bread-fruit and *fetau* trees on the rich, warm soil composed of vegetable matter and decayed coral detritus.

And then, too, you can look over the side of the canoe, or from an exposed boulder of coral, and see the fish take your bait—unless a breeze is rippling the surface of the water.

I usually chose the early morning, before the trade wind roused itself, as then, if in a canoe, one need not anchor, but drift about from one side of the lagoon to the other; then about ten o'clock, when the breeze

came, I would paddle over to the lee of the weather side of the island (the land in places not being much wider than the Palisadoes of Port Royal in Jamaica) and fish in unruffled water in some deep pool among a number of sand banks, or rather round-topped hillocks, which even at high water were some feet above the surface.

When bent on sand-mullet—*afulu* the natives call them—I was in the habit of going alone, although the moment I appeared in the village carrying my rod, lines, and gun, I was always besought to take one or two men with me. One of the most ardent fishermen on the island was one Kino—a gentleman who weighed eighteen stone; and, as my canoe was only intended for two light-weights like myself, I always tried to avoid meeting him, for not only was he most persistent in his desire to see how I managed to get so many mullet, but was most anxious to learn to speak English.

On one occasion I fatuously took the monster out in my whaleboat to fish for *takuo* (a variety of *tuna*) one calm starlight night when the ocean was like a sheet of glass. We pulled out over the reef, and when a mile from the shore lowered our heavy lines and began fishing. For nearly a quarter of an hour neither of us spoke, then he suddenly asked me in his fat, wheezy tones, if I would mind telling him something.

“What is it?”

“Will you tell me, friend, what are the English words that should be spoken by one of us of Nanomea to a ship captain, giving him greeting, and asking him if he hath had a prosperous voyage with fair weather? My heart is sick with envy that Pita and Loli speak English, and I cannot.”

Forgetting my past experiences of my man, I was fool enough to tell him.

“You say this: ‘Good morning, Captain; have you had a good voyage and fair weather?’”

He greedily repeated each word after me, very slowly and carefully; then he asked me to tell him again. I did so. Then he sighed with pleasure.

“Kind friend, just a few times more,” he said.

I told him the sentence over and over again for at least a score of times; and his smooth, fat face beamed when at last he was able to say the words alone. Then he began whispering it. Five minutes passed, and he tackled me again.

“Is this right?—‘Good—mornin’, kipen—ha—ad—you—have—goot—foy—age—and—fair wesser?’”

“That is right,” I said impatiently, “but ask me no more to-night. Dost not know that it is unlucky to talk when fishing for *takuo* and *tautau*?”

“Dear friend, *that* we believed only in the heathen days. *Now* we are Christians.”

He paused a moment, then raised his face to the stars and softly murmured, “Good—mornin’ kâpen—haad—you—you—have—goot—foyage—and wesser—and fair—wesser?” Then he looked at me interrogatively. I took no notice.

He toyed with his line and bent an earnest gaze down in the placid depths of the water as if he saw the words down there, then taking a turn of his line round a thwart, he put his two elbows on his enormous naked knees, and resting his broad, terraced chin on the palms of his hands, he said slowly and mournfully, as if he were communing with some one in the spirit-world—

“Good—mornin’—kâpen. Haad—you—haave—” &c., &c.

Then I sharply spoke a few words of English—simple in themselves, but well understood by nearly every native of the South Seas. He looked surprised, and also reproachful, but went on in a whisper so faint that I could scarcely hear it; sometimes quickly and excitedly, sometimes doubtfully and with quivering lips, now raising his eyes to heaven, and with drooping lower jaw gurgling the words in his thick throat; then sighing and muttering them with closed eyes and a rapt expression of countenance, till with a sudden snort of satisfaction, he ceased—at least I thought he had. He took up a young coconut, drank it, and began again as fresh as ever.

“Stop!” I said angrily. “Art thou a grown man or a child? Here is some tobacco, fill thy pipe, and cease muttering like a *tama valea* (idiot boy).”

He shook his head. “Nay, if I smoke, I may forget. I am very happy to-night, kind friend. Good-mor—”

“May Erikobai” (a cannibal god of his youth) “polish his teeth on thy bones!” I cried at last in despair. That shocking heathen curse silenced him, but for the next two hours, whenever I looked at the creature, I saw his lips moving and a silly, fatuous expression on his by no means unintelligent face. I never took him out with me again, although he sent me fowls and other things as bribes to teach him more English.

These sand-mullet are very dainty-feeding fish. They are particularly fond of the soft tail part of the hermit crabs which abound all over the island, especially after rain has fallen. Some of the shells (*T. niloticus*) in which they live are so thick and strong, however, that it requires two heavy stones to crush them sufficiently to take out the crab, the upper part of whose body is useless for bait. For a stick of tobacco, the native children would fill me a quart measure, and perhaps add some few shrimps as well, or half a dozen large sea urchins—a very acceptable bait for mullet. My rod was a slender bamboo—cost a quarter of a dollar, and was unbreakable—and my lines of white American cotton, strong, durable, and especially suitable for fishing on a bottom of pure white sand. My gun was carried on the outrigger platform, within easy reach, for numbers of golden plover frequented the sand banks, feeding on the serried battalions of tiny soldier crabs, and in rainy weather they were very easy to shoot. The rest of my gear consisted of twenty or thirty cartridges, a box of assorted hooks, a heavy 27-cord line with a 5-in. hook (in case I saw any big rock cod about), a few bottles of lager, some ship biscuits or cold yam, and a tin of beef or sardines, and some salt. This was a day's supply of food, and if I wanted more, there were plenty of young coconuts to be had by climbing for them, and I could cook my own fish, native fashion; lastly there was myself, in very easy attire—print shirt, dungaree pants, panama hat, and no boots, in place of which I used the native *takka*, or sandals of coconut fibre, which are better than boots when walking on coral. Sometimes I would remain away till the following morning, sleeping on the weather side of the island under a shelter of leaves to keep off the dew, and on such occasions two or three of the young men from the village would invariably come and keep me company—and help eat the fish

and birds. However, they were very well conducted, and we always spent a pleasant night, rose at daybreak, bathed in the surf, or in the lagoon, and after an early breakfast returned to the village, or had some more fishing. It was a delightful life.

My canoe was so light that it could easily be carried by one person from the open shed where it was kept, and in a few minutes after leaving my house I would be afloat, paddling slowly over the smooth water, and looking over the side for the mullet. In the Nanomea, Nui, and Nukufetau Lagoons the largest but scarcest variety are of a purple-grey, with fins (dorsal and abdominal) and mouth and gill-plates tipped with yellow; others again are purple-grey with dull roddish markings. This kind, with those of an all bright yellow colour throughout, are the most valued, though, as I have said, the whole family are prized for their delicacy of flavour.

As soon as I caught sight of one or more of the sought-for fish, I would cease paddling, and bait my hook; and first carefully looking to see if there were any predatory leather-jackets or many-coloured wrasse in sight, would lower away, the hook soon touching the bottom, as I always used a small sinker of coral stone. This was necessary only because of the number of other fish about—bass, trevally, and greedy sea-pike, with teeth like needles and as hungry as sharks. In the vicinity of the reef, or about the isolated coral boulders, or “mushrooms” as we called them, these fish were a great annoyance to me, though my native friends liked them well enough, especially the large, gorgeously-hued “leather-jackets,” to which they have given the very appropriate name of *isuumu moana*—the sea-rat—for they have a great trick of quietly biting a baited line a few inches above the hook. *Apropos* of the “sea-rat,” I may mention that their four closely-set and humanlike teeth are so thick that they will often crush an ordinary hook as if it were made of glass, and as their mouths are exceedingly small, and many are heavy, powerful fishes, they cause havoc with ordinary tackle. But a fellow-trader and myself devised a very short, stout hook (1 1/2 inch of shank) with a barbless curve well turned in towards the shank; these we bent on to a length of fine steel wire seizing. They proved just the ideal hook for the larger kind of sea-rat, which run up to 10 lb., and the natives were so greatly taken with the device that, whenever a ship touched at the island, short pieces of fine steel wire rigging were eagerly bought (or begged for).

However, no leather-jackets, wrasse, greedy rock-cod, or keen-eyed trevally being about, the bait touches the sandy bottom, and then you will see one—perhaps half a dozen—*afulu* cease poking their noses in the sand, and make for it steadily but cautiously. When within a foot or so, they invariably stop dead, and eye the bait to see if it is worth eating. But they are soon satisfied—that round, pale green thing with delicious juices exuding from it is an *uga* (hermit crab) and must not be left to be devoured by rude, big-mouthed rock-cod or the like, and in another moment or two your line is tautened out, and a purple-scaled beauty is fighting gamely for his life in the translucent waters of the lagoon, followed half-way to the surface by his companions, whom, later on, you place beside him in the bottom of the canoe. And even to look at them is a joy, for they are graceful in shape, lovely in colour, and each scale is a jewel.

You take up the paddle and send the canoe along for half-a-cable's length towards a place where, under the ledge of the inner reef, both *afulu sama sama* and *afulu lanu uli* (yellow and purple mullet) are certain to be found; and, as the little craft slips along, a large gar—green-backed, silvery-sided, and more than a yard long—may dart after you like a gleaming, hiltless rapier skimming the surface of the water. If you put out a line with a hook—baited with almost anything—a bit of fish a strip of white or red rag—you will have some sport, for these great gars are a hard-fighting fish, and do the tarpon jumping-trick to perfection. But if you have not a line in readiness you can wait your chance, and as he comes close alongside, break his back with a blow from the sharp blade of your paddle, and jump overboard and secure him ere he sinks.

“Not very sportsmanlike,” some people will say; but the South Sea native is very utilitarian, and it takes a keen eye and hand to do the thing neatly. And not only are these gars excellent eating—like all surface-feeding, or other fish which show a “green” backbone when cooked; but fore and aft strips out from their sheeny sides make splendid bait for deep-sea habitants, such as the giant sea bass and the 200-pounder “coral” cod.

Under the ledge of the inner reef, if you get there before the sun is too far to the westward, so that your eyes are not blinded by its dazzling, golden light, you will see, as you drop your line for the yellow and purple mullet which swim deep down over the fine coral sand, some of the strangest shaped, most fantastically, and yet beautifully coloured rock fish imaginable. As you pull up a mullet (or a green and golden striped wrasse which has seized the bait not meant for him), many of these beautiful creations of Nature will follow it up to within a few feet of the canoe, wondering perhaps what under the sea it means by acting in such a manner; others—small creatures of the deepest, loveliest blue—flee in tenor at the unwonted commotion, and hide themselves among the branching glories of their coral home.

“LUCK”

CHAPTER I

A “hard” man was Captain William Rodway of Sydney, New South Wales, and he prided himself upon the fact. From the time he was twenty years of age, he had devoted himself to making and saving money, and now at sixty he was worth a quarter of a million.

He began life as cabin boy on a north-country collier brig; was starved, kicked, and all but worked to death; and when he came to command a ship of his own, his north-country training stood him in good stead—starving, kicking, and working his crew to death came as naturally to him as breathing. He spared no one, nor did he spare himself.

From the very first everything went well with him. He saved enough money by pinching and grinding his crew—and himself—to enable him to buy the vessel to which he had been appointed. Then he bought others, established what was known as Rodway's Line, gave up going to sea himself, rented an office in a mean street, where he slept and cooked his meals, and worked harder than ever at making money, oblivious of the sneers of those who railed at his parsimony. He was content.

One Monday morning at nine o'clock he took his seat as usual in his office, and began to open his pile of letters, his square-set, hard face, with its cold grey eyes, looking harder than ever, for he had been annoyed by the old charwoman who cleaned his squalid place asking him for more wages.

He was half-way through his correspondence when a knock sounded.

"Come in," he said gruffly.

The door opened, and a handsome, well-built young man of about thirty years of age entered.

"Good morning, Captain Rodway."

"Morning, Lester. What do you want? Why are you not at sea?" and he bent his keen eyes upon his visitor.

"I'm waiting for the water-boat; but otherwise I'm ready to sail."

"Well, what is it then?"

"I want to know if it is a fact that you will not employ married men as captains?"

"It is."

"Will you make no exception in my favour?"

"No."

"I have been five years in your employ as mate and master of the *Harvest Home*, and I am about to marry."

"Do as you please, but the day you marry you leave my service."

The young man's face flushed. "Then you can give me my money, and I'll leave it to-day."

"Very well. Sit down," replied the old man, reaching for his wages book.

"There are sixty pounds due to you," he said; "go on board and wait for me. I'll be there at twelve o'clock with the new man, and we'll go through the stores and spare gear together. If everything is right, I'll pay your sixty pounds—if not, I'll deduct for whatever is short. Good morning."

