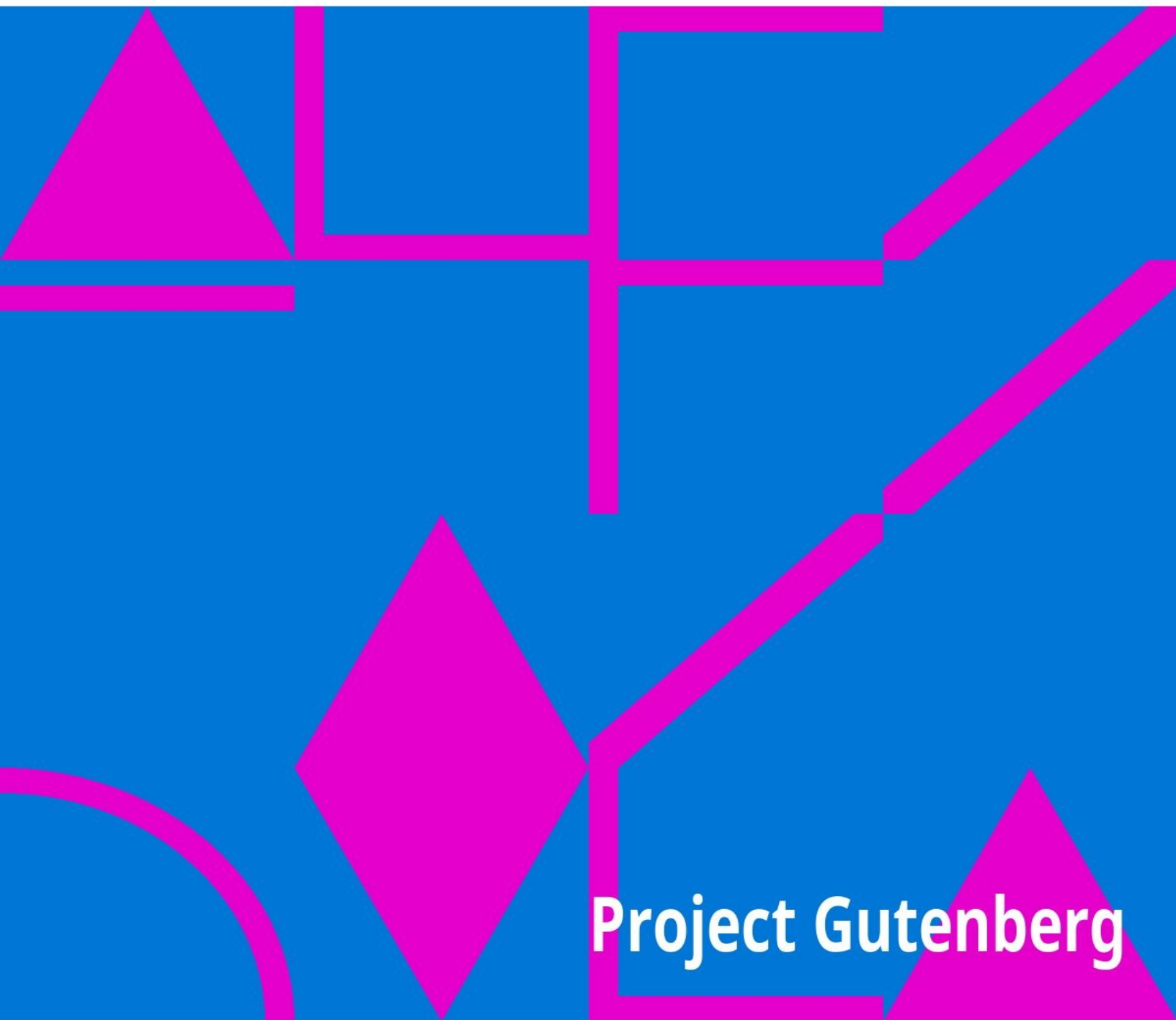


Alone on an Island

William Henry Giles Kingston

The background of the lower half of the image is a solid blue field. Overlaid on this are several large, flat, magenta-colored geometric shapes. These include a large triangle in the upper left, a horizontal bar below it, a vertical bar to the right of the triangle, a large diamond in the lower center, and a large triangle in the lower right. There are also several diagonal lines and smaller rectangular blocks scattered throughout the blue area, creating a complex, abstract pattern.

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W.H.G. Kingston

"Alone on an Island"



Chapter One.

The *Wolf*, a letter-of-marque of twenty guns, commanded by Captain Deason, sailing from Liverpool, lay becalmed on the glass-like surface of the Pacific. The sun struck down with intense heat on the deck, compelling the crew to seek such shade as the bulwarks or sails afforded. Some were engaged in mending sails, twisting yarns, knotting, splicing, or in similar occupations; others sat in groups between the guns, talking together in low voices, or lay fast asleep out of sight in the shade. The officers listlessly paced the deck, or stood leaning over the bulwarks, casting their eyes round the horizon in the hopes of seeing signs of a coming breeze. Their countenances betrayed ill-humour and dissatisfaction; and if they spoke to each other, it was in gruff, surly tones. They had had a long course of ill luck, as they called it, having taken no prizes of value. The crew, too, had for some time exhibited a discontented and mutinous spirit, which Captain Deason, from his bad temper, was ill fitted to quell. While he vexed and insulted the officers, they bullied and tyrannised over the men. The crew, though often quarrelling among themselves, were united in the common hatred to their superiors, till that little floating world became a perfect pandemonium.

Among those who paced her deck, anxiously looking out for a breeze, was Humphry Gurton, a fine lad of fifteen, who had joined the *Wolf* as a midshipman. This was his first trip to sea. He had intended to enter the Navy, but just as he was about to do so his father, a merchant at Liverpool, failed, and, broken-hearted at his losses, soon afterwards died, leaving his wife and only son but scantily provided for.

Tenderly had that wife, though suffering herself from a fatal disease, watched over him in his sickness, and Humphry had often sat by his father's bedside while his mother was reading from God's Word, and listened as with tender earnestness she explained the simple plan of salvation to his father. She had shown him from the Bible that all men are by nature sinful, and incapable, by anything they can do, of making themselves fit to enter a pure and holy heaven, however respectable or excellent they may be in the sight of their fellow-men, and that the only way the best of human beings can come to God is by imitating the publican in the parable, and acknowledging themselves worthless,

outcast sinners, and seeking to be reconciled to Him according to the one way He has appointed—through a living faith in the all-atoning sacrifice of His dear Son. Humphry had heard his father exclaim, “I believe that Jesus died for me; O Lord, help my unbelief! I have no merits of my own; I trust to Him, and Him alone.” He had witnessed the joy which had lighted up his mother’s countenance as she pressed his father’s hand, and bending down, whispered, “We shall be parted but for a short time; and, oh! may our loving Father grant that this our son may too be brought to love the Saviour, and join us when he is summoned to leave this world of pain and sorrow.”

Humphry had felt very sad; and though he had wept when his father’s eyes were closed in death, and his mother had pressed him—now the only being on earth for whom she desired to live—to her heart, yet the impression he had received had soon worn off.

In a few months after his father died, she too was taken from him, and Humphry was left an orphan.

