SYNOPSIS.

—15—

Humphrey Van Weyden, critic and dilettante, finds himself aboard the sealing schooner Ghost, Captain Wolf Larsen, bound to Japan waters. The captain makes him cabin boy "for the good of his soul." The cockney cook, Mugridge, is jealous of Hump and hazes him. Wolf hazes a seaman and makes it the basis for a philosophic discussion with Hump. Cooky and Hump whet knives at each other. Hump's intimacy with Wolf increases. Wolf sketches the story of his life, discusses the Bible and Omar, and illustrates the instinctive love of life by choking Hump nearly to death. A carnival of brutality breaks loose in the ship. Wolf proves himself the master brute, is knocked overboard and wins clear in a fight in the forecastle. Hump dresses Wolf's wounds and, despite his protest, is made mate on the hell-ship. Mr. Van Weyden tries to learn his duties as mate. Van Weyden proves by his conduct in a blow that he has learned "to stand on his own legs." Two men desert the vessel in one of the small boats. A young woman and four men, survivors of a steamer wreck, are rescued from a small boat. The deserters are sighted, but Wolf stands away and leaves them to drown. Maude Brewster, the rescued girl, and Van Weyden find they know each other's work. They talk together of a world alien to Wolf. Maude sees Mugridge towed overside in a bowline to give him a bath and his foot bitten off by a shark as he is hauled aboard. She begins to realize her danger at the hands of Wolf. Van Weyden realizes that he loves Maude.

CHAPTER XX—Continued.

We left the table to go on deck, for a steamer was a welcome break in the monotony of the sea on which we floated, while the conviction that it was Death Larsen and the Macedonia added to the excitement. The stiff breeze and heavy sea which had sprung up the previous afternoon had been moderating all morning, so that it was now possible to lower the boats for an afternoon's hunt. The hunting promised to be profitable. We had sailed since daylight across a sea barren of seals, and were now running into the herd.

The smoke was still miles astern, but overhauling us rapidly, when we lowered our boats. They spread out and struck a northerly course across the ocean. Now and again we saw a sail lower, heard the reports of the shotguns, and saw the sail go up again. The seals were thick, the wind was dying away; everything favored a big catch. As we ran off to get our leeward position of the last lee boat, we found the ocean fairly carpeted with sleeping seals. They were all about us, thicker than I had ever seen them before, in twos and threes and bunches, stretched full length on the surface and sleeping for all the world like so many lazy young dogs.

Under the approaching smoke the hull and upperworks of a steamer were growing larger. It was the Macedonia. I read her name through the glasses as she passed by scarcely a mile to starboard. Wolf Larsen looked savagely at the vessel, while Maud Brewster was curious.

"Where is the trouble you were so sure was breezing up, Captain Larsen?" she asked gayly.

He glanced at her, a moment's amusement softening his features.

"What did you expect? That they'd come aboard and cut our throats?"

"Something like that," she confessed. "You understand, seal-hunters are so new and strange to me that I am quite ready to expect anything."

He nodded his head. "Quite right, quite right. Your error is that you failed to expect the worst."

"Why, what can be worse than cutting our throats?" she asked, with pretty naive surprise.

"Cutting our purses," he answered. "Man is so made these days that his capacity for living is determined by the money he possesses."

"'Who steals my purse steals trash,'" she quoted.

"Who steals my purse steals my right to live," was the reply, "old saws to the contrary. For he steals my bread and meat and bed, and in so doing imperils my life. There are not enough soup-kitchens and bread-lines to go around, you know, and when men have nothing in their purses they usually die, and die miserably—unless they are able to fill their purses pretty speedily."

"But I fail to see that this steamer has any designs on your purse."

"Wait and you will see," he answered grimly.

We did not have long to wait. Having passed several miles beyond our line of boats, the Macedonia proceeded to lower her own. We knew she carried fourteen boats to our five (we were one short through the desertion of Wainwright), and she began dropping them far to leeward of our last boat, continued dropping them athwart our course, and finished dropping them far to windward of our first weather boat. The hunting, for us, was spoiled. There were no seals behind us, and ahead of us the line of fourteen boats, like a huge broom, swept the herd before it.

