

CHAPTER II.

INCIDENTS ON THE VOYAGES OF SEVERAL OF THE EARLY SHIPS, TOGETHER WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE VOYAGE OF THE "BENGAL MERCHANT," IN 1839-40, TO WELLINGTON.

ON the 28th October, 1839, Mr. Dunlop, of Craigton, then Lord Provost of Glasgow, and a large party, attended by some of the officers and the band of the 1st Royals, sailed from Glasgow, in a steamboat hired for the occasion, to the barque "Bengal Merchant," lying off Greenock, and then chartered in London, for the purpose of conveying the first Scotch colony to New Zealand. On board the steamer there was served a sumptuous repast, at which champagne flowed in abundance. On reaching the vessel, his Lordship delivered an appropriate address to the emigrants. He told them that, though going to a beautiful country, and to enjoy a salubrious climate, they must lay their account with many enduring hardships, and must labour hard before getting fairly established in their adopted country. He exhorted them to cherish kindly feelings towards each other; reminded them that, as their tenure of life was short and uncertain, they would derive great consolation, when traversing the stormy deep and when tossed by mighty waters, from the hopes which the Christian religion afforded. He told them they were going to lay the foundation of a colony, which in time might become a great nation—a second Britain. On the 31st October the "Bengal Merchant" weighed anchor, and the emigrants bade adieu to their native land.

"We left our native land, and far away
Across the waters sought a world unknown;
But did not know that we in vain might stray
In search of one so lovely as our own."

When nearly opposite to Largs, in Ayrshire, the passengers on board the "Bengal Merchant" received the parting cheers of Mr. Crawford, the New Zealand Com-

pany's agent in Glasgow, and other friends who accompanied them down the river in a steamboat. "As may easily be supposed," says a writer of the time, "we were not slow in returning the cheers. We were full of hope, and anxious to see what had been represented to us as a sort of earthly paradise—a smiling land, the sight of which was to have banished away all our cares and all our sorrows." But man seeth only as through a glass darkly. Within a few short months those very beings who were cheering and shouting as they left the land of their nativity were cast, as it were, upon a barren, dreary, and inhospitable shore. They were turned out in a flat-bottomed boat every morning for three weeks, nearly up to their knees in water, in order that they might erect for themselves their future habitations in the wilderness. After that short period of three weeks, they were driven out of the ship like oxen upon a Saturday night, in the midst of a storm of wind and rain, many of them having no place to fly to for shelter until the fury of the storm was abated. They sighed, and their feelings overpowered them when they thought of those peaceful shores they had so lately left, and on those happy days which had vanished for ever from their view. Many of them were ready to exclaim, with the prophet Jeremiah, "Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him, but weep sore for him that goeth away, for he shall return no more, nor see his native country; but he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more."

The "Bengal Merchant" kept to the north of Ireland, passing near to the Giant's Causeway early on the following morning, and after a splendid run of nearly 500 miles during the first two days, got into the Atlantic Ocean and clear of land. With the exception of one gale when off the Bay of Biscay, there was scarcely occasion for even double-reefed top-sails during the whole voyage. Including cabin, intermediate, and steerage passengers, there were about 150 emigrants on board, including children. The commander of the ship was Captain John Hemery, from the Island of Jersey, a handsome young man of good address, who, although said to be opulent, preferred a sea life to any other. He was sober, attentive to his duties, and a strict disciplinarian, somewhat haughty in his deportment. There was dancing occasionally during the early part of the voyage, and the minister, Rev. Mr.

McFarlane, gave prayers every night in the cabin; while the steerage passengers gave prayers amongst themselves. Those in the cabin consisted of nineteen individuals. Their names were: Dr. and Mrs. Logan, Mr., Mrs. and Miss Strang, Mr. and Mrs. D'Orsey, Mr. and Mrs. Hay, Rev. Mr. McFarlane, two brothers named Carruth, Dr. Graham Tod and his brother, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Wallace, Mr. Yule, and Alexander Majoribanks, of Majoribanks. Mr. D'Orsey was one of the surgeons. Dr. Tod, who came from Glasgow, died shortly after his arrival in New Zealand.

