The Lonely Island

By R. M. Ballantyne

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Chapter One.
The Refuge of the Mutineers.
The Mutiny.

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

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

It is natural for man to rejoice in sunshine. His sympathy with cats in this respect is profound and universal. Not less deep and wide is his discord with

the moles and bats. Nevertheless, there was scarcely a man on board of that ship on the evening in question who vouchsafed even a passing glance at a sunset which was marked by unwonted splendour. The vessel slowly rose and sank on a scarce perceptible oceanswell in the centre of a great circular field of liquid glass, on whose undulations the sun gleamed in dazzling flashes, and in whose depths were reflected the fantastic forms, snowy lights, and pearly shadows of cloudland. In ordinary circumstances such an evening might have raised the thoughts of ordinary men to their Creator, but the circumstances of the men on board of that vessel were not ordinaryvery much the reverse.

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

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

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

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

“Hard on him! I should think he was,” rejoined McCoy. “Why, if Mr Christian had been one of the worst men in the ship instead of the best officer, the Cap’n could not have abused him worse. I heard and saw ’im with my own ears and eyes. The cocoanuts was lyin’, as it might be here, between the guns, and the Cap’n he came on deck an’ said he missed some of his nuts. He went into a towerin’ rage right offin the old styleand sent for all the officers. When they came aft he says to them, says he, ‘Who stole my cocoanuts?’ Of course they all said they didn’t know, and hadn’t seen any of the people take ’em. ‘Then,’ says the Cap’n, fiercer than ever, ‘you must have stole ’em yourselves, for they couldn’t have been taken away without your knowledge.’ So he questioned each officer separately. Mr Christian, when he came to him, answered, ‘I don’t know, sir, who took the nuts, but I hope you do not think

me so mean as to be guilty of stealing yours.' Whereupon the Cap'n he flared up like gunpowder. 'Yes, you hungry hound, I do,' says he; 'you must have stolen them from me, or you would have been able to give a better account of them.'"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

When the islanders were asked at first the name of the island, they replied, "OTahiti," which means, "It is Tahiti", hence the earlier form of the nameOtaheite.

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

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

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

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

"To whom does your amiable wish refer?" asked a brotherofficer named

Stewart, who came up just then and leaned over the bulwarks beside him.

“Can you not guess?” said the other, sternly.

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

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

“But where will you go to?” asked Stewart.

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

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

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

“Better try to take the ship!” whispered a voice behind him.

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

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

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

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

He had barely fallen into a troubled slumber when he was awakened by Stewart, and rose at once to go on deck. He observed in passing that young Hayward, the mate of his watch, had lain down to take a nap on the armchest. Mr Hallet, the other midshipman of the watch, had also gone to sleep somewhere, for he was not to be seen. Whether the seriously reprehensible conduct of these two officers roused his already excited spirit to an ungovernable pitch, or their absence afforded a favourable opportunity, we cannot tell, but certain it is that Fletcher Christian opened his ear at that time to the voice of the tempter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The eager readiness of this man at once decided Quintal. Christian then went

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

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

In a few seconds John Mills, the gunner’s mate, a stronglybuilt middleaged man, came on deck, and agreeing at once to join, was sent to fetch the keys of the armchest from the armourer, under pretence of getting out a musket to shoot a shark which was alongside.

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

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

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

The morning of the 28th of April was now beginning to dawn. Before that the greater part of the ship’s company had been gained over and armed; yet all this was done so quietly and with such firmness that the remainder of the crew were ignorant of what was going on. No doubt a few who might have given

the alarm were afraid to do so. Among those who were asleep was one deserving of special notice, namely, Peter Heywood, a midshipman who was true as steel at heart, but whose extreme youth and inexperience, coupled with the surprise and alarm of being awakened to witness scenes of violence, produced a condition of inaction which resulted in his being left, and afterwards classed, with the mutineers.

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

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

He was roughly awakened and bidden to rise.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Now, Mr Hayward and Mr Hallet, get into the boat," said Christian, who seemed to be torn with conflicting emotions. His tone and look were sufficient

for those young midshipmen. They obeyed promptly.

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

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

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

Bligh now made a last appeal.

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

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

attempt resistance you shall be put to death."

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

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

The crew of the Bounty at the time consisted of fortyfour souls, all told. Eighteen of these went adrift with the Captain. The remaining twentyfive steered back to the sunny isles of the Pacific.

Chapter Two.

Records the Duties and Troubles of the Mutineers.

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

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

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

"You see, lads," said Christian, "it is absolutely certain that we shan't be left among these islands in peace. Whether Bligh manages to get home or not, the British Government is sure to send out to see what has become of us. My notion is that we should bear away to the south'ard, far out of the usual track

of ships, find out some uninhabited and suitable island, and establish ourselves thereon?"

"What! without wives, or sisters, or mothers, or grandmothers, to say nothin' o' mothersinlaw, to cook our victuals an' look after our shirtbuttons?" said Isaac Martin, who, having been detained against his will, had become lugubriously, or recklessly, facetious, and was stimulated to a sort of fierce hilarity by his glass of rum.

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

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

"No man in his senses would go back to Otaheiteat least not to stay there," said John Adams, gravely; "it's the first place they will send to look for us."

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

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

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

That night, while the Bounty was skimming gently over the starlit sea before a

light breeze, the three officers, Heywood, Stewart, and Young, leaned over the weather side of the quarterdeck, and held a whispered conversation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Christian therefore changed his plan, and, reembarking in the Bounty, set sail for Otaheite.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Edward Young went up to him.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“That may perhaps suit them,” said Young.

“Suit them,” rejoined Christian, with a quick glance; “then you don’t count yourself one of them?”

“No,” returned the midshipman with a frank look, “I will follow you now, sir, to the end. How far I am guilty is a question that does not concern me at

present. If the British Government gets hold of me, my fate is sealed. I am in the same boat with yourself, Mr Christian, and I mean to stick by it."

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thus the party consisted of twentyeight soulsnamely, nine mutineers, six native men, twelve native women, and the lightbrown baby.

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

"I could not leave you," he said in conclusion, "without relieving my mind of

all that I have just said about the mutiny, because you are sure to be sent for and taken to England as soon as the intelligence of this sad affair reaches. I advise you to go off at once to the first ship that may appear, and give yourselves up to the commander."

"Such is our intention," said Heywood.

"Right," rejoined Christian; "you are both innocent. No harm can come to you, for you took no part in the mutiny. For me, my fate is fixed. I go to search for some remote and uninhabited island, where I hope to spend the remainder of my days without seeing the face of any Europeans except those who accompany me. It is a dreary thought, lads, to lose country and kindred and friends for ever by the act of one dark hour. Now, remember, Heywood, what I have told you to tell my friends. God knows I do not plead guiltless; I am alone responsible for the mutiny, and I exonerate all, even my adherents, from so much as suggesting it to me; nevertheless, there are some who love me in England, to whom I would beg of you to relate the circumstances that I have told you. These may extenuate though they cannot justify the crime I have committed. I assure you, most solemnly, that almost up to the last I had no intention of doing more than making my own escape from the ship which the injustice and brutality of Bligh had made a place of torment to me. When you called me, Stewart, to relieve the watch, my brain seemed on fire, and it was when I found the two officers both asleep, who should have been on duty, that I suddenly made up my mind to take the ship. Now," concluded Christian, grasping the hands of the youths, "I must say farewell. I have done you grievous wrong. God forgive me, and bless you. Goodbye, Peter; goodbye, Stewart, goodbye."

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

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

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

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

These, to the number of sixteen, soon distributed themselves among the houses of their various friends, and proceeded to make themselves quite at home. Some of them, however, were not disposed to take up a permanent

abode there. Among these was the boatswain's mate, James Morrison, a man of superior mental power and energy, who kept an interesting and graphic journal of events. (See note.) He, with the armourer, cooper, carpenter's mate, and others, set to work to construct a small vessel, in which they meant to sail to Batavia, whence they hoped to procure a passage to England. The natives opposed this at first, but on being told that the vessel was only meant for pleasure trips round the island, they ceased their opposition, and watched with great wonder at the process of shipbuilding, which was carried on industriously from day to day.

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

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

Meanwhile, two of the worst of the mutineers, named Thompson and Churchill, came to a tragical end. The former insulted a member of the family with whom he resided, and was knocked down. He left them in high dudgeon, and went to that part of the island where the vessel above referred to was being built. One day a canoe from a distant district touched there, and the owner landed with his wife and family, carrying his youngest child in his arms. Thompson angrily ordered him to go away, but the man did not obey the order, whereupon Thompson seized his musket and shot father and child with the same bullet. For this murder he was shunned with abhorrence by his comrades, and obliged to go off to another part of the island, accompanied by Churchill. These two took up their abode with a chief who was a tayo, or sworn friend, of the latter. This chief died shortly afterwards, leaving no children behind him; and Churchill, being his tayo, succeeded to his possessions and dignity, according to the custom of the country. He did not, however, enjoy his new position long, for Thompson, from jealousy or some

other cause, shot him. The natives were so incensed at this that they arose en masse and stoned Thompson to death.

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

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

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

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

Chapter Three.

The Lonely Island Sighted.

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

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

infant.

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

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

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

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

“Take care!” exclaimed John Adams as he left the quarterdeck with his hands in his pockets; “your mate’ll butt you overboard, Sal, if you don’t lookout.”

There was, indeed, some fear of such a catastrophe, for the precocious infant had a tendency to scramble on any object which enabled her to look over the

low bulwarks, and the goat had a propensity to advance on its hind legs with a playful toss of its head and take its playmate by surprise, in truth, what between the forehatch, the companionhatch, and the low bulwarks, it may be said that Sally led a life of constant and imminent danger. She was frequently plucked by the men out of the very jaws of death, and seemed to enjoy the fun.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

lurch of the ship soon after sent Sally head foremost into the midst of the ripples.

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

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

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

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

“So do all his countrymen,” said Young.

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

“She’s tugging at the man’s woolly head as if it were a door mat,” said Christian, laughing; “and I do believeyesthe little thing is now reaching roundand pulling his nose. Look at them, Young.”

