

# **Novel Daily**

## **2 Short Stories**

### **The old Story book part 1**

**Two Fictional Tales, set in the distant past**

#### **Story 1**

#### **THE CORNISH FISHERMEN'S WATCH-NIGHT.**

The old year was drawing to a close, indeed, it had not many

hours to run, for the thirty-first of December had dawned upon the lonely Cornish village of Penwhinnock. It was a pouring wet day, and the wind was blowing so fiercely that the billows rolled and tossed as if some evil spirit, which could not rest, had taken possession of them. Penwhinnock overlooked the sea, being built upon a rocky promontory which commanded a splendid view of the Channel, and of any craft which might be nearing that part of the coast. The

fishermen of the village were hardy, brave, stout, and strong; but whispers went abroad that they loved wrecking. It was said that battered and shipwrecked vessels had small chance if caught in the fearful gales which sometimes rose off that coast, and tempted the mariners to run for shelter to the bay, which proved after all a deceitful haven; and ugly tales were told of dead sailors, and of drowning men hurled back into the waters, on the principle that "dead men tell

no tales," forgetting that, in the judgment to come, these would rise in swift witness against their murderers. Ostensibly the villagers of Penwhinnock gained their livelihood by fishing; but many a home contained valuables and wealth which had been obtained by this same practice of wrecking. Tourists and visitors looked askance at the Penwhinnock folk, and avoided their houses as if they had contained the plague, so that few

strangers ever came among them or conversed with them.

There was one, however, who did not avoid them—would not, in fact. This person was the young minister, lately come into the neighbourhood, and as full of zeal and courage and self-sacrifice in his great Master's work as he was of health, hardy energy, and fearless pluck. Mr. Ernest Boyce was the very man to deal with those rough, semi-civilised, Cornish fishermen. Were they valiant, powerful, frank, and

fearless? So was he; only in the service of a better Master. He was tall, well-built, and had eyes and ears as keen as they; but he was gentle, loving, forbearing, and considerate. A true gentleman and a true Christian, Mr. Boyce presented to those rough Cornish fishermen a pattern of true manliness. Their manliness consisted, for the most part, in being bold to commit sin; his, on the other hand, in being brave to serve God. They had talked once or twice of "frightening him off;"

but his brave, loving, outspoken, disinterested Christian honesty of purpose had disarmed them, and caused their hostility to slumber, though it had not yet died away. Penwhinnock was situated some eight miles or so from his residence, but very regularly every week Mr. Boyce rode over there to hold the appointed service. This service was always held in the evening, and Mr. Boyce noticed with a sharp, quick intelligence, that while he had a fair audience on fine, warm, mild,



or quiet evenings, he had scarcely anybody to hear him if the evening turned out stormy, rough, or dark; and being a gentleman of quick perceptions, he lost no time in solving this problem. As to the solution at which he arrived he said but little, but ever after that he ordered his dealings with the fisher-folk accordingly,—that is to say, if the afternoon betokened "big guns," he would ride over to Penwhinnock early, and visit freely at the fishermen's cottages, inviting, persuading,



entreating, and almost  
"compelling them to come in" to  
the meeting. And now that the  
last day of the old year had  
dawned, amid storm, wind, rain,  
and roaring of billows, there  
seemed but little doubt that he  
would be over as usual, visiting  
among the villagers, and charging  
them to attend the "Watch-night  
service." For there was a watch-  
night service to be held in the  
accustomed meeting-place, which  
was a large empty cottage

adjoining a farmhouse, and Mr. Boyce was to preside.

This was what the Penwhinnock men were discussing as they stood around some of the largest fishing-boats, dragged up on the beach for safety, and watched the gathering storm. The wind was blowing "big guns" then, and the rain was pelting fiercely down upon the bare, rugged rocks, and the mean, small cottages which formed the dwellings of the fishermen, and lined each side of the long straggling village street.

It would have appeared to most  
landsmen as if the weather could  
not be much worse; but to the  
experienced eyes of the  
fishermen the night promised  
worse things—worse things to  
many an ill-fated mariner—but in  
the judgment of those hardy,  
cruel men it might bring to them  
"a good catch." This meant a  
brave ship being wrecked, flung  
hopelessly and helplessly upon  
the dreadful rocks, decoyed there  
by false lights, and lured into the  
jaws of death; it meant, too,

robbery, pillage, cruelty, and, not seldom, *murder*!