As showing the ideas regarding New Zealand at that time, it is worth mentioning that Mr. R. Strang, who was a solicitor from Glasgow, used to drill the passengers to be ready in case of being attacked by the New Zealanders. The passengers named, with the captain and Mr. Bradley (the second mate) formed the daily circle at the dinner table. They fared sumptuously every day; in fact, they did little else but eat, drink, and sleep during the whole voyage. They had four meals per day, and at dinner had always five or six dishes of fresh meat, with *carte blanche* of claret and other wines, besides a dessert of fruit. The supply of fresh provisions, for the cabin passengers daily and the intermediate passengers twice a week, was very great, having regard to the period. In addition to preserved meats, they had on board 60 sheep, 21 pigs, and 900 head of poultry. The pigs throve best: they were at home at sea, whether at the Equator or in the colder zones. The only trouble was that when there was any restraint placed upon their appetites, then their noise was like pandemonium.

During the voyage out there was one marriage, one baptism, one birth, and one death. At that time those born at sea had to be registered in the parish of Stepney, London. There were two quarrels on board ship, but they were nothing to those that happened on board some of the other ships, when duels were sometimes fought. The death was that of a boy about ten years of age, the son of one of the emigrants. The consigning of the body to the deep amidst the roaring of the waves, with nothing but a sheet for a coffin, was well calculated to excite the deep and solemn emotion of the passengers. On the 16th November they came in sight of Madeira, and entered the tropics on the 21st. For two or three weeks the thermometer ranged from 75 to 82 in the shade, and the nights were very oppressive.



MR. C. H. AND MRS. KETTLE
1839, "Mary Catherine."

MRS. JOHN ANDERSON
1840, "Oriental."

MR. JOHN ANDERSON
1840, "Oriental."

MR. ARCHIBALD ANDERSON
1840, "Bengal Merchant."

Every Sunday, when weather permitted, there was divine service on deck, the whole of the passengers and crew assembling. After service the first Sunday the Rev. Mr. McFarlane distributed amongst the passengers copies of a pastoral address by the Presbytery of Paisley, of which he had been a member, to the first Scottish settlers in New Zealand. The address concluded:—

“And now, dear countrymen, we sympathise with you in your feelings, which are no doubt tender, on leaving the land of your fathers, it may be for ever, and are persuaded that, as Scotsmen, you are not likely soon to forget your last view of its rocky shores, as these fade and disappear in the distant horizon. Other lands, rich and sunny though they be, will, to those of you who have reached maturity, still want the tender associations of early life, and the hallowed recollections of a Scottish Sabbath, with its simple but affecting accompaniments. We have no need to be ashamed of our common country, comparatively barren though it be, and however uncongenial our climate. Scotland has proved the nurse of many adventurous sons, whose conduct in other parts of the world reflects honour on the land of their birth, and you will not forget that you also are now to be enrolled among her expatriated children, and that she expects you will be distinguished amongst the natives of other lands for your high moral bearing, your honest and persevering industry, and your habitual reverence for God, and the things of God. And now, brethren, we must bid you adieu! Our first meeting will probably be around the judgment seat of Christ; but then we will not be as now, in the attitude of addressing, and of being addressed; the world itself will then have passed away, time will have ceased to be counted by the revolutions of seasons and of centuries, eternity will have begun, the sentence will then have gone forth, ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.’ ”

On the 10th day of February, 1840, the passengers came in sight of the Middle Island of New Zealand, and when coasting along its shores for nearly 100 miles were wonderfully struck with the height of the ridge of snow-clad mountains which they had constantly in view. “The mountains, the sublime Southern Alps, more elevated than

the highest of the Alps in Switzerland, upheaved from the depths of the great South Sea, in some places to more than three miles in altitude, and from their volcanic character, of the boldest and most abrupt outline, are perhaps unequalled in the world."