At two o'clock in the afternoon Captain Tom Lester landed at Circular Quay with his effects and sixty sovereigns in his pocket.

Leaving his baggage at an hotel he took a cab, drove to a quiet little street in the suburb of Darling Point, and stopped at a quaint, old-fashioned cottage surrounded by a garden.

The door was opened by a tall, handsome girl of about twenty-two.

"Tom!"

"Lucy!" he replied, mimicking her surprised tone. Then he became grave, and leading her to a seat, sat beside her, and took her hand.

"Lucy, I have bad news. Rod way dismissed me this morning, and I have left the ship."

The girl's eyes filled. "Never mind, Tom. You will get another."

"Ah, perhaps I might have to wait a long time. I have another plan. Where is Mrs. Warren? I must tell her that our marriage must be put off."

"Why should it, Tom? I don't want it to be put off. And neither does she."

"But I have no home for you."

"We can live here until we have one of our own. Mother will be only too happy."

"Sure?"

"Absolutely, or I would not say it."

"Will you marry me this day week?"

"Yes, dear—today if you wish. We have waited two years."

"You're a brave little woman, Lucy," and he kissed her. "Now, here is my plan. I can raise nearly a thousand pounds. I shall buy the *Dolphin* steam tug—I can get her on easy terms of payment—fill her with coal and stores, and go to Kent's Group in Bass's Straits, and try and refloat the *Braybrook Castle*. I saw the agents and the insurance people this morning—immediately after I left old Bodway. If I float her, it will mean a lot of money for me. If I fail, I shall at least make enough to pay me well by breaking her up. The insurance people know me, and said very nice things to me."

"Will you take me, Tom?"

"Don't tempt me, Lucy. It will be a rough life, living on an almost barren, rocky island, inhabited only by black snakes, albatrosses, gulls and seals."

"Tom, you *must*. Come, let us tell mother."

Three days later they were married, and at six o'clock in the evening the newly-made bride was standing beside her husband on the bridge of the *Dolphin*, which was steaming full speed towards Sydney Heads, loaded down almost to the waterways with coals and stores for four months.

CHAPTER II

Two months had passed, and the sturdy *Dolphin* was lying snugly at anchor in a small, well-sheltered cove on one of the Kent's Group of islands. Less than a hundred yards away was one of the rudest attempts at a house ever seen—that is, externally—for it was built with wreckage from many ships and was roofed with tarpaulins and coarse "albatross" grass. Seated on a stool outside the building was Mrs. Lester, engaged in feeding a number of noisy fowls with broken-up biscuit, but looking every now and then towards the *Braybrook Cattle*, which lay on the rocks a mile away with only her lower masts standing. It was nearing the time when her husband and his men would be returning from their usual day's arduous toil. She rose, shook the biscuit crumbs from her apron, and walking down to the *Dolphin*, anchored just in front of the house, called—"Manuel."

A black, woolly head appeared above the companion way, and Manuel, the cook of the wrecking party, came on deck, jumped into the dinghy alongside and sculled ashore.

"Manuel, you know that all the men are having supper in the house to-night," she said, as the man—a good-natured Galveston negro—stepped on shore.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, I've done all *my* share of the cooking—I've made two batches of bread, and the biggest sea pie you ever saw in your life, but I want two buckets of water from the spring."

"All right, ma'am. I'll tote 'em up fo' yo' right away."

"Please do. And I'll come with you. Captain Lester and the others won't be here for half an hour yet, and I want to show you some curious-looking stuff I saw on the beach this morning. It looks like dirty soap mixed with black shells, like fowl's beaks."

The negro's face displayed a sudden interest. "Mixed with shells, yo' say, ma'am. Did yo' touch it?"

"No—it looks too unpleasant."

The negro picked up the buckets, and, followed by Mrs. Lester, set out along a path which led to a rocky pool of some dimensions filled with rain water.. "Leave the buckets till we come back, Manuel We have not far to go."

She led the way to the beach, and then turning to the left walked along the hard, white sand till they came to a bar of low rocks covered with sea-moss and lichen. Lying against the seaward face of the rock was a pile of driftweed, kelp, crayfish shells, &c, and half buried in *débris* was the object that had aroused her curiosity.

"There it is, Manuel," she said, pointing to an irregularly-shaped mass of a mottled grey, yellow and brown substance, looking like soap, mixed with cinders and ashes.

The negro whipped out his sheath knife, plunged it into the mass, then withdrew it, pressed the flat of the blade to his nostrils, and then uttered a yell of delight, clapped his hands, took off his cap and tossed it in the air, and rolled his eyes in such an extraordinary manner, that Mrs. Lester thought he had become suddenly insane.

"Yo' am rich woman now, ma'am," he said in his thick, fruity voice. "Dat am ambergris. I know it well 'nuff. I was cook on a whaleship fo' five years, and have handled little bits of ambergris two or three times, but no one in de world, I believe, ever see such a lump like dis."

"Is it worth anything then?"

"Worth anything, ma'am! It am worth twenty-two shillings de ounce!"

He knelt down and began clearing away the weed till the whole mass was exposed, placed his arms around it, and partly lifted it.

"Dere is more'n a hundredweight," he chuckled, as he looked up at Mrs. Lester, who was now also feeling excited. "Look at dis now."

He cut out a slice of the curious-looking oleaginous stuff, struck a match and applied the light. A pale yellow flame was the result, and with it there came a strong but pleasant smell.

Mrs. Lester had never heard of ambergris to her recollection, but Manuel now enlightened her as to its uses—the principal being as a developer of the strength of all other perfumes.

Such a treasure could not be left where it was—exposed to the risk of being carried away by the tide so the negro at once went to work with his knife, catting it into three pieces, each of which he carried to the house, and put into an empty barrel. Then he returned and carefully searched for and picked up the minutest scraps which had broken off whilst he was cutting the "find" through.

Just at sunset, Lester and his gang of burly helpers returned tired and hungry, but highly elated, for they had succeeded in getting out an unusual amount of valuable cargo.

"We've had great luck to-day, Lucy," cried Lester, as he strode over the coarse grass in his high sea boots; "and, all going well, we shall make the first attempt to pull the ship off the day after to-morrow."

"And I have had luck too," said his wife, her fair, sweet face, now bronzed by the sun, glowing as she spoke. "But come inside first, and then I'll tell you."

The interior of the dwelling consisted of two rooms only—a small bedroom and a large living room which was also used as a kitchen. It was quite comfortably furnished with handsome chairs, lounges, chests of drawers, and other articles taken from the cabin of the stranded ship. The centre of the room was occupied by a large deal table made by one of the men, and a huge fire of drift timber blazed merrily at one end. Manuel was laying the table, his black face beaming with sup-pressed excitement, and the rough, sea-booted wreckers entered one by one and sat down. Mrs. Lester bade them smoke if they wished.

"Well, boys," said their leader to the wrecking party—of whom there were thirty—"we all deserve a drink before supper. Help yourselves to whatever you like," and he pointed to a small side-table covered with bottles of spirits and glasses. Then Lucy, after they had all satisfied themselves, walked over to the cask containing her "find," and standing beside it, asked if they would all come and look at the contents and see if

they knew what it was. Lester, thinking she had succeeded in catching a young seal, looked on with an amused smile.

One by one the men came and looked inside the cask, felt the greasy mass with their horny fingers, and each shook his head until the tenth man, who, the moment he saw it, gave a shout.

"Why, I'm blest if it ain't ambow-grease!"

Lester started. "Ambergris! Nonsense!" and then he too uttered a cry of astonishment as a second man—an old whaler—darted in front of him, and, pinching off a piece of the "find," smelt it.

"Hamble-grist it is, sir," he cried, "and the cask is chock-full of it."

"Turn it out on the floor," said Lester, who knew the enormous value of ambergris, "and let us get a good look at it. Light all the lamps, Lucy."

The lamps were lit, and then Manuel repeated his experiment by burning a piece, amid breathless excitement. No further doubt could exist, and then Manuel, taking a spring balance (weighing up to 50 lbs.) from the wall, hung it to a rafter, whilst the men put the lot into three separate bags and suspended them to the hook in turn.

"Forty-five pounds," cried the mate of the Dolphin, as the first bag was hooked on. "Come on with the next one."

"Thirty-nine pounds."

"And thirty-four pounds makes a hundred and eighteen," said Lester, bending down and eagerly examining the dial.

"How much is it worth, skipper?" asked the tug's engineer.

"Not less than £1 an ounce——"

"No, sah," cried Manuel, with an *ex cathedra* air, "twenty-two shillings, sah. Dat's what the captain of de *Fanny Long* Hobart Town whaleship got fo' a piece eleven poun' weight in Sydney last June. And I hear de boys sayin' dat he would hab got £1 5s. only dat dere was a power of squids' beaks in it—and dere's not many in dis lot, so it's gwine to bring more."

He explained that the pieces of black shell, which looked like broken mussel shells, were in reality the beaks of the squid, upon which the sperm whale feeds. Then, for the benefit of those of the party, he and the two other ex-whalemen described the cause of the formation of this peculiar substance in the body of the sperm whale.

Lester took pencil and paper and made a rapid calculation.

"Boys, we'll say that this greasy-looking staff is worth only a pound an ounce—though I don't doubt that Manuel is right. Well, at £1 an ounce, it comes to eighteen hundred and eighty-eight pounds."

"Hurrah for Mrs. Lester!" cried Lindley, the mate.

"She has brought us luck from the first, and now she has luck herself."

The men cheered her again and again, for there was not one of them that had not a rough affection for their captain's violet-eyed wife. They had admired her for her pluck even in making the voyage to this desolate spot, and her constant cheerfulness and her kindness and attention in nursing three of them who had been seriously ill cemented their feelings of devotion to her. There was a happy supper party in "Wreck House"—as Lucy had named her strangely-built abode—that night, and it was not until the small hours of the morning that the men went off to sleep on the tug, and left Lucy and her husband to themselves.

"I'm too excited to sleep now, Tom," she said. "Come, I must show you the place where I found it. It is not a bit cold. And oh! Tom, I'm beginning to love this lonely island, and the rough life, and the tame seals, and the wild goats, and the fowls, and black Manuel, and, and—oh, everything! And look, Tom dear, over there at the lighthouse at Deal Island. I really believe the light was never shining as it is to-night. Oh! all the world is bright to me."

CHAPTER III

Two days later, and after nearly fifteen weeks of arduous and unremitting labour, there came, one calm night, a glorious spring tide, and the *Dolphin*, under a full head of steam, and with her stout, broad frame quivering and throbbing and panting, tugged away at the giant hulk of the stranded ship; and the ship's own donkey engine and winch wheezed and groaned as it slowly brought in inch by inch a heavy coir hawser made fast to a rock half a cable length ahead of the tug. And then the *Braybrook Castle* began to move, and the wrecking gang cheered and cheered until they were hoarse, and the second engineer of the tug and two stokers, stripped to their waists, with the perspiration streaming down their roasting bodies, answered with a yell—and then, lying well over on her starboard bilge, the great ship slid off stern first into deep water, and Tom Lester's heart leapt within him with joy and pride.

Lucy, as excited as any one else, was on the bridge with him, her face aglow, and her hand on the lever of the engine-room telegraph.

"Half-speed, Lucy."

As the bell clanged loudly, and the heart of the sturdy tug beat less frantically, the wrecking gang on board the ship under Lindley slipped their end of the coir hawser from the winch barrel, and worked like madmen to get the ship on an even keel by cutting adrift the lashings of several hundred barrels of cement (part of the cargo) which were piled up on the starboard side of the main deck, and letting them plunge overboard. As the ship righted herself inch by inch, and finally stood up on an even keel, Lester made an agreed-upon signal—blowing his whistle thrice—for Lindley to stand by his anchors, which were all ready to let go.

His device of getting up the barrels of cement from the lower hold, and stowing them against the iron deck stanchions (having previously cut away the bulwark plates) so as to give the vessel a big cant to starboard, had answered perfectly; for, high as was the tide that night, the *Dolphin*, though so powerful, could not have moved a ship of 1,500 tons with her keel still partly sustaining her weight on the rooks on which she had struck. By canting her as he had done, she had actually floated—and no more than floated—an hour before the tide was at its full.

Half an hour later the *Braybrook Castle* had been towed round to a little bay just abreast of "Wreck House," and the tug's engines stopped.

"All ready, Lindley?" shouted Lester.

"All ready sir."

"Then let go."

At a tap from Lindley's hammer, the great anchor plunged down, and the flaked out cable roared as it flew through the hawse-pipes, drowning the loud "Hurrah" of the men on board.