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

The fact was, that Sally’s mother thought no more of Sally falling into the sea than a white mother might of her child falling on its nosenot so much, perhaps. She knew that the ship would wait to pick her up. She also knew that Sally was an expert swimmer for her age, and that the man who had gone to her rescue was thoroughly able for the duty, having, like all the South Sea Islanders, been accustomed from infancy to spend hours at a time in the water.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“It is too late to attempt a landing tonight,” said Christian to Young. “We’ll dodge off and on till morning.”

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

Chapter Four.

The Island Explored.

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

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

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

“Won’t you take cutlasses?” asked Young, looking over the side.

“Well, yes, hand down halfadozen; and don’t go far from this end of the island, Mr Young. Just keep dodging off and on.”

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

“Shove off,” said Christian, seating himself at the helm.

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

As the boat neared the shore it soon became evident that it would be extremely difficult to effect a landing. Nothing could be seen but high precipitous cliffs without any sign of a harbour or creek sufficiently large or safe to afford

anchorage for the ship. Worst of all, the only spot that seemed to offer any prospect of a landingplace, even for a boat, was guarded by tremendous breakers that seemed to bid defiance to man's feeble powers. These great waves, or rollers, were not the result of storm or wind, but of the mere oceanswell of the great Pacific, which undulates over her broad breast even when becalmed. No signs of the coming waves were visible more than a few hundred yards from the shore. There, each roller gradually and silently arose when the undulating motion of the sea caught the bottom. A little farther in it assumed the form of a magnificent green wall of liquid glass, which became more and more vast and perpendicular as it rolled on, until it curled over and rushed with a mighty roar and a snowy crest towards the beach. There it dashed itself in tumultuous foam among the rocks.

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

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

"Shall we give 'em a shot, sir?" asked McCoy, laying his hand on a musket.

"No, time enough for that," replied Christian, shortly.

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

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

"We'll have to try it, sir," said John Adams, looking at his leader inquiringly.

"We're sure to capsize," observed McCoy.

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

He spoke to one of the native in the imperfect jumble of Otaheitan and English with which the white men had learned to communicate with the natives. Ohoo understood, and at once went to the bow of the boat, the head of which was now directed towards a place in the cliffs where there seemed to be a small

bay or creek. The native gave directions with his arms right or left, and did not require to speak. Christian steered with one of the oars instead of the rudder, to give him more power over the boat.

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

“Give a gentle pull, boys,” he said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

At the head of the bay there was a hill, almost a cliff, up which there wound something that had the appearance of a path, or the almost dry bed of a watercourse. It was exceedingly steep, but seemed the only route by which the

interior of the island could be reached. Up the tangled pass for about three hundred yards the explorers advanced in single file, all except Quintal, who was left in charge of the boat.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Humph! It’s not all gold that glitters,” growled McCoy, with a sarcastic smile.

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

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

Besides cocoanut palms and other trees and shrubs, there were banyantrees, the branches of which dropped downwards to the earth and there took root,

and other large timbertrees, and plantains, bananas, yams, taroroots, mulberry, teeplant, and other fruitbearing plants in great profusion. Over this richly varied scene the eyes of William Brown wandered in rapture.

“Magnificent!” he exclaimed; “a perfect garden!”

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

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

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

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

“Can we do better than dine here?” said Isaac Martin. “There’s lots o’ food around us.”

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

Brown had brought a small hatchet with him, which enabled them to break open several cocoanuts, whose hard outer husks would not have yielded easily to a claspknife.

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

A small species of flycatcher, of a whiteybrown colour, was likewise observed, and those creatures, it was afterwards ascertained, were the only living things

to be found on the island, with the exception of a variety of insects and the innumerable gulls already mentioned.

“Here, then,” said Christian, raising a piece of the cocoanut shell filled with water to his lips, “I drink to our health and happiness in our island home.”

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

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

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

“Worse without it, I think,” growled McCoy, who was naturally contentious and quarrelsome; “don’t it warm the heart and raise the spirits and strengthen the frame, and”

“Ay, and clear the brain,” interrupted Martin, with one of his most lugubrious looks, “an’ steady the gait, specially w’en one’s pretty far gone, an’ beautify the expression, an’an’clear the int’leck, an’ (hic) an’ gen’r’ly inintenshify sh’ powers (hic) of cconverzashun, eh?”

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

To which Martin returned, “Bam!”

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

“I doubt it’s too deep for anchoring,” remarked Adams, as they walked down the hill.

“Well, then, we shall run the ship on shore,” said Christian, curtly, “for here we must remain. There is no other island that I know of in these regions. Besides, this one seems the very thing we want. It has wood and water in abundance; fruits and roots of many kinds; a splendid soil, if we may believe our eyes, to say nothing of Brown’s opinion; bad anchorage for ships, great difficulty and some danger in landing even in fine weather, and impossible to land at all, I should think, in bad; beautiful little valleys and hills; rugged

mountains with passes so difficult that a few resolute men might defy a host, and caves to which we might retreat and sell our lives dearly if hard pushed. What more could we wish for?”

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

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

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

“Give way!”

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

“With a will, boys, with a will!” cried Christian.

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

Chapter Five.

The Landing of the Livestock in Bounty Bay.

Preparations were now made for landing. The bay which they had discovered, and was the only one on the island, lay on its northern side. Into it they

succeeded in running the Bounty, and cast anchor. Soon the women, with little Sally, were landed and sent up to the tableland above, to make some sort of encampment, under the charge of midshipman Young. The ship was warped close up to the cliffs, so close that she ran the end of her bowsprit against them and broke it off. Here there was a narrow ledge that seemed suitable for a landingplace. Night put a stop to their labours on board. While some lighted fires and encamped on the shore, others remained in the ship to guard her and to be ready for the debarkation that was to take place in the morning.

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

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

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

“Quite like a menadgeree,” suggested Mills.

“More like old Noah comin’ out o’ the ark,” said Williams, “on the top o’ MountMountwhat was its name? I forget.”

“Mount Synee,” suggested Quintal.

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

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

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

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

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

congenial.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“So we have!” exclaimed everybody.

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

This estimate of the cats was fully justified by what followed. A considerable

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

“I see ’im,” cried Mills, with his head thrust down between a nailcask and a bundle of Otaheitan roots.

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

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

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

“I’ve touched him at last,” said Adams, quietly. “Lookout there, Brown, he’s goin’ to scramble up the bulkhead.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter Six.

Settling down and Exploration.

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

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

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

“I say wait a bit and consider,” replied Young.

“Ditto,” said Adams.

Some of the others thought with Christian. Quintal, in particular, who seemed to live in a chronic state of objection to being hanged, was strong for destroying the vessel. Eventually, after a good deal of delay and much discussion, the good ship Bounty finished her career by being burned to the water’s edge in Bounty Bay. This occurred on the 23rd January 1790. The lower part of the vessel, which would not burn, was towed out into deep water and sunk, so that not a vestige of her remained.

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

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

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

The botanist hesitated, and glanced round him.

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

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

ground.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Strange," said Adams; "an' it sounded very like some one in distress."

It was observed suddenly that Isaac Martin was absent.

"But the voice was not like his," said Brown.

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

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

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

In a few seconds the party reached what seemed to be a dark hole, out of

which the poor man's left leg was seen protruding. Christian and Adams grasped it. Brown and one of the Otaheitans lent a hand, and Martin was quickly dragged out of danger and set on his legs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"More fit for a monkey," said Martin.

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

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

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

He returned as he spoke to the cave's landward entrance, and clambered out with some difficulty, followed by his companions. Proceeding with their investigations, they found that, while a large part of the island was covered

with rich soil, bearing fruittrees and shrubs in abundance, the remainder of it was mountainous, rugged, and barren. They also ascertained that, although the place had been inhabited in times long past, there seemed to be no inhabitants at that time to dispute their taking possession. Satisfied with the result of their investigations, they descended to their encampment on the tableland close to the heights above Bounty Bay.

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

“It’s Quintal and McCoy,” said Adams; “I know the sound o’ their illnatured voices.”

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

“I tell you the baccy is mine,” said Quintal.

“It’s nothin’ o’ the sort, it’s mine,” answered McCoy, snatching the coveted weed out of the other’s hand.

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Where away did ’ee lose her?” asked McCoy; but the poor mother could only

wring her hands and cry, “Lost! lost!”

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

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

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

“Now, lads,” said Christian, after it was ascertained that the poor woman could give no information whatever, “we must search at once, but we must go about it according to a fixed plan. I remember once reading of a General having got lost in a great swamp one evening with his staff. It was near the sea, I think, and the tide was making. He collected his officers and bade them radiate out from him in all directions, each one in a straight line, so as to make sure of at least one of them finding the right road out of the danger. We will do likewise.”

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

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

We will follow only the line of search which ended in success. It was pursued by Christian himself. At first he came on spots where domestic fowls had taken up their abode. Then, while tramping through a mass of luxuriant ferns, he trod on the toes of a slumbering hog, which immediately set up a shriek comparable only to the brake of an illused locomotive. This uncalledfor disturbance roused and routed a considerable number of the same family

which had taken refuge in the same locality. After that he came on a bevy of cats, seated at respectful distances from each other, in glaring and armed neutrality. His sudden and evidently unexpected appearance scattered these to the four points of the compass.

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

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

Chapter Seven.

Roasting, Foraging, and Fabricating.

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

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

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

Mainmast, who was better known by that sobriquet than by the name which Christian had given to her on his weddingday at Otaheite, was a very comely and naturally amiable creature, graceful in form, and although a socalled savage, possessing an air of simple dignity and refinement which might almost be termed ladylike. Indeed, several of the other native wives of the mutineers were similar to Mrs Christian in these respects, and, despite their brown

complexions, were remarkably goodlooking. One or two, however, were commonplace enough, especially the wives of the three married Otaheitan men, who seemed to be, as no doubt they were, of a lower social class than the others who had mingled with the best Otaheitan society, Edward Young's wife, for instance, being a sort of native princessat least she was the daughter of a great chief.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Yes, hog takes time to cook."

