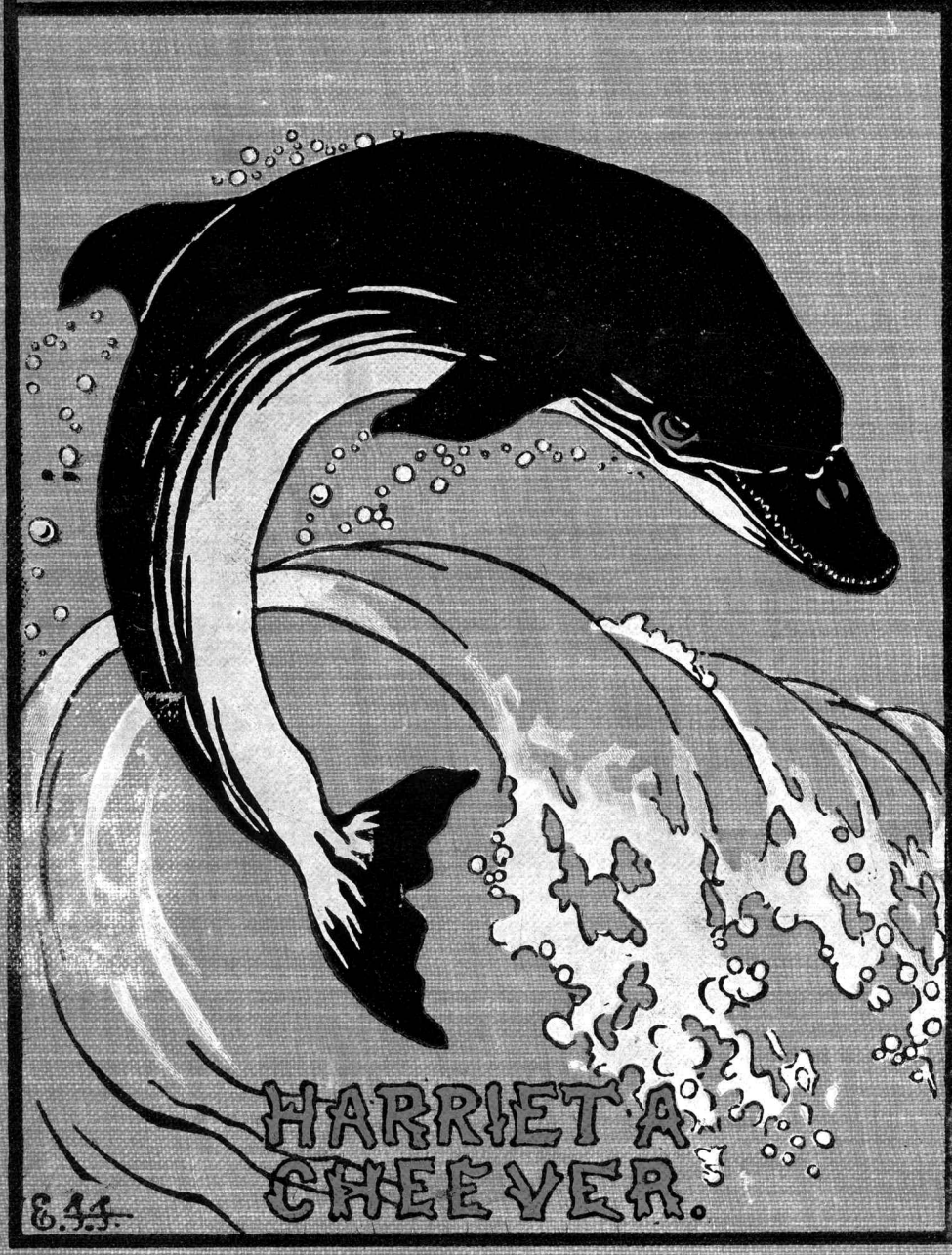
# LORD DOLPHIN



HARRIET A. CHEEVER.