"What do you think of the night?" inquired Bob Trevannion of Will Lowry.

"Think! Why, many a good ship will go down before another year dawns. That's what I think. And parson thinks so, too, I guess, for see, here he is!"

Turning their faces towards the place indicated by the speaker, the group saw Mr. Boyce coming through the rain quietly, on his stout, sure-footed pony.

"Eh!" said Hugh Hoskyns, a brawny six-footer. "I guess we'll have to attend the cottage to-night."

"So we shall, man," replied Will Lowry; "but we shall leave in time to do a good night's work, if all be well. The *Fleur-de-lis* is due up about this part toward morning, and our mates will be ready about on the hills in good time. But we must needs go to parson's 'Watch-night,' or he'll be poking his nose into our fun, and spoiling it."

"Seems to me you've laid your plans well but I shouldn't wonder if parson isn't as deep," slyly retorted Bob Trevannion. "He's up to all of it most as much as the wreckers themselves."

"Never mind if he is. He'll not know anything this time, for we've put up the women and children to it; and though he may ride about this afternoon, visiting one and another, he'll not get anything. We shall go to his meeting right enough, then we'll wish him 'good-bye,' and while he's

trotting off home and out of the storm, we'll look after our own business. Never fear!"

And the men chuckled again at thinking of their sagacity in outwitting Mr. Boyce. It showed the hold which one determined servant of the Lord could obtain over those wicked, resolute men, by his calm, fearless faith and outspoken fidelity. They could not plan their wrecking expedition as of old, but must consider first how to blind and deceive him. But he was more "'cute" than they



dreamed. Mr. Boyce had not lived thirty years in the world without opening both eyes and ears, and he read, by the embarrassed silence of the children and the prevaricating, evasive replies of the women, that some business was on hand, either wrecking or smuggling—for the Penwhinnock folk were smugglers, too—of which he was to be kept ignorant. But the fisher folk had reckoned without their host.

Mr. Boyce took a cup of tea here, and a broiled fish there, on his

peregrinations through the village that evening, so strengthening himself for his night's vigil. There were sick folk to be seen, inquirers to be instructed, families to be catechised, and sundry other duties appertaining to his office to be performed; and, to do the people justice, they were never stingy or rude to him. Open-handed hospitality was generally the rule towards Mr. Boyce; but, as generally happens, the thing was so overdone, and he was so condoled with in

reference to his midnight journey on this particular afternoon, that he felt sure that some mischief was intended. And the women and children unconsciously confirmed all his suspicions. So Mr. Boyce laid his plans.

The service was to begin at ten o'clock that evening. As I said, it was to be held in a large unoccupied cottage adjoining a farmhouse. The thin partition between the two downstairs rooms had been removed, so that a pretty fair number could

assemble in the place "where prayer was wont to be made." The people came trooping in in great numbers, considering the weather, until nearly all the able-bodied men and lads, together with many women and girls, were present. As usual, the service was opened with singing, in which Will Lowry and Hugh Hoskyns joined with apparent good will. Then Mr. Boyce read and prayed, after which another hymn was given out. Then he preached a sermon on the flight of time, and, not

sparing the vices which reigned in Penwhinnock, besought his hearers tenderly and affectionately to remember that another year of their mortal probation was slipping away from them, that each left one less to live, and, though so near its end, they could not know certainly that they would ever see the commencement of the year just about to dawn. He reminded them of their mercies, as numerous as the sands of the sea, and of their sins, if possible, more

numerous still. He besought them to examine themselves in the fading hour of that last day of another year, and to humble themselves before God for their manifold offences committed during that year. As he depicted the great meeting around the judgment-seat, there to give account, each one for himself, of the deeds committed during this and every preceding year, his hearers looked grave. There are solemn hours in the life of the most wicked man and woman

upon earth, and this hour was a solemn one in the lives of those fishermen. They sat and listened most attentively, while some, I doubt not, half wished that they had never engaged either in wrecking or smuggling.