"Hog is it, eh? That'll be firstrate. Got sauce for it?"

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

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

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

“What have you got there?” asked one.

“Oysters, eh?” said another, scrutinising the pan.

“More like jellyfish,” said Young.

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

“You’ll see when it boils,” said Martin.

“There’s nothin’ in it at all but water,” said Quintal, somewhat contemptuously.

“Well, I’ve heerd of many a thing, but never fried water,” remarked McCoy.

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

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

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

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

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

“I intend to finish the thatching of my hut,” said Quintal, in that offhand tone of independence and disregard of the wishes of others which was one of his characteristics.

“Well, there are plenty of us to do all the work,” said Christian. “Let every man do what pleases himself. I would only ask for one or two volunteers to cut the watertanks I spoke of yesterday. The water we have discovered, although a

plentiful supply for present needs, may run short or cease altogether if drought comes. So we must provide against a dry instead of a rainy day, by cutting a tank or two in the solid rock to hold a reserve."

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

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

"Not quite, but nearly," returned Martin, as he stirred the furiouslyboiling contents of the fryingpan.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

preparing charcoal for the forge fire.

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

Chapter Eight.

Division of the IslandMoralisings, Misgivings, and a Great Event.

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

It is, however, but just to Edward Young to say that he invariably treated the natives well and was much liked by them, from which it is to be supposed that he did not quite fall in with the views of his associates, although he made no objection to the unjust distribution of the land. John Adams, being an amiable and kindly man, also treated the natives well, and so did Fletcher Christian; but the others were more or less tyrannical, and those kindred spirits, Matthew Quintal and William McCoy, treated them with great severity, sometimes with excessive cruelty.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“And now, an outlaw, an outcast, doomed, if taken, to a felon’s death! Comrades seduced to their ruin! The brand of Cain not more terrible than mine! Selfexiled for life! Never, never more to see friends, country, kindred, sistersmother! God help me!”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Come down, Adams, come down; there’s no occasion to keep shouting up there.”

“True, sir; but do you come up. You’re wanted immediately.”

There was something in the man’s voice which alarmed Christian. Grasping

his musket, he sprang up the ladder and stood beside his comrade.

“Well?”

“It’sit’s all right, sir,” said Adams, panting with his exertions in climbing the hill; “it’sit’s a boy!”

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

Chapter Nine.

Sally’s Chief JoysDark Clouds Overspread the Pitcairn Sky, and Darker Deeds are done.

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

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

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

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

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

Thus came into the world the first “descendant” of the mutineers of the Bounty.

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

“What will you call him?” inquired Young, after pledging the new arrival in a cup of cocoanut milk.

“What day is it?” asked Christian.

“Thursday,” answered Martin.

“Then I’ll call him Thursday,” said Christian; “it will commemorate the day.”

“You’d better add ‘October,’ and commemorate the month,” said Adams.

“So I will,” said Christian.

“An’ stick on ‘Seventeenninety’ to commemorate the year,” suggested Mills.

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

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

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

discarding his eccentric taste for days and months, named Charles.

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

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

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

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

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

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

This accident had at first a deeply solemnising effect on the whole community. Accustomed though these men were to the sight of death in some of its worst forms in war, they were awed by this sudden and unexpected assault of the great enemy. The poor mangled body lying so quietly among the rocks at the foot of the awful precipice, the sight of the husband's grief, the sad and silent procession with the ghastly burden in the deepening gloom of evening, the wailing of the women, and the awestruck gaze of such of the children as were old enough to know that something terrible had occurred, though unable to

understand it,all conspired to deepen the impression, even on those among the men who were least easily impressed; and it was with softened feelings of pity that Quintal and McCoy, volunteering their services on the occasion, dug the first grave at Pitcairn.

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

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

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

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

"Why does black man sharpen axe?

To kill white man."

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

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

The other four men begged for mercy, said that the two who had just left were the instigators as well as ringleaders in the plot, and promised to hunt them down and murder them if their own lives should be spared. As Christian had

probably no fixed intention to kill any of the men, and his sudden anger soon abated, he accepted their excuses and left them. It was impossible, however, for the mutineers to feel confidence in the natives after that. The two men who had fled for refuge to the bush did not return to the settlement, but remained in hiding.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Kill them," suggested McCoy.

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

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

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

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

The assassin was not long in tracking out his countrymen.

“You bring us food?” said Talaloo.

“Yes, I have stolen it. Will you have some?”

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

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

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

The two combatants were pretty well matched. The pistol had fallen at the first onset, and for a few minutes it seemed doubtful which should prove the victor,

as they swayed to and fro, straining their dark and sinewy forms in deadly conflict. At last the strength of Talaloo seemed to give way, but still he retained a vicelike grasp of his antagonist's right wrist.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter Ten.

Dangers, Joys, Trials, and Multiplication.

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

Williams was busy at the forge under the pleasant shade of the great

banyantree. Resting his hammer on the anvil, he looked up.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Why not?”

“’Cause I’s got to look arter babby.”

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

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

“Yes, there’s a stunnin’ lot of ’ema’most too many for me; but I said the babby.”

“Oh, I suppose you mean Charlie Christian?”

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

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

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

Submitting, according to custom, in solemn and resigned surprise, Charlie was soon seated on the shoulders of our midshipman, who led the way to the cliffs.

William Brown followed, leading Sally by the hand, for she refused to be carried, and Nehow brought up the rear.

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

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

She effectually prevented reply, even if such had been intended, by suddenly seizing her little charge round the neck and kissing his right eye passionately. Master Charlie cared nothing for that. He gazed past her at the gulls with the unobliterated eye. When she kissed him on the left cheek, he gazed past her at the gulls with the other eye. When she let him go, he continued to gaze at the gulls with both eyes. He had often seen the same gulls at a distance, from the lower level of Bounty Bay, but he had never before stood on their own giddy cliffs, and watched them from their own favourite bird'seyeview point; for there were thousands of them sloping, diving, and wheeling in the airy abyss, pictured against the dark blue sea below, as well as thousands more circling upwards, floating and gyrating in the bright blue sky above. It seemed as if giant snowflakes were trembling in the air in all directions. Some of the gulls came so near to those who watched them that their black inquiring eyes became distinctly visible; others swept towards them with rustling wings, as if intending to strike, and then glanced sharply off, or upwards, with wild cries.

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

"Oh, wouldn't it?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Oh, he never moves a’most, ’xcept w’en I lifts ’im. He’s so good!” interrupted Sally.

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

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

It was interesting to watch the movements of the three men. Each was, in his own way, venturesome, fearless, and more or less practised in cliff climbing. The midshipman ascended the perpendicular face with something of a nautical swagger, but inasmuch as the ledges, crevices, and projections were neither so well adapted to the hands nor so sure as ratlines and ropes, there was a

wholesome degree of caution mingled with his confidence. When the wishedfor ledge was gained, he gave relief to his feelings in a hearty British cheer that reverberated from cliff to cliff, causing the startled seagulls to drive the very echoes mad with their clangour.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Charlie did them, at the same moment, the greatest possible damage, by sitting

down in the basket, unintentionally, with an awful crash.

From the gaze of horror that he cast upwards, it was evident that he was impressed with a strong belief that he had done something wrong, though the result did not seem to him unpleasant. The gaze of horror quickly changed into one of alarm when he observed the shocked countenance of Sally, and he burst into uncontrollable tears.

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

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

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

“Oh, Challie, but you is bad today.”

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

“No, no; O don’t!” cried the repentant Sally, her arms round his neck and fondling him. “I didn’t mean it. I’m so sorry. It’s me that’s badbadder than you ever was.”

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

“Me’s dood?” he cried, pausing suddenly, with a blaze of inquiry in his wet visage.

“Yes, yes, good as goldgooder, far gooder!”

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

“Me’s doodO dood! ahoeeawee!”

The noise was bad enough, but the way he flung himself about was worse. There was no occasion for Sally to clean him up. Rolling thus on the green turf made him as pure, if not bright, as a new pin; but it had another effect, which

gave Sally a fright such as she had never up to that time conceived of, and never afterwards forgot.

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

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

If Sally had been a few years older she would have bounded after him like a goat, but she had only reached that period of life which rendered petrifaction possible. She stood ridged for a few moments with heart, head, and eyes apparently about to burst. At last her voice found vent in a shriek so awful that it made the heart of Young, high on the cliffs above, stand still. It had quite the contrary effect on the legs of Brown. That cautious man chanced to be climbing the cliff slowly with a fresh basketful of eggs. Hearing the shriek, and knowing full well that it meant imminent danger, he leaped up the last few steps of the precipice with a degree of heedless agility that equalled that of Nehow himself. He was just in time to see Charlie coming straight at him like a cannon shot. It was really an awful situation. To have received the shock while his footing was still precarious would have insured his own destruction as well as that of the child. Feeling this, he made a kangaroolike bound over the edge of the cliff, and succeeded in planting both feet and knees firmly on a grassy foundation, just in time. Letting go his burden, he spread out both arms. Charlie came into his bosom with extreme violence, but he remained firm, while the basket of eggs went wildly downward to destruction.

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

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

“All right?” gasped Young.

“All right,” replied Brown.

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

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

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

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

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

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

About the same time that little Dinah was born, John Mills rushed one day into the yamfield of Edward Young, where the midshipman was at work, seized his hand, and exclaimed“I wish you joy, sir, it’s a girl!”

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

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

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

Chapter Eleven.

Sporting, Schooling and Moralising.

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

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

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

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

On turning from the clearing into the bush, Adams came on a sight which amused him not a little. In an open place, partially screened from the sun by the graceful leaves of palms and bananas, through which was obtained a glimpse of the sea, Otaheitan Sally was busily engaged in playing at “school.” Seated on the end of a felled tree was Thursday October Christian, who had become, as Isaac Martin expressed it, a great lout of a boy for his age.