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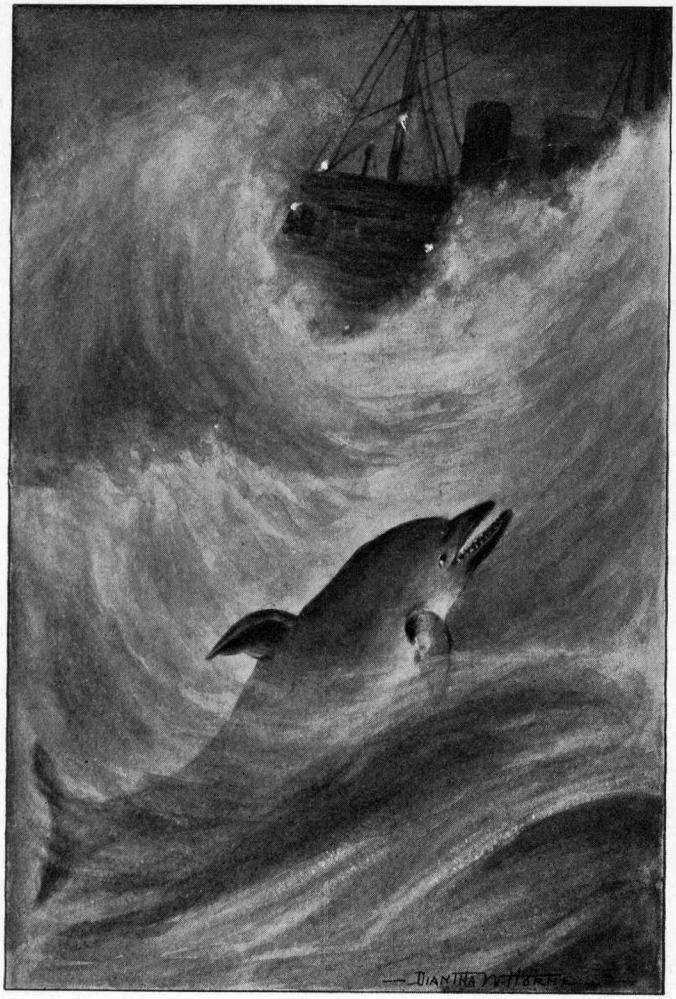


"A GREAT VESSEL WAS STRAINING AND TUGGING, AND I COULD SEE LIGHTS"

# LORD DOLPHIN

BY

HARRIET A. CHEEVER

AUTHOR OF

"THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF BILLY TRILL,"
"MADAME ANGORA," "MOTHER BUNNY," ETC.

Illustrated by

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# LORD DOLPHIN: HIS STORY

## CHAPTER I.

### LORD DOLPHIN INTRODUCES HIMSELF

NOW who ever heard of a fish's sitting up and telling his own story!

Oh, you needn't laugh, you young Folks, perhaps you will find that I can make out very well, considering.

Of course I have been among "Folks," else I could never use your language or know anything about you and your ways.

A message is not received direct from the depths of the sea very often, and especially from one of the natural natives. And then, there are very few fishes that ever have an experience like mine, and travel from one continent to another, going both by sea and by land.

You surely will open your eyes pretty widely

at that, and wonder how a fish could go anywhere by land. Have patience and you shall hear all about it by and by.

I was born deep down in the Mediterranean Sea. That long name is no stranger. You have seen it many a time in your geographies. But could you tell the meaning of it, I wonder? *I* can! It means "Midland Sea," and is so named from being so near the middle of the earth.

If the Mediterranean Sea should be pulled up and away, together with the space it occupies, my! what a hole there would be in the big round earth!

Nowadays, even the little Folks hear a great deal about Europe. Some of the family have very likely been there. Perhaps even small John or Elizabeth have themselves crossed the great ocean, sailing on a fine steamer to the coast of England or Ireland.

Oho! if you had fins and could spread them like sails, and cut through the water like a flash, you would have a very different idea of the word "distance" from what you have now.