The sermon was ended, and it being about a quarter to twelve, Mr. Boyce gave out a hymn, thus commencing the short prayer-meeting which he had announced as following the sermon. During the singing of that hymn Mr. Boyce very coolly stepped to the



door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket. As the strains of the singing died away, the voices of Hugh Hoskyns and Bob Trevannion were heard in no gentle tones threatening the preacher with violence if he did not give up the key, so as to afford them free egress and ingress.

"They were not going to stay there all night, to suit his fancies," they said, and endeavoured to assert their independence of all laws, human and Divine. Two or

three minutes passed in this way,  
and then Mr. Boyce spoke plainly.  
"I shall not keep you here all  
night, friends; but you will not  
leave this watch-night service yet  
awhile. I believe that a blessing is  
coming; I feel sure of it, and the  
greatest sinners could not find in  
their hearts to refuse a blessing  
from heaven. Could you? And you  
know that you need a blessing!  
Most of all, you need the blessing  
of forgiveness!"

"Yes, that may sound all very well  
for you to preach, as a parson,"

spoke up Bob Trevannion; "but I don't know as we want so much preaching just now. Here we've been for nearly two mortal hours listening to your service, and I say it's precious hard if you won't let us out now."

"You will not leave yet, Bob Trevannion," coolly replied Mr. Boyce. "And, beside that, we are just entering upon the last five minutes of the dying year. You remember, too, that my announcement for the watch-night service informed you that

we should *watch in* the new year. So, according to that announcement, your time is not up yet. We will spend the last five minutes in prayer, silent prayer, each one for himself and herself. And may the Lord pour you down such a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

At this the assembly again grew quiet; they could not for very shame refuse to fulfil the conditions of the service. The men sat still, moody, silent, and

jealously afraid of Mr. Boyce; but whether they prayed I cannot say. Some of the women appeared to be in fervent supplication, with one or two of the older men. Perhaps they were beginning to see, although but dimly, that the wild, lawless life of their sons, husbands, and brothers was ill befitting "those who had to give an account of the deeds done in the body," and to whom the knell of every passing year told of added sins, with lessened opportunities for repentance. Mr.

Boyce bent his head low in earnest pleading with God on behalf of this rough, sinful assembly; pleading with tears for "a present blessing," even the descent of the Holy Spirit. And through it all the storm howled and roared, and the sea tossed its restless foaming billows, as though hungry for the lives of those who were out that night upon her broad bosom. The rain beat with terrific force against the windows, while even the old trees creaked and bent beneath the

power of the wind. So passed the last five minutes of that memorable year.

Twelve o'clock! There were no church bells to ring out the hour, and to welcome with their musical peal the dawning of the new year.

But Mr. Boyce arose, and said,—  
"Friends, it is twelve o'clock!...

Now it is five minutes past. I wish you all a very happy, a very blessed, new year! The old year is gone into eternity, with all its faults, its sins written down in God's book of remembrance. This



new year comes to you full of mercy. Its record is now spread open before you like a fair white page, upon which you may inscribe anything you like. But you will not make any good entries there unless God's grace, helps you. And in order to pray for that grace, let us bend before God's throne a little longer."

"I vote that we've had enough of your praying for one night, Mr. Boyce," spoke up Hoskyns.

"We've sat out your watch-night service now, and we want to be

going. So I shall go, and my mates too, or we'll know the reason why." He made a move towards the door as he spoke.

"You can't go out of that door," said Mr. Boyce. "It is locked, and I have the key in my pocket."

"Then hand it over, if you please," said Hugh, roughly; "or I shall be at the pains to make you. And it's not worth while, mister."

"You say rightly, it is not worth while," said Mr. Boyce. "God is in this place. He knows the very secret thoughts of your hearts; He

is at this moment noting your secret intentions of doing evil. Will you dare to brave God's anger, Hugh?"

"I don't want to be trifled with," rejoined Hugh. "I am not a child, to be frightened. When I say I'll do a thing, I mean it; and I've said I'll leave this meeting."