Thursday was at the head of the class, not in virtue of his superior knowledge, but his size. He was a strongmade fellow, with a bright, intelligent, goodhumoured face, like that of his father. Next to him sat little Matt Quintal, rather heavy and stupid in expression, but quiet and peaceable in temperament,

like his mother. Next came Daniel McCoy, whose sharp sparkling countenance seemed the very embodiment of mischief, in which quality he resembled his father. Fortunately for little Dan, his mother was the gentlest and most unselfish of all the native women, and these qualities, transmitted to her son, were the means of neutralising the evil which he inherited from his father. After him came Elizabeth Mills, whose pretty little whiteybrown face was the counterpart of her mother's in expression. Indeed, all of these little ones inherited in a great degree that sweet pliability of character for which the Otaheitan women were, and we believe still are, famous. Last, but not least, sat Charlie Christian at the bottom of the class.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Oh, you booby!" said Sally.

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

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

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

“Yes, I will ask ’im. Challie, what’s three an’ two?”

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

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

“You’re winkin’ again, sir,” cried Sally, sharply.

“Yis, mum, but with bof eyes this time, vich isn’t naughty, you know.”

“But it is naughty, sir, unless you do it with both eyes at once.”

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

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

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

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

“No,” replied the child, looking earnestly up into the seaman’s countenance.

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

“No,” repeated Sally, “don’t think nobody have pass this mornin’.”

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

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

“Isaac Martin’s big sow,” replied Dan, gravely.

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

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

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

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

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

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

“No, sar.”

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

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

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

The native threw the animal over his broad shoulders, and Adams directed his steps to the wellknown cave on the mountaintop, where the chief of the mutineers spent so much of his leisure time.

After the murder of the two natives, Talaloo and Ohoo, Fletcher Christian had become very morose. It seemed as if a fit of deep melancholy had taken entire possession of him. His temper had become greatly soured. He would scarcely condescend to hold intercourse with any one, and sought the retirement of his

outlook in the cave on the mountaintop, where few of his comrades ventured to disturb him, save when matters of importance claimed his immediate attention.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter Twelve.

Converse in the CaveCruelty, Punishment, and Revelry.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

There was nothing but goodnatured encouragement in Christian's look and tone; nevertheless, John Adams felt it extremely difficult to speak, and wished

with all his heart that he had not come to the cave. But he was too bold and outspoken a man to be long oppressed with such feelings. Clearing his voice, he said, “Well, Mr Christian, here’s what I’ve got to say. I’ve bin thinkin’ for a long time past that it’s of no manner of use your comin’ up here day after day an’ mopin’ away about what can’t be mended, an’ goin’ into the blues. You’ll excuse me, sir, for bein’ so free, but you shouldn’t do it, sir. You can’t alter what’s bin done by cryin’ over spilt milk, an’ it comes heavy on the rest of us, like. Indeed it do. So I’ve made so bold as to come an’ say you’d better drop it and come along with me for a day’s shootin’ of the cats an’ pigs, and then we’ll go home an’ have a royal supper an’ a song or two, or maybe a game at blindman’sbuff with the child’n. That’s what’ll do you good, sir, an’ make you forget what’s past, take my word for it, Mister Christian.”

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

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

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

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

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

“That’s not it, that’s not it,” said Christian, quickly. “Repentance is not enough. Why, man, do you think if I went to England just now, and said ever so earnestly or so truly, ‘I repent,’ that I’d escape swinging at the yardarm?”

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

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

Adams’s puzzled look increased, and finally settled on the horizon. The matter

had evidently never occurred to him before in that light. After a short silence he turned again to Christian.

“Well, sir, to be frank with you, I must say that I don’t rightly understand it.”

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

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

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

“Do you mean God’s book?”

“Yes.”

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

“Ha! that’s it; that’s what must have turned your head.”

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

“Well, whether right or wrong, it’s not for me to say but for you to prove, Mr Christian.”

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

“John Adams, whatever turn my head may have got, I shall have reason to thank God for it all the days of my lifeay, and afterwards throughout eternity.”

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

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

Christian made no reply. He knew full well that both McCoy and Quintal were in the habit of flogging their slaves, Nehow and Timoa, and otherwise treating them with great cruelty. Indeed, there had reached him a report of treatment so shocking that he could scarcely credit it, and thought it best at the time to take no notice of the rumour; but afterwards he was told of a repetition of the cruelty, and now he seemed about to witness it with his own eyes. Burning indignation at first fired his soul, and he resolved to punish Quintal. Then came the thought, “Who was it that tempted Quintal to mutiny, and placed him in his present circumstances?” The continued cries of agony, however, drove all connected thought from his brain as he ran with Adams towards the house.

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

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

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

“The slave is mine!” he hissed between his teeth.

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

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

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

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

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

“A bad beginning,” echoed Adams, “to give a welldeserved blow to as great a rascal as ever walked?”

“No, not exactly that; butWell, no matter, we’ll dismiss the subject, and go have a lark with the children.”

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

Chapter Thirteen.

Tyrants and Plotters.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“How did it happen?” asked McCoy.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“What has happened?” asked Timoa, anxiously.

While Nehow explained the nature of the cruel treatment he had just received,

they ran together to the nearest watercourse. It chanced to be pretty full at the time, heavy rain having fallen the day before.

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

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

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

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

Timoa looked at him with an intelligent grin.

“The white men must die,” he said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter Fourteen.

The Influence of Infancy, also of Villainy.

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

Otaheitan mothers are not particular in the matter of infant costume. Little Mary’s dress may be described in one wordnothing. Neither are such mothers

much troubled with maternal anxieties. Long before a European baby would have been let out of the hands of mother or nurse, even for a moment, little Molly Christian was committed to the care of her delighted father, who daily bore her off to a favourite resort among the cliffs, and there played with her.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“I don’t think anything of it at all,” replied Christian, whose countenance at once assumed that look of gravity which had become habitual to him since the day of the mutiny. “They have had too good reason to plot, poor fellows, but I

have such faith in their native amiability of disposition, that I don't believe they will ever think of anything beyond a brief show of rebellion."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

To those who have travelled much about this world, it may sound absurd to talk of hiding away in an island of such small size; but it must be borne in mind that the miniature valleys and hills of the interior were, in many places, very rugged and densely clothed with jungle, so that it was, in reality, about as difficult to catch an agile native among them as to catch a rabbit in a whinfield.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Nebber!” exclaimed Nehow, fiercely.

“Well, it will be the worse for yourselves in the longrun,” said Young, “for Quintal and McCoy will be sure to go after you at last and shoot you.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter Fifteen.

Murder!

The planting time came round at Pitcairn, and all was busy activity in the little settlement at Bounty Bay. The women, engaged in household work and in the preparation of food, scarcely troubled themselves to cast an anxious eye on the numerous children who, according to age and capacity, rolled, tumbled, staggered, and jumped about in noisy play. The sun, streaming through the leaves of the woods, studded shady places with balls of quivering light, and blazed in fierce heat in the open where the men were at work, each in his respective garden. We have said that those gardens lay apart, at some distance from each other, and were partially concealed by shrubs or undulating knolls.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

cry or groan, shot through the heart.

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

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

Christian also heard the shot, but seemed to pay no regard to it. Ceasing his labour in a few minutes, he raised himself, wiped his forehead, and resting both hands on his spade, looked upwards at the bright blue sky. Fleecy clouds passed across it now and then, intensifying its depth, and apparently riveting Christian's gaze, for he continued motionless for several minutes, with his clear eye fixed on the blue vault, and a sad, wistful expression on his handsome face, as if memory, busy with the past and future, had forgotten the present. It was his last look. A bullet from the bushes struck him at that moment on the breast. Uttering one short, sharp cry, he threw both hands high above his head, and fell backwards. The spasm of pain was but momentary. The sad, wistful look was replaced by a quiet smile. He never knew who had released his spirit from the prisonhouse of clay, for the eyes remained fixed on the bright blue sky, clear and steadfast, until death descended. Then the light went out, just as his murderers came forward, but the quiet smile remained, and his spirit returned to God who gave it.

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

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

"Yes; what then?" demanded Quintal.

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

"Didn't sound like that to me," returned Quintal; "more like Mainmast callin' her husband to dinner."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Meanwhile McCoy ran to warn Christian. Reaching his garden, he found him there, dead, with the tranquil smile still on his cold lips, and the now glazed eyes still gazing upwards. One glance sufficed. He turned and ran back to Christian’s house to tell his wife what he had seen, but the poor woman was

sick in bed at the time and could not move. Running then to Quintal's garden, he found him alive, but quite ignorant of what was going on.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reaching the edge of Brown's garden, and seeing the four Otaheitans standing as we have described, Adams stopped and called out to know what was the matter.

"Silence," shouted one of them, pointing his gun. Being unarmed, and observing the body of Brown on the ground, Adams at once leaped into the bush and ran. He was hotly pursued by the four men, but being strong and swift of foot, he soon left them behind. In passing Williams's house, he went towards it, intending to snatch up some thick garments, and, if possible, a musket and ammunition, for he had no doubt now that some of his countrymen must have been killed, and that he would have to take to the bush along with them. An exclamation of horror escaped him when he came upon the armourer's body. It needed no second glance to tell that his comrade was dead. Passing into the house, he caught up an old blanket and a coat, but there was no musket. He knew that without arms he would be at the mercy of the savages. Being a cool and courageous man, he therefore made a long détour through the bush until he reached his own house, and entered by a back window. His sick wife received him with a look of glad surprise.

"Is it true they have killed some of the white men?" she asked.

"Ay, too true," he replied, quickly; "and I must take to the bush for a while. Where can I find a bag to hold some yams? Ah, here you are. There's no fear o' them hurting you, lass."

As he spoke a shot was heard. The natives had seen and followed him. A ball, coming through the window, entered the back of his neck and came out at the front. He fell, but instantly sprang up and leaped through the doorway, where he was met by the four natives.

Besides being a powerful man, Adams was very active, and the wound in his

neck was only a flesh one. He knocked down Timoa, the foremost of the band, with one blow of his fist, and grappling with Nehow, threw him violently over his prostrate comrade; but Menalee, coming up at the moment, clubbed his musket and made a furious blow at Adams's head. He guarded it with one hand, and in so doing had one of his fingers broken. Tetaheite and Menalee then both sprang upon him, but he nearly throttled the one, tripped up the other, and, succeeding by a violent wrench in breaking loose, once more took to his heels.