"What is it, Lindley?" cried Lester, "ten fathoms?"

"Twelve, sir."

"Give her another twenty-five. It's good holding ground and there is plenty of room for her to swing. Lindley!"

"Yes, sir."

"We have had a bit of good luck, eh?"

"Yes, sir. That is because Mrs. Lester is on the tug. She brings us good luck."

Lester laughed and turned to his wife. "Do you hear that, Lucy?"

She was gazing intently over to the westward, but turned to him the moment he spoke.

"Tom, I can see a blue light over there.... Ah, see, there is a rocket! What is it?"

Lester took his night glasses and looked.

"There is a ship ashore somewhere between here and the Deal Island light," he said, and then he rang, "Go astern," to the engine-room.

"Lindley," he called as soon as the tug backed alongside the *Braybrook Castle*, "there is a ship ashore about four miles away from us to the westward. My wife noticed her signals a few minutes ago."

"More salvage, sir," bawled Lindley, "Mrs. Lester is bringing us more luck. What's to be, sir?"

"I want ten or a dozen men, and I'll go and see what I can do. You are all right, aren't you?"

"Right as rain, sir."

Fifteen, instead of a dozen men slid down a line on to the deck of the tug, and Lucy, at a nod from her husband, turned on "Full steam ahead," and Lester whistled down the speaking-tube.

"Hallo!" was the response.

"Give it to her, Patterson, for all she's worth. There is a ship ashore about four miles away. She is burning blue lights and sending up rockets."

Five minutes later, the *Dolphin* was tearing through the water at her top speed—eleven knots—and Patterson came up on the bridge.

"Who saw the seegnals first?" he inquired.

"I did, Mr. Patterson," said Lucy.

"Ay, I thocht as much, Mistress Leslie. Even that lazy, sheeftless Irish fireman loon ae mine, Rafferty, said ye'd bring us mair guid luck." Then he dived below again to the engines so dear to his Scotsman's heart.

The night was dark, but calm and windless, and the panting tug tore her way through a sea as smooth as glass towards where the ghastly glare of the last blue light had been seen. Twenty minutes later, Lester caught sight of the distressed ship. She was lying on her beam ends, and almost at the same moment came a loud hail—

"Steamer ahoy!"

"Clang!" went the telegraph, and the *Dolphin's* engines stopped, and then went astern, just in time to save her from crashing into a boat crowded with men; a second boat was close astern of the first. They came alongside, and the occupants swarmed over the tug's low bulwarks, and an old greybearded man made his way up to Lester.

"My cowardly crew have forced me to abandon my ship. We were caught in a squall yesterday, and thrown on our beam ends." Then he fell down in a fit.

"Veer those boats astern," cried Lester to his own men, "I'm going to hook on to that ship!"

Bailey, one of his best men, gave a yell.

"More luck, boys. Mrs. Lester!"

As the poor captain was carried off the bridge into the little cabin, the *Dolphin* went ahead, and in a quarter of an hour, Bailey and his men had cut away the masts and the tug had the ship in tow.

At daylight next morning Lester brought her into the little bay where the *Braybrook Castle* lay, and Bailey anchored her safely.

When Lester boarded her he found she was the *Harvest Queen*, sister ship to the *Harvest Maid*, *Harvester*, and his own last command, the *Harvest Home*, all ships of 1,500 tons, and belonging to Captain James Rodway.

"Why didn't you cut away her masts?" he said to the unfortunate captain later on.

"Ah, you don't know my owner," the old man replied, "and besides that, I could have righted the ship if my crew had stuck to me. But after being eighteen hours on our beam ends, they took fright and lowered the

boats. I'm a ruined man."

"Not at all. You have done your duty and I'll give you command of another ship to-day—the *Braybrook Castle*. You have nothing further to do with the *Harvest Queen*. She was an abandoned ship. She's mine now. Salvage, you know."

The old man nodded his head. "Yes, I know that. And you'll make a pot oat of her."

"What is she worth?"

"Ship and cargo are worth £80,000. We loaded a general cargo in London."

"That will be a bit of a knock for Rodway." "Do you know him?" asked Captain Blake in surprise.

"I do indeed! I was master of the *Harvest Home*. Now come ashore. My wife is getting as something to eat."

CHAPTER IV

At the end of another four weeks, the *Braybrook Castle*, with three-fourths of the cargo she had brought from London, sailed for Sydney under the command of Captain Blake of the *Harvest Queen*, and the *Harvest Queen* under jury masts, and with her valuable cargo undamaged, was ready to sail, escorted by the *Dolphin* on the following day, with Lindley as master.

The last night at "Wreck House" was even a merrier and happier one than that on which the wrecking party celebrated Lucy's "find." But yet Lucy herself felt a little sad at saying farewell to this wild spot, where amid the roar of the ever-beating surf, and the clamour of the gulls and terns, she had spent the four happiest months of her life. The rough food, the fresh sea-air, and the active life had, Lester declared, only served to increase her beauty, and she herself had never felt so strong and in such robust health before. Almost every day in fine weather she had taken a walk to some part of the interior of the island, or along the many white beaches, filling a large basket with sea-birds' eggs, or collecting the many beautiful species of cowries and other sea-shells with which the beaches were strewn. Years before, another wrecking party had left some goats on the island, and these had thriven and increased amazingly. Her husband's men had shot a great number for food, and captured three or four, which supplied them with milk, and these latter, with their playful kids, and a number of fowls which had been brought from Sydney in the *Dolphin*, together with a pair of pet baby seals, made up what she called her "farmyard." On one part of the island there was a dense thicket of low trees, the resort not only of hundreds of wild goats, but of countless thousands of terns and other sea-birds, who had made it their breeding ground. It was situated at the head of a tiny landlocked bay, the beach of which was covered with the weather-worn spars and timbers of some great ship which had gone ashore there perhaps thirty or forty years before. The whole of the foreshores of the island, however, were alike in that respect, for it had proved fatal to many a good ship, even from the time that gallant navigator Matthew Flinders had first discovered the group.

On the morning of the last day of the stay of the wrecking party on the island, Lucy set out for this place, remembering that on her last visit she had left a basket of cowries there. Bidding her beware of black snakes, for the place was noted for these deadly reptiles, Lester went off on board the *Harvest Queen*.

An hour afterwards, as Lester was engaged with Lindley in the ship's cabin, a man on deck called down the skylight to him.

"Here is Mrs. Lester coming back, sir. She's running, and is calling for you."

With a dreadful fear that she had been bitten by a snake, Lester rushed on deck, jumped into a boat, and was ashore in a few minutes. Lucy, too exhausted to come down to the boat and meet him, had sat down in front of the now nearly empty house.

"I'm all right, Tom," she panted, as he ran up to her, "but I've had a terrible fright," and she could not repress a shudder. "I have just seen three skeletons in the thicket scrub, and all about them are strewn all sorts of things, and there are two or three small kegs, one of which is filled with money, for the end has burst and the money has partly run out on the sand."

Lester sprang to his feet, and called out to the two men who had pulled him ashore to come to him.

"Mrs. Lester's luck again!" he cried.

"Mrs. Lester's luck again!" bawled one of the men to the rest of the wrecking party on board the *Harvest Queen*, and in an instant the cry was taken up, and then came a loud cheer, as, disregarding discipline, all hands tumbled into a boat alongside, frantically eager to learn what had occurred.

Lester waited for them, and then Lucy gave a more detailed account of how she made her discovery.

"I found my basket where I had left it, and had just sat down to take off my shoes, which were filled with sand, when a goat with two of the sweetest little kids you ever saw in your life came suddenly out from behind a rock. The kids were not more than a day or two old, and I determined to catch at least one of them to take home. The moment the mother saw me she ran off with her babies, and I followed. They dived into the thicket, and led me *such* a dance, for they ran much faster than I thought they could.

"I had never been so far into the scrub before, and felt a little bit frightened—it was so dark and quiet—but I was too excited to give up, so on I sped until the nanny and kids ran into what seemed a tunnel in the thick scrub. It is really a road made by the goats and is only about three feet high, the branches and creepers making a regular archway overhead. I stooped down and followed, and in a few minutes came to a little space which was open to the sky; for the sunlight was so bright that, coming out of the dark tunnel place, I was quite dazzled for a few moments, and had to put my hands over my eyes.

"When I looked about, I saw that the ground was strewed with all sorts of things—rotten boards and boxes, and ships' blocks, and empty bottles and demijohns, with all the cane covering gone. Then I saw the three

kegs, and noticed one had burst open or rotted away, and that it was filled with what looked like very large and dirty nickel pennies. I went to it and took some up, and saw they were crown pieces! Of course, I was at once wildly excited, and thought no more of the dear little kiddies, when I heard one of them cry out—quite near—and saw it, lying down exhausted, about ten yards away. I was running over to it when I saw those three dreadful skeletons. They are lying quite close to each other, near some brass cannons and a lot of rusty ironwork. I was so terrified that I forgot all about the poor kid, and—and, well, that is all; and here I am with my skirt in rags, and my face scratched, and my hair loose, and 'all of a bobbery,' as Manuel says."

"Boys," said Lester, "I'm pretty sure I know how those poor fellows' bones come to be there. An East Indiaman—the *Mountjoy*—was lost somewhere on the Kent Group about sixty years ago; and I have read that she had a lot of specie on board. Now, as soon as Mrs. Lester has rested a bit, we'll start."

"I'll carry you, ma'am," said Bailey, a herculean creature of 6 ft. 6 in., and stepping into "Wreck House" he brought out a chair, seated Lucy on it, and amidst applause and laughter, lifted it up on his mighty shoulders as if she was no more weight than the chair itself.

She guided them to the spot, and within an hour, not only the three small casks—all of which were filled with English silver money, but the contents of two others, which were found lying partly buried in the sandy soil, were brought to the house. And then began the exciting task of counting the coins, which took some time, and when Lester announced the result, a rousing cheer broke from the men.

"Six thousand, two hundred and seven pounds, four shillings, boys; all with the blessed picture of good old George the Third on them. Lucy, my dear, let us drink your health."

Lucy drew him aside for a minute or two ere she complied with his request, and with sparkling eyes she talked earnestly to him.

"Of course I will, dear," he said.

"Now, hoys," he cried, as Lucy brought out two bottles of brandy, and some cups and glasses, "let us drink my wife's health. She has brought us good luck. And she and I are dividing a thousand pounds between you, with an extra fifty for Manuel; for I'm pretty well certain that the Home Government can't claim any royalty."

The rough wreckers cheered and cheered again, as they drank to "Mrs. Lester's Luck." They were all being paid high wages, and were worth them, for they had toiled manfully, and the most pleasant relations had always existed between them and Lester.

Immediately after breakfast on the following morning the anchors of the *Harvest Queen* were weighed to the raising chanty of—

"Hurrah, my boys, we're Homeward Bound!" and then the *Dolphin*, with Lester on the bridge and Lucy beside him at the telegraph, went ahead, and tautened out the tow line, and Lindley made all sail on his stumpy jury masts.

Seventeen days later, the gallant little tug pulled the *Harvest Queen* into Sydney Harbour. "Mrs. Lester's Luck," had been with them the whole voyage, for from the time they had left Kent's Group, till they passed between Sydney Heads, nothing but fine weather and favourable winds had been experienced.

As the *Dolphin*, with the hulking *Harvest Queen* behind her, came up the smooth waters of the harbour to an anchorage off Garden Island, big Bailey, who was standing beside Lester and Lucy on the bridge, uttered a yell of delight.

"Mrs. Lester's luck again, by all that's holy! There is the *Braybrook Castle* at anchor over in Neutral Bay!"

It was indeed the *Braybrook Castle*, which had arrived only one day previously, and when Lester went on shore a few hours later, he found that he was a richer man by over £17,000 than when he had left Sydney less than six months before.

And "Mrs. Lester's Luck" brought happiness to many other people beside herself and her husband in the city of the Southern Sea, and when a year later, in England, she stood on a stage under the bows of a gallant ship of two thousand tons, built to Lester's order, and broke a bottle of Australian wine against her steel plates, she named her "The Lucy's Luck!"

BULL-DOGS OF THE SEA

Not many sea-going people—outside of professional whalers or sealers—know much about the "killer" and his habits, and still less of his appearance. Yet this curious whale (for the killer is one of the minor-toothed whales) is known all over the world, though nowhere is it more plentiful than along the eastern and southern coasts of the Australian continent. In the colder seas of the northern part of the globe it is not uncommon; and only last year one was playing havoc, it was stated, with the fishermen's nets off the northeastern coast of Ireland.