"Listen, Hugh Hoskyns," said Mr. Boyce, solemnly. "God will not be trifled with. He says, 'He, that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without

remedy.' He says, too, 'Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.' Will you spurn all these warnings? Will you say that you do not need a blessing? Will you rush away to sin—right from the mercy-seat? Think again, I entreat you. I want to do you good, not to harm you. I will not believe that you intend evil towards me, knowing, as you do, that I wish nothing but good to you. As I said before, I simply want to do you good. Else why should I ride over to this place

every week, and work among you, were it not for that? Does any one else care enough about you to do that?"

"No, no! that they don't," were the murmured responses. "We're much obliged to you, Mr. Boyce, for your interest in us. But it seems very hard laws to be shut up here against our wills."

"I won't keep you very long, only long enough for the blessing to come, the blessing which I feel sure *is coming*. And consider what a dreadful thing it is for you to

slight that blessing. Why, how do you know what will happen?

God's voice is abroad, on the face of the waters, and in nature.

Suppose you were going home through this hurricane of wind and rain, and one of those large old trees were to fall before you got clear of the fields, where would your soul be, if the tree fell upon you? Answer me that question—or, no, answer it to God. And do it *honestly* to Him." At this they sat still, cowed into silence.

The wind roared and howled still, as Mr. Boyce was speaking; and just at that moment a loud crash was heard. The farmer to whom the cottage belonged went out to see what was the matter; and to his astonishment—for the rest were too frightened to move—he found that one of the large old trees standing near had been blown down, and had only by a short distance cleared the pathway leading to the cottage. Singular to say, God had permitted the winds to do His will



just at that moment, and confirmed in a most remarkable manner the words of His servant. As the old farmer returned to the cottage and reported what had happened, awe fell upon the people. Even Hugh Hoskyns and Bob Trevannion, as they realised how near they had been to death, sat still and shuddered. Had not Mr. Boyce been firm, they would at that very time have been in the path of the fallen tree; and once under its dreadful trunk, where would their souls have been?

They felt that their portion would have been in *hell*. It was no use to shirk the matter; for, look at it which way they would, they felt that they were not fit for heaven, and, not being fit for heaven, their place would have been found in *the lost world*.

As I said, awe fell upon the little assembly, and many knees bent in prayer that night which had not so bent for years. No more was said about the watch-night service, or their desire to leave it, but one after another, those rude, rough

fishermen *prayed*, in broken, uncouth petitions, for pardon. The Spirit descended, and strove mightily with the people, until five or six of the roughest, including Bob Trevannion and Hugh Hoskyns, were found crying for mercy; and over many more of them Mr. Boyce could rejoice ere the meeting broke up, because, like Saul of Tarsus, it could be said of each of them, "*Behold, he prayeth.*"

That watch-night service was the commencement of a great revival

in the village. A church was built, and the little believing community gathered together in one body.

Wrecking almost entirely disappeared; and smuggling, although it took longer time to make it die, vanished gradually before the clearer light of Gospel truth. The *Fleur-de-lis* escaped her threatened fate, through the fact of being detained on her voyage somewhat longer than was anticipated by the wreckers of Penwhinnock. Hugh Hoskyns, Will Lowry, Bob Trevannion, and all the

rest, grew to delight more in things "honest, pure, just, true, lovely, and of good report;" so that those things in which they once delighted became a shame to them. No better friends had Mr. Boyce from that time than those who had threatened him with violence during that ever-memorable watch-night service.

## Story 2

### **THE BOOK THAT BROUGHT BAGS OF GOLD.**

**During the war between France and England a frigate sailed from a South American port, on board of which were a Brazilian widow named Maria da Silva and her child Francisca. Her husband had been in the service of the British Government; she herself had become a Protestant, and was now driven by persecution from her home. She was coming to Europe in the hope of finding her brother, her only surviving**

**family member, who had preceded her some years before. The poor woman's health was failing when she came on board. Anxiety and sorrow soon completed the work which disease had begun, and her death drew near. The sailors were very kind to her in their rough way, especially Wat Connor, who was an old messmate of her husband's, and had gone through many hardships and dangers with him.**



**Feeling that her end was near, Maria da Silva expressed to Wat her solicitude respecting her little Francisca, so soon to be left an orphan amongst strangers. Wat at once promised that little "Sisker Silver," as he called her, should never want a friend as long as he lived. The dying woman raised her eyes in grateful acknowledgment of his kindness, and said—**