The kind and pious minister, Mr Faithful, who frequently visited Mrs Gurton during the last weeks of her illness, had promised her to watch over her boy, but he had no legal power. Humphry’s guardian was a worldly man, and finding that there was but a very small sum for his support, was annoyed at the task imposed on him.

Humphry had expressed his wish to go to sea. A lad whose acquaintance he had lately made, Tom Matcham, was just about to join the *Wolf*, and, persuading him that they should meet with all sorts of adventures, offered to assist him in getting a berth on board her. Humphry’s guardian, to save himself trouble, was perfectly willing to agree to the proposed plan, and, without difficulty, arranged for his being received on board as a midshipman.

“We shall have a jovial life of it, depend upon that!” exclaimed Matcham when the matter was settled. “I intend to enjoy myself. The officers are rather wild blades, but that will suit me all the better.” Harry went to bid farewell to Mr Faithful.

“I pray that God will prosper and protect you, my lad,” he said. “I trust that

your young companion is a right principled youth, who will assist you as you will be ready to help him, and that the captain and officers are Christian men.”

“I have not been long enough acquainted with Tom Matcham to know much about him,” answered Humphry. “I very much doubt that the captain and officers are the sort of people you describe. However, I daresay I shall get on very well with them.”

“My dear Humphry,” exclaimed Mr Faithful, “I am deeply grieved to hear that you can give no better account of your future associates. Those who willingly mix with worldly or evil-disposed persons are very sure to suffer. Our constant prayer is that we may be kept out of temptation, and we are mocking God if we willingly throw ourselves into it. I would urge you, if you are not satisfied with the character of those who are to be your companions for so many years, to give up the appointment while there is time. I would accompany you, and endeavour to get your agreement cancelled. It will be better to do so at any cost, rather than run the risk of becoming like them.”

“Oh, I daresay that they are not bad fellows after all!” exclaimed Humphry. “You know I need not do wrong, even though they do.”

The minister sighed. In vain he urged Humphry to consider the matter seriously.

“All I can do, then, my young friend, is to pray for you,” said Mr Faithful, as he wrung Harry’s hand, “and I beg you, as a parting gift, to accept these small books. One is a book above all price, of a size which you may keep in your pocket, and I trust that you will read it as you can make opportunities, even though others may attempt to interrupt you, or to persuade you to leave it neglected in your chest.”

It was a small Testament, and Harry, to please the minister, promised to carry it in his pocket, and to read from it as often as he could.

Humphry having parted from his friend, went down at once to join the ship.

Next day she sailed. Humphry at first felt shocked at hearing the oaths

and foul language used, both by the crew and officers. The captain, who on shore appeared a grave, quiet sort of man, swore louder and oftener than any one. Scarcely an order was issued without an accompaniment of oaths; indeed blasphemy resounded throughout the ship.

Matcham only laughed at Humphry when he expressed his annoyance.

“You will soon get accustomed to it,” he observed. “I confess that I myself was rather astonished when I first heard the sort of thing, but I don’t mind it now a bit.”

So Humphry thought, for Matcham interlarded his own conversation with the expressions used by the rest on board; indeed, swearing had become so habitual to him, that he seemed scarcely aware of the fearful language which escaped his lips.

By degrees, as Matcham had foretold, Humphry did get accustomed to the language used by all around, which had at first so greatly shocked him. Though he kept his promise to the minister, and carried the little Testament in his pocket, he seldom found time to read it.

He wished to become a sailor, and he applied himself diligently to learn his profession; and as he was always in a good temper and ready to oblige, the captain and officers treated him with more respect than they did Matcham, who was careless and indifferent, and ready to shirk duty whenever he could do so. Matcham, finding himself constantly abused, chose to consider that it was owing to Humphry, and, growing jealous, took every opportunity of annoying him. Humphry, however, gained the good-will of the men by never swearing at them, or using the rope’s-end: this the officers were accustomed to do on all occasions, and Matcham imitated them by constantly thrashing the boys, often without the slightest excuse.

As the ship sailed on her voyage, the state of affairs on board became worse and worse. On one occasion the crew came aft, complaining that their provisions were bad, and then that the water was undrinkable, when the captain, appearing with pistols in his hands, ordered them to go forward, refusing to listen to what they had to say. Another time they complained that they were stinted in their allowance of spirits, when he

treated them in the same way. They retired, casting looks of defiance at him and the officers. On several occasions, when some of the men did not obey orders with sufficient promptitude, Humphry saw them struck to the deck by the first and second mates without any notice being taken by the captain. The officers, too, quarrelled among themselves; the first officer and the second refused to speak to each other; and the surgeon, who considered that he had been insulted, declined intercourse with either of them. The younger officers followed their bad example, and often and often Humphry wished that he had listened to the advice of his friend Mr Faithful, and had inquired the character of his intended companions before he joined the ship.

At the first port in South America at which the *Wolf* touched, the surgeon, carrying his chest with him, went on shore, and refused to return till the mates had apologised. As this they would not do, she sailed without him; and although the men might be wounded, or sickness break out, there was now no one on board capable of attending to them. Such was the condition of the *Wolf* at the time she was thus floating becalmed and alone on the wide ocean.



Chapter Two.

Harry Gurton stood gazing on the glassy sea till his eyes ached with the bright glare, his thoughts wandering back to the days of his happy childhood, when he was the pride and delight of his beloved father and mother. He had come on deck only to breathe a purer air than was to be found below.

Soon after leaving the coast of South America a fever had broken out on board, and several of the crew lay sick in their berths. Their heartless shipmates, afraid of catching the complaint, took little care of them. Humphry could not bear to see them suffer without help, and from the first had done his best to attend on them. He constantly went round, taking them water and such food as he could induce the cook to prepare.

Tom Matcham was the only officer who had as yet been struck down by the fever. He lay in his berth tossing and groaning, complaining of his hard lot. The officers, who were annoyed by his cries, often abused him, telling him roughly not to disturb them.

"The cruel brutes! I will be revenged on them if I ever get well," exclaimed Matcham.

In vain Humphry tried to pacify him.

"Don't mind what they say, Tom," he observed. "I hope you may get well; but if you were to die, it would be dreadful to go out of the world with such feelings in your heart. I remember enough about religion to know that we should forgive those who injure us. If you will let me, I will try to say some of the prayers which my mother taught me when I was a child, and I will pray with you. I have got a Testament, and I should like to read to you out of it."

"I can't pray, and I don't want to hear anything from the Testament," answered Tom gloomily.

"It would be very dreadful if you were to go out of the world feeling as you now do," urged Humphry.

“What! you don’t mean to say you think I am going to die!” exclaimed Tom in an agitated voice.

“I tell you honestly, Tom, that you seem as bad as the two poor fellows who died last week,” said Humphry.

“Oh, you are croaking,” groaned Tom, though his voice faltered as he spoke.

After talking for some time longer without being able to move him, Humphry was compelled to go forward to attend to some of the other men.

In the first hammock he came to lay Ned Hadow, one of the oldest, and apparently one of the most ruffianly of the crew. He seemed, however, to be grateful to Humphry for his kindness; and he acknowledged that if it had not been for him, he should have been fathoms down in the deep before then.

“I hope, however, that you are getting better now,” said Humphry.

“Thanks to you, sir, I think I am,” answered Ned. “I don’t want to die, though I cannot say I have much to live for, nor has any one else aboard this ship, except to be abused and knocked about without any chance of gaining any good by the cruise.”