On the eastern seaboard of Australia, however, the killers can be watched at work, even from the shore, particularly from any bluff or headland from which a clear view can be obtained of the sea beneath, and should there be a westerly wind blowing, their slightest movements may be observed; particularly when they are "cruising," i.e., watching for the approach of a "pod" of either humpback or fin-back whales. During the prevalence of westerly winds the sea water becomes very clear, so clear that every rock and stone may be discerned at a depth of six or eight fathoms, and the killers, when waiting for their prey, will frequently come in directly beneath the cliffs and sometimes remain stationary for half an hour at a time, rolling over and over, or sunning themselves.

First of all, let me describe the killer's appearance. They range in length from ten to twenty feet, have a corresponding girth, and show the greatest diversity of colouring and markings. Their anatomy is very much that of the sperm whale—the one member of the cetacean family which they do not attempt to attack on

account of his enormous strength and formidable teeth—and they “breach,” “spout” and “sound” like other whales. The jaws are set with teeth of from one or two inches in length, deeply imbedded in the jawbone, and when two of these creatures succeed in fastening themselves to the lips of a humpback, even fifty feet in length, they can always prevent him from “sounding” and escaping into deep water, for they cling to the unfortunate monster with bull-dog tenacity, leaving others of their party to rip the blubber from his sides and pendulous belly.

On the coast of New South Wales—particularly at Twofold Bay, where there is a shore whaling station, there are two “pods” or communities of killers which have never left the vicinity within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, and indeed they were first noticed and written about in the year 1790. At other places on the Australian coast there are permanent pods of ten, fifteen or twenty, but those at Twofold Bay are quite famous, and every individual member of them is well-known, not only to the local whalers, but to many of the other residents of Twofold Bay as well, and it would go hard with the man who attempted to either kill or injure one of any of the members of the two pods, for the whalers would be unable to carry on their business were it not for the assistance rendered to them by their friends the killers, whose scientific name, by the way, is *Orca Gladiator*—and a more fitting appellation could never have been applied.

Now as to the colouring and markings—which are not only diverse, but exceedingly curious. Some are of a uniform black, brown, dark grey, or dirty cream; others are black with either streaks or irregular patches of yellow, white or grey: others again are covered with patches of black, white or yellow, ranging in size from half a dozen inches in diameter to nearly a couple of feet. One which the present writer found lying dead on the reef of Nukulaelae Island, in the Ellice Group, was almost a jet black with the exception of some poorly defined white markings on the dorsal fin and belly; another which he saw accidentally killed by a bomb fired at a huge whale off the Bampton Shoals, was of a reddish-brown, with here and there almost true circular blotches of pure white. This poor fellow was twelve feet in length, and his death was caused by his frantic greediness to get at the whale and take his toll of blubber. The whale was struck late in the day, and the sea was so rough that the officer in charge, after having twice tried to get up and use his lance, determined to end the matter with a bomb before darkness came on. At this time there was a “pod” of seven killers running side by side with the whale and endeavouring to fasten to his lips whenever he came to the surface; and, just as the officer had succeeded in getting within firing distance and discharging the bomb, poor *Gladiator* came in the way, and was killed by the shot, much to the regret of the boat's crew.

For, as I have said, the whalers—and particularly the shore whalers, *i.e.*, those who do their whaling from a station on shore—regard, and with good reason, the killers as invaluable allies. Especially is this so in the case of the Twofold Bay shore whalers, for out of every ten whales killed during the season, whether humpbacks, “right” whales, or finbacks, three-fourths are captured through the pack of killers seizing and literally holding them till the boats come up and end the mighty creatures' miseries.

Towards the end of winter an enormous number of whales appear on the Australian coast, coming from the cold Antarctic seas, and travelling northward along the land towards the breeding grounds—the Bampton and Bellona Shoals and the Chesterfield Groups, situated between New Caledonia and the Australian mainland, between 17° and 20° S. The majority of these whales strike the land about Cape Howe and Gabo Island at the boundary line between New South Wales and Victoria—sixty miles south of Twofold Bay. Most of them are finbacks, though these are always accompanied by numbers of humpbacks and a few “right” whales—the most valuable of all the southern cetacea except the spermaceti or cachalot. The latter, however, though they will travel in company with the flying finback and the timid humpback and “right” whale, has no fear of the killers. He is too enormously strong, and could crush even a full-grown killer to a pulp between his mighty jaws were he molested, and consequently the killers give the cachalot a wide berth as a dangerous customer. The finback, however, swift and lengthy as he is, seldom manages to escape once he is “bailed up,” and having no weapon of defence except his flukes (for he is one of the baleen or toothless whales), he has but one chance of his life, and that is to dive to such a depth that his assailants have to let go their hold of him in order to ascend to the surface to breathe.

The finback, I must mention, although the most plentiful of all the whale family, and sometimes attaining the length of ninety feet, is never attacked by whale-boats when he is “loose,” *i.e.*, free, and is only captured when his struggles with the ferocious killers have so exhausted him that a boat can approach and dart a harpoon into or lance him. The reason for this immunity of primary attack by boats is that the finback is in the first place of little value when compared to either the humpback or “right” whale, for the coating of blubber is thin, and the plates of baleen (or whalebone) he possesses are very short; and in the second place he is, although so timid a creature, too dangerous to be struck with a harpoon, for he would take the entire whale-line out of three or four boats and then get away with it after all, for it is the swiftest of all the cetacean family, and all whalers say that no one but a stark lunatic would dream of putting an iron into a loose “finner,” such as ranges the Southern Ocean. I was told, however, of one well-authenticated case off the Azores, where a reckless Portuguese shore-whaler struck a bull finback, which, after taking the lines from four boats (220 fathoms in each) towed them for three hours and then got away, the line having to be cut owing to the creature sounding to such an enormous depth that no more line was available.

The shore whaling parties at Twofold Bay, however, run no risks of this sort. They let their friends, the *Gladiators*, do most of the work, and find that “fin-backing” under these circumstances is fairly profitable, inasmuch as they can tow the carcass ashore, and “try out” the blubber at their leisure.

But, in a case where one of these finbacks is held by killers, it can be approached, as I have said, by shore boats and killed, as is the practice of the Twofold Bay whalers.

Let the writer now quote, with the publisher's permission, from a work he wrote some years ago describing the way the killers “work in” with their human friends. In this particular instance, however, it was a humpback whale, but as *Orca Gladiator* treats the humpback and “right” whale as he does the lengthy “finner,” the extract from the article is quite applicable.

“Let us imagine a warm, sunny day in August at Twofold Bay. The man who is on the look-out at the abandoned old lighthouse built by one Ben Boyd on the southern headland fifty years ago, paces to and fro on the grassy sward, stopping now and then to scan the wide expanse of ocean with his glass, for the spout of a

whale is hard to discern at more than two miles if the weather is misty or rainy. But if the creature is in a playful mood, and 'breaches'—that is, springs bodily out of the water, and falling back, sends up a white volume of foam and spray, like the discharge of a submarine mine, you can see it eight miles away.

"The two boats are always in readiness at the trying-out works, a mile or so up the harbour; so too are the killers, and the look-out man, walking to the verge of the cliff, gazes down.

"There they are, cruising slowly up and down, close in shore, spouting lazily, and showing their wet, gleaming backs and gaff-topsail-like dorsal fins as they rise, roll, and dive again.... Some of them have nicknames, and each is well known to his human friends.

"Presently the watchman sees, away to the southward, a white, misty puff, then another, and another. In an instant he brings his glass to bear. 'Humpback!' Quickly two flags flutter from the flagpole, and a fire is lit; and as the flags and smoke are seen, the waiting boats' crews at the trying-out station are galvanised into life by the cry of 'Rush, ho, lads! Humpbacks in sight, steering north-west! Rush and tumble into the boats and away!'

"Round the south head sweeps the first boat, the second following more leisurely, for she is only a 'pickup' or relief, in case the first is 'fluked' and the crew are tossed high in air, with their boat crushed into matchwood, or meets with some other disaster. And as the leading boat rises to the long ocean swell of the offing, the killers close in round her on either side, just keeping clear of the sweep of the oars, and 'breaching' and leaping and spouting with the anticipative zest of the coming bloody fray.

"'Easy, lads, easy!' says the old boat-header; 'they are coming right down on us. Billy has right. They're humpbacks, sure enough!'

"The panting oarsmen pull a slower stroke, and then, as they watch the great savage creatures which swim alongside, they laugh in the mirthless manner peculiar to most native-born Australians, for suddenly, with a last sharp spurt of vapour, the killers dive and disappear into the dark blue beneath; for they have heard the whales, and, as is their custom, have gone ahead of the boat, rushing swiftly on below fully fifty fathoms deep. Fifteen minutes later they rise to the surface in the midst of the humpbacks, and half a square acre of ocean is turned into a white, swirling cauldron of foam and leaping spray. The bull-dogs of the sea have seized the largest whale of the pod or school—a bull—and are holding him for the boat and for the deadly lance of his human foes. The rest of the humpbacks rise high their mighty flukes and 'sound' a hundred—two hundred—fathoms down, and, speeding seaward, leave the unfortunate bull to his dreadful fate.

("And in truth it is a dreadful fate, and the writer of this sketch can never forget one day, as he and a little girl of six watched, from a grassy headland on the coast of New South Wales, the slaughter of a monstrous whale by a drove of killers, that the child wept and shuddered and hid her face against his shoulder.)

"Banging swiftly alongside of him, from his great head down to the 'small' of his back, the fierce killers seize his body in their savage jaws and tear great strips of blubber from off his writhing sides in huge mouthfuls, and then jerking the masses aside, take another and another bite. In vain he sweeps his flukes with fearful strokes from side to side—the bull-dogs of the sea come not within their range; in vain he tries to 'sound'—there is a devil on each side of his jaws, their cruel teeth fixed firmly into his huge lips; perhaps two or three are underneath him tearing and riving at the great rough corrugations of his grey-white belly; whilst others, with a few swift, vertical strokes of their flukes, draw back for fifty feet or so, charge him amidships, and strike him fearful blows on the ribs with their bony heads. Round and round, in ever-narrowing circles as his strength fails, the tortured humpback swims, sometimes turning on his back or side, but failing, failing fast.

"'He's done for, lads. Pull up; stand up, Jim.'

"The boat dashes up, and Jim, the man who is pulling bow oar, picks up his harpoon. A minute later it flies from his hand, and is buried deep into the body of the quivering animal, cutting through the thick blubber as a razor would cut through the skin of a drum.

"'Stern all!' and the harpooner tumbles aft and grips the steer oar, and the steersman takes his place in the head of the boat and seizes his keen-edged lance. But 'humpy' is almost spent, and though by a mighty effort he 'ups flukes' and sounds, he soon rises, for the killers thrust him upwards to the surface again. Then the flashing lance—two, three swift thrusts into his 'life' a gushing torrent of hot, dark blood, and he rolls oyer on his side, an agonised trembling quivers through his vast frame, the battle is oyer and his life is gone.

"And now comes the curious and yet absolutely truly described final part that the killers play in this ocean tragedy. They, the moment the whale is dead, close around him, and fastening their teeth into his body, by main strength bear it to the bottom. Here—if they have not already accomplished it—they tear out the tongue, and eat about one-third of the blubber. In from thirty-six to forty hours the carcase will again rise to the surface, and as, before he was taken down, the whalers have attached a line and buoy to the body, its whereabouts are easily discerned from the look-out on the headland; the boats again put off and tow it ashore to the trying-out works. The killers, though they have had their fill of blubber, accompany the boats to the head of the bay and keep off the sharks, which would otherwise strip off all the remaining blubber from the carcase before it had reached the shore. But once the boats are in the shallow water, the killers stop, and then with a final 'puff! puff!' of farewell to their human friends, turn and head seaward to resume their ceaseless watch and patrol of the ocean.

"The killers never hurt a man. Time after time have boats been stove in or smashed into splinters by a whale, either by an accidental blow from his head or a sudden lateral sweep of his monstrous flukes, and the crew left struggling in the water or clinging to the oars and pieces of wreckage; and the killers have swum up to, looked at, and smelt them, but never have they touched a man with intent to do him harm. And wherever the killers are, the sharks are not, for Jack Shark dreads a killer as the devil is said to dread holy water. Sometimes I have seen 'Jack' make a rush in between the killers, and rip off a piece of hanging blubber, but he will carefully watch his chance to do so."