**"I have nothing to leave her but this little money. I have a Bible: if you will promise me that she**

**shall learn to read it, I shall die in peace."**

**"She shan't want for nothing while I can get it; and as to the book—all right—when she's old enough, I'll see to her tackling it."**

**"And will you read it, too?" said she, earnestly.**

**"I would if I could," said Wat, bluntly; "if it would do you any good, or her either."**

**"Not for her nor me, but for yourself," she said. "Depend on it, kind, dear friend, it will be**

**better to you than bags of gold.  
This Book helped my husband  
to bear sickness, meet death,  
and submit to leave me alone in  
the world; it has supported me  
under his loss, and enabled me  
to see nothing but love in all  
the troubles I have had; and  
now, trusting in its promises, I  
am not afraid to die—not afraid  
to leave my child. Do believe  
what I say, learn to read, and  
make this precious Book your  
friend—oh, *do!*"**

**"Well, I will--thanks," said Wat, taking the book with respect. "I can't say no fairer."**

**Very soon after this the widow was lowered among the waves. Wat immediately took possession of her purse and clothes, which he made into a little bundle for the child; and having stowed that and the Bible safely away, he went to work with his charge, with whom he had become very familiar.**

**With a gravity, importance, and fatherly tenderness, Wat regularly attended to what he called "rigging little Sisky."**

**Perfectly indifferent to the jokes of his companions, he went as methodically through all the ceremonies of the nursery as if he had been "groom of the chamber" or "mistress of the robes."**

**"Where's Wat?" was asked, one morning, when he was busy with Sisky's toilette.**

**"Oh, he's with the child," said a messmate.**

**"What, topping and tailing his gooseberry?" was the reply.**

**From that time "Sisky" was better known as "Wat's gooseberry" than by any other name; and Wat himself, being highly diverted with the joke, took to calling her Gooseberry, declaring it was a deal more English-like than "Sisky."**

**When the voyage ended, Wat, who had no relations but an old**

**grandmother, was rather at a loss what to do with his charge, who was now about six years old; but after a little consideration, he mounted a stage-coach which ran from the port where he had landed to the place where his grandmother lived.**

**Nothing could exceed the delight of the child at all she saw. After the tedious life on board ship, the green hedges and trees, the fields, the cottages, the pretty sights all**



**along the road, made her clap her hands with joy. Wat was happy, too; and if anything could have made him more light-hearted than he was, it was the high spirits and rejoicing of his little Gooseberry.**

**Some years had passed since he had been to see his grandmother.**

**Was she alive? He looked out rather anxiously at the places he passed, till the coach came**

**to the top of a green lane, with an alder hedge on each side.**

**"Into port, captain," he cried, checking the coachman; "here's our landing-place." And dismounting, he took Gooseberry on his shoulder and the bundles under his arm, and went down the lane.**

**One cottage—two—three—he passed, but at last he stopped at a pretty, though very humble dwelling, with flowers trained round the door. *That* was the house. There was the old boat**

**summer-house that his father had made, and there was his granny knitting in the garden. The old lass was well pleased to see him, and he was heartily glad to find her "all right and tight," as he said, and hugged her as if she had been his mother.**

**After a few words of pleasure and surprise, granny turned towards Gooseberry, who was staring with her great black eyes on all before her.**

**"What, married, my lad? and brought me thy little one?" she said.**

**Wat told the story, and taking up her bundle, he added,**

**"When she's able to be put forward in life, I shall lay out the money on her, and give her them clothes; but till then I shall look to her like my own."**

**Granny remonstrated. The workhouse was the proper place. He might marry, and then what could he do with this child? This was right and**

**reasonable, as Wat allowed, but he affirmed that it was "righter and more reasonable" that he should keep his promise.**

**Granny, finding him positive, consented to let Gooseberry live with her; and though he had a misgiving that she wouldn't have a lively time of it, yet he felt she would be safe for the present. So he emptied his pockets most liberally of pay and prize-money, and gave the child into her care.**