“Perhaps we may do better by and by,” observed Humphry.

“I have no hopes of that while such men as the captain and his mates have charge of the ship. Take my advice, Mr Gurton, if you have a chance, get out of her as fast as you can. You will thank me for warning you—it is the only way I have to show that I am grateful to you for your kindness.”

Hadow’s remarks made no deep impression upon Humphry, but he could not help occasionally recollecting them.

After visiting the other sick men, he went on deck to keep his proper watch; then, weary with his exertions, he turned into his berth to obtain the rest he so much needed.

He was awakened by hearing the cry of "All hands shorten sail!" He quickly sprang on deck.

A gale had suddenly sprung up. The ship was heeling over, and ploughing her way through the seething waters. The crew flew aloft. The loftier sails were taken in, and the top-sails were being closely reefed, when another blast, more furious than the former, struck the ship, and two poor fellows were hurled from the lee-yard-arm into the foaming waters. There was a cry from the crew, and several rushed to lower a boat—Humphry among them.

"Hold fast!" cried the captain; "let the fellows drown; you will only lose your lives if you attempt to save them."

Still the men persisted, showing more humanity than they had exhibited in attending to their sick shipmates, when the captain swore that he would shoot any one who disobeyed him. Though spare spars and everything that could float had been hove overboard, the poor fellows in the water could no longer be seen.

The crew, with gloomy looks, assembled forward, muttering threats which did not reach the officers' ears.

The change of weather had the effect of restoring some of the sick men to health, though several died. Among the first to appear on deck was Ned Hadow. He still looked weak and ill—the shadow of his former self. He was changed in other respects, and Humphry observed that he was quiet in his behaviour, and no longer swore in the way he had been accustomed to do.

Matcham remained in his berth. He seemed a little better, though he still refused to listen to Humphry when he offered to read the Bible to him, and when asked the reason, replied, "Because I am not going to let those fellows suppose that I am afraid to die. They would be sneering at me, and calling me a Methodist; and I don't intend to die either, so I don't see why I should bother myself by having religion thrust down my throat."

"If you are not going to die, I suppose the case is different," answered Humphry. "Still, I know that if you were, the Bible is the best book to read. I wish that I had read it oftener myself."

“If I can get hold of it, I will take care that neither you nor I am troubled with it in future,” answered Matcham. “You have teased me too much about it already. I wish you would just try what the captain or mates would say to you if you were to bother them.”

Humphry put his little Testament into his pocket, determining that his messmate should not get hold of it. Still, much as he valued the book as a gift from his old friend, he looked upon it, as many other people do, as a book to be revered, and to be read in times of sickness or trouble; but he had little notion of the value of an open Bible, to be studied with prayer every day in the week, to serve as a light to his feet and a lamp to his path, and to guide him in the everyday affairs of life.

Humphry, wishing Matcham good evening, went on deck.

As he looked ahead, he saw in the distance a small island rising like a rock out of the blue ocean. The ship was standing towards it. The sun, however, was just then setting, and in a short time it was concealed from sight by the mists of night. As he was to keep the first watch with the third mate, he went down and took some supper. When he returned on deck, he found that the sky was overcast with clouds, and that the night was excessively dark. He could scarcely distinguish the man at the helm or the officer of the watch.

“Is that you, Gurton?” asked the third mate. “The orders are to heave to in an hour, so as not to run past the island we saw at sunset, as the captain wishes to examine it to-morrow morning. Go forward, and see that the look-outs are keeping their eyes open; the reefs may run further off the land than we think for.”

“Ay, ay, sir,” answered Humphry, making his way along the deck.

Having spoken to the men as directed, he stood for some minutes trying to pierce the thick gloom, and as he was sure no danger could be seen till the ship was close upon it, he resolved to return aft, and advise the mate to heave her to sooner than he had been ordered.

When just abreast of the fore-rigging, he suddenly felt his arms pinioned behind him, and a gag thrust into his mouth. At the same time a voice whispered in his ear, which he recognised as Ned Hadow’s, “Do not cry

out—no harm is intended you; what we do is for your good.” The next instant he felt himself lifted off his feet and placed in the fore-rigging, up which a man on either side forced him to ascend. He soon reached the top.

“He will be safer in the cross-trees,” said one of the men, and he was compelled to ascend till he got there. “We must make you fast where you are,” whispered Hadow, compelling Humphry to sit down on the cross-trees, and lashing him to the rigging. “If you will promise not to cry out, we will remove the gag from your mouth; if not, you must be content to bear it for some time longer. Here, press my hand if you promise to do as I tell you—I can trust to your word.”

Humphry was very anxious to get rid of the gag, which hurt him, and pressed the hand placed in his. The gag was immediately taken out of his mouth.

“Whatever sounds you hear, or whatever you see, don’t cry out, as you value your life,” whispered Hadow.

The next moment Humphry was left alone. He sat wondering why he had been thus treated. Hadow could certainly not have intended to injure him; at the same time, he could not help fearing that the crew contemplated some dreadful act of mutiny, and that Hadow had contrived to get him up there to keep him out of harm’s way. Nothing could he see but the tall mast above his head tapering towards the dark sky, and the yard and ropes immediately below him. All on deck seemed quiet, no voices reached his ear.

The moments passed slowly by. Suddenly a loud shriek rent the air, followed by a heavy groan; then came the flash and report of a pistol—another, and another followed. Now rose fierce shouts and cries from many voices, loud thundering blows, and the clash of cutlasses. A desperate fight was going on. He no longer had any doubt that the officers had been attacked, and were struggling for their lives.

Suddenly, as they began, all sounds of strife ceased, though he could now distinguish the voices of the crew shouting to each other.

The helm during the contest had been deserted, and the ship had come

up to the wind. It seemed a relief to him to hear the boatswain's voice ordering the crew to brace up the yards. The ship was then hove to.

No one, however, came to release him. If his friend Hadow had fallen in the strife, what would be his fate when the rest of the crew discovered him? The dreadful certainty forced itself upon his mind, that the officers had been overcome. He heard the men moving about the deck, and talking in loud voices to each other; but though he listened eagerly, he could not ascertain what was said.

Hour after hour passed by. No one came aloft to release him.

Notwithstanding the fearful anxiety he felt, he at length dropped off into forgetfulness; but his dream were troubled, and full of the horrors which had just occurred.



Chapter Three.

"It was well I thought of lashing you securely, or you would have fallen and been killed," said a voice in Humphry's ear.

Consciousness returned. He recognised Ned Hadow.

"It will be wise in you not to ask any questions, Mr Gurton," he whispered. "Just be sure that you are wide awake, and I will cast off the lashings. I have done the best I could for you. The men did not ask you to join them because they believed you would not, nor do I either. I am too grateful to you for what you have done for me to wish you to be among them. They have now possession of the ship, and intend to keep it. As we shall be at daybreak close in with the island we saw last night, they give you your choice of being put on shore there, or taking the oath of fidelity to them, and joining their cause. As I said before, I don't suppose you will hesitate about the matter."

"Indeed I will not," answered Humphry; "whether or not the island is inhabited or means of subsistence can be found on it, I would rather be put on shore than remain an hour longer than I can help on board the ship, after what I fear has taken place."