One of the most experienced whaling masters of New Bedford, with whom the writer once cruised from the Gilbert Islands to Tap in the Western Carolines, told him that on one occasion when he was coming from the

shore to his ship, which was lying to off the Chatham Islands, the boat was followed by a pack of five killers. They swam within touch of the oars, much to the amusement of the crew, and presently several of what are called "right whale" porpoises made their appearance, racing along ahead of the boat, whereupon Captain Allen went for'ard and picked up a harpoon, for the flesh of this rare variety of porpoise is highly prized. The moment he struck the fish it set off at a great rate, but not quick enough to escape the killers, for though the porpoise was much the swifter fish (were it loose), the weight of the boat and fifty fathoms of line was a heavy handicap. As quickly as possible the men began hauling up to the stricken fish so that Allen might give it the lance, when to their astonishment the killers seized it and literally tore it to pieces in a few minutes.

"If ever I felt mad enough to put an iron into a 'killer' it was then," he said, "but I couldn't do it. And very glad of it I was afterwards, for a week later I had two boats stove in by a whale, and of course, had I hurt one of those beggars of killers, the whole crew would have said it was only a just retribution."

"REVENGE"

On that fever-stricken part of the coast of the great island of New Britain, lying between the current-swept headland of Gape Stephens and the deep forest-clad shores of Kabaira Bay, there is a high grassy bluff dotted here and there with isolated coco-palms leaning northward to the sea beneath, their broad branches restlessly whipping and bending to the boisterous trade wind. On the western side of the bluff there is a narrow strip of littoral, less than half a mile in width, and thickly clothed with a grove of betel nut, through which the clear waters of a mountain stream flow swiftly out oceanwards across a rocky bar.

Near where the margin of the grove of straight, grey-boled betels touch the steep side of the bluff, there may be seen the outline of a low wall of coral stones, forming three sides of a square, and bound and knit together with vines, creepers, and dank, ill-smelling moss—the growth, decay, and re-growth of three score years. The ground which it encloses is soft and swampy, for the serried lines of betel-trees, with their thick, broad crowns, prevent either sun or wind from penetrating to the spot, and the heavy tropical rains never permit it to dry. It is a dark, dismal-looking place, only visited by the savage inhabitants when they come to collect the areca-nuts, and its solitude is undisturbed save by the flapping of the hornbill's wings as he carries food to his imprisoned mate, or the harsh screech of a white cockatoo flying overhead to the mountain forest beyond.

Yet sixty years ago it was not so, for then on the shore facing the bar stood a native village, and within the now rained wall were the houses of three white men, who from their doorways could see the blue Pacific, and the long curve of coast line with cape and headland and white line of reef stretching away down to the westward in the misty tropic haze.

Walk inside the old, broken walls, and you will see, half-buried in the moist, steaming, and malarious ground, some traces of those who dwelt there—a piece of chain cable, two or three whaler's trypots, a rotten and mossgrown block or two, only the hardwood sheaves of which have resisted the destroying influences of the climate; a boat anchor, and farther towards the creek, the mouldering remains of a capstan, from the drumhead holes of which long grey-green pendants of moss droop down upon the weather-worn, decaying barrel, like the scanty ragged beard that falls on the chest of some old man worn out with poverty and toil.

That is all that one may see now; for the dense, evergrowing jungle has long since hidden or rotted all else that was left.

The three men were named Ford, Adams, and Stenhouse. They were *beche-de-mer* fishers, and for nearly a year had been living in this savage spot—the only white men inhabiting the great island, whose northern coast line sweeps in an irregular half-moon curve for more than three hundred miles from Cape Stephens to within sight of the lofty mountains of New Guinea. In pursuit of their avocation, death from disease, or from the spears or clubs of the treacherous, betel-chewing, stark-naked cannibals among whom they dwelt was ever near, but to the men of their iron resolution and dauntless courage that mattered not. Two years' labour meant for them a large sum of money—enough to enable them to return with their wives and families and native dependents, to those more restful islands in the Western Carolines whence they had come a year before.

All three men were employed by one firm in Singapore, whose ship had brought them with their families and some thirty or forty natives of Yap to New Britain. Nine months after their landing, a small schooner had called to replenish their supplies, and ship the cured trepang, which by the most assiduous labour and daring enterprise they had accumulated; and when this story opens, the schooner had been gone some weeks, and they and their native workers were preparing their boats for another cruise along the great barrier reef of New Britain.

Two of these men, Adams and Stenhouse, were old and tried comrades, and in their rough way, devoted to each other. Stenhouse, the elder of the two, had some ten years previously, while sailing along the Pelew Island, found Adams adrift in an open boat—the sole survivor of a shipwrecked crew of sixteen men, and had nursed him back to life and reason. Later on, Adams had married one of Stenhouse's half-caste daughters. Ford, too, who was an American, was connected by marriage with Stenhouse, and nearly every one of the thirty or forty male and female Caroline Islanders who worked for the three white men were more or less allied to their wives by ties of blood or marriage, and there was not one of them who would not have yielded up his or her life in their defence.

Stenhouse, who was the leader of the adventurous party, was a man of about forty-five years of age, and, like his two comrades, an ex-sailor. He was nearly six feet in height, and possessed of such powers of strength and endurance that his name was known throughout the Western Pacific to almost every white man, but his once handsome features were marred by such a terrible disfigurement, that those who came to know

the man and his sterling character always thought or spoke of him with genuine and respectful pity. What had caused this cruel distortion was known to but three other persons besides himself—the mother of his children, his son-in-law, Thomas Adams, and the man who had inflicted the injury; and to spare the reader's feelings as much as possible, it need only be said that the left side of his face had been so injured by violence of some kind as to be pitiful to look upon, the more so as the eye was missing.

Late one evening, just as Stenhouse and his son-in-law, Adams, were smoking their last pipes before tarning in, their comrade entered the house hurriedly, accompanied by one of their native employees, who had been away on a fishing excursion.

"Here's news! There's a big full-rigged ship just anchored under Cape Stephens. Masik boarded her, and had a yarn with the mate."

"Where is she from?" asked Stenhouse, turning his one eye upon the native, Masik.

"I know not, master. But she is a great ship with many men on board—some white, and some yellow, with shaven heads.

"Ah, a Calcutta-Sydney ship, most likely," said Stenhouse to his comrades. Then turning to Masik—"Why came she here? Didst ask?"

"Aye," replied the man in his native tongue; "the ship came here because there be many sick, and two dead men on board. It is a strong sickness."

"Didst speak of us white men here?"

The man nodded. "Aye, and the mate said that the captain would like thee all to come to the ship; but to hasten, for when the two men are buried to-morrow the ship will sail And the mate gave me these for thee."

Adams eagerly extended his hand for a bundle of newspapers which Masik carried wrapped up in a piece of old sail-cloth.

"This is a god-send," said Adams, as he opened the packet and tossed some of the papers to Stenhouse and Ford, "only about six months old. Hallo, here's the name of the ship and captain I suppose, on one of them:

Roger Fullerton, Esq., Ship *Ramillies*———"

"What!"

It was Stenhouse who spoke, and his usual cheerful voice now sounded cracked and discordant, as with an oath he tore the paper from his comrade's hand, read the name, and then sat down, with one hand pressed to his sightless orb, his whole frame trembling from head to foot.

"What is the matter, Ted?" asked Ford anxiously.

Slowly he turned his face towards his comrades. It was white.

"Send them away," he said, "but tell them to call the others and get ready. I am going down to the cape to-night, to that ship. I am going to kill a man."

Ford looked at him wonderingly. Adams, who understood, spoke a few whispered words to the natives, who quickly left the room.

"Tom."

"Yes, Ted."

"Are all the women and children asleep?"

Adams nodded, and Stenhouse silently motioned to him and Ford to be seated. He remained standing.

"Jim Ford," he said quietly, "look at me"—he drew his hand down the distorted side of his face—"and tell me what you would do to a man who made you look like this."

"I would have his life if I swung for it."

"Well, I am going to have this man's life. I shall not be hanged for it, but if I am killed, I look to you, Jim, and you Tom, to stand to my wife and children."

Ford put out his hand impulsively: "All that I have I owe to you, Ted. I will stand to 'em, so help me God."

"I knew you would. Now, only three people in the world besides me—Tom Adams, my wife, and the man who did it—know what made me the blarsted scarecrow I am; but as I may be a dead man by this time tomorrow, I'll tell you."

He paused, and with his forefinger still pressed firmly on the name on the newspaper, said slowly:—

"This man, Roger Fullerton, was a passenger on the *Mahratta*, East Indiaman. I was his servant. We were bound to Sydney from Table Bay. He was going out to be Commissary-General or something of that kind in New South Wales. We had a rough, mutinous crew on board, and one night there was a fight between them and the officers and passengers. They burst into the cabin, and would have captured the ship but for the mate, who shot one man dead and cut another down. I had nothing to do with them—as God is my witness—for I was only a lad of nineteen, and would have stood to the captain and officers like a man, but I was made prisoner by the mutineers early in the fight. After the row was over, Mr. Fullerton missed his watch and a hundred sovereigns which were in a writing case in his cabin. He accused me of stealing them, and when I hotly denied the charge, knocked me down on deck and kicked me so savagely in the face that I should have been killed if I had not been dragged away from him. As it was, he broke my jaw and destroyed my left eye. But that was not all. When he reached Sydney he charged me with the theft. I got a heavy sentence and was sent to the coal-mines at Newcastle; but after two years of hell I escaped by stowing away in a Dutch barque bound to Samarang. And now *my* turn has come."

"Are you sure he is the man?" asked the American.

"Quite. He settled in the Colony and married there. I have heard of him from time to time for many years."

Before midnight the three white men, with twenty-five of their native followers armed with muskets and cutlasses, were following the coastline in the direction of Gape Stephens. The night was dark and rainy, but the route was familiar to both Adams and Stenhouse. All night they marched steadily onward, and only when

daylight broke did they halt on the banks of a stream to rest and eat. Then, crossing the stream, they struck a native path which led to the shore.

"There she is," said Ford.

The ship lay about a mile from the shore. Stenhouse looked at her earnestly, and then abruptly told his comrades his plans, which were daring but simple. He would await the landing of the boat bringing the dead men ashore for burial, and take them prisoners. In all probability the captain would be in charge, and it was Stenhouse's intention to hold him and his boat's crew as ransom for the man he wanted. He intended no harm to them, but was determined to achieve his object if he had to carry his prisoners off to the mountains, and keep them there till Fullerton was given up to him.

Immediately after breakfast, the watchers saw two boats leave the ship, and pull in towards a creek which debouched into a sandy cove situated immediately under Gape Stephens. The coastline here was uninhabited, and except for the banks of the creek, which were heavily timbered, presented a succession of rolling, grassy downs, and here and there clumps of *vi* (wild mango) and cedar trees, and Stenhouse felt pretty certain that the burying party would pick upon one of these spots to inter the bodies, and that he could easily cut them off from the boats.

Swiftly and silently they took up a position on the banks of the creek, Stenhouse with his two friends keenly watching the advancing boats from behind the buttressed roots of a giant Indian fig-tree. In a few minutes, the leading boat, in which were six men and an officer, entered the creek, but the water being shallow, grounded on the bar, and the crew got out. The second boat contained four seamen, and three or four persons who were seated aft, and she too took the ground, and then, as her crew stepped out into the water, Stenhouse gripped Adams by the shoulder.

"See, Tom, there he is! The man himself. Look! that big fellow with the white whiskers, sitting between the others." He held a hurried consultation with his comrades, and quickly decided on his course of action.

Both crews were now endeavouring to drag the boats across the shallow bar into the deeper water beyond, but the task was too much for them, and presently the captain, who was in the second boat, ordered them to cease, and said something to the big, white-whiskered man, who nodded his head in approval.

Four seamen then lifted two coffins from the first boat, and, followed by four others carrying their own and their shipmates' arms and some spades, began wading through the water to the shore, directly to where the unseen watchers lay awaiting; and the remainder of the party, leaving the boats with two men on guard, came slowly after them.

Stenhouse pointed to the two boat-keepers, and said something to Ford, who, with half-a-dozen natives, quickly disappeared.

In a few minutes the bearers of the coffins reached the shore, and placed their burdens on the ground to await further orders.

"We shall find clear ground, sir, within a few yards from the bank," began the captain, addressing the tall man, who with bared head and slow step walked by his side, when suddenly there came a rush of a score of half-naked figures, who threw themselves silently upon the party, and overcame them almost without a sound.

"Surrender, or you are all dead men," cried a hoarse voice.

There was no need for the stern summons, for not only were the astonished sailors terrified by the extraordinary suddenness of the attack and the savage appearance of their captors, but their captain, the surgeon, and the big man had their pistols taken from their belts so quickly that resistance was utterly out of the question, covered as they were by half-a-dozen muskets pointed at their breasts.