The first place at which they landed was at D'Urville's Island, on the west entry of Cook's Strait, but not finding, as they expected, any of the Company's officers to give them directions, they remained there for only two hours. During that time a family of natives paid them a visit in their canoes, the first they had seen, and the new immigrants were not favourably impressed with what they saw of the natives. The Rev. Mr. McFarlane offered a prize for the best poem when the passengers were off D'Urville's Island, and though Mr. Majoribanks composed one which was believed to be the best, it was ruled out as not coming up to the standard of what a prize poem ought to be, an excuse that was considered at the time a very ingenious contrivance, enabling the reverend gentleman to keep the money in his own pocket. The scene was, "On board of the 'Bengal Merchant,' at 10 o'clock at night, off D'Urville's Island, Cook Strait, New Zealand, on 11th February, 1840." and the concluding two of the ten topical verses read:—

"And when the cry of 'Land!' was heard at last,
How eager all that land were to explore;
Though some shed tears for scenes for ever past,
Far, far away on Caledonia's shore.

"And now that we have ploughed the stormy deep,
And anchored safely on a foreign strand,
Let's sing the praises of the gallant ship
That's wafted us unto this smiling land."

The "Bengal Merchant" arrived at Port Nicholson in 113 days from Greenock, and, though exposed for a time to considerable hardship, yet the exemplary order and propriety observed on the voyage could not be considered but as a happy omen of future prosperity, and at least one of the passengers offered up a prayer to the Almighty Disposer of all events "that He would bless us in this land wherein we had come to dwell, as it is written in the 26th chapter of Genesis He blessed Isaac of old, 'And the Lord appeared unto Isaac and said go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee

of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee and will bless thee.' ”

On first landing, it was observed that the heaviest men were the most admired by the natives. A man of fifteen stone was regarded as a hero amongst them, and one man of this proportion says it was amusing to see the delight with which they gazed on him; and when he walked along the beach, two of them, a young man and a young woman, insisted on accompanying him and taking hold of his arm. Had he been twenty stone instead of fifteen, he believed they would have worshipped him as a deity.

Some of the passengers on landing found lodgings in the hut or hotel of a man named George Rose, from the County of Banff, who in personal appearance was a sort of a giant, being 6 ft. 6 in. in height. His “hotel” had neither door nor window, and admitted both wind and rain, and native dogs, which were very troublesome. He had plenty of blankets, however. The “hotel” had neither table nor chair, plenty of packing cases; but in addition to being “mine host,” he was also storekeeper, auctioneer, boat-builder, boat-hirer, commission agent, etc.

The three islands of New Zealand were then, or just previously, called New Leinster, New Munster, and New Ulster. In England at that time New Zealand signified Port Nicholson, and the Company’s land adjacent, where there were located in 1842 some five or six thousand souls. The natives called Port Nicholson “Port Nie.,” and from that we now have “Poneke.” Even in those days the gales of Wellington Harbour were commented upon, but the climate was described as remarkably healthy, the temperature throughout the year being singularly equable. What is now Wellington was then called variously Britannia, Thorndon, or Wellington. The coast was shoally, and vessels had to lay off half a mile. In flowery language someone at Home had described Port Nicholson as resembling the Bay of Naples, but it was so only as “chalk is like cheese.”

Ships continued to be sent out from England, with immigrants of various sorts, some refugees of parishes, who were for the most part an idle set, a few rural labourers, and an undue proportion of shopkeepers, some settlers of enterprise and talent, and a specimen of your gentlemen adventurers, who gamble in billiards and land. A road was being formed about fourteen miles long to get at some available country, there being hitherto but

one solitary piece of cultivation to supply five or six thousand mouths. Numbers of those who arrived left—some for Cloudy Bay, on the south side of Cook's Strait, others to different parts of New Zealand or to Sydney. More recently another Company had located an extensive tract of level land near Mount Egmont, called Taranaki, where some progress was made in cultivation. From a glimpse one of the "Bengal Merchant" passengers had of it, he described the scenery as attractive, "the lofty peak of Mount Egmont rising at once from the plain, like the Alps from the vale of Lombardy."