"As I said, Mr Gurton, you must ask no questions," repeated Hadow. "I wish I could go with you, but I am sworn to stay by the rest. I would give anything to be out of the ship, but it is too late now to draw back; though, as I have heard it said, that hell with sinners often begins on earth, so it has begun with me. Yes, Mr Gurton, I almost wish that I had been carried off by the fever instead of living on, to become what I now am. I was bad enough before, but I am a thousand times worse now. There is no one on board I can say this to, and I cannot help saying it to you."

"Surely you could manage to come on shore with me," said Humphry. "Your messmates will probably release you from any oath you have taken if you wish it."

"They will not do that, sir, they will not do that," answered Hadow in a despairing tone. "I am bound hand and foot to them; their fate, whatever

that is, must be mine. You must not stay up here longer. I will cast off the lashings now, but you must take care, as your arms will be stiff after being bound so long, that you don't fall. I will hold you till you get the use of them."

Saying this, Ned cast off the rope, and grasping Humphry round the body, assisted him to get on his legs; then, after he had stood for a minute or two, helped him to descend the rigging.

On reaching the foretop, Hadow told him to wait there till he should come for him.

"I don't want you to go among the crew," he said in a low voice. "I have got four men whom you looked after in their sickness, who have agreed to pull you on shore, which we hope to reach as soon as there is light enough to land. The boat is already in the water, and we are stowing her with things which we think will be useful to you. As you saw nothing of what happened, even should you be taken off the island some time or other, you cannot swear against any one. All you know is that you were lashed in the rigging, and were put on shore the same night before daybreak. If any one asks you questions on deck, that is what you must say to them—you understand me?"

Humphry replied that he did understand, and, suspecting that his safety depended on his answer, said that he would do as Ned advised.

"Well, then, stay here till I come for you," and Ned disappeared down the rigging.

Harry had not long to wait when he again heard his voice.

"All is ready," he whispered. "We took the bearings of the island before dark, and can steer a straight course for it. Don't speak to any one. Follow me into the boat; she is waiting under the forechains; you will find a rope by which you can lower yourself into her."

Humphry followed Ned without ever stepping on deck, and took his seat near him in the stern of the boat, which noiselessly shoved off from the ship's side. The crew bent to their oars, while Ned steered by a boat compass lighted by a lantern at his feet.

Humphry breathed more freely when he felt himself out of the ship. Yet what a fate was to be his. To be left alone on an island where he might have to spend long, long years, cut off from all intercourse with his fellow-creatures. Yet anything was better than having to associate with the wretched men on board the *Wolf*.

They soon lost sight of the ship, and the boat made her way across the dark water, the island not being yet visible ahead.

“Are they all dead, have none been spared?” asked Humphry at length, yet half fearing to speak on the subject which occupied his thoughts.

“I told you, Mr Gurton, to ask no questions,” answered Ned in a hollow voice. “The sooner you put all thoughts of what happened last night out of your head the better. Just think of what you have got to do. You will have to keep your wits awake where you are going, depend on that. I wish we could stop to help you, but we have promised to be back as soon as we have landed your things. All I can tell you is, that there is said to be water, and you will probably find cocoa-nut and bread-fruit trees, and other roots and fruits; and as we have put up lines and hooks, and a gun and ammunition, and a couple of harpoons, and lines for catching seals, it will be your fault if you do not manage to find as much food as you want.”

“But how shall I be able to live all alone by myself on the island?” said Humphry with a sigh.

“Better to be all alone than food for the sharks, I have a notion,” observed one of the men who overheard him.

Humphry made no further remark. He now felt more than ever certain that a fearful tragedy had been enacted, and that he ought to be thankful to get out of the company of the perpetrators. Yet he was sorry to leave Hadow among them, for he had observed, he thought, the signs of something better in him than in his companions, rough and ignorant as he was.

As day dawned the island appeared ahead, rising out of the blue water with black rocks piled one upon another, and some hills of considerable elevation. Humphry observed also a deep sandy bay between the rocks, but an encircling coral reef intervened, over which, even on that calm

morning, the sea broke in masses of foam.

They pulled along till the bay opened out more clearly, and just in front was a cascade, which came tumbling down the rocks. A narrow piece of dark water was seen between the masses of foam which danced up on either side of it.

“There is a passage,” exclaimed Ned. “Give way, my lads, and we shall get through it without difficulty.”

The men bent to their oars, and the boat, dashing between the two walls of foam, was in a short time floating on the calm surface of a lagoon. Pulling up the bay, they reached a small sandy beach, though the dark rocks which everywhere rose up around it gave the place a gloomy aspect.

The boat was hauled up, and the men quickly landed the various articles which Ned had secured for Humphry’s benefit.

He and Humphry searching about soon found a level spot on one side of the bay where the ground looked capable of cultivation.

“This will do for you, my lad,” said Ned. “And as I found some papers of seed in the captain’s cabin, I put them into one of the casks; though I don’t know what they are, maybe if you sow them they will come up, and supply you with vegetables.”

The men now brought up all the things from the boat. They all wished him good luck and a happy life on the island, and then hurried back to the boat.

“I only wish I could stop with you, that I do!” exclaimed Ned with some feeling, as he wrung Humphry’s hand. “I dare not say ‘God bless you!’ but I hope He will, that I do with all my heart,” and Ned ran down to join his companions, who were already shoving off the boat. He would not have been sorry if they had gone without him.

Humphry watched them going down the bay. They passed through the reef, and pulled out to sea till the boat was lost to sight, though he could distinguish the ship hove to in the offing waiting for her return.



Chapter Four.

Humphry sat down on his chest, feeling very forlorn. Here he was on a desert island, a mere speck in the ocean, hundreds of miles away perhaps from any place inhabited by civilised man. He might perhaps never be able to make his escape, or again hold intercourse with his fellow-creatures. All alone, without speaking, without exchanging an idea with another human being, he might have to drag out a weary existence; and then, should sickness overtake him, have to lie down and breathe out his life, leaving his bones to whiten in the sun.

He had read Robinson Crusoe, but then his case was very different to that of the far-famed voyager. Robinson Crusoe had the companionship of Friday, and his island was fertile and smiling, and he had goats and fowls and other animals to cheer him or to serve him as food. He would have to go in search of fish and birds for his daily food, and as yet was uncertain whether any were to be found, though at present he did not fear starvation, as he had the salted beef and pork and biscuits with which Ned had supplied him. But then when they were gone, how should he live?

“It won’t do to indulge in these thoughts,” he exclaimed to himself, suddenly starting up. “I must think about building a house in the first place; and then as soon as I can prepare the ground I will put in the seed, and, as I hope, some may produce good edible vegetables, I shall have a variety in diet and keep myself in health.”

As he began to examine the articles which had been brought on shore, he found a large roll of canvas. It was part of an old sail.

“This Ned must have intended to serve as a tent till I can put up a more substantial building. I am much obliged to him, and I need not be in any great hurry about building my house.”

He spoke his thoughts aloud on nearly all occasions. It gave him some relief to hear his own voice.

“I must get some poles for the tent, though; and no spars, I see, have

been brought on shore.”

He looked out an axe, and sticking it in his belt, set out to search for what he wanted.

“I shall not lose my way in this new kingdom of mine, that’s one advantage in having it of moderate size; and if I climb to the top of the hill, I shall be able to sing with Robinson Crusoe, ‘I am lord of all I survey,’—ah, ah, ah!” and he laughed for the first time for many a day.