In running, the Otaheitans were no match for him. He gradually left them behind. Then Timoa called out to him to stop.

"No, you scoundrels," he shouted back in reply, "you want to kill me; but you'll find it a harder job than you think."

"No, no," cried Nehow, vehemently, "we don't want to kill you. Stop, and we won't hurt you."

Adams felt that loss of blood from his wound was quickly reducing his strength. His case was desperate. He formed a quick resolve and acted promptly. Stopping, he turned about and walked slowly but steadily back towards the natives, with his hands in his pockets and his eyes fixed sternly upon them.

"Well, I have stopped, you see," he said, on coming up. "I will take you at your word."

"We will do you no harm if you will follow us," said Timoa.

They then went together to the house of Young. Here they found its owner, just roused by the noise of the scuffle with Adams, listening to the explanations of the women, who were purposely trying to lead him astray lest he should go out and be shot. The entrance of the four natives, armed and covered with blood, and Adams unarmed and wounded, at once showed him how matters stood.

"This is a terrible business," he said in a low tone to Adams, while the murderers were disputing noisily about going into the woods to hunt down McCoy and Quintal. "Have they killed many of our comrades?"

"God knows," said Adams, while Quintal's wife bound up the wound in his neck. "There has been firin' enough to have killed us all twice over. I thought some of you were spending the ammunition foolishly on hogs or gulls. Williams is dead, I know, and poor Brown, for I saw their bodies, but I can't say"

“Fletcher Christian is killed,” said Quintal’s wife, interrupting.

“Fletcher Christian!” exclaimed Adams and Young in the same breath.

“Ay, and Isaac Martin and John Mills,” continued the woman.

While she was speaking, the four Otaheitans, having apparently come to an agreement as to their future proceedings, loaded their muskets hastily, and rushing from the house soon disappeared in the woods.

We shall not harrow the reader’s feelings by following farther the bloody details of this massacre. Let it suffice to add, briefly, that after retiring from a fruitless search for the white men in the bush, Menalee quarrelled with Timoa and shot him. This roused the anger of the other two against Menalee, who fled to the bush and tried to make friends with McCoy and Quintal. This he appeared to succeed in doing, but when he was induced by them to give up his musket, he found out his mistake, for they soon turned it on himself and killed him. Then Young’s wife, Susannah, was induced to kill Tetaheite with an axe, and Young himself immediately after shot Nehow.

When McCoy and Quintal were told that all the Otaheitan men were dead they returned to the settlement. It was a terrible scene of desolation and woe. Even these two rough and heartless men were awed for a time into something like solemnity.

The men now left alive on the island were Young, Adams, Quintal, and McCoy. In the households of these four the widows and children of the slain were distributed. The evidences of the bloody tragedy were removed, the murdered men were buried, and thus came to a close the first great epoch in the chequered history of Pitcairn Island.

Chapter Sixteen.

Matt Quintal makes a Tremendous Discovery.

Upwards of four years had now elapsed since the mutiny of the Bounty, and of the nine mutineers who escaped to Pitcairn Island, only four remained, with eleven women and a number of children.

These latter had now become an important and remarkably noisy element in the colony. They and time together did much to efface the saddening effects of the gloomy epoch which had just come to a close. Time, however, did more than merely relieve the feelings of the surviving mutineers and widows. It increased the infantry force on the island considerably, so that in the course of

a few years there were added to it a Robert, William, and Edward Young, with a little sister named Dolly Young, to keep them in countenance. There also came a Jane Quintal and an Arthur Quintal, who were closely followed by a Rebecca Adams and a James Young. So that the selfimposed cares and burdens of that pretty, active, and selfdenying little creature, Otaheitan Sally, increased with her years and stature.

Before the most of these made their appearance, however, the poor Otaheitan wives and widows became downcast and discontented. One cannot wonder at this. Accustomed though they no doubt had been to war and bloodshed on their native island, they must have been shocked beyond measure by the scenes of brutality and murder through which they had passed. The most of them being now without husbands, and the men who remained being not on very amicable terms among themselves, these poor creatures seem to have been driven to a state of desperation, for they began to pine for their old home, and actually made up their minds to quit the island in one of the Bounty's old boats, and leave the white men and even the children behind them. See Note 1.

The old boat turned out to be so leaky, however, that they were compelled to return. But they did not cease to repine and to desire deliverance. Gentlespirited and tractable though they undoubtedly were, they had evidently been tried beyond their powers of endurance. They were roused, and when meek people are roused they not unfrequently give their friends and acquaintances, (to say nothing of those nearer), a considerable surprise.

Matthew Quintal, who had a good deal of sly humour about him, eventually hit on a plan to quiet them, at least for a time.

"What makes you so grumpy, old girl?" he said one day to his wife, while eating his dinner under the shade of a palmtree.

"We wiss to go home," she replied, in a plaintive tone.

"Well, well, you shall go home, so don't let your spirits go down. If you've got tired of me, lass, you're not worth keeping. We'll set to work and build you a new boat out o' the old un. We'll begin this very day, and when it's finished, you may up anchor and away to Otaheite, or Timbuctoo for all that I care."

The poor woman seemed pleased to hear this, and true to his word, Quintal set to work that very day, with McCoy, whom he persuaded to assist him. His friend thought that Quintal was only jesting about the women, and that in reality he meant to build a serviceable boat for fishing purposes. Young and Adams took little notice of what the other two were about; but one day when the former came down to the beach on Bounty Bay, he could not help remarking on the strange shape of the boat.

“It’ll never float,” he remarked, with a look of surprise.

“It’s not wanted to float,” replied Quintal, “at least not just yet. We can make it float well enough with a few improvements afterwards.”

Young looked still more surprised, but when Quintal whispered something in his ear, he laughed and went away.

The boat was soon ready, for it was to some extent merely a modification of the old boat. Then all the women were desired to get into it and push off, to see how it did.

“Get in carefully now, old girls,” said Quintal, with a leer. “Lay hold of the oars and we’ll shove you through the first o’ the surf. Lend a hand, McCoy. Now then, give way allhi!”

With a vigorous shove the two men sent the boat shooting through the surf, which was unusually low that day. Young and Adams, with some of the children, stood on the rocks and looked on. The women lay to their oars like men, and the boat leaped like a flyingfish through the surf into deep water. Forgetting, in the excitement of the moment, the object they had in view, the poor things shouted and laughed with glee; but they dipped their oars with sad irregularity, and the boat began to rock in a violent manner. Then Young’s wife, Susannah, caught what in nautical parlance is called “a crab;” that is, she missed her stroke and fell backwards into the bottom of the boat.

With that readiness to render help which was a characteristic of these women, Christian’s widow, Mainmast, leaped up to assist the fallen Susannah. It only wanted this to destroy the equilibrium of the boat altogether. It turned bottom up in a moment, and left the female crew floundering in the sea.

To women of civilised lands this might have been a serious accident, but to these Otaheitan ladies it was a mere trifle. Each had been able to swim like a duck from earliest childhood. Indeed, it was evident that some of their own little ones were equally gifted, for several of them, led by Sally, plunged into the surf and went out to meet their parents as they swam ashore.

The men laughed heartily, and, after securing the boat and hauling it up on the beach, returned to the settlement, whither the women had gone before them to change their garments.

This incident effectually cured the native women of any intention to escape from the island, at least by boat, but it did not tend to calm their feelings. On the contrary, it seemed to have the effect of filling them with a thirst for

vengeance, and they spent part of that day in whispered plottings against the men. They determined to take their lives that very night.

While they were thus engaged, their innocent offspring were playing about the settlement at different games, screaming at times with vehement delight, and making the palmgroves ring with laughter. The bright sun shone equally upon the heads that whirled with merriment and those that throbbed with dark despair.

Suddenly, in the midst of her play, little Sally came to an abrupt pause. She missed little Matt Quintal from the group.

“Where’s he gone, Charlie?” she demanded of her favourite playmate, whose name she had by that time learned to pronounce.

“I dunno,” answered Charlie, whose language partook more of the nautical tone of Quintal than of his late father.

“D’you know, Dan’l?” she asked of little McCoy.

“I dunno nuffin’,” replied Dan, “’xcep’ he’s not here.”

“Well, I must go an’ seek ’im. You stop an’ play here. I leave ’em in your care, Toc. See you be good.”

It would have amused you, reader, if you had seen with your bodily eyes the little creatures who were thus warned to be good. Even Dan McCoy, who was considered out and out the worst of them, might have sat to Rubens for a cherub; and as for the others, they were, we might almost say, appallingly good. Thursday October, in particular, was the very personification of innocence. It would have been much more appropriate to have named him Sunday July, because in his meek countenance goodness and beauty sat enthroned.

Of course we do not mean to say that these children were good from principle. They had no principle at that time. No, their actuating motive was selfishness; but it was not concentrated, regardless selfishness, and it was beautifully counteracted by natural amiability of temperament.

But they were quite capable of sin. For instance, when Sally had left them to search for her lost sheep, little Dan McCoy, moved by a desire for fun, went up behind little Charlie Christian and gave him an unmerited kick. It chanced to be a painful kick, and Charlie, without a thought of resentment or revenge, immediately opened his mouth, shut his eyes, and roared. Horrified by this unexpected result, little Dan also shut his eyes, opened his mouth, and roared.

The face that Charlie made in these circumstances was so ineffably funny, that Toc burst into uncontrollable laughter. Hearing this, the roarers opened their eyes, slid quickly into the same key, and tumbled head over heels on the grass, in which evolutions they were imitated by the whole party, except such as had not at that time passed beyond the staggering age.

Meanwhile Sally searched the neighbouring bush in vain; then bethinking her that Matt Quintal, who was fond of dangerous places, might have clambered down to the rocks to bathe, she made the best of her way to the beach, at a place which, being somewhat difficult of access from above, was seldom visited by any save the wild and venturesome.

She had only descended a few yards when she met the lost one clambering up in frantic haste, panting violently, his fat cheeks on fire, and his large eyes blazing.