The "John Wickliffe" was nearly a month getting clear of the Channel, being driven back three times into the Downs, but after that good weather was experienced. When nearing the Line there was some fun, as Neptune with his guards paid an official visit for the purpose of initiating, with the ancient rites, all those who had not previously done the trip. The performance was carried out with spirit, and enjoyed by all, except the victims. The evening before, the vessel was hailed from the sea, when the mate reported that Neptune had arrived in his flowing carriage. He was soon stationed on the fore-castle, where he was handed a stiff glass of grog, after which he interviewed the captain, asking if any of his children were on board, and saying he would put them through the ceremony the following day. He then retired aft, standing for a while under the mizzen-top mast, where he fired a pistol, causing all the cabin passengers to rush up to see what was the matter. When all were collected round the mast, a huge tub of water was capsized over them, drenching them to the skin. Before leaving, Neptune got a glass of grog, and told them to have everything ready for the morrow. He then retired in his carriage—a wash-deck tub, surrounded by blazing tar and tow. Next morning he again came on deck, accompanied by his wife (the smallest sailor, dressed to suit the part), his doctor, with his pills and draughts made up of goats' dung and muck from the pig-styes, his barber, with the razor made of a piece of hoop-iron notched like a saw, his guards, and his bear. All those to be initiated were kept safe below, and each, on his name being called, was brought upon deck, where a large sail filled with water had been rigged up. A spar was placed across the sail for a seat for the victim, who was blindfolded. The barber set to work, lathering him with the filthy mixture.

and then began to shave, talking all the time to induce him to open his mouth. On his doing so, the barber immediately dabbed the brush, covered with slush, into his mouth, and upset him into the water, where he was thoroughly washed by the bear and others, who kept him floundering about until they were satisfied. If the victim was disliked, the treatment was made very rough, but the others got off very lightly. The most amusing part to the onlookers was the shaving of Neptune's wife. When everything was cleared away and the sailors had got cleaned up, all were allowed a holiday, only those whose turn it was to be at the helm working. At night a regular jollification took place, with the grog supplied by those who had purchased immunity from the operations.

The "Wickliffe" was becalmed for three days, and lay beside a Dutch ship, on board of which a ball was given. On the next evening a return ball was to have been given on the "Wickliffe," but a breeze sprang up, and the two vessels parted.

This vessel got so far south that many icebergs were seen, and a watch had to be kept night and day for them. One night in a fog she was nearly ashore on Kerguelen Island, and had to lie off for a day and two nights, becalmed. The island appeared to be covered with low scrub, and some of the passengers took sketches of it. Although the sun shone brightly, the weather was so cold that every now and then the sketchers had to rush to the galley fire to warm their hands.

Another vessel, the "Ajax," was becalmed at the Line for three weeks. At last the wind began to rise in gusts, and a straw hat worn by one of the passengers was blown overboard. Another passenger, on the impulse of the moment, sprang overboard, and, swimming out, brought the hat on board. He was not long on board before the passengers landed a 10-foot shark.

On the "Blundell," a few of the passengers had telescopes, and made up their minds to have some fun with those who imagined the Line was an actual one to be seen by the eye. They arranged to place a hair across one of the glasses, and taking their stations with the telescopes pretended to see the Line. One would say to the other, "I can't see it; can you?" "I think I can see it; just wait a minute, and you'll see it too." Then, in a few seconds, the first would declare he saw it too.

They then turned to the bystanders and asked them if they would like to see it; but the trick soon leaked out, and there was great laughter.

In the tropics the water was very warm, and a good many of the passengers liked to have a swim, the ship being almost stationary. Those who were so inclined went overboard, but a good look-out had to be kept for sharks, which were very plentiful. When one was seen, the cry, "A shark! a shark!" was raised, and the bathers swam as fast as they could to the ship, where ropes were hanging down for them to catch. The doctor on board liked a bath, but never ventured into the ocean. He stood under the deck of the poop, while one of the sailors stood above and poured water over him.

The sailors caught some sharks, and cut some collops off them. These the cook fried, and the sailors pronounced them excellent; but the passengers would have none of them. Heavy rains were frequent, and often large quantities of water were caught in a sail erected for the purpose. This water was particularly refreshing to the passengers, as, although they had plenty of water on board, it was not always good. One of the curious things that caused some little amusement with the young was that, when the vessel was being tacked and put about, the sun appeared at first on the one side, and when the ship was put about it appeared on the other.

The "Rajah" in 1853 encountered severe storms after passing the Cape of Good Hope. A very strong gale came on, and the bulwarks and all the boats were smashed up. The ship lay on her beam ends for an hour, but righted herself when the wreckage was cleared away.