There was nothing to excite his risibility on board. He felt his spirits rising.

“Stay!” he exclaimed suddenly. “What an ungrateful wretch I am! Here have I been saved from a great danger, and placed in safety, at all events for the present, and yet I have not uttered one word of thanks to Him who has preserved me.”

He knelt down, and lifted up his heart as well as he could to God.

“Careless, worthless fellow that I have been! yet God promises to hear all those that come to Him, not trusting to themselves or to their own good deeds, but to the perfect and complete atonement Jesus Christ made for their sins on the cross, so I know that He will hear me; and I am sure, though I am unworthy of His care, that He put it into the hearts of those men to bring me on shore instead of throwing me overboard, or what would have been worse, keeping me among them.”

He felt his heart much lighter when he rose from his knees.

He then, carefully observing the appearance of the rocks, that he might find his way back without difficulty, proceeded on his expedition. Clambering over them, he came to more level ground covered with various bushes, and soon reached a hill-side on which grew a number of trees, palms and others, with the names of which he was unacquainted. He looked in vain for cocoa-nuts, not being aware that the trees are only generally found on the level shore to which the nuts have been borne by the wind and tides of the ocean from other islands. He cut two stout poles for uprights, and a longer one for a ridge-pole, and shouldering them, returned to his camp.

"I shall want a fire, though," he thought, as he got back, and throwing them down he again set out to get fuel.

This he had no difficulty in finding among the brushwood, and with the aid of his axe he quickly made up a number of faggots.

"I shall not be obliged to have a fire burning all night to keep off wild beasts, that is another comfort," he observed. "But it will be cheerful to sit by when it grows dark. I shall not find the time hang heavily on my hands for some days to come, that's another comfort."

His first thought was to do the most necessary work. Having brought the faggots to his camp, he next put up his tent.

This accomplished, as soon as he sat down to rest he began to feel hungry. He rummaged in a small cask, which contained a number of miscellaneous articles, and discovered a tinder-box. He had soon a fire blazing in front of his tent. He had prudently made it up at a sufficient distance to prevent the risk of the flames reaching the canvas. While he stayed his hunger with some biscuit, he prepared a piece of beef, which he spitted and placed before the fire on two small sticks, such as he had read of people doing under similar circumstances. He turned the meat on the spit, which grew blacker and blacker.

"I think it must be done now," he said at length, taking it off.

When he cut it with his knife, he found it almost as hard as wood. He attempted to eat a few mouthfuls, but he could scarcely get them down.

"This won't do," he said. "I must get some water, to enable me to swallow this dry food."

On searching for something to hold the water, he found a saucepan, and on his way with it to the cascade it occurred to him that he might have cooked his beef much better by boiling. "I must try that way for dinner," he thought.

A draught of pure water greatly refreshed him. He returned to the camp with his saucepan filled. He put it on at once with a small piece of meat in it, recollecting that salted beef requires a long time to boil, and he hoped

to have better success in his second attempt at cooking.

He now made a survey of the articles his shipmates had left with him. There was enough beef and pork to serve him for many months, but he regretted to find that the bread would not last him nearly so long.

“I must try and find some substitute for it,” he said, “and economise it in the meantime. I would rather have had much more bread and less meat, as I hope to catch some fish and kill some birds. However, I need not go hunting till I have put my home to rights.”

Then he thought of his seeds. He had no spade, however, to dig the ground; so going to the wood he shaped one, which he hoped would answer the purpose, out of the stem of a small tree. It did better than nothing, but he would have been very glad of an iron spade. He at once began to dig up the ground. It was covered thickly with grass with long roots, but the soil was rather sand than earth. “I must dig all this up,” he said, “or they will soon sprout up again, and destroy the seed.” So he marked out a small plot, carefully throwing the roots and grass into a heap. It then struck him that if they were scattered about on the ground in the sun they would more quickly dry, and he might then burn them, and the ashes would contribute to fertilise the ground.

He worked away till he felt quite weary. He then went back to his fire to see how the beef was boiling. As it was not yet done, after resting a short time he returned to his digging. It was a very long operation, but after labouring for four or five hours he found that he had dug up almost ten square yards of ground. “It is thoroughly done, though there is not much of it, and that’s a satisfaction,” he said. He thought, however, even when the ashes of the grass were mixed with it, it would scarcely be sufficiently fertile for the seeds. “I will go into the woods and collect rotten leaves, and with the ashes of my fire I hope in time to make the soil good.” This was a wise thought, but the sun was already getting low, and he determined to wait till the next day to do so. “It will be better to have a small piece of good ground than to dig up the whole plot, and I will only put in a few seeds at first, to see how they answer; so that if some fail, I may try a different way of cultivating them. I shall, at all events, have work enough. How sad it would have been if I had had nothing to do but to sit still and bemoan my hard fate. I may not, after all, find my life so

miserable alone as I had expected, that's another comfort."

With these reflections he went back to his fire, and now, to his satisfaction, he found that his beef was thoroughly boiled. Ned had forgotten to put in any salt or mustard, but as the beef was salt in itself, that did not signify. It reminded him, however, that if he shot any birds or caught fish, he should require some. That made him resolve to try and look for it amongst the rocks, or to try and manufacture it from salt water, as he had read of being done. He had been accustomed to read a good many books of travels before he came to sea, and he now found the advantage of having done so, by being reminded of the various ways people, when placed in situations similar to his, had been enabled to support existence. This contributed to keep up his spirits, as it made him have no doubts of obtaining food. His only dread was that he might meet with an accident, or might fall ill, when there would be no one to help him.

"Well, well, I ought not to trouble myself about that either," he said. "I must pray to God to preserve me, and do my best not to run any unnecessary risk."

He then recollected the dreadful complaint, the scurvy, which had already attacked some of the crew of the *Wolf*.

"That is brought on by people living too exclusively on salt provisions. I must try to find some roots or herbs till the seeds come up: and then, if they produce vegetables, as I hope they will, I need not be anxious about that."

Such were his cogitations during his meal. Having finished, he hung up the remainder of his beef in his tent, to serve as breakfast for the next morning, and then went back to the fountain to enjoy a draught of pure water.

He felt but little inclined to do any more work, and the sun had not set when he recollected that he had not yet read from his Testament. He took it from the pocket of his jacket, which hung up in his tent, and sat down to read. He read on for some time, feeling his spirits greatly refreshed, till, by the increasing darkness, he found that the sun had gone down, and that it was time to prepare for rest. Ned had thrown a bed into the boat

and a blanket.

“Few people left on a desert island as I am have enjoyed so luxurious a couch as this is,” thought Humphry, as he laid himself down after offering up his prayers, as he had been accustomed to do before he came to sea. Since then, shame, and the indifference which arises from it, had prevented him ever kneeling in prayer. He now, left all alone as he was, felt that prayer was his greatest comfort; though he had no fellow-creature to talk to, he had the privilege of speaking to his Maker. He had not been reading his Testament without gaining enlightenment. He had learned that he must come to God in His appointed way—through Jesus Christ; that he had no right to approach Him in any other way.

He had scarcely placed his head on the bundle of clothes which he had rolled up to make a pillow, and drawn his blanket round him, than he fell fast asleep.

Chapter Five.