“Oh, Matt, what is it?” she exclaimed, awestruck at the sight of him.

“Sip!sip!” he cried, with labouring breath, as he pointed with one hand eagerly to the sea and with the other to the shore; “bin men down dare!look, got suffin’! Oh!”

A prolonged groan of despair escaped the child as he fumbled in a trouserspocket and pushed three fingers through a hole in the bottom of it.

“It’s hoed through!”

“What’s hoed through?” asked Sally, with quick sympathy, trying to console the urchin for some loss he had sustained.

“De knife!” exclaimed little Dan, with a face of blank woe.

“The knife! what knife? But don’t cry, dear; if you lost it through that hole it must be lying on the track, you know, somewhere between us and the beach.”

This happy thought did not seem to have occurred to Matt, whose cheeks at once resumed their flush and his eyes their blaze.

Taking his hand, Sally led him down the track.

They looked carefully as they went, and had not gone far when Matt sprang forward with a scream of delight and picked up a claspknife. It was by no means a valuable one. It had a buckhorn handle, and its solitary blade, besides being broken at the point, was affected with rust and tobacco in about equal proportions.

“Oh, Matt, where did you find it?”

“Come down and you see,” he exclaimed, pointing with greater excitement than ever to the beach below.

They were soon down, and there, on the margin of the woods, they found a heap of cocoanut shells scattered about.

“Found de knife dere,” said Matt, pointing to the midst of the shells, and speaking in a low earnest voice, as if the subject were a solemn one.

“Oh!” exclaimed Sally, under her breath.

“An’ look here,” said Matt, leading the girl to a sandy spot close by. They both stood transfixed and silent, for there were strange footprints on the sand.

They could not be mistaken. Sally and Matt knew every foot and every shoe, white or black, in Pitcairn. The marks before them had been made by unknown shoes.

Just in proportion as youth is more susceptible of astonishment than age, so was the surprise of those little ones immeasurably greater than that of Robinson Crusoe in similar circumstances. With awestruck faces they traced the footprints down to the water’s edge. Then, for the first time, it struck Matt that he had forgotten something.

“Oh, me forget de sipde sip!” he cried, and pointed out to sea.

Sally raised her eyes and uttered an exclamation of fresh astonishment, as well she might, for there, like a seagull on the blue wave, was a ship under full sail. It was faroff, nearly on the horizon, but quite distinct, and large enough to be recognised.

Of course the gazers were spellbound again. It was the first real ship they had ever seen, but they easily recognised it, being familiar with man’s floating prisons from the frequent descriptions given to them by John Adams, and especially from a drawing made by him, years ago, on the back of an old letter, representing a fullrigged manofwar. This masterpiece of fine art had been nailed up on the walls of John Adams’s hut, and had been fully expounded to each child in succession, as soon after its birth as was consistent with commonsensesometimes sooner.

Suddenly Otaheitan Sally recovered herself.

“Come, Matt, we must run home an’ tell what we’ve seen.”

Away they went like two goats up the cliffs. Panting and blazing, they charged down on their amazed playmates, shouting, “A sip! a sip!” but never turning aside nor slacking their pace until they burst with the news on the astonished mutineers.

Something more than astonishment, however, mingled with the feelings of the seamen, and it was not until they had handled the knife, and visited the sandy cove, and seen the footprints, and beheld the vessel herself, that they became fully convinced that she had really been close to the island, that men had apparently landed to gather cocoanuts, and had gone away without having discovered the settlement, which was hid from their view by the high cliffs to the eastward of Bounty Bay.

The vessel had increased her distance so much by the time the men reached the cove, that it was impossible to make out what she was.

“A mano’war, mayhap, sent to search for us,” suggested Quintal.

“Not likely,” said Adams. “If she’d bin sent to search for us, she wouldn’t have contented herself with only pickin’ a few nuts.”

“I should say she is a trader that has got out of her course,” said Young; “but whatever she is, we’ve seen the last of her. I’m not sure that I wouldn’t have run the risk of having our hidingplace found out, and of being hung, for the sake of seeing once more the fresh face of a white man.”

He spoke with a touch of sadness in his tone, which contrasted forcibly with the remark that followed.

“It’s little I would care about the risk o’ bein’ scragged,” said Quintal, “if I could only once more have a stiff glass o’ grog an’ a pipe o’ good, strong, genuine baccy!”

“You’ll maybe have the first sooner than you think,” observed McCoy, with a look of intelligence.

“What d’ye mean?” asked Quintal.

“Ax no questions an’ you’ll be told no lies,” was McCoy’s polite rejoinder, to which Quintal returned a not less complimentary remark, and followed Young and Adams, who had already begun to reascend the cliffs.

This little glimpse of the great outer world was obtained by the mutineers in 1795, and was the only break of the kind that occurred during a residence of many years on the lonely island.

Note 1. We are led to this conclusion in regard to the children by the fact that in the various records which tell us of these women attempting their flight, no mention is made of the children being with them.

Chapter Seventeen.

The Clouds grow Thicker and Blacker.

This glimpse of a stray vessel left a deep impression on the minds of the exiles for many days, and it so far influenced the women that they postponed their scheme of vengeance for some time.

It must not be supposed, however, that all of those women, whom we have described as being so gentle in character, were suddenly transformed into demons. It was only two or three of the more energetic and passionate among them who stirred up the rest, and forced them to fall in with their views. These passionate ones were the widows of the men who had been slain. They not only felt their loss most bitterly, but became almost mad with the despair caused by their forlorn condition, and the apparent hopelessness of deliverance.

The sight of the passing ship had diverted their thoughts for a time, perhaps had infused a little hope; but when the excitement died down they renewed their plots against the men and at last made a desperate attempt to carry them out.

It was on a dark and stormy night. Thunder was rolling in the sky. Lightning flashed among the mountainpeaks. Rain, the first that had descended for many days, fell in fitful showers. It must have seemed to the women either that the elements sympathised with them, or that the extreme darkness was favourable to the execution of their plan, for about midnight one of them rose from her bed, and crept noiselessly to the corner of her hut, where she had seen Quintal deposit a loaded musket the previous day. Possessing herself of the weapon, she went straight to the widow of Fletcher Christian, and wakened her. She rose, somewhat reluctantly, and followed the woman, whose face was concealed in a kerchief of native cloth. The two then went cautiously to another hat, where two of the wives of the murdered Otaheitans awaited them, the one with a long knife, the other with an axe in her hand.

They whispered together for a few seconds. As they did so there came a tremendous crash of thunder, followed by a flash which revealed the dark heads and glistening eyeballs drawn together in a group.

“We had better not try tonight,” said one voice, timidly.

“Faint heart, you may stay behind,” replied another voice, firmly. “Come, let us not delay. They were cruel; we will be cruel too.”

They all crouched down, and seemed to melt into the dark earth. When the next lightningflash rent the heavens they were gone.

Lying in his bunk, opposite the door of his house, that night, John Adams lay half asleep and halfconscious of the storm outside. As he lay with closed eyes there came a glaring flash of light. It revealed in the open doorway several pallid faces and glistening eyeballs.

“A strange dream,” thought Adams; “stranger still to dream of dreaming.”

The thunderclap that followed was mingled with a crash, a burst of smoke, and a shriek that caused Adams to leap from his couch as a bullet whistled past his ear. In the succeeding lightningflash he beheld a woman near him with an uplifted axe, another with a gleaming knife, and Edward Young, who slept in his house that night, in the act of leaping upon her.

Adams was prompt to act on all occasions. He caught the uplifted axe, and wrenching it from her grasp, thrust the woman out of the door.

“There,” he said, quietly, “go thy way, lass. I don’t care to know which of ’ee’s done it. Let the other one go too, Mr Young. It’s not worth while making a work about it.”

The midshipman obeyed, and going to a shelf in a corner, took down a torch made of small nuts strung on a palmspine, struck a light, and kindled it.

“Poor things,” he said, “I’m sorry for them. They’ve had hard times here.”

“They won’t try it again,” remarked Adams, as he closed the door, and quietly turned again into his sleepingbunk.

But John Adams was wrong. Foiled though they were on this occasion, and glad though some of them must have been at their failure, there were one or two who could not rest, and who afterwards made another attempt on the lives of the men. This also failed. The first offence had been freely forgiven, but this time it was intimated that if another attempt were made, they should all be put to death. Fortunately, the courage of even the most violent of the women had been exhausted. To the relief of the others they gave up their murderous designs, and settled down into that state of submission which was natural to them.

One might have thought that now, at last, the little colony of Pitcairn had

passed its worst days, most of the disturbing elements having been removed; but there was yet one other cloud, the blackest of all, to burst over them. One of the world's greatest curses was about to be introduced among them. It happened thus:

One night William McCoy went to his house up on the mountainside, entered it, and shut and bolted the door. This was an unusual proceeding on his part, and had no connection with the recent attempts at murder made by the women, because he was quite fearless in regard to that, and scoffed at the possibility of being killed by women. He also carefully fastened the windowshutters. He appeared to be somewhat excited, and went about his operations with an air at once of slyness and of mystery.

A small torch or nutcandle which he lighted and set on a bracket on the wall gave out a faint flickering light, which barely rendered darkness visible, and from its position threw parts of the chamber into deepest gloom. It looked not unlike what we suppose would be the laboratory of an alchemist of the olden time, and McCoy himself, with his eager yet frowning visage, a nativemade hat slouched over his brows, and a piece of native cloth thrown over his shoulders like a plaid, was no bad representative of an old doctor toiling for the secrets that turn base metal into gold, and old age into youthsecrets, by the way, which have been lying open to man's hand for centuries in the Word of God.

Taking down from a shelf a large kettle which had formed part of the furniture of the Bounty, and a twisted metal pipe derived from the same source, he fitted them up on a species of stove or oven made of clay. The darkness of the place rendered his movements not very obvious; but he appeared to put something into the kettle, and fill it with water. Then he put charcoal into the oven, kindled it, and blew it laboriously with his mouth until it became redhot. This flameless fire did not tend much to enlighten surrounding objects; it merely added to them a lurid tinge of red. The operator's face, being close in front of the fire as he blew, seemed almost as hot as the glowing coals.