Our boats hunted across the two or three miles of water between them and the point where the Macedonia's had been dropped, and then headed for home. The wind had fallen to a whisper, the ocean was growing calmer and calmer, and this, coupled with the presence of the great herd, made a perfect hunting day—one of the two or three days to be encountered in the whole of a lucky season. An angry lot robbed; and the boats were hoisted in of men, boat-pullers and steerers as well as hunters, swarmed over our side. Each man felt that he had been amid curses, which, if curses had power, would have settled Death Larsen for all eternity—"Dead and damned for a dozen iv eternities," commented Louis, his eyes twinkling up at me as he rested from hauling taut the lashings of his boat.

"Listen to them, and find if it is hard to discover the most vital thing in their souls," said Wolf Larsen. "Faith? and love? and high ideals? The good? the beautiful? the true?"

"Their innate sense of right has been violated," Maud Brewster said, joining the conversation.

She was standing a dozen feet away, one hand resting on the main shrouds and her body swaying gently to the slight roll of the ship. She had not raised her voice, and yet I was struck by its clear and bell-like tone. Ah, it was sweet in my ears!

"A sentimentalist," he sneered, "like Mr. Van Weyden. Those men are cursing because their desires have been outraged. That is all. To lay hands on their purses is to lay hands on their souls."

"You speak so calmly—" she began.

"But I do not feel calm; I could kill the man who robbed me," he interrupted. "Yes, yes, I know, and that man my brother—more sentiment! Bah!"

His face underwent a sudden change. His voice was less harsh and wholly sincere as he said:

"You must be happy, you sentimentalists, really and truly happy at dreaming and finding things good, and because you find some of them good, feeling good yourself. Now, tell me, you two, do you find me good?"

"You are good to look upon—in a way," I qualified.

"There are in you all powers for good," was Maud Brewster's answer.

"There you are!" he cried at her, half angrily. "Your words are empty to me. He who delights the most lives the most, and your dreams and unrealities are less disturbing to you and more gratfying than are my facts to me. Dreams must be substantial and satisfying. Emotional delight is more filling and lasting than intellectual delight; and, besides, you pay for your moments of intellectual delight by having the blues. Emotional delight is followed by no more than jaded senses which speedily recuperate. I envy you, I envy you."

He stopped abruptly, and then on his lips formed one of his strange quizzical smiles, as he added:

"It's from my brain I envy you, take notice, and not from my heart. You have no facts in your pocketbook."

He ceased speaking, and his gaze wandered absently past her and became lost in the placid sea. The old primal melancholy was strong upon him. He was quivering to it. He had reasoned himself into a spell of the blues, and within few hours one could look for the devil within him to be up and stirring. I remembered Charley Furuseth, and knew this man's sadness as the penalty which the materialist ever pays for his materialism.

CHAPTER XXI.

"You've been on deck, Mr. Van Weyden," Wolf Larsen said, the following morning at the breakfast table. "How do things look?"

"Clear enough," I answered, glancing at the sunshine which streamed down the open companionway. "Fair westerly breeze, with a promise of stiffening, if Louis predicts correctly."

He nodded his head in a pleased way. "Any signs of fog?"

"Thick banks in the north and northwest."

He nodded his head again, evincing even greater satisfaction than before.

"What of the Macedonia?"

"Not sighted," I answered.

I could have sworn his face fell at the intelligence, but why he should be disappointed I could not conceive.

I was soon to learn. "Smoke ho!" came the hail from on deck, and his face brightened.

"Good!" he exclaimed, and left the table at once to go on deck and into the steerage, where the hunters were taking the first breakfast of their exile. The bulkhead was too thick for us to hear what he said; but whatever it was it was followed by loud exclamations and shouts of joy.