**"Ye see, mother," he said, the night before he left, "I am bound to have her learned to read, and to read this Book; and I'm bound, likewise, to learn to read the Book myself, seeing as I promised I'd do both them things. Now nobody can be at sea and on shore at the same time; and by that rule, how can I leave the Book for her, and take it for myself?"**

**Wat's puzzle was set at rest by Granny's telling him that she**

**would teach Gooseberry out of her Bible, which would be the same thing, as all Bibles were exactly alike.**

**"I reckon so," he said, with a perplexed look, comparing Sisky's with the old baize-covered one on the settle. "But there's a lot of signs and marks in this 'un," pointing to red ink notes on the margin, and underlinings of several passages.**

**Granny inspected it, and shook her head.**



**"I don't know much of the writing, lad, but the printing is the same as mine," she said; and reading the opening of Genesis from both the Books, she succeeded in persuading him that they were one and the same, except the red ink.**

**"Heave to, then!" he cried. "I'll have Sisky's; it's trimmer to haul about than yonder woolly-backed one, and I'll try to spell it out when I get aboard again." To say truth, Wat had found his engagement to take care of the**

**child less troublesome than his promise to learn to read. He had got on till now extremely well without any knowledge of that art, and he felt a hearty repugnance to a job he knew so little about.**

**It was not long before Wat got a ship, and sailed again. The parting between him and Sisky was a sorer trial than he had looked for. Granny was not so sensitive, and couldn't understand how he should care to leave a little one like that,**

**who had no call on him, more than his own old grandmother whom he had not seen for so long. Sisky openly rebelled at the idea of being left behind. When he had really gone the child was for a time inconsolable. Her only consolation seemed to be to sit in the old boat summer-house, where she could see the sea, and watch every vessel that glided by, hoping, till the hope faded away, that her dear**

**"Daddy Wat" would come back again.**

**Granny left her very much to her own devices. She fed her and clothed her; and, that done, there was but one thing more she had engaged for—to teach her the Bible. This she tried very earnestly to do; but Sisky didn't like her, and wouldn't learn, and gave her so much trouble, that, finding the funds sufficient, she put her in charge of Mary Keythorn, an excellent young woman, who supported**

**her aged mother by teaching the village children.**

**"She's as wiggle-some and unsettled as ever a sailor on land, or a fish out of the sea," said Granny, as she delivered her over to Mary; "but Wat made me promise she should learn to read this Bible, and I'm bound to keep my word."**

**Gooseberry pricked up her ears at this. She had never been told it was Daddy Wat's desire she should read; but now she knew it, she went to work with her**

**whole heart, and what with fair abilities, a thorough good will, and a gentle and patient teacher, she soon became a pretty good scholar.**

**Wat was not quite so prosperous in his studies. Once fairly on board again, he seldom thought of Sisky's Book, and when he did, it made him uneasy. He wished in his heart he had never made the promise.**

**The ship had been running before a gale for some hours,**

**and everything portended a storm. The ship was nearing a coast where many a wreck had happened. All that seamanship that could do had been done, and they were now waiting the result.**

**One of the passengers, with a Book in his hand, said calmly, as Wat passed him,—**

**"Do you think there is danger?"**

**"Lots," said Wat.**

**The man, after a moment's pause, reopened his Book and read on.**



**"You take it very comfortable,"  
said Wat.**

**"I am not afraid. I can depend  
on this promise," said the man,  
pointing to his Book.**

**Wat shook his head.**

**"I can't take in that, worse luck,  
master. May be yours's is the  
same as this," said Wat, taking  
Sisky's Bible from his pocket,  
where he always kept it when  
his conscience was troubled, as  
if to pacify it with a sort of  
showing his good intentions.**

**The man looked attentively at the Bible, while Wat, in a few words, told him its history, and confessed his neglect, which he had never more truly lamented. A sudden call from the mate made him leave the book in the man's hands, and it was not till after two or three hours of hard work that he returned with the joyful news that the danger was past.**

**"The Lord be praised!" said the man.**

**"Poor Sisky's mother used to talk about the Lord," said Wat.**

**"She told me reading that Book would be better than bags of gold to me."**

**"So it will. Let me teach you," said the man.**

**"With right good will, my hearty," said Wat; "and I'll pay you with part of my 'baca or rum now, or money when I get my pay."**