With patient watchfulness he sat there crouching over the fire for several hours, occasionally blowing it up or adding more fuel.

As the experiment went on, McCoy's eyes seemed to dilate with expectation, and his breathing quickened. After a time he rose and lifted a bottle out of a tub of water near the stove. The bottle was attached to one end of the twisted tube, which was connected with the kettle on the fire. Detaching it therefrom, he raised it quickly to the light. Then he put it to his nose and smelt it. As he did so his face lit up with an expression of delight. Taking down from a shelf a cocoanut cup, he poured into it some sparkling liquid from the bottle. It is a

question which at that moment sparkled most, McCoy’s eyes or the liquid.

He sipped a little, and his rough visage broke into a beaming smile. He drank it all, and then he smacked his lips and laughednot quite a joyous laugh, but a wild, fierce, triumphant laugh, such as one might imagine would issue from the panting lips of some stout victor of the olden time as he clutched a muchcoveted prize, after slaying some halfdozen enemies.

“Ha ha! I’ve got it at last!” he cried aloud, smacking his lips again.

And so he had. Long and earnestly had he laboured to make use of a fatal piece of knowledge which he possessed. Among the hills of Scotland McCoy had learned the art of making ardent spirits. After many failures, he had on this night made a successful attempt with the tiroot, which grew in abundance on Pitcairn. The spirit was at last produced. As the liquid ran burning down his throat, the memory of a passion which he had not felt for years came back upon him with overwhelming force. In his newborn ecstasy he uttered a wild cheer, and filling more spirit into the cup, quaffed it again.

“Splendid!” he cried, “firstrate. Hurrah!”

A tremendous knocking at the door checked him, and arrested his hand as he was about to fill another cup.

“Who’s that?” he demanded, angrily.

“Open the door an’ you’ll see.”

The voice was that of Matthew Quintal. McCoy let him in at once.

“See here,” he cried, eagerly, holding up the bottle with a leer, “I’ve got it at last!”

“So any deaf man might have found out by the way you’ve bin shoutin’ it. Why didn’t you open sooner?”

“Never heard you, Matt. Was too much engaged with my new friend, I suppose. Come, I’ll introdooce him to you.”

“Look alive, then,” growled Quintal, impatiently, for he seemed to have smelt the spirit, as the warhorse is said to smell the battle from afar. “Give us hold o’ the cup and fill up; fill up, I say, to the brim. None o’ your half measures for me.”

He took a mouthful, rolled it round and round with his tongue once or twice, and swallowed it.

“Heh, that’s it once more! Come, here’s your health, McCoy! We’ll be better friends than ever now; good luck to ’ee.”

McCoy thought that there was room for improvement in their friendship, but said nothing, as he watched his comrade pour the fiery liquid slowly down his throat, as if he wished to prolong the sensation.

“Another,” he said, holding out the cup.

“No, no; drink fair, Matt Quintal; wotever you do, drink fair. It’s my turn now.”

“Your turn?” retorted Quintal, fiercely; “why, you’ve bin swillin’ away for halfanhour before I came.”

“No, Matt, no; honour bright. I’d only just begun. But come, we won’t quarrel over it. Here’s the other half o’ the nut, so we’ll drink together. Now, hold steady.”

“More need for me to give you that advice; you shake the bottle as if you’d got the ague. If you spill a drop, now, I’llI’ll flatten your big nose on your ugly face.”

Not in the least hurt by such uncomplimentary threats, McCoy smiled as he filled the cup held by his comrade. The spirit was beginning to tell on him, and the smile was of that imbecile character which denotes perfect selfsatisfaction and goodwill. Having poured the remainder into his own cup, he refixed the bottle to the tube of the “still,” and while more of the liquid was being extracted, the cronies sat down on low stools before the stove, to spend a pleasant evening in poisoning themselves!

It may be interesting and instructive, though somewhat sad, to trace the steps by which those two men, formed originally in God’s image, reduced themselves, of their own free will, to a level much lower than that of the brutes.

“Doesn’t the taste of it bring back old times?” said McCoy, holding his cup to the light as he might have held up a transparent glass.

“Ay,” assented Quintal, gradually becoming amiable, “the good old times before that fool Fletcher Christian indooced us to jine him. Here’s to ’ee, lad, once more.”

“Why, when I think o’ the jolly times I’ve had at the Blue Boar of Plymouth,” said McCoy, “or at the Swan wi’ the two throttles, ininI forget where, I feelI feellikelikehere’s your health again, Matt Quintal. Give us your flipper, man.

You’re not a bad feller, if you wasn’t given to grumpin’ so much.”

Quintal’s amiability, even when roused to excess by drink, was easily dissipated. The free remarks of his comrade did not tend to increase it, but he said nothing, and refreshed himself with another sip.

“I really do think,” continued McCoy, looking at his companion with an intensity of feeling which is not describable, “I really do think thatthatwhen I think o’ that Blue Boar, I could a’most become poetical.”

“If you did,” growled Quintal, “you would not be the first that had become a big fool on a worse subjec’.”

“I shay, Matt Quintal,” returned the other, who was beginning to talk rather thickly, so powerful was the effect of the liquor on his unaccustomed nerves; “I shay, ole feller, you used to sing well once. Come ggive us a stave now.”

“Bah!” was Quintal’s reply, with a look of undisguised contempt.

“Jusso. ’Xactly my opinion about it. Well, as you won’t sing, I’ll give you a ditty myself.”

Hereupon McCoy struck up a song, which, being deficient in taste, while its execution was defective as well as tuneless, did not seem to produce much effect on Quintal. He bore it with equanimity, until McCoy came to a note so far beyond his powers that he broke into a shriek.

“Come, get some more drink,” growled his comrade, pointing to the still; “it must be ready by this time.”

“Shum more drink!” exclaimed McCoy, with a look of indignant surprise. Then, sliding into a smile of imbecile goodhumour, “You shl’aveit, my boy, you shl’aveit.”

He unfixed the bottle with an unsteady hand, and winking with dreadful solemnity, filled up his companion’s cup. Then he filled his own, and sat down to resume his song. But Quintal could stand no more of it; he ordered his comrade to “stop his noise.”

“Shtop my noise!” exclaimed McCoy, with a look of lofty disdain.

“Yes, stop it, an’ let’s talk.”

“Well, I’m wwillin’ t’ talk,” returned McCoy, after a grave and thoughtful pause.

They chose politics as a light, agreeable subject of conversation.

“Now, you see, ’s my ’pinion, Matt, that them coves up’t th’ Admiralty don’t know no more how to guv’n this country than they knows how to work a Turk’s head on a manrope.”

“P’r’aps not,” replied Quintal, with a look of wise solemnity.

“Nor’abiton it,” continued McCoy, becoming earnest. “An’ wot on earth’s the use o’ the Lords an’ Commons an’ War Office? W’y don’t they slump ’em all together into one ’ouse, an’ get the Archbishop o’ Cantingbury to bless ’em all, right off, same as the Pope does. That’s w’ere it is. D’ye see? That’s w’ere the shoe pinches.”

“Ah, an’ what would you make o’ the King?” demanded Quintal, with an argumentative frown.

“The King, eh?” said McCoy, bringing his fuddled mind to bear on this royal difficulty; “the King, eh? Why, I’dI’d make lopscouse o’ the King.”

“Come, that’s treason. You shan’t speak treason in my company, Bill McCoy. I’m a mano’war’s man. It won’t do to shove treason in the face of a maro’waar. If I am a mutineer, w’at o’ that? I’ll let no other man haul down my colours. So don’t go shovin’ treason at me, Bill McCoy.”

“I’ll shove treason w’erever I please,” said McCoy, fiercely.

“No you shan’t.”

“Yes I shall.”

From this point the conversation became very contradictory in tone, then recriminative, and after that personally abusive. At last Quintal, losing temper, threw the remains of his last cup of spirits in his friend’s face. McCoy at once hit Quintal on the nose. He returned wildly on the eye, and jumping up, the two grappled in fierce anger.

They were both powerful men, whose natural tendency to personal violence towards each other had, up to this time, been restrained by prudence; but now that the great destroyer of sense and sanity was once again coursing through their veins, there was nothing to check them. All the grudges and bitternesses of the past few years seemed to have been revived and concentrated on that night, and they struggled about the little room with the fury of madmen, striking out savagely, but with comparatively little effect, because of excessive passion, coupled with intoxication, clutching and tugging at each other’s whiskers and hair, and cursing with dreadful sincerity.

There was little furniture in the room, but what there was they smashed in pieces. Quintal flung McCoy on the table, and jumping on the top of him, broke it down. The other managed to get on his legs again, clutched Quintal by the throat, and thrust him backward with such violence that he went crashing against the little windowshutters, split them up, and drove them out. In one of their wildest bursts they both fell into the fireplace, overturned the still, and scattered the fire. Fortunately, the embers were nearly out by this time. Tumbling over the stools and wreck, these menwho had begun the evening as friends, continued it as fools, and ended it as fiendsfell side by side into one of the sleepingbunks, the bottom of which was driven down by the shock as they sank exhausted amid the wreck, foaming with passion, and covered with blood. This was the climax; they fell into a state of partial insensibility, which degenerated at last into a deep lethargic slumber.

Hitherto the quarrels and fights that had so disturbed the peace of Pitcairn, and darkened her moral sky, had been at least intelligently founded on hatred or revenge, with a definite object and murderous end in view. Now, for the first time, a furious battle had been fought for nothing, with no object to be gained, and no end in view; with besotted idiots for the champions, and with strong drink for the cause.

Chapter Eighteen.

Aquatic Amusements.

Now, it must not be supposed that the wives and widows of these mutineers gave themselves up to moping or sadness after the failure of their wild attempt to make their condition worse by slaying all the men. By no means. By degrees they recovered the natural tone of their mild yet hearty dispositions, and at last, we presume, came to wonder that they had ever been so mad or so bad.