Then Adams stepped out and addressed the captain. 804

"No harm will be done to you and your men, but you must remain our prisoners for awhile. Then your arms will be returned to you, and you can go back to your ship. Your boat-keepers are secured."

"What in God's name does this mean?" cried the unfortunate officer.

"Silence, if you value your life," cried the same stern voice that had called upon them to surrender.

The captain turned and sought to discern the speaker, but the muzzle of a pistol was placed menacingly against his chest, and he was again ordered to be silent.

Then at a sign from Adams all the crews' and officers' arms were carried off to the boats by two natives, and the wondering seamen were bidden by Adams to lift the coffins and follow him.

"Do not attempt to escape," he said, speaking to the whole party generally; "if you do you will be shot down without mercy."

As he spoke Ford, with five armed natives, silently joined the rest of the captors. Fullerton, the captain, and the surgeon all looked at him curiously.

"March, gentlemen," he said, pointing with his drawn cutlass to the bearers of the coffins, who were now, guided by Adams, pushing their way through the timber, surrounded by their native guards with muskets cocked.

In ten minutes the belt of timber had been passed through, and captors and captured emerged upon a grassy sward.

"Halt!"

Again that hoarse, strange voice sounded from somewhere near, and the seamen shuddered as they gently laid their burdens on the ground.

"Bury your dead, sir, and have no fear," said Adams to the captain.

Then he and Ford spoke to their followers, who silently drew back and permitted the seamen who carried shovels to advance. The ground was soft and moist, and their task was soon accomplished, and the coffins lowered into their graves.

Then the captain, followed by the surgeon and Roger Fullerton, advanced, prayer-book in hand, and read

the burial service, and Adams and Ford wondered somewhat when, at its conclusion, a heavy sob burst from Fullerton.

Quickly the earth was shovelled in, and soon two mounds showed on the sward. Then came the clank of arms, and the mourners were again surrounded by their half-nude guards.

"Follow," said Adams shortly.

He led them for a distance of about a hundred yards, then halted, and the prisoners found themselves in a hollow square.

"Are you going to slaughter unarmed men?" cried the surgeon, who was terrified at the very appearance of the wild-looking Caroline Islanders and their grim, silent leaders.

Adams shook his head, but made no reply.

A heavy footstep sounded in the jungle near them, and Stenhouse, carrying two cutlasses under his arm, strode into the square and stood before Fullerton.

For a moment or two their eyes met, and then Stenhouse raised his hand and touched his distorted face.

"You know me, Mr. Fullerton?"

"I know you. You have come to kill me."

"Yes, unless you kill me." He drew a cutlass from its leather sheath and held its hilt out to the man he hated. Fullerton folded his arms across his chest.

"Take it," said Stenhouse slowly, "or, by Heavens! I'll cut you down as you stand."

"As you will," replied the old man steadily, "but fight you I will not. My life is in your hands. Take it. I am not afraid to die."

Stenhouse drew his cutlass slowly, his one eye shining with a deadly hatred.

"For God's sake, man, whoever you are, whatever your injuries may be, do not shed the blood of an old man on his son's grave!" and the captain sprang forward with outspread, appealing hands.

"His son!" and the point of the gleaming weapon drooped.

"His only son. Have mercy on him, as you hope for mercy yourself."

"Stop, Captain Marsland. Do not ask for mercy for me. I did this man a grievous wrong. My life is his. Let him have his due."

Stenhouse threw down his cutlass with an oath, turned his back on his enemy, and put his hand to his forehead.

Then he faced round sharply, and once more he looked into Fullerton's unmoved face.

"Go," he said.

And without another word he strode away, followed by his comrades and his savage companions.

SAUNDERSON AND THE DYNAMITE

Saunderson was one of those men who firmly believed that he knew everything, and exasperated people by telling them how to do things; and Denison, the supercargo of the *Palestine*, hated him most fervently for the continual trouble he was giving to every one, and also because he had brought a harmonium on board, and played dismal tunes on it every night and all day on Sundays. But, as Saunderson was one of the partners in the firm who owned the *Palestine*, Denison, and Pakenham the skipper, had to suffer him in silence, and trust that something might happen to him before long. What irritated Denison more than anything else was that Saunderson frequently expressed the opinion that supercargoes were superfluous luxuries to owners, and that such work "as they tried to do could well be done by the captains, provided the latter were intelligent men."

"Never mind, Tom," said Pakenham hopefully, one day, "he's a big eater, and is bound to get the fever if we give him a fair show in the Solomons. Then we can dump him ashore at some missionary's—he and his infernal groan-box—and go back to Sydney without the beast."

When the *Palestine* arrived at Leone Bay, in Tutuila, Saunderson dressed himself beautifully and went ashore to the mission-house, and in the evening Mrs. O—— (the missionary's wife), wrote Denison a note and asked if he could spare a cheese from the ship's stores, and added a P.S., "What a *terrible* bore he is!" This made the captain and himself feel better.

The next morning Saunderson came on board. Denison was in the cabin, showing a trader named Rigby some samples of dynamite; the trader wanted a case or two of the dangerous compound to blow a boat passage through the reef opposite his house, and Denison was telling him how to use it. Of course Saunderson must interfere, and said *he* would show Rigby what to do. He had never fired a charge of dynamite in his life, nor even seen one fired or a cartridge prepared, but had listened carefully to Denison. Then he sarcastically told Denison that the cheese he had sent Mrs. O—— might have passed for dynamite, it was so dry and tasteless.

"Well, dynamite is made from cheese, you know," said the supercargo deferentially, "just cheese slightly impregnated with picric acid, gastrito-nepenthe, and cubes of oxalicogene."

Saunderson said he knew that, and after telling Rigby that he would walk over to his station before dinner, and show him where to begin operations on the reef, went on shore again.

About twelve o'clock Denison and Rigby went on shore to test the dynamite, fuse, and caps—first in the water and then on the reef. Just abreast of the mission-house they saw a big school of grey mullet swimming close in to the beach, and Denison quickly picked up a stone, tied it with some string round a cartridge, cut

the fuse very short, lit it, and threw it in. There was a short fizz, then a dull, heavy thud, and up came hundreds of the beautiful fish stunned or dead. Saunderson came out of the mission-house and watched the natives collecting them. Denison had half-a-dozen cartridges in his hand; each one was tightly enveloped in many thicknesses of paper, seized round with twine, and had about six inches of fuse, with the ends carefully frayed out so as to light easily.

"Give me some of those," said Saunderson.

The supercargo reluctantly handed him two, and Saunderson remarked that they were very clumsily covered, but he would fix some more himself "properly" another time. Denison sulkily observed that he had no time to waste in making dynamite cartridges look pretty. Then, as Saunderson walked off, he called out and told him that if he was going to shoot fish he would want to put a good heavy stone on the cartridges. Saunderson said when he wanted advice from any one he would ask for it. Then he sent word by a native to Mrs. O———that he would send her along some fish in a few minutes.

Now within a few hundred yards of the mission-house there was a jetty, and at the end of the jetty was Her Majesty's gunboat *Badger*, a small schooner-rigged wooden vessel commanded by Lieutenant-Commander Muddle, one of the most irascible men that ever breathed, and who had sat on more Consuls than any one else in the service.

Saunderson went on the jetty followed by a crowd of natives, and looked over into the water. There were swarms of fish, just waiting to be dynamited. He told a native to bring him a stone, and one was brought—a nice round, heavy stone as smooth as a billiard ball—just the very wrong kind of stone. He tied it on the cartridge at last, after it had fallen off four or five times; then, as he did not smoke, and carried no matches, he lit it from a native woman's cigarette, and let it drop into the water. The stone promptly fell off, but the cartridge floated gaily, and drifted along fizzing in a contented sort of way. Saunderson put his hands on his hips, and watched it nonchalantly, oblivious of the fact that all the natives had bolted back to the shore to be out of danger, and watch things.

There was a bit of a current, and the cartridge was carried along till it brought up gently against the *Badger*—just in a nice cosy place between the rudder bearding and the stern-post. Then it went off with a bang that shook the universe, and ripped off forty-two sheets of copper from the *Badger*; and Saunderson fell off the jetty into the water; and the bluejackets who were below came tumbling up on deck; and the gunner, seeing Lieutenant-Commander Muddle rush up from his cabin in his shirt-sleeves with a razor in his hand, thought that he had gone queer again in his head, and had tried to blow up the ship, and was going to cut his throat, and so he rushed at him, and knocked him down and took his razor away, and begged him to be quiet; and Muddle, thinking it was a mutiny, nearly went into a fit, and straggled so desperately, and made such awful choking noises that two more men sat on him; and the navigating midshipman, thinking it was fire, told the bugler to sound to quarters, and then, seeing the captain being held down by three men, rushed to his assistance, but tripped over something or somebody and fell down and nearly broke his nose; and all the time Saunderson who was clinging to one of the jetty piles, was yelling pitifully for help, being horribly afraid of sharks.

At last he was fished out by Bigby and some natives and carried up to the mission-house and then, when he was able to talk coherently, he sent for Denison, who told him that Commander Muddle was coming for him presently with a lot of armed men and a boatswain with a green bag in which was a "cat," and that he (Saunderson) would first be flogged and then hanged at the *Badger's* yard-arm, and otherwise treated severely, for an attempt to blow up one of Her Majesty's ships; and then Saunderson shivered all over, and staggered out of the mission-house in a suit of Mr. O———'s pyjamas, much too large for him, and met Commander Muddle on the jetty and tried to explain how it occurred, and Muddle called him an infernal, drivelling idiot, and knocked him clean off the jetty into the water again, and used awful language, and told Denison that his chronometers were ruined, and the ship's timbers started, and that he had had a narrow escape from cutting his own throat when the dynamite went off, as he had just begun to shave.

Saunderson was very ill after that, and was in such mortal terror that Muddle and every one else on board the gunboat meant to kill, wound, or seriously damage him, that he kept inside the mission-house, and said he felt he was dying, and that Mr. O——— would prepare him for the end. So Denison and Paekenham, who were now quite cheerful again, sent his traps and his harmonium ashore, and sailed without him, a great peace in their bosoms.

THE STEALING OF SA LUIA

One dull rainy morning, soon after daybreak, as the ship *St. George* of New Bedford was cruising for sperm whales between the islands of Tucopia and Vanikoro, the look-out hailed the deck and reported a boat in sight. The captain was called, and a few minutes later appeared and went aloft.

The boat was about three miles distant to leeward, and Captain Elphinstone at once kept the ship away. The wind, however, was so light that it took her some time to get within hailing distance, and then it was discovered that the boat contained three natives—a man and two young girls—who appeared to be greatly exhausted, for after feebly raising their heads for a moment and putting out their hands imploringly, they fell back again.

A boat was quickly lowered from the ship, and the sufferers brought on board, and their own boat, which was a small, native-built craft much like a whale-boat, but with an outrigger attached, was hoisted on board, for she was too good to be turned adrift.

On board the *St. George* was a Samoan named Falaoa. He was a native of the island of Manua, and at once recognised the unfortunates as country-people of his own. The man, who was in a dreadful state of

emaciation, and barely able to raise his voice above a whisper, was over six feet in height, and appeared to be about five-and-twenty years of age; his companions had evidently not undergone as much suffering and did not present the same shocking appearance as he, for the sun had burnt his skin to such a degree that that part of his tattooing which was not covered by the scanty *lava lava* of tappa cloth around his loins had become almost black.

Under the kind and careful treatment they received from Captain Elphinstone and his officers, all three soon recovered, and ten days after they had been rescued, the following entry was made in the ship's log:—"This day, at their own request, we landed the three Samoans at the island of Nufilole, one of the Swallow Group, where they were well received by the natives and a white trader. They were accompanied by one of my crew named Falaoa, who begged me to let him go with them, having become much attached to one of the young women. We gave them some arms and ammunition, and some clothing and tobacco. They all behaved with the greatest propriety during their stay on the ship. From where they started in Samoa to where we picked them up in 12° S. is a distance of 1,800 miles."

And here is their story, told by Sa Luia to the wife of Frank Chesson, a white trader then living on the Santa Cruz Islands, in which the Swallow Group is included. Chesson himself had lived in Samoa, and spoke the language well, and the four people remained in his house for many months as welcome guests. A strong and lasting friendship was formed, and resulted in the trader, his wife and family, and the four Samoans removing to the little island of Fenua-loa, and there founding what is now a colony of Polynesians with language, customs and mode of life generally entirely distinct from their Melanesian neighbours.

I am Sa Luia. I come from Mulifanua, at the lee end of Upolu in Samoa. My father was not only the chief of Mulifanua, but has great lands in the Atua district on the north side of Upolu—lands which came to him through my mother, who died when I was but a week old—and from these lands he had his name, Pule-o-Vaitafe (Lord of many Rivers).