When the "Robert Henderson" made her first trip in 1858, she had a very rough passage through the Bay of Biscay, her decks frequently being swept by huge waves. The hatches were battened down until the worst was over. On one occasion, a young man was seated, in company with a young lady, on a spar, their backs to the bulwarks, when suddenly the ship gave a tremendous lurch, and the water came pouring in over them. The young lady seized the man round the neck, and both were knocked flat on their backs, heels in the air. Fortunately, neither was hurt.

On another occasion, a young man got into a terrible state of fear, and cried out to clear the way and let him on deck to get fair play in drowning. Shortly after

coming to Otago this young man was drowned in a lagoon in the West Taieri.

The "Rajah," previously mentioned, was brought into contact with a pirate, or what was supposed to be one. The pirate sailed round and round her, the yards almost touching. The "Rajah" was twice the size of the pirate, yet the latter sailed round her as if she were at anchor. All on board the "Rajah" were in a great state of alarm, but all prepared to meet death with the fury of tigers, those able to use a cutlass or a musket being supplied with these weapons. Fortunately, no fighting took place, as the pirate, no doubt taking compassion on so many women and children, sheered off and soon disappeared.

On the "Bernicia" was a cockney tailor, who was in the habit of ill-treating his wife. One night this brute began abusing her as usual, when the single men, headed by a particularly strong young fellow, rushed into the tailor's quarters, dragged him out of his bunk, lugged him on deck, plunged him into a tub of dirty water, and then turned the hose on him till he was nearly drowned. He did not appear on deck for nearly a week, and from that time till the end of the voyage his wife had a little peace.

When crossing the Line, a sad occurrence took place. All was festivity, and the rough play had just begun, when the cry, "A man overboard!" was heard, and a commanding voice shouted, "'Bout ship!" The captain refused to stop, saying it was only a practical joke, but when the ship's roll was called, it was found that one of the apprentices was missing. The cry to "'bout ship" had been given by Colonel Wakefield, one of the passengers, who had heard the cry for help. The saddest part was that the boy was the son of an intimate friend of the captain, who had declined to stop the ship.

"The passengers of the 'Victory,'" says a passenger, "had the unusual experience of a mutiny on board, but it was of a mild type. Before the ship had cleared the Channel, it became apparent that the captain was a nervous, over-anxious, incompetent man, utterly unfit for his post. He also succeeded in annoying the crew by many acts of petty tyranny, such as depriving them of their sleep by calling all hands on deck, when it was not necessary. The discontent grew, and the grumbling loud and deep reached the captain's ears, as it was intended

to do. To punish them, when they were up reefing on cold dark nights, he would stand beside the steersman and make him keep her full, thus keeping the men longer on the yards than there was any occasion for.

“Conspicuous among the crew was a man named Robinson, who was a strikingly handsome young fellow, with dark complexion and curly black hair, with a ‘love of a moustache,’ as the girls said, a very unusual appendage in those days, and who looked, to quote another young lady, like ‘a dear, delightful brigand.’ This young man, who had been well educated and evidently belonged to a higher rank, proved himself to be a thorough seaman, and as the captain lost the confidence of the crew and passengers he gained it. The first mate was a very young man, who had no qualities or appearance to inspire respect, and the second mate was so worthless that he was disrated, and his place taken by the bo’sun. Thus Robinson appeared to be the natural and only leader.

“In the Bay of Biscay things came to a crisis. The old cry arose, ‘All hands shorten sail!’ Robinson was in the mate’s watch, then below. The men had only turned in about an hour. When they had left the deck there was a stiff breeze, but nothing particularly threatening, and from the motion of the ship it did not appear to be any worse. There were a few curses, and then Robinson said, ‘Look here, boys, I’ll go up and see what it is like, and if there is no need we will not do it.’ ‘Right you are!’ said one and all; ‘we are at your back.’ Robinson went on deck, and asked the first man he met, ‘Has it been any worse?’ ‘Not a bit; just as you see.’ So Robinson decided they would not obey the order, all the men of both watches backing him up. He told the captain their decision, and that gentleman got into a great rage. At first he wanted to put Robinson in irons, and tried to get the passengers to help him, but they refused to a man, for they saw plainly that the sailor was in the right, and that, if any real danger should threaten the ship, their only hope was in him. Thus it came to pass that the A.B. was virtual captain of the ‘Victory.’ When everything went on well Robinson did his work like the other men. When there was rough weather or any danger threatened, he quietly took command. All the men obeyed and trusted him, and before the voyage was over the mate repeated his orders as if

they had been those of the captain. It seems strange that this man, who practically saved the ship, crew, and passengers, and really deserved the gratitude of the owners, should have been put in prison on the ship's arrival in port."