It seemed but a moment afterwards that Humphry heard some birds chirruping, and opening his eyes, he found that it was already daylight. He instantly sprang up, recollecting that though the days were long, he had plenty of work to do. He first knelt down and earnestly offered up a prayer for protection and guidance.

The water in the bay looked bright and clear. Throwing off his clothes and plunging in, he enjoyed a refreshing swim. The warm air soon dried him, for Ned, as may be supposed, had not thought of providing him with towels. As he sat on a rock for a few moments to rest, he saw a dark object floating by in the water, then a triangular fin rose above it, and he observed a pair of fierce-looking eyes gazing up at him. He shuddered, for he recognised the sailor's enemy, the shark. How mercifully he had been preserved! Had he remained in a few minutes longer the monster might have seized him. He must be cautious in future how he bathed. He might find, however, some quiet pool into which no shark could enter.

After recovering himself he returned to the camp, and lighted a fire to cook his breakfast, which consisted of salt beef and biscuit. He thought he should like some tea. He searched in his cask of stores, and to his satisfaction he discovered a large bagful, and another of cocoa. This showed him more than ever how thoughtful his friend had been. He knew, however, that he must husband it carefully. Having brought water from the fountain, he made a little, which he found very refreshing. After draining off the liquid he put the leaves carefully by, to serve for another time. With this, and some of the cold beef and biscuit, he made a hearty meal. Then taking his spade in his hand he set to work to dig up more ground. He enriched it also with rotten leaves which he collected, and with the ashes of the grass and roots which he dug up and burned.

He had already spent nearly two days on the island. "I shall forget how time passes if I don't take some note of it," he thought. "I must follow Robinson Crusoe's plan, and notch a stick." He at once went and cut a long one. He made a notch to show the day he had landed, and another for that which was then passing. He then smoothed off the end, and carved the date—"20th November 1812." "I will cut a notch every

morning, directly I am up, and then I shall not run the risk of missing a day by forgetting to mark it."

He was surprised to find how soon Sunday came round. On board the *Wolf* that sacred day had only been observed by the men being allowed to mend their clothes; or if they were not so employed, they used to sit idly gambling or singing ribald songs. Humphry had been considering all the previous day how he should spend it. "We are told by God in the Bible to do no work, and to make it a day of rest. I am sure that I ought to obey Him, though it may seem important to me to get my house up or to dig more ground. I will therefore obey His commands, and leave the rest to Him."

He rose at the usual hour, and went to wash at the waterfall, where he found that he could take a shower-bath, which was cooler and more refreshing than even a dip in the sea. He came back to breakfast, and then taking out his Testament, read for a long time with deep interest. While so employed, it occurred to him that he would learn portions by heart. This amply occupied his mind, and afforded him so much satisfaction, that he determined every morning to commit a verse to memory that he might think of it while he was at work. He began at the "Sermon on the Mount" on Monday morning, so that by the end of another week he had learned six verses.

While waiting for the result of his gardening operations, he began putting up his house. As he had the greater portion of the summer of the Southern hemisphere before him, he was in no hurry about this; so during a portion of each day he went out with his gun to shoot birds, or sat on a rock with a line catching fish. He never failed to kill as many birds as he wanted for food, or to catch as many fish as he could eat. He fitted one of his harpoons, and kept it ready for use in case any seals appeared, though he suspected that if they visited the island at all, they would not come till the winter season.

He had gone on increasing his garden, and putting in more seeds. Greatly to his delight those he first sowed now appeared above ground, he watered them regularly, and the plants rapidly increased in size. Some were evidently cabbages, while others put forth roots with tubers; others, again, greatly resembled spinach.

He had now got up his house, and had dug a garden sufficiently large for his wants. The soil, by being watered every day, became even more fertile than he had expected.



Chapter Six.

Several weeks thus passed away before he thought of exploring his island.

His stores had during this time visibly diminished. He therefore saw the necessity of laying in a store of food which might serve him when he could not obtain it either by his gun or fishing-lines.

During bad weather, when the sea breaking over the reef washed into the bay, he was frequently unable to catch fish. He thought over various ways of preserving them. "I might dry some in the sun, and salt others; but I suspect they would keep better and be more palatable if I could smoke them."

He found salt in the hollows of the rocks as he had expected, but it required much time and labour to collect. One of his small casks was now empty. A fine day, when the fish bit freely, enabled him to catch a large number, and he made his first experiment. He had already got a large pile of salt, though it was somewhat sandy, but he thought that would not signify. He cut off the heads and tails of the fish, then rubbed the salt thoroughly into them, and packed them away in layers, with salt between each. It took him three or four days' fishing to fill his cask, when all the salt was expended. He then stowed it away in a dry part of his hut, hoping that he had now secured food to last him for several weeks.

He next tried drying some in the sun, but did not succeed to his satisfaction. He afterwards, however, built a smoking-house, and cured a considerable number in it, though they were less palatable than those preserved with salt.

These tasks finished, one day, being prevented from fishing by a gale of wind, he set out on his proposed expedition, taking his gun, with some provisions in a wallet he had manufactured for the purpose.

He made his way towards the nearest hill, and then struck down a valley which led to the sea. Between it and the bay a high ridge of rocks extended, so he continued his course along the shore in an opposite

direction. He had not gone far before he came to another ridge which he had to surmount, the coast becoming wilder and wilder as he advanced, instead of improving, as he had hoped it might do. At last he reached what he took to be the southern end of the island. Looking back he saw the slope of the single high hill which composed its chief feature. He had now great difficulty in proceeding. The cliffs which faced the sea were almost perpendicular, and the rocks over which he climbed were extremely rough. He proceeded cautiously, knowing the fearful position in which he would be placed should he meet with an accident. He saw, however, at a little distance off, a number of wild-fowl circling round the cliffs. He was certain that they had come there for the purpose of laying their eggs. Could he reach the spot, he might obtain a pleasant addition to his larder.

After great labour he reached the spot, when he found himself among hundreds of birds, many of them already sitting. They screeched and quacked and scolded, pecking at his legs as he got among them. Without ceremony he quickly filled his wallet with eggs.

“This will serve me as a poultry-yard for a long time to come,” he thought. “I will not kill any of the old birds, but will wait till the young ones are hatched, as they are likely to be more palatable than their parents. In the meantime, I will supply myself with eggs.”

It was now time for him to commence his return home. He felt very tired when he reached his hut, for he had not taken so long a walk since landing on the island. To preserve his eggs, he covered them over with the grease which remained in the pot after he had boiled his pork, and then packed them away in cool, dry sand.

Every day he had reason to be thankful that he had read so much, for recollecting the various methods by which others had supported themselves, he was able to supply himself with food.

His garden yielded him a daily meal of either sweet potatoes, yams, cabbages, or other vegetables. He now caught more fish than at first, and also from his poultry-yard obtained a good supply of young fowls.

His shoes were wearing out, and he was desirous of catching some

seals, from the skins of which he might manufacture others to supply their place. At last he saw several sporting in the bay. He at once got his harpoon ready, and took post on a rock, expecting that one would before long approach him. He was not disappointed. Darting his weapon, he struck the animal, which swam off, dragging out the line at a rapid rate. He found that he had made a mistake, and was nearly losing his line and harpoon as well as the seal. Fortunately, just as it neared the end, he got a turn round a projecting piece of rock. The poor seal plunged and tumbled, and swam back to the rock to ascertain, it seemed, what had hurt it. He drew in the slack, and was thus able to secure it more completely. After a time its struggles ceased, and he dragged it to the beach. He here took off the skin, with which he hoped to make several pairs of shoes, while the flesh supplied him with a dinner of fresh meat for a couple of days; the other portions he salted, in store for future use. Stretching the hide on the ground, he dressed it with a ley formed by mixing the ashes of his fire with water. This he found would not answer completely, and after searching in the forest he discovered some bark which formed a strong tan.