Neither must it be imagined that these women were condemned to be the laborious drudges who are fitly described as “hewers of wood and drawers of water.” They did indeed draw a good deal of water in the course of each day, but they spent much time also in making the tapa cloth with which they repaired the wornout clothes of their husbands, or fabricated petticoats for themselves and such of the children as had grown old enough to require such garments. But besides these occupations, they spent a portion of their time in prattling gossip, which, whatever the subject might be, was always accompanied with a great deal of merriment and hearty laughter. They also spent no small portion of their time in the sea, for bathing was one of the favourite amusements of the Pitcairners, young and old.

Coming up one day to Susannah, the wife of Edward Young, Thursday October Christian begged that she would go with him and bathe.

Susannah was engaged in making the native cloth at the time, and laid down her mallet with a look of indecision. It may be remarked here that a mallet is used in the making of this cloth, which is not woven, but beaten out from a state of pulp; it is, in fact, rather a species of tough paper than cloth, and is produced from the bark of the paper mulberry.

“I’s got to finish dis bit of cloth today, Toc,” said Susannah, in broken English, for she knew that Master Thursday October preferred that tongue to Otaheitan, though he could speak both, “an’ it’s gettin’ late.”

“Oh, what a pity!” said TOC, with a look of mild disappointment.

Now Susannah was by far the youngest and most girlish among the Otaheitan women, and could not resist an appeal to her feelings even when uttered only by the eyes. Besides, little Toc was a great favourite with her. She therefore burst into a merry laugh, gently pulled Thursday’s nose, and said, “Well, come along; but we’ll git some o’ the others for go too, an’ have some fun. You go klect de jumpers. Me git de womans.” Susannah referred to the older children by the term “Jumpers.”

Highly pleased, the urchin started off at once. He found one of the jumpers, namely, Otaheitan Sally, nursing Polly Young, while she delivered an oracular discourse to Charlie Christian, who sat at her feet, meekly receiving and believing the most outrageous nonsense that ever was heard. It is but just to Sally, however, to say that she gave her information in all good faith, having been previously instructed by John Adams, whose desire for the good of the young people was at that period stronger than his love of truth. Wishing to keep their minds as long as possible ignorant of the outer world, he had told them that ships came out of a hole in the clouds on the horizon.

“Yes, Charlie, it’s quite true; father Adams says so. They comes out of a hole on the horizon.”

Charlie’s huge eyes gazed in perplexity from his instructor’s face to the horizon, as if he expected to behold a ship emerging from a hole then and there. Then, turning to Sally again with a simple look, he asked

“But why does sips come out of holes on de ’rizon?”

Sally was silenced. She was not the first knowing one who had been silenced by a child.

Little Daniel McCoy came up at the moment. Having passed the “staggering” period of life, he no longer walked the earth in a state of nudity, but was decorated with a pair of very short tapa trousers, cut in imitation of seafaring ducks, but reaching only to the knees. He also wore a little shirt.

“Me kin tell why ships come out ob de hole in de horizon,” he said, with a twinkle in his eyes; “just for notin’ else dan to turn about an’ go back into de hole again.”

“Nonsense, Dan’l!” cried Sally, with a laugh.

“Nonsense!” repeated Dan, with an injured look. “Didn’t you saw’d it happen jus’ t’other day?”

“Well, I did saw the ship go farer an’ farer away, an’ vanish,” admitted Sall; “but he didn’t go into a hole that time.”

“Pooh!” ejaculated little Dan, “dat’s ’cause de hole was too far away to be seen.”

Further discussion of the subject was prevented by the arrival of Thursday.

“Well, Toc, you’s in a hurry today,” said little Dan, with a look of innocent insolence.

“We’re all to go an’ bathe, child’n,” cried Thursday, with a look of delight; “Susannah’s goin’, an’ all the ’oomans, an’ she send me for you.”

“Hurrah!” shouted Dan and Sally.

“Goin’ to bave,” cried Charlie Christian to Lizzie Mills, who was attracted by the cheering, which also brought up Matt Quintal, who led his little sister Sarah by the hand. Sarah was yet a staggerer, and so was Dinah Adams, also Mary Christian; Polly Young and John Mills had not yet attained even to the staggering periodthey were only what little Dan McCoy called sprawlers.

Before many minutes had elapsed, the whole colony of women, jumpers, staggerers, and sprawlers, were assembled on the beach at Bounty Bay.

It could scarcely be said that the women undressedthey merely threw off the light scarf or bodice that covered their shoulders, but kept on the short skirts, which were no impediment to their graceful movements in the water. The jumpers, of course, were only too glad of the excuse to get out of their very meagre allowance of clothing, and the rest were, so to speak, naturally ready for the plunge.

It was a splendid forenoon. There was not a zephyr to ruffle the calm breast of the Pacific, nevertheless the gentle undulation of that mighty bosom sent wave after wave like green liquid walls into the bay in ceaseless regularity. These, toppling over, and breaking, and coming in with a succession of magnificent roars, finally hissed in harmless foam on the shingly beach.

“Now, T’ursday,” said Mrs Adams, “you stop here an’ take care o’ de sprawlers.”

Adams’s helpmate was the oldest of the women, and defective in vision. Her commands were law. Thursday October would as soon have thought of disobeying Adams himself as his wife. It was not in his nature, despite its goodness, to help feeling disappointed at being left in charge of the little ones. However, he made up his mind at once to the sacrifice.

“Never mind, Toc,” said Young’s wife, with a bright smile, “I’ll stay an’ keep you company.”

This was ample compensation to Thursday. He immediately flung himself into the shallow surf, and turning his face to the land, held out his arms and dared the little ones to come to him. Two of them instantly accepted the challenge, crept down to the water, and were beaten back by the next rush of foam. But they were caught up and held aloft with a shout of glee by Susannah.

Meanwhile, the women advanced into the deep surf with the small children on their shoulders, while the others, being able to look after themselves, followed, panting with excitement for although able to swim like corks they found it extremely difficult to do battle with the rushing water.

Deeper and deeper the foremost women went, until they neared the unbroken glassy billows.

“I’ll go at de nixt,” muttered Mrs Adams to Mary Christian, who was on her back, clutching tight round her neck.

The “nixt” was a liquid wall that came rolling grandly in with everincreasing force and volume, until it hovered to its fall almost over the heads of the daring women. Mrs Adams, Mainmast, and Mills’s widow, who were the foremost of the group, bent their heads forward, and with a graceful but vigorous plunge, sprang straight into the wall of water and went right through it. The others, though a moment later, were quite in time. The children also, uttering wild screams in varied keys, faced the billow gallantly, and pierced it like needles. Another moment, and they were all safe in deep water on the seaward side, while the wave went thundering to the shore in a tumultuous wilderness of foam, and spent its weakened force among the babies.

The moment the women were safe beyond the rolling influence of these great waves, in the calm sea beyond, they threw the staggerers from their shoulders and let them try their own unaided powers, while the jumpers swam and floated around to watch the result.

These wonderful infants disported themselves variously in the sea. Mary Christian wobbled about easily, as if too fat to sink, and Bessy Mills supported herself bravely, being much encouraged by the presence and the cheering remarks of that humorous imp Dan McCoy. But Charlie Christian showed symptoms of alarm, and losing heart after a few moments, threw up his fat little arms and sank. Like the swooping eagle, his mother plunged forward, placed a hand under him, and lifted him on her shoulders, where he recovered equanimity in a few minutes, and soon wanted to be again sent afloat. When this had gone on for a little time, the women reshouldered their babies and swam boldly out to sea, followed at various distances by the youngsters. Of these latter, Sall of Otaheite was by far the best. She easily outstripped the other children, and could almost keep pace with the women.

Meanwhile Thursday October Christian and Susannah Young performed amazing feats with the infants in the shallow water on the beach. Sarah Quintal and Johnny Mills gave them some trouble, having a strong disposition to explore places beyond their depth; but Dinah Adams and Polly Young were as good as gold, spluttering towards their guardians when called, and showing no tendency to do anything of their own immediate free will, except sit on the sand and let the foam rush round and over them like soapsuds.

Now, it is wellknown that every now and then there are waves of the sea which seem to have been born on a gigantic scale, and which, emerging somewhere from the great deep, come to shore with a grander roar and a higher rush than ordinary waves.

One such roller came in while no one was on the lookout for it. Its deeptoned roar first apprised Susannah of its approach, but before she could run to the rescue its white crest was careering up the beach in magnificent style.

It caught the infants, each sitting with a look of innocent surprise on the sand. It turned them head over heels, and swept them up the shingly shore. It tumbled Susannah herself over in its might, and swept Thursday October fairly off his legs.

Having terminated its career thus playfully, the big wave retired, carrying four babies in its embrace. But Susannah and Thursday had regained their footing and their presence of mind. With a brave and, for him, a rapid spring,

Thursday caught little Sarah and Dinah as they were rolling helpless down the strand, the one by an arm, the other by a leg, and held on. At the same instant Susannah sprang forward and grasped Jack Mills by the hair of the head, but poor Polly Young was beyond her reach. Little Polly was the smallest, the neatest, and the dearest of the sprawling band. She was rolling to her doom.

The case was desperate. In this emergency Susannah suddenly hurled Jack Mills at Thursday. The poor boy had to drop the other two in order to catch the flying Jack, but the other two, sliding down his body, held each to a Thursday October leg like limpets. The result was that the four remained firm and safe, while Susannah leaped into the surf and rescued little Poll.

It all happened so quickly that the actors had scarcely time to think. Having reached the dry land, they looked seaward, and there saw their more practised companions about to come in on the top of a wave. For a few seconds their heads were seen bobbing now on the top, now between the hollows of the waves.

Then they were seen on a towering snowy crest which was just about to fall. On the summit of the roaring wave, as if on a snowy mountain, they came rushing on with railway speed. To an unpractised eye destruction among the rocks was their doom. But they had taken good aim, and came careering to the sandy patch where the little ones sprawled. In another moment they stood safe and sound upon the land.

This was but an everyday feat of the Pitcairners, who went up to their village chatting merrily, and thinking nothing more about the adventure than that it was capital fun.