I know "Folks" do not think it very nice to talk much about one's self, but if there is no one else to introduce you, and it is necessary that those with whom you are talking should know the

truth about you, it can be plainly seen that the only thing to do is to tell the personal story as modestly and as truthfully as possible.

When first I saw the light, deep down in the sea, I was quite a little fellow, and had a mother that took splendid care of me. She never had but one child at a time, and that one she watched over and tended with much affection until it was fully able to take care of itself.

My name is Dolphin, and the Dolphin family is a large one. One branch is of a very peculiar shape, and has a long and pointed nose or beak from which it is called the "Sea Goose," or the "Goose of the Sea." I belong to that branch, but as to being a goose, allow me to say I never was one and never shall be, not really and truly.

My head is round, and so large that it forms almost a third of my whole body. Many Folks travelling by water have seen Dolphins, as once in awhile we are obliged to toss our heads up out of the water in order to breathe, as we have lungs. Yet it is not necessary for us to breathe as Folks do, and we can blow out water in an upward stream from little holes that are over our eyes.

My colors are fine, dark, almost black on my back, gray at the sides, white and shiny as satin underneath.

There are strange things about a Dolphin. One is that when one is about to die, the colors are very beautiful. In growing faint-tinted where once dark, new and brilliant shades flash forth that change and glow in showy tints. In our beak are thirty or forty sharp teeth on each side of the jaw. Our voices are peculiar. We are said to make a kind of moan, which you know is not a very cheerful sound. This is strange, as we are really very lively creatures, and bright and happy in disposition, not at all moany or sad.

Then we have a kind of small tank or reservoir inside the chest and near the spine which is filled with pure blood. This, you must know, is separate from the veins, and if we stay very long under water we can draw from this reserve supply, causing it to circulate through the body.

There is a great deal of wisdom in all this that a poor fish cannot understand, but Folks must know how these strange things come about, and who makes and guides all creatures everywhere. But a Dolphin cannot take it in at all.

We are a merry, friendly tribe. There probably are no fish that swim the sea that are fonder of Folks than we Dolphins. And we cannot help feeling quite proud because of what Folks have appeared to think of us. And I must explain

why I do so grand a thing as to call myself "Lord Dolphin."

To begin with: In long years past, in "ancient times," as they are called, Folks had an idea that we were able to do them good in some ways, and so were of special value to them. And certain old coins or pieces of money had the figure of a Dolphin stamped on them. It also was on medals, which, you know, are of gold, silver, and copper, and are given to Folks as a reward for having done a good or a brave deed.

The figure of a Dolphin was also sometimes embroidered on ribbon to be used as a badge, showing that the wearer belonged to a particular society or order using the Dolphin as an emblem. Or it might be, again, that the figure showed one to be a member of an ancient or noble family.

Then there are strange and attractive stories of "myths," imaginary forms or persons, like fairies, gods, and goddesses. When you are older you will study about these ancient, make-believe beings, and the study will be called myth-ology, telling curious, interesting stories about the myths.

Apollo, one of the so-called deities, was a myth, and said to be the god of music, medicine, and the fine arts, a great friend of mankind; and a great favorite I was said to be of Apollo's.

Orion, another myth, and a most exquisite player of the lute, so charmed the Dolphins with his playing, that once being in great trouble and throwing himself into the sea, a Dolphin bore him on his back to the shore.

Some Folks have called us whales. But we are not whales at all, and are of an entirely different family. Yet I am a big fellow all of eight feet long, while some of us are still much longer than that.

But the chief cause of pride with the Dolphins is the notice that has been taken of us, and the honor shown us by the royal family of France. Why, we formed at one time the chief figure on the coat of arms of the princes of France.

A coat of arms, perhaps you know, is a family crest or medal, having on it a figure or device which a high-born family adopts as its particular sign or emblem of nobility.

Then the French people once named a province of France for us, calling it Dauphené, and pronounced Dor-fa-na.

But greatest of all the honors shown us, is the fact that the little men-babies born of the French kings, and heirs to the throne of