The seals now came on shore in large numbers. Recollecting that their skins would be of value should a ship come to the island, he determined to capture as many as he could. Arming himself with a thick club, he attacked them when asleep on the beach, and every day succeeded in knocking over a considerable number. This gave him abundant occupation; and continuing his experiments he succeeded in perfectly preserving the skins. When at length the creatures took their departure, his hut was nearly filled with the result of his industry.

Day after day went rapidly by, and had he not been careful in notching his stick, he would soon have lost all count of time.

Chapter Seven.

Three years had passed away since Humphry landed on the island. He was startled one calm day, when fishing from a rock in the bay as he caught sight of his own countenance in the water, to observe how changed he had become. Instead of the laughing, careless, broadly-built boy with the ruddy face, which he once was, he had grown into a tall, thin young man, with a sunburnt countenance, its expression grave and thoughtful. He was not melancholy, however, nor did he ever feel out of spirits; but he had of course been thrown back on himself, while his mind was constantly occupied. He had but one book to read, but that book, above all price, had given him ample subjects for reflection. "What should I have done without this?" he often said to himself, as he opened the book with a prayer that what he was about to read might enlighten his mind.

"I have heard people talk of reading their Bibles, but though I have read nothing but my Testament for three years, I every day find something fresh and interesting in it."

He had often made excursions to the top of the hill, whence he could obtain a view over the surrounding ocean.

It had been raining heavily during the previous day. No seals were to be caught on shore, nor fish in the water. Taking his gun, he set off, intending to go over the hill to get a shot at some wild-fowl. The wind had greatly increased; and wishing to obtain a view of the ocean with its huge foam-covered billows rolling around, he climbed to the top of the hill. As he reached it, his eye fell on a ship driving before the gale towards the rocky shore. Two of her masts were gone; the third fell while he was looking at her. Nothing could now save her from destruction, for even should her anchors be let go, they were not likely to hold for a moment. He considered whether he could render any assistance to the unhappy people on board. Too truly he feared that he could be of no use. Still he would do his best. Hurrying home, he procured the only rope he possessed, and a spar, and with these on his shoulder he hastened towards the spot at which, considering the direction the ship was driving, he thought she would strike the shore. He had scarcely reached it when

he saw the ship driving on towards him on a mountain sea. The next instant down she came, crashing on a reef of rocks far away from where he stood, the foaming sea dashing over her. Several poor wretches were carried off the deck, now driven towards him, but directly afterwards carried back by the retiring surf. He could distinguish but one alone still clinging to a portion of the wreck, all the others had in a few minutes disappeared. As long as that man remained, he could not tear himself from the spot.

Several hours passed by; still the man clung on, having secured himself apparently by a lashing. The storm seemed to be abating. Humphry took off his shirt, and fastening it to the end of a spar, waved it, to show the shipwrecked seaman that help was at hand if he could reach the shore. It was observed at length. The man, casting off the lashings, lowered himself into the water, and struck out for land. Humphry prepared his rope. Fixing the spar deep in the sand, and securing one end of the rope to it, he stood ready to plunge in, with the other end round his waist, to drag the man on shore should he get within his reach. How anxiously he watched! Nearer and nearer the man came. Now he was seen floating on his back, now he struck out again. A sea rolling in bore him on, but as it receded it threatened to carry him off once more. Now was the moment. Humphry dashed into the surf. The man's strength had almost failed when Humphry grasped him, and hauling himself up by the rope dragged the man out of the surf, sinking down exhausted by his side the instant he was out of its reach.

Humphry was the first to recover.

"If you are strong enough to accompany me to the other side of the island, friend, where I have my home, we will set off at once; but if not, I will go back and get some food for you," he said.

"I shall soon be better," answered the man. "I think I could walk. Have you a companion with you?"

"No," answered Humphry, surprised at the question; "I am all alone."

"That's strange! What, isn't there a young lad somewhere about the island?"

“No,” said Humphry. “I have been here three years and have seen no human being.”

The man gazed into his countenance with a look of astonishment.

“What is your name, then?” he asked.

Humphry mentioned it.

“You Mr Gurton!” he cried, pressing his hand. “I suppose it must be; and don’t you know me?”

Humphry looked into the man’s face. It was covered with a thick beard, and his tangled hair hung over his shoulders.

“You must be Ned Hadow; yet I should not have known you more than you know me. I am indeed thankful that you have been saved. But where have you been all the time?”

“Greater part of it living on shore,” answered Ned. “After we landed you, we took three or four prizes; but not being able to navigate the ship, we put into a convenient harbour in an island inhabited by savages. There we remained, living among them much as they did. Several of our men were killed; and at last, finding that the savages intended to cut us all off, we put to sea again. We had been knocking about for some time, and used up all our provisions, when we fell in with the gale which drove the ship on yonder rocks.”

Ned insisted that he could walk across the island, and with Humphry’s help he was able to accomplish the journey, though nearly exhausted at the end of it. Humphry then made him lie down in his bed, while he prepared some soup and other food. Next day Ned somewhat recovered; and in the course of a week, owing to Humphry’s constant attention, he looked more like his former self.

“It’s very dreadful to think that all the others have perished, but I am truly thankful that you have been sent to be my companion,” said Humphry. “You little thought when you acted so kindly towards me by saving my life, and getting me put on shore here, that I should ever in any way be able to repay you.”

“I did not, Mr Gurton; but I feel that I am such a worthless fellow that my life was not worth preserving.”

“We are all worthless, Ned: that’s what the book I read every day tells me, and I am convinced of it when I look into my own heart, and know how people in the world are generally acting.”

“What! have you got that book still, Mr Gurton?” asked Ned.

“Yes, indeed I have, and I shall be glad to read it to you, Ned,” said Humphry.

“I shall like to hear it, sir, for I have not heard anything like a good word since you used to read it to me when I was sick. I had almost forgotten there is a God in heaven. I remembered that, however, when I was clinging to the wreck, and expecting every moment to be in His presence.”

“It’s the best thing to read God’s Word, and to be guided by it, when we expect to live. I hope you may be spared many years, even though we never get away from this island, and that book will serve us better than any other companion who could join us.”

Humphry, instead now of reading his Testament to himself, read it daily to Ned, and even while they were at work he used to repeat portions he had learned by heart.

Though Ned could not read, he gained in time a good knowledge of the book, and his dark soul by degrees becoming enlightened, he understood clearly at length God’s plan of salvation, and cheerfully accepted it.

“You see, Ned, all things are ordered for the best,” said Humphry one day, “and you must be convinced that God loves us, however little we may have loved Him. If I had remained on board the privateer, I should have become, as I was fast doing, like the rest of the unhappy crew. Though I thought it very dreadful to be left all alone on the island, I now feel that it has been the greatest blessing to me. God in His mercy also saved you, though you would have preferred remaining among the savages. Now you are happy in knowing the glorious truth that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; and though we may both of us wish

to be once more among our fellow-men, we can live contentedly here till He thinks fit to call us out of this life.”