A burial at sea is a sad and solemn function. The late Mr. Robt. Campbell thus describes a burial from the "Ajax":—"A little child died last night, and was buried to-day, October 9th, 1848. The little body was sewn up in a bag and laid on the grating of the main hatch, covered with the Union Jack. At 10 a.m. all hands were called up to attend the funeral. A few boards were laid from the ship's side to the long-boat. The boatswain stood on the boards, the little body before him stretched on a piece of plank, still covered by the Union Jack. The boatswain had hold of the plank in one hand and the flag in the other. The doctor read the service over the body, and at the word of command the sailor pulled off the flag and tipped up the plank, and, amidst the tears of some and the sighs of many, the little thing was launched into the deep, and in a minute was lost to sight, and in ten minutes all things were going on as before."

The adult steerage passengers of the "Ajax" received fresh meat only five or six times during the whole voyage, and then only half a pound each. They were often docked of their provisions, and on examination on one occasion the beam and scales proved to be three and a-half ounces on the wrong side, and on further examination a piece of lead two ounces in weight was found run into the scale. The passengers then appointed two men to go into the storeroom every day and see the provisions properly weighed.

A general disruption took place among the boys and girls attending school on board. A German who had been appointed to teach the children was in every way unqualified for the job, besides being in the habit of quarrelling with his better half, with whom he frequently came to fisticuffs. Mr. Brown started an opposition school with a few Scotch boys, and in the afternoon the English boys and girls left the German, who, in high dudgeon at being so put upon, gave up his task and retired, to the satisfaction of all concerned.

On board the "Mooltan" was a number of young Highlanders, whose notions of the English language were

of the haziest kind, but whose physique was grand. They were, so to speak, "the pick of the pen." All were young, powerful as lions, and bold as those mighty monarchs of the East. As they stood upon the deck when the vessel sailed from Greenock, sparkling with animation and bright as the morning star, they were pronounced on all hands fitting soldiers for colonising chivalry. It can truly be affirmed that the progress of Otago was materially advanced by these sons of the mountain, the heather, and the heath.

Mr. R. M. McDowall, the third gentleman who conducted school in Otago, gives the following particulars of the voyage of the "Mooltan":—"After the outbreak of cholera on board the 'Mooltan,' the passengers, as was natural, became terribly alarmed, and it was evident something must be done to divert and calm their minds, or a general panic would ensue. Prompt measures were determined on and adopted. The ship was fumigated in every part, and the ablest speakers, previously instructed, addressed the assembled and panic-stricken passengers. The orators assured the emigrants that all possible danger was at an end. Solemn as the occasion was, the wise and politic assurances, boldly asserted and insisted upon, but in the truth of which the speakers did not in the least believe, had the desired effect. The addresses were received with cheers by the emigrants. While in this mood all available musicians were posted near the cabins, the decks cleared, and a gay throng was speedily joining in the merry mazes of the dance. In these and other pastimes devised from time to time to keep up the spirits of the passengers, the sailors were the leading actors, and their comical antics did much to divert anxious and troubled hearts from dwelling on possible danger. Naturally, however, nothing could stir the hearts of the formidable array of mourners, who had lost their nearest and dearest.

Never, perhaps, was so much misery assembled in a space so limited, for the number of mourners was at least treble that of the dead. But the active measures taken had the desired effect, and from that time onward there was but one more death, and that was from sunstroke. Sports of all kinds were organised and continued, music floated on the air, and the decks resounded nightly to the measured motion of the dancers' feet.

Later on, when the cholera scare had entirely sub-

sided, and when the "Mooltan" was going full speed with a favouring gale, a new horror came. An ominous cry arose from the watch: "Breakers ahead!" We were all aware that we were nearing the island of Tristan D'Acunha, but by some miscalculation the captain was not aware that we were so close upon it, although one of the passengers, himself an ex-captain, had warned him of the dangerous proximity, and the watch had been enjoined to double vigilance.