**"My good fellow," said the man, "I want no pay. I am greatly in your debt already."**

**This Book belonged to my sister; it was all she had of my father's goods. He had nothing to leave, but he told her she would find it better than bags of gold. She did. You have only to read it, and you will find the same."**

**"Well, that's curious enough," said Wat. "And how came it you never looked after her and little Sisky?"**

**"I was in Europe; I have been long away from home. Until I heard your story, and saw from**

**this Book who the mother and the child you spoke of were, I did not know her history."**

**The stranger told him further that he was desirous to provide for his sister's child, and after he had been home and arranged all his family affairs, he would return to England, and take his niece under his protection, and, as far as he could, repay him for his goodness to her.**

**Wat declared that he could not part with his little Gooseberry,**

**but he gratefully set to work to learn to read. As he learned, Da Silva, whose heart was penetrated with the truth, kept earnestly endeavouring to present it acceptably to his pupil; and as the letter of the Word entered his mind, the grace of God blessed it to his true conversion.**

**The voyage ended, he lost no time in going to his Granny's. There he found her, as usual, knitting in the garden.**

**After greetings were passed, he asked for Sisky, and hearing she was at school, went to fetch her. He made his best sailor's bow to Miss Mary in somewhat a shy style, for he had once tried to induce her to look with favour on him, but, for some undeclared reason, she had not consented. The meeting between him and the child was very joyous. She held his jacket tight, as if to prevent his again giving her the slip.**

**"Hear me read, Daddy Wat! Mistress has taught me! I can read quite fast!" she cried.**

**"All right. The next thing is to understand it, and then you'll be all right for sea," said Wat. Sisky opened the Bible and began to read. It happened to be a place that Wat knew pretty well, so he was well pleased to prompt her now and then, and, moreover, to give her a concise commentary, more to Mary's pleasure and edification than**



**little Sisky's, who was impatient at the interruption.**

**Before they left, Wat felt that Mary looked more kindly on him than she had done in old days. She was still free. He was not long in coming to a point when he was clear upon its propriety. So he, quite suddenly, a few days after his return, asked her without much "roundabouts," as he said, "whether she'd the same objections to sail along with him as she had once**

**manifested." Mary honestly answered *no*. She told him her objections before had not arisen from any want of liking for him; but she said, "I knew that I was but a weak and ignorant Christian, and I was afraid, from the way you talked, you were not one at all; and I dared not venture on such a marriage."**

**"I'm a poor hand at it now," he said, with great humility.**

**"Poor enough I am," she answered; "but so long as we**

**are of one mind we shall help one another on. I feel safe about that."**

**Poor Wat! Every year of his married life brought him, as he said, "fuller bags of gold;" for a sweeter, kinder, better wife, man never had than Mary made him.**

**The peace came. Wat left the service, but his character was so good that he had no difficulty in getting a place in the coast-guard; and in his cottage by the sea he maintained wife and**

**children, old granny, and little Gooseberry, who, however, was little no longer. In his spare time he cultivated a bit of ground, and this with his pay kept all comfortable. Still his family was increasing, and food was dear: money went faster and faster. "Never mind," said Wat, "godliness with contentment is great gain."**

**One day when he came home from duty, he found all out, the door locked, and the key in the thatch, as usual. He went in, and**

**on the table was a canvas bag. He opened it, expecting to find beans for sowing, but out tumbled Spanish dollars. While he was wondering, Sisky, who had been to look for him, ran in. The tale was soon told. Her uncle had come for her, and had put that bag on the table for her Daddy Wat.**

**Philip da Silva, having settled all his affairs, had resolved to live in England, all his near relations having moved away from his native place or died.**

**He purchased a small property in the neighbourhood, taking care that Wat and his wife should share in his prosperity. Little Sisky, whom he looked on as his child, helped him heartily as years went on to forward the happiness and interests of her foster-father and his family. "Mary dear," said Wat, many and many a time, "what blessings have come to me through getting this Book! Bags of gold! why, what are they to having you for a wife? and,**

**above all, to the hope I've got  
of being pardoned for all my  
sins, and received into heaven  
when I die?"**