Now it is not well for a daughter to speak unkindly of her father; but this what I now say is true. My father, though he was so rich a man, was very cruel to those who crossed his path, and though he was a brave man in battle, his heart was shrunken up by reason of his avarice and his desire to grow richer, and all Samoa, from Manna in the east to Falealupo in the west, spoke of him as Pule-lima-vale—"Pule the close-fisted"—or Pule fata-ma'a—"Pule the stony-hearted." Yet all this gave him no concern.

"What does it matter to me?" he said to his brother Patiole one day, when Patiole, who was a chief of Manono, reproached him for his meanness in sending away some visitors from Tutuila with such scanty presents that all the people of Mulifanua were ashamed. "What does it matter to me what people say of me? This *malaga* (party of visitors) from Tutuila are eaten up with poverty. Why should I give them fine mats, and muskets and powder and bullets? Am I a fool? What return can they make to me?"

"They came to do thee honour," said my uncle, putting his hand across his eyes out of respect to my father, who was of higher rank than he, and speaking softly. "They are thy dead wife's relatives, and are of good blood. And thou hast shamed them—and thyself as well—by sending them away empty-handed."

My father laughed scornfully. "What care I for my dead wife's relatives! I have no need of them, and want them not. When I took the daughter of Mauga to wife, Mauga was a great man. Now he and his people are broken and dispersed. Let them go and eat grass or wild yams like pigs. I, Pule-o-Vaitafe, want no needy dependents."

"Thou art a hard man," said my uncle, bending his forehead to the mat on which he sat.

"And thou art a fool," replied my father; "if thy heart pains thee of this, why dost thou not give them all that they wish?"

"Because for me, thy brother, to do so, would put shame on thee, for 'tis thy place and thy honour as head of our family to help these people who have fallen on evil days through warfare," said my uncle sadly.

"Thine then be the place and the honour," said my father scornfully. "I will not begrudge thee either. Naught will I have to do with broken men. Farewell."

That was my father's way. That was his hard, hard heart, which knew neither pity nor remorse. This is how my mother died:

When I was seven days old, she took me, as is customary with a woman of chiefly rank, to the *fale siva* (town dance house), where I had to be shown to the people, who brought fine mats and tappa cloth, and many other presents. Now my father was filled with anger that my mother had not borne him a male child, for a male child would have meant richer presents—not only from his own people, but from towns and villages far away. So when he saw that instead of such gifts as a new canoe or some very old, rare mats, or muskets, or such other things as would have been given were the child a boy, there were but the usual presents for a girl-child, his lips turned down with scorn, and he muttered a curse. My mother heard him and the tears flowed down her cheeks.

"It may be that my next child will be a boy," she whispered, and then she held me up to my father. "See, Pule, though a girl, she hath thy features, and thou wilt come to love her."

"Tah!" said my father in angry contempt; and without another word he rose and went away.

Then my mother wept silently over me for a long time, for the shame put upon her was very great, and not to be endured. So, with some of her women, she took me to a place called Falema'a, where the cliffs rise up straight from the sea. Her hair was then oiled and dressed, and then she made gifts of her rings of gold and tortoise-shell to her women, and bade them farewell. Then she took me in her arms, and leapt over the cliff into the sea.

It so happened that half-way down the cliff, which is twelve fathoms high, there was a boy named Manaia. He was collecting the eggs of the sea-bird called *Kanapu* and his canoe was anchored just in front of the base of the cliff. He was a brave boy, and being of a very poor family, had clambered up the steep side of the wall of rock, so that he might find the *kanapu* eggs in the clefts and holes, and sell them to people in exchange for food for his mother and sisters. As he clung to the jagged face of the rock, he saw my mother falling through

the air, and in an instant he sprang after her. When she came to the surface, I was still clasped tightly in her arms, and Manaia cried to her to swim to the canoe.

"Nay," she cried, "but take my babe."

And so Manaia took me, and my mother threw up her arms and sank and died.

When my uncle heard of this, he sent a party of his people over from Manono for me, and I was taken to live with him. My father did not interfere, for the manner of my mother's death had made the people murmur, and he was afraid that they might rise in rebellion, and kill or banish him. But yet he tried to get another rich wife, and sent a deputation of his chiefs to Seu Manu of Apia asking for his daughter Sina; and Sina sent him back a piece of wood carved in the semblance of a woman, together with a stone shaped like a heart, with this message—

"This is a good wife for Pule-o-Vaitafe. If she displease him, he can sink her in the sea with a heart of stone."

After that my father tried no more, for the people all round about were murmuring, and he began to feel afraid.

But in no other way did he change, and although Manono is but two leagues distant from Mulifanua, he never came to see me till I was in my fifteenth year, and when I was chosen by the people of Aana to be *Taupo*{*} of Mulifanua. Then I had to leave my uncle, which made me weep, for although I was proud of the honour done me, I did not wish to leave him and go back to my father. But I had no choice but to obey, and so I was taken back to Mulifanua by a fleet of canoes and *taumualua* (native boats), with great ceremony, and then followed many meetings and much feasting and dancing. I was put under the care of two women, who attended me day and night, as is the custom; they walked, ate, and slept with me, and every day I was taught how to dance, and how to wear my fine mats and long train of tappa, so as to receive or call upon visitors who came to the town from other places in Samoa.

** Taupo, the town maid. This distinction is usually conferred on a girl of good family, and has many honours and emoluments in the way of presents attached to it. In some cases a taupo will not marry till she reaches middle age, and occasionally will remain single.*

In all the many years that I had spent on Manono, I had not once seen the boy Manaia—he who had taken me from the water—though I had heard of him as having been tattooed and grown into a tall man. But on the same day that I returned and was taken to the *fale taupule* (council house) to be received by the people as their *taupo*, a girl named Selema who attended me whispered his name, and pointed him out to me. He was sitting with the other young men, and like them, dressed in his best, and carrying a musket and the long knife called *nifa oti*. I saw that he was very, very tall and strong, and Selema told me that there were many girls who desired him for a husband, though he was poor, and, it was known, was disliked by my father.

Now this girl Selema, who was of my own age, was given to me as my especial *tavini* (maid) and I grew to like her as my own sister. She told me that already my father was casting about in his mind for a rich husband for me, and that the man he most favoured was old Tamavili, chief of Tufa, in Savai'i, who would soon be sending messengers with presents to him, which if they were accepted, would mean that my father was inclined to his suit, and that he, Tamavili, would follow himself and pay court to me.

All this frightened me, and I told Selema I would escape to my uncle in Manono, but she said that that would not do, as if he tried to protect me it would mean war. So I said nothing more, though much was in my mind, and I resolved to run away to the mountains, rather than be made to marry Tamavili, who was a very old man.

One day Selema and I went to the river to wash our hair with the pith of the wild oranges. We sat on the smooth stones near the water, and had just begun to beat the oranges with pieces of wood to soften them, when we saw a man come down the bank and enter a deep pool further up the stream.

"'Tis Manaia," said Selema; "he hath come to drag the pool for fish." Then she called out to him, "*Ola*, Manaia," and he looked at us and laughed as he spun his small hand-net into the pool. We sat and watched him and admired his strength and skill and the clever way in which he dived and took the fish from his net. In a little while he had caught seven—beautiful fish, such as are in all the mountain streams of Samoa. Then he came out of the water, made a basket of leaves, and approached me, and without a word, laid them at my feet. This pleased me, so I put out my hand and touched one of the fish—meaning that one only would I take.

"They are all for thee, lady," he said in a low voice.

Selema laughed and urged me to accept the gift; so I took the basket, and then, when I looked at his face and saw that his eyes were still turned down, I took courage and said—

"Thou art Manaia. Dost thou remember me?"

"How could I forget thee?" he replied; and then he raised his eyes to my face, and I felt glad, for they were like unto those of my uncle Patiole—kind and soft when they looked into those of a woman or child, but steady and bold to those of a man.

"I am glad to see thee, Manaia," I said, "for I owe thee my life," and as he took my hand and pressed it to his forehead, Selema stole away and left us together.

Now I know not what he said to me, except that when he spoke the name of Tamavili of Tufa, I wept, and said that I would I were back at Manono, and that I was but a child, and had no desire to be wedded to any man. Then he lifted me up in his great arms, and said—

"I love thee, Sa Luia, I love thee! And even if thou canst not love me, yet shall I save thee from wedding this old dotard. Aye, I shall save thee from him as I saved thee from the boiling serf of Falema'a when thy mother, who was a great lady, cried out to me, 'Take my babe.'"

So that is how Manaia my husband wooed me, and when Selema came back and saw us seated together, she laughed again, though tears were in her eyes when she took my feet and pressed them to her cheeks, for she feared that when we fled, she would be left behind. Then Manaia whispered to me and asked me if it was

to my mind to take her.

"Ay," I said; "else will my father kill her when we are gone."

So we made our plans, and when the messengers of Tamavili came and laid their presents before me, I said I was content, and that they could go back to their master, and tell him that in a month's time I would be ready and that he could come for me. This pleased my father, and although at night time I always slept between the two women, as is customary for a *taupo*, with a mat over me, and they lay on the outside, one on each side, yet in the day time I often met my lover in the forest, whilst Selema kept watch.

"We shall go to Uea," {*} he said; "'tis but seventy leagues away, and so soon as the rainy season is ended we shall start. I have bought a small but good boat and have strengthened it for the voyage with an outrigger, and in my mother's house is hidden all the food we can carry. In eight days more the westerly winds will cease, and we shall start, for then we shall have the Matagi Toe'lau (trade wind) and at Uea we shall be safe and live in peace. Then some day I shall send for my mothers and sisters, for on the night that we escape, they too must flee for their lives to Sen Mann, of Apia, who will protect them from thy father's wrath."

** Wallis Island, two hundred miles from Samoa. Many Samoans fled there for refuge after a reverse in battle or for other causes.*

On the morning of the fourth day after this, there came a strange messenger to the town to see my father, who in a little time appeared at his door with a smiling face and bade the conch be blown to summon the people together.

"Here is news, O people," he said. "Manka, {*} the white trader of Tufa, also seeketh my daughter, Sa Luia, in marriage. He and Tamayili have quarrelled—why, it matters not to me, or thee—and Manka, who is a very rich man, hath sent me word that he will compete with Tamayili. Whatever he offers for dowry and for presents to me, the white man will give double. This is a good day for me."

** Monk.*

But the people were silent, for they knew that he was breaking his pledged word with Tamavili, and was setting at naught the old customs and the honour of the town. So, as he looked at them, he scowled; then he held out his hand, on the palm of which were ten American gold coins, each of twenty dollars.

"Two hundred dollars hath this white man, Manka, sent to my daughter Sa Luia as a present, with these words: 'If she cares not for my suit, well and good—let her have them made into bracelets for her pretty arms.'"

Now this was a great gift, and it came with such generous words that the people applauded, and my father smiled, as his long thin fingers closed around the heap of gold; but suddenly his face darkened as Manaia spoke.

"'Tis a free gift to the lady Sa Luia. Therefore, O Pule-o-Vaitafe, give it to her."

"Aye, aye! 'tis hers, 'tis hers," cried the people.

My father sent a glance of bitter hatred to my lover, and his lips twitched, but without a word he came to me, and bending low before me, put the money on the ground at my feet, and I, his daughter, heard his teeth grinding with rage, and as I felt his hot breath on my hand, I knew that murder was in his heart. It is easy for a chief such as was my father, to have a man who displeases him killed secretly.

My father went away in anger, and then the chiefs decided that although the white man could not wed me, he should be received with great honour, and be given many presents; for he was known to us as a man of great strength and daring, and was tattooed like a Samoan, which is a great thing to the mind of a Samoan woman, who loathes an untattooed man as unworthy of all that a woman can give, for without tattooing a young man hath no manhood, and his children are weak of body and poor of mind.

That night my father asked me for the money, which I gave him unwillingly, for I wished to send it back to the white man. He took it and placed it in a great box, which contained such things as guns, pistols, and powder and ball, and the key of which he always wore around his neck.

When the eighth day dawned, the sea was very smooth, and our hearts were gladdened by seeing that the wind was from the south-east, and as the day wore on, it increased in strength. When night fell, and the evening fires were lit, Manaia, saying he was going to fish for *malau*, launched his boat and sailed along the shore for a league to the mouth of a small stream. Here he was met by his mother and sisters, who were awaiting him with baskets of cooked food, young coconuts and calabashes of water for the voyage. Then they put their arms around him, and wept as they bade him farewell, for seventy leagues is a long voyage for a small boat not intended for rough seas. Then they went into the forest and fled for their lives to Sen Manu of Apia, and Manaia waited for me.