Maud Brewster accompanied me on deck, but I left her at the break of the poop, where she might watch the scene and not be in it. The sailors must have learned whatever project was on hand, and the vim and snap they put into their work attested their enthusiasm. The hunters came trooping on deck with shotguns and ammunition boxes, and, most unusual, their rifles and a large supply of cartridges. I noticed they grinned with satisfaction whenever they looked at the Macedonia's smoke, which was rising higher and higher as she approached from the west.

The five boats went over the side with a rush, spread out like the ribs of a fan, and set a northerly course, as on the preceding afternoon, for us to follow. I watched for some time curiously, but there seemed nothing extraordinary about their behavior. They lowered sails, shot seals and hoisted sails again, and continued on their way as I had always seen them do. The Macedonia repeated her performance of yesterday, "hogging" the sea by dropping her line of boats in advance of ours and across our course. Fourteen boats require a considerable spread of ocean for comfortable hunting, and when she had completely lapped our line she continued steaming into the northeast, dropping more boats as she went.

"What's up?" I asked Wolf Larsen, unable longer to keep my curiosity in check.

"Never mind what's up," he answered gruffly. "You won't be a thousand years in finding out, and in the meantime just pray for plenty of wind."

"Oh, well, I don't mind telling you," he said the next moment. "I'm going to give that brother of mine a taste of his own medicine. In short, I'm going to play the hog myself, and not for one day, but for the rest of the season—if we're in luck."

"And if we're not?" I queried.

"Not to be considered," he laughed. "We simply must be in luck, or it's all up with us."

The smoke of the Macedonia had dwindled to a dim blot on the northeastern horizon. Of the steamer herself nothing was to be seen. We had been loafing along, till now, our sails shaking half the time and spilling the wind; and twice, for short periods, we had been hove to. But there was no more loafing. Sheets were trimmed, and Wolf Larsen proceeded to put the Ghost through her paces. We ran past our line of boats and bore down upon the first weather boat of the other line.

"Down that flying jib, Mr. Van Weyden," Wolf Larsen commanded. "And stand by to back over the jibs."

I ran forward and had the downhaul of the flying jib all in and fast as we slipped by the boat a hundred feet to leeward. The three men in it gazed at us suspiciously. They had been hogging the sea, and they know Wolf Larsen, by reputation at any rate. I noted that the hunter, a huge Scandinavian sitting in the bow, held his rifle, ready to hand, across his knees. It should have been in its proper place in the rack. When they came opposite our stern Wolf Larsen greeted them with a wave of the hand, and cried:

"Come on board and have a 'gam'!"

"To gam," among the sealing schooners, is a substitute for the verbs "to visit," "to gossip." It expresses the garrulity of the sea and is a pleasant break in the monotony of the life.

The Ghost swung around into the wind, and I finished my work forward in time to run aft and lend a hand with the main sheet.

"You will please stay on deck, Miss Brewster," Wolf Larsen said, as he started forward to meet his guest. "And you, too, Mr. Van Weyden."

The boat had lowered its sail and run alongside. The hunter, golden-bearded like a sea-king, came over the rail and dropped on deck. He glanced from Wolf Larsen to me, noted that there was only the pair of us, and then glanced over his own two men who had joined him. Surely he had little reason to be afraid. He towered like a Goliath above Wolf Larsen. At the

A Huge Scandinavian, Sitting in the Bow, Held His Rifle.

top of the companionway he reassured himself with a glance down at his host and the pair descended into the cabin. In the meantime, his two men, as was the wont of visiting sailors, had gone forward into the forecastle to do some visiting themselves.

Suddenly, from the cabin came a great, choking bellow, followed by all the sounds of a furious struggle. It was the leopard and the lion, and the lion made all the noise. Wolf Larsen was the leopard.

"You see the sacredness of our hospitality," I said bitterly, to Maud Brewster.

She nodded her head that she heard, and I noted in her face the signs of the same sickness at sight or sound of violent struggle from which I had suffered so severely during my first weeks on the Ghost.

The sounds from below soon died away. Then Wolf Larsen came alone on deck. There was a slight flush under his bronze, but otherwise he bore no signs of the battle.

"Send those two men aft, Mr. Van Weyden," he said.

I obeyed, and a minute or two later they stood before him.