When first sighted, Tristan D'Acunha looked merely an undefined mist, of which one could make nothing. As the ship drifted closer in, drawn by a current from which she could not escape, the explosions from the impact of waters on the island announced its presence in thundering proclamations. Gradually the mist cleared off, the nebular appearance became more defined, and presently Tristan D'Acunha glittered in the rays of the setting sun, when even the most light-hearted were convinced of the impending peril. The day was drawing to a close, with scarcely a breath of wind with which to manœuvre or work the vessel, which was gradually but surely drifting upon the breakers. Every moment the danger became greater, the sails were trimmed in all possible directions in a vain attempt to extricate the vessel from her dangerous position. After labouring all night we did not appear to be any better or worse than before. Having floated to a certain point we had remained stationary. We were fortunate in having a still, calm sea and no adverse wind—in fact, no wind at all. Though soundings told us that we were on a sea where anchors would be of no use, they, with chains and cables, were ordered from below. Plan after plan was tried and abandoned, and there seemed nothing left but to await our doom with fortitude and composure. At this juncture a happy inspiration suddenly illumined the hitherto gloomy face of the captain. All the boats, with one exception, were ordered to be launched and immediately manned by a mixed company of seamen and Highlanders, conspicuous among the latter being the late Allan McMasters, of Saddle Hill. To these boats lines were attached, and the experiment was tried of towing the ship from her perilous position.

During seven or eight hours these young Titans plied the oars with unceasing resolution. But the "Mooltan" remained as immovable as if she had been anchored, yet the efforts of the rowers were not useless, for the strain

upon the tow lines at least kept the ship from being drawn nearer to the island. With the one boat remaining relays of men were sent out to the indefatigable rowers, stimulants were supplied, and everything was done to keep up their strength and courage.

When hope of saving the ship had almost gone a puff of wind from the island filled the sails, and for the first time the ship moved a few yards from the land, but with provoking persistency the wind chopped round, and the "Mooltan" returned to her former dangerous position, and again the wind dropped altogether. This happened two or three times, and then, being convinced that the ship was doomed, the captain prepared to do his best to save the passengers, and ordered up stores of provisions, spirits, &c., and set the men to work to make rafts. Again the slight wind from the land filled the sails, and drove the ship some distance from land. The wind fell, but this time the ship did not lose ground, and the captain's trumpet rang out to the rowers to pull for their lives. This they did, fearing some new disaster. Then came another puff from the land to their aid, and this gradually increased in strength and steadiness, until at last the tow lines began to slacken, and it became evident that the ship's progress was greater than that of the boats, and the "Mooltan," apparently ashamed of her former apathy, dashed aside the blue waters of the ocean and bounded ahead. In a few hours the dreaded Tristan D'Acunha was a mere speck on the horizon.

One more marvellous escape marked this eventful voyage. When about an hour's sailing from the Heads, we were all but on a small rock unseen by the look-out. The captain had just time to leap to the helm, and so manipulate the ship that she escaped the rock and nothing more. For a couple of minutes he was speechless and pale, for the "Mooltan" had really grazed the rock. "That was a clean shave," he muttered, looking back upon the obstacle that he had contrived to elude as by a miracle.

The "Three Bells" had a very long passage of 117 days. Up to crossing the Line, a good deal of stormy weather was experienced, and in the Bay of Biscay the ship lost her fore-yard, and this was the only occasion during the trip on which the sailors received an allowance of rum. During this same storm, she also lost the top of the main-mast, which was replaced at the Line, where she

lay becalmed for three weeks. This top was again broken off before the vessel reached her destination. It took eleven weeks to reach the Line, but only five afterwards to come to Otago.

The ship got far to the South and many icebergs were encountered, chiefly during the night, one passed being over 100ft. above the water line. One of the passengers, Rogers, who had crossed the Line seven times previously, said that this was the only trip on which he felt afraid. On one occasion the ship reared right up on end, and quivered from stem to stern. It appeared as if she was about to sink head foremost, but fortunately she recovered her balance, and soon all fears vanished.