When the town was buried in slumber, Selema, who lay near me, touched my head with her foot, and then asked me if I slept.

"Nay," I replied in a loud voice, and speaking with pretended anger, so as to awaken the two women between whom I lay. "How can I sleep? 'Tis too hot. Let us go to the beach awhile and feel the cool wind."

The two women grumbled a little at being disturbed, and Selema and I rose and went out of the house. Then, once we were at a safe distance, we ran swiftly to the beach, and then onwards to where Manaia awaited us.

Selema took her seat on the foremost thwart, Manaia at the stern, and I in the centre, and then we pushed off, and using canoe paddles, made for the passage through the reef out into the open sea. When the dawn broke, we were half-way across the straits which divide Savai'i from Upolu, and only two leagues away we saw the clustering houses of Tufa on the iron-bound coast. We did not dare to hoist the sail for fear of being seen, so continued to paddle, keeping well into the middle of the straits. Only that the current was so fierce, Manaia would have steered north, and gone round the great island of Savai'i and then made westward, but the current was setting against the wind, and we should have all perished had we tried to go the north way.

Presently Manaia turned and looked astern, and there we saw the great mat sail of my father's double canoe, just rising above the water, and knew that we were pursued. So we ceased paddling, and hoisted our own sail, which made us leap along very quickly over the seas, though every now and then the outrigger would lift itself out of the water, and we feared that we might capsize. But we knew that Death was behind us, and so sat still, and no one spoke but in a whisper as we looked astern, and saw the sail of the great canoe growing higher and higher. It was a very large canoe and carried a hundred men, and on the raised platform was a cannon which my father had bought from a whale-ship when it was in his mind to fight against Tamalefaiga, who was the king of Upolu.

Suddenly Selema cried out that she saw a *taumualua*{*} and a boat with a sail coming towards us from Tufa, and my heart sank within me, for I knew that if they saw we were pursued by Pule-o-Vaitafe, they would, out of respect for him, stop us from escaping. Still there was naught for us to do but go on, and so we leapt and sprang from sea to sea, and Manaia bade us be of good heart, as he turned the head of the canoe toward the land.

* A large native-built boat

"If this *taumualua* and the boat seek to stay us, I shall run ashore," he said, "and we will take to the mountains. It is Manka's boat, for now I can see the flag from the peak—the flag of America." "And the *taumualua* is that of Tamavili of Tufa," said Selema quietly, for she is a girl of great heart, "and it races with the white man's boat."

I, who was shaking with fear, cannot now well remember all that followed, after Manaia headed our canoe for the shore, and tried to escape, but suddenly, it seemed to me, the white man's boat, with flapping sail, was upon us, and Manka was laughing loudly.

"Ho, ho!" he cried, pulling his long white moustache, "so this is the way the wind bloweth! The old dotard Tamavili and I race together for a bride, and the bride is for neither of us, but for the man who saved her from the sea. Ha, ha! Thou art a fine fellow, Manaia, and I bear thee no ill will, even though the girl hath my good golden money."

"Nay, Manka," cried Selema quickly, and taking something from her girdle she held it up to the white man; "see, here is thy gift to the lady Sa Luia. We meant to give it back to thee with all good will, for Sa Luia loves no man but this her lover Manaia, who held her up from the angry sea when her mother died. And so when Pule-o-Vaitafe took the money from her—which was thy free gift—I waited till he slept, and stole the key of his treasure-chest, and took the money so that it might be returned to thee."

"Is this true?" asked the white man of Manaia. "The money is thine," said Manaia, who knew not what else to say, "but the woman is mine. So let us depart, for Tamavili and his men—whom no one in Malifanua thought to see for three days yet—are drawing near, and we may escape by running the canoe through the surf, and taking to the mountains."

The white man swore an oath. "Thou art a fine fellow, and I bear no ill will, but will help thee to outwit that old dodderer who tried to steal away three days before me. I will put my boat between he and thee and keep him off. Whither wouldst land?"

"Not here, unless we are pressed. But we are in bad case; for see, on the one side comes Pule-o-Vaitafe, and on the other Tamavili. Yet if thou wilt be the good friend to us, we may escape both, and keep on our way to the open sea."

"The open sea!" cried Manka quickly—"and whither to?"

"To Uea."

"Thou art a bold fellow," said the white man again, "and shalt have the girl, for thou art worthy of her. And she shall keep the money for her dowry. I am no man to go back on my word, even though I lose so fair a bride. As for Pule-o-Vaitafe, I care not a blade of grass, and for Tamavili even less. And see, take this rifle, and if Tamavili cometh too close to thee, how can I help thee defending thyself and the women?"

With that he gave Manaia one of six rifles in his boat and two score and ten cartridges, some tobacco, matches, and a pipe; then he pressed our hands and wished us God-speed, and we parted, he sailing towards the *taumualua*, which was crowded with men, and we following. When he came within speaking distance of Tamavili, he again brought his boat to the wind and mocked at the old man.

"Ho, ho! Tamavili. Whither goest in such a hurry? See, there in the canoe is the little bird we both sought, and there following comes her father. But she is neither for me nor thee. Is not her lover there, a fine man—nearly as handsome as I am, and big enough to make ten such rats as thee."

Tamavili was mad with rage, and did not answer. There were with Manka six men—all armed with rifles which loaded at the breech like that which he had given Manaia, and Manka was too great a man for even Tamavili to hurt. But suddenly, as we in the canoe sailed in between the boat and the *taumualua*, the old chief found his voice, and called out to Manaia to lower his sail.

"Give me the lady Sa Luia," he said, "and I will let thee and the girl Selema go," and as he spoke, the crew turned the *taumualua* round and came after us, twenty men paddling on each side.

"Keep back!" cried Manaia fiercely, as he changed seats with me, and giving me the steering paddle, he took up the rifle and loaded it.

"Beware, old man!" shouted Manka, "'tis a dog that bites!"

But Tamavili was too hot with anger to take heed, and shouted to his men to go on, and then Manaia took aim and fired, and two men went down.

"Ho, ho!" and Manka's voice again mocked, "did I not say 'twas a dog that bit?"

There was great commotion in the *taumualua* for a moment or two, but *Tamavili* shouted to his men to go on; he would have ordered some of them to cease paddling and try and shoot Manaia, but feared to hurt or perhaps kill me, and that would have meant war between Tufa and Mulifanua.

"Alo, alo foe!" {*} he cried, standing up on the stem and brandishing his death-knife at Manaia. "I shall

give thy head to the children of the village for a football ere the sun is in mid-heaven."

* "Paddle, paddle hard!"

That was a foolish boast, for once more Manaia knelt and shot, and I turned my head and saw the blood spurt from Tamavili's naked chest as he fell down without a sound among the paddlers and a loud cry of anger and sorrow burst from his men. But in a moment a young sub-chief of Tufa named *Lau Aula* (the Golden-haired) took command and shouted to the crew to press on, and leaping to the bow, he began firing at us with a short gun (revolver) and one of the bullets struck the girl Selema on the leg and tore a hole through the fleshy part. Now this Lau Aula was a blood relative of Manaia, who called out to him to cease firing, but Lau Aula took no heed, and began shooting at us with muskets loaded with round bullets, which were handed to him by some of his people.

Then Manaia's face was evil to look at; his lips were drawn back, and his teeth showed like those of an angry dog, for the blood which flowed from Selema's wound was creeping around his naked feet. Yet once more he cried out to Lau Aula to beware ere it was too late; but the young chief called him a thief, and bade him bring the boat to the wind.

"This for thee, then," cried Manaia, and once more he raised his rifle and fired, and Lan Anla spun round and fell over into the sea, for the bullet had struck him in the throat and his life was gone.

That was the last of the fight, for when Lau Aula fell, the rest of Tamavili's men threw down their paddles and let us sail on without further pursuit.

Then, whilst I steered, Manaia tied strips of tappa around Selema's leg so as to stay the bleeding.

"We are safe," cried the girl bravely through her tears, for the pain was very great. "See, lady, the wind is not strong enough for the big double canoe to pursue us."

But yet, in his rage, when my father saw that we were escaping, he lowered the mat sail and fired two shots at us with the cannon, and the great heavy balls roared over our heads and fell into the sea with a heavy splash not fifty fathoms away. But cannon-balls cost much money, and so, when a third shot was fired, and it fell astern of our boat, my father wasted no more, and we saw the sail again hoisted and the canoe go slowly down towards the *taumualua* of Tamavili, to which the white man was already rendering succour, for Manka, although he had quarrelled with the old chief of Tufa, was yet a man of a kind heart.

And so we sailed on before a fair, soft breeze, and by sunset the great mountain peaks of Savai'i had sunk beneath the sea rim, and we were steering westward by the bright stars with a great joy filling our hearts.

For four days we sailed steadily onwards, and Selema's wound soon began to heal. On the evening of the fourth day we saw the land of Uea just showing above the sea rim, and thought to place our feet on the shore in the morning. But now came sorrow, for in the night it began to blow strongly from the north-east, and heavy rain squalls drove us past the land. In the morning there was but the open sea, and the waves were white and angry, and all that day and the next Manaia kept the boat to the wind, hoping that it would change and let us sail back to Uea. But we hoped vainly; and then, on the third day, there came such a furious storm that we could do naught but drive before it, and go on and on into the great unknown western ocean, whither so many have gone, and have been no more known of men. For many, many days we sailed on, and then, although we had much rain and so suffered no thirst, our food began to fail, and had not Manaia one day caught a sleeping turtle, we should have perished. Some time about the fourteenth day, we saw the jagged peaks of an island against the sky, and steered for it. It was the island called Rotumah—a fine, fair country, with mountains and valleys and running streams, and on it dwell people who are like unto us Samoans in appearance and manners and language. We sailed the boat into a bay on which stood a village of many houses, and the people made us welcome and gave us much food, and besought us to stay there, for their island was, they said, a better place than Uea. And this we should have done and been content, but in the night, as I slept in the house of the unmarried women, a girl whispered in my ear—

"Get thee away with thy lover and the girl Selema. Felipa, the head chief of Fao, hath been told of thy beauty, and hath sent word here that the man Manaia must be killed to-night, and thou and Selema be sent to him. This is wrong for even a chief to do, and we of this place would aid thee to escape."

So Manaia and I and Selema stole away to the boat, and the people of the village, who pitied us, pretended not to hear or see us. They were very kind, and had put baskets of cooked food and other things into the boat; and so we pushed off, and stood out to sea once more. They had told us to go round to the north end of the island, where there was a chief named Loli, who would protect us and give us a home.

But again evil fortune befell us, for the chief of Fao, hearing of our escape, sent a messenger overland to Loli, claiming us as *mea tafea i moana*—gifts sent to him by the sea—and asking him to hold us for him. And so Loli, who would have welcomed us, was afraid, and begged us not to land and so bring about bloodshed.

"Great is my sorrow, O wanderers," he cried to us, as we sat in the boat a little distance from the beach, "but ye must not land. Steer to the west, and a little to the south, where there is a great land—many, many islands which trend north and south." {*}

* *The New Hebrides Group.*

"Is it far?" asked Manaia scornfully.

"Four days for a ship, longer for a boat," replied Loli shamefacedly; "the gods go with thee, farewell."

Once again we sailed towards the setting sun, steering by the stars at night time, and for seven days all went well. Then after that there came calms, and the hot sun beat upon us and ate its way into our hearts, and we saw no sign of land, and only now and then did a seabird come near us. And then came the time when all our food was gone, and we waited for death to come. Manaia had eaten no food for five days when it came to this, for he said he was feeling quite strong, and divided his share between us. Once as he and I slept Selema put a little piece of old coconut—the last that was left—into my hand, and slipped over the side to die, but Manaia heard her, and, although he was very weak, he roused and caught her as she sank.

Two days before that on which the ship found us Manaia shot a small shark which was following the boat. It

was not as long as a man's arm nor as thick as a woman's, but it kept us alive. Manaia gave us all the flesh, and kept only the head and skin for himself; after that all the world became dark to me, and we lay together in the boat to die.

The captain of the whale-ship was very kind to us, and when he found that the sailor named Falaoa did not wish to part from us on account of Selema, whom he wished to marry, he gave his consent, and said he would land us all here at Nufilole, where there was a white man who would be kind to us.

That is all, and now my husband Manaia and I, and Falaoa and his wife Selema are well content to live here always. For even now, after many months have passed, do Selema and I cry out in our slumbers, and when we awaken our hair lies wet upon our foreheads; but soon all these bad dreams will pass away from us for ever.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A MEMORY OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS ***

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