"Hoist in your boat," he said to them. "Your hunter's decided to stay aboard awhile and doesn't want it pounding alongside."

"Hoist in your boat, I said," he repeated, this time in sharper tones as they hesitated to do his bidding.

"Who knows? You may have to sail with me for a time," he said, quite softly, with a silken threat that belied the softness, as they moved slowly to comply, "and we might as well start with a friendly understanding. Lively now! Death Larsen makes you jump better than that, and you know it!"

Their movements perceptibly quickened under his coaching, and as the boat swung inboard I was sent forward to let go the jibs. Wolf Larsen, at the wheel, directed the Ghost after the Macedonia's second weather boat.

Under way, and with nothing for the time being to do, I turned my attention to the situation of the boats. The Macedonia's third weather boat was being attacked by two of ours, the fourth by our remaining three; and the fifth, turn about, was taking a hand in the defense of its nearest mate. The fight had opened at long distance, and the rifles were cracking steadily. A quick, snappy sea was being kicked up by the wind, a condition which prevented fine shooting; and now and again, as we drew closer, we could see the bullets zip-zipping from wave to wave.

The boat we were pursuing had squared away and was running before the wind to escape us, and, in the course of its flight, to take part in repulsing our general boat attack.

Attending to sheets and tacks now left me little time to see what was taking place, but I happened to be on the poop when Wolf Larsen ordered the two strange sailors forward and into the forecastle. They went sullenly, but they went. He next ordered Miss Brewster below, and smiled at the instant horror that leapt into her eyes.

"You'll find nothing gruesome down there," he said, "only an unhurt man securely made fast to the ring-bolts. Bullets are liable to come aboard, and I don't want you killed, you know."

Even as he spoke, a bullet was deflected by a brass-capped spoke of the wheel between his hands and screeched off through the air to windward.

"You see," he said to her; and then to me, "Mr. Van Weyden, will you take the wheel?"

Maud Brewster had stepped inside the companionway so that only her head was exposed. Wolf Larsen had procured a rifle and was throwing a cartridge into the barrel. I begged her with my eyes to go below, but she smiled and said:

"We may be feeble land-creatures without legs, but we can show Captain Larsen that we are at least as brave as he."

He gave her a quick look of admiration.

"I like you a hundred per cent better for that," he said. "Books, and brains, and bravery. You are well-rounded, a blue-stocking fit to be the wife of a pirate chief. Ahem, we'll discuss that later," he smiled, as a bullet struck solidly into the cabin wall.

I saw his eyes flash golden as he spoke, and I saw the terror mount in her own.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

COTTON STALKS HAVE VALUE

Hitherto Regarded as Waste, They Are to Be Turned Into a Marketable Commodity.

Considering the fact that in the neighborhood of 75,000,000 tons of cotton stalks have been destroyed annually as worthless and only in the way, the possibilities of a plant capable of converting them into paper and artificial silk are readily comprehended. A plant is now being erected at Greenwood, Miss., which will be devoted to the preparation of pulp from cotton stalks, and it is said that owing to the stronger fibers of the cotton stalk pulp, paper manufactured from it is considerably stronger in proportion to its thickness and weight than that produced from the usual wood pulp. It has been the custom to cut and burn the stalks, after the cotton-picking season has ended, at a cost of about a dollar a ton. The use of cotton pulp is not limited to the making of paper. The stalk fibers have been found capable of withstanding the nitrating process involved in the making of gun-cotton. The fibers also produce an artificial silk, motion-picture films, and such chemicals as pyroxilene, alcohol and acetone.

Soup Kitchens for Birds.

The establishment of "soup kitchens" for the birds in the cemeteries and city parks has been proposed by A. J. Watson, scout commissioner, who offers to have Boy Scouts maintain them if the suet necessary is furnished free, states the Kansas City Star. He also calls on all scouts to feed the hungry birds about their homes until the snow has melted fully.

Scouts are taught to study bird life and protect it. To feed the birds scouts have found the best way is to tie pieces of suet in trees and keep grain and seeds in boxes also nailed to trees.

"The furnishing of the seeds is a small item," Mr. Watson said. "The scout organization will gladly do that, but it does not have the funds to furnish suet. If any person or organization will furnish it, the scouts will distribute it."

Developing English Industry.

Glass-making research is a new feature at Sheffield university. The war cut off many kinds of glass products from England, but the investigations have been so effective that 8,000 Yorkshire glassworkers, formerly turning out only cheap glass bottles, are reported to be now making a varied lot of materials in fine glass.

The Gift of God

By REV. W. W. KETCHUM
Director of Practical Course Moody Bible Institute of Chicago

TEXT—The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Romans 6:23.

A gift is something for which we do not work. It is something that is not naturally our just due. It is something that someone graciously gives us because he or she is interested in us. This text in the revision speaks of this gift as the free gift of God. Now there are many people who expect to pay their way into heaven—many who expect to compensate God for eternal life, when the text says that the free gift of God is eternal life. Eternal life—what is it? It is the opposite of eternal death. Not eternal death does not mean nonexistence any more than eternal life means continued existence. God's word teaches that the soul never dies, in the sense of going out of existence. It does say that "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," but we must interpret the words of the Bible by the Bible. The Bible, you know, is not only a book that gives us the truth, but it defines the truth that it gives, and when it talks about eternal death it does not mean the annihilation of the soul. It is a truth that whatever exists always exists, so the scientists tell us, and the Bible says that the human soul lives forever. Well, what is eternal life then, and what is eternal death? Perhaps we might say that eternal life means being born of God, having the life of God. It is not our natural life prolonged into endless duration. It is the divine life imparted to us, the very life of God himself communicated to a human soul. To put it in another way, we might say that eternal life is right existence, while eternal death is wrong existence, or, to put it in still another way, eternal life is living in the presence of God, while eternal death is having the wrath of God abiding on one.

Now, God's gift is eternal life. Our text says that he offers us this life through Jesus Christ our Lord, that is, Christ is the medium through whom eternal life comes. What a wonderful thing it is to know that God has planned to give the human race, dead in trespasses and in sins, eternal life through his son. What is involved in that truth? A great deal, my friends.

First of all, that on the cross Christ died for our sins.

Secondly, that there upon the cross God laid upon Christ all our sins.

Thirdly, that all our sins will be forgiven us on condition of our simple acceptance by faith of his Son, and the one who thus receives his Son, we are told, is born, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." I have met many people who were striving to get eternal life. I have even met Christians who have had the idea that eternal life becomes theirs, not through faith, but by works of righteousness which they do.

I shall never forget preaching in a little church in the Catskills, and talking about the way of salvation, when a brother arose and controverted what I said about the simple way of having eternal life through the acceptance by faith of Jesus Christ as one's Savior. Another brother, thinking he would pour oil on the water, which was very troublous just then, told about two theologians who were crossing a stream. One of the theologians was arguing that salvation was by works, and the other that salvation was by faith, when the oarsman, listening to the argument, began to row with one oar, and the boat went round and round, when they said, "What are you doing?" and he replied, "Don't you see, that oar with which I am rowing is works, and I don't get anywhere," and then he took the other oar and rowed with that, and went round and round in the other direction, and he said, "That oar, you see, is faith, and when I row alone with that we do not get across the stream. To reach the other shore we must row with both oars." That was a good story, but a poor illustration, for, while it sounds very plausible, the trouble is it is not scriptural. The Bible tells us that it is "not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Change the illustration and have it true to the Scriptures. Jesus Christ is the oarsman, and is rowing the boat of salvation from earth to heaven, and if we would reach the other shore what we must do is by simple faith to get on board.

I go down to the ferry slip in New York. Now, if I wish to go across to the other side, what I must do is to step upon the ferry boat. The moment I do that I have trusted myself to the ferry, and it is for the ferry now, by its own power, to take me over. This crudely illustrates Christ's work of salvation for us. We commit ourselves to him, and he, by his own power and work saves us.

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It May Be.

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"Dunno. Guess spring is bilious like the rest of us."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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