“I hope He may take me before any ship comes to the island, for if I once fell among the sort of men I have lived with all my life, I should soon again be as bad as they are,” said Ned with a sigh.

“Not if you sought help and protection from God’s Holy Spirit,” answered Humphry, “and prayed that He would keep you out of temptation.”

Ned was surprised to find how much Humphry had done during the time he had been alone on the island. He assisted him in all his undertakings, and they together caught enough seals to fill another large storehouse.

At last, after two years had thus passed away, Ned, who had been fishing down the harbour, came hurrying back. His countenance was grave, and he looked much agitated.

“I have been watching a vessel standing in for the island. She has hove to, and is sending a boat on shore. The time has come, Mr Gurton, when we must part. I dare not go back into the world, and have made up my mind to remain here. You are young, and have many years before you, and I would advise you to go, and all I ask is that you will think of me and pray for me.”

This announcement made Humphry even more agitated than Ned. He hurried to the spot where the boat could be seen.

She made her way up the harbour. Humphry and his companion went down to meet her. An officer-like looking man stepped on shore, accompanied by another in dark clothes. They seemed much surprised at seeing Humphry and Ned.

“What! are you Englishmen?” asked one of the strangers. “We only discovered the island this morning, and had no expectation of finding it inhabited.”

Humphry explained that they were the only inhabitants; that he had been left there some years before, and, pointing to Ned, said, “This man was afterwards wrecked on the coast, and he alone was saved from his ship.”

"I am Captain Summers of the *Hope*, now lying in the offing. This gentleman is the Reverend Mr Evans, a missionary, whom I am conveying to an island where he is about to settle. What is your name?" asked the officer.

Humphry told him.

"And my name is Tom Martin," said Ned coming forward, greatly to Humphry's surprise.

"Well, my friends, it seems but a barren island. I wonder how you have managed to live here so long."

Humphry briefly explained the various means by which he had procured food, and leading the way to the garden, showed them the perfect cultivation into which it had been brought. He then invited Captain Summers and Mr Evans into his hut. His Testament lay open on the table. The latter took it up, observing—

"I am glad to see, my young friend, that you have not been deprived of God's Word during your long stay here."

"It has indeed been my great solace and delight," answered Humphry. "Without it I should have been miserable."

"Well, my friends, I shall be most happy to receive you both on board my ship; and as I hope to sail for England in the course of a few months, you will then be able to return home."

Humphry thanked the captain for his offer, which he gladly accepted. Ned looked very grave.

"I am much obliged to you, sir," he said, "and though I shall be sorry to part from Mr Gurton, I am very sure that I had better stay where I am till God thinks fit to call me from this world. I have lived too long among savages, and worse than savages, to go back again and live with civilised people. If Mr Gurton will leave me his Testament, which he has taught me to read, and his gun and harpoons, it's all I ask."

"No, my friend," observed Mr Evans, "man is not made to live alone. If, as

I hope from what you say, you have learned to love Jesus Christ, you should try to serve Him, and endeavour to do good among your fellow-creatures. Now, as I am going to settle in an island inhabited by savages, I shall be very glad of your assistance, and if you already understand their language, which I have to learn, you may speak to them, and tell them of Him who died for them, that they may be reconciled to Him. You will thus be showing your love for Him far more than by living a life of solitude, even although you spend your days in reading His Word. Remember it is not only those who hear the Word of God, but those who hear and do it, who are His disciples.”

“You are right, sir,” exclaimed Ned, brightening up. “My only fear if I left this was to find myself among those who would lead me back into bad ways, but I will gladly go with you—that I will, sir.”

As the captain was anxious to see the island, Humphry undertook to guide him and Mr Evans to the top of the hill, whence they could obtain a view over the whole of it. Before setting out, Humphry showed them the store of seal-skins.

“I shall be sorry to leave these behind,” he observed, “and if you can receive them on board, they will assist to pay my passage.”

“As to that, my friend,” answered the captain, “I will very gladly send my boats to take them off, and you shall pay freight for them; but you, I am very sure, will be able to work your passage, and I hope you will find they will sell for some hundred pounds in England.”

“Part of them belong to my companion,” observed Humphry.

“No, no, Mr Gurton,” said Ned. “They are all yours. Not a shilling of their value will I touch, except enough to give me a new rig-out, as I am not fit to accompany Mr Evans in these tattered old clothes of mine.”

“Set your mind at rest about that,” said the captain. “You shall be welcome to a thorough fit out, suitable for the task you are about to undertake, and your friend Mr Gurton will require the money more than you will.”

Captain Summers, according to his promise, loaded his own boat with

seal-skins, and sent her off to the ship with orders for the long-boat to come ashore and carry off the remainder. Meantime he and Mr Evans paid their intended visit to the hill-top.

On their return Humphry took the first opportunity of drawing Ned aside, and asking why he had not given his right name.

"I did give my right name, Mr Gurton," he answered. "Ned Hadow was merely a purser's name which I took when I entered on board the *Wolf*, because you see, sir, I had run from a man-of-war. Now I know better, I would only tell the truth; and so, please, call me Tom Martin in future, and I am ready to stand the consequences."

Humphry and his companion were kindly received on board the *Hope*, when the good captain supplied them with new suits of clothes, which they indeed much required.

The *Hope* continued her voyage.

How different was the life led on board her to that on board the *Wolf*! Captain Summers and his officers were Christian men. The crew were kindly treated; not an oath escaped the lips of any of the men, while all did their duty with cheerfulness and alacrity.

The voyage was prosperous. At the end of three weeks the *Hope* dropped her anchor in the harbour of a fine island where Mr Evans was to remain.

A native missionary, who had been sent there a year before, came off to receive him, and brought him the satisfactory intelligence that a large number of the natives were anxiously looking out for his arrival.

Some days were spent in landing his property, and assisting him in putting up his house, while an abundance of fresh provisions was brought off by the natives to the ship.

Humphry parted from his old friend with the less regret from feeling sure that he would be well occupied, and free from the temptations he dreaded.

“We shall meet again, I trust, as Captain Summers has offered me a berth as third mate of the *Hope* on her next voyage, which he expects to make to these seas,” said Humphry, as he bade him farewell.

“If we don’t meet here, we shall in another world, sir. And bless you, Mr Gurton, for pointing out to me the way to it,” said Tom, as he wrung Humphry’s hand, and tears burst from his eyes.

The *Hope* had a prosperous voyage home, during which Humphry did his utmost to fit himself for the duty he was to undertake. He had no ties in England, so he gladly again sailed in the *Hope*. Captain Summers having sold the seal-skins for a good price, judiciously invested the proceeds for him.

Humphry had the satisfaction of meeting his old friend Ned, or rather Mr Martin, as he was now called, and of finding that he had been of the greatest service to Mr Evans. He never returned to England, but died at his post, labouring to the last in spreading the gospel among the natives.

Humphry won the regard of Captain Summers by his steadiness and good conduct, and at the end of his third voyage he married his daughter, and soon afterwards obtained the command of a ship. When at length he was able to quit the sea and live on shore, he often used to relate to his children, among his many adventures, how he spent five years of his life alone on an island.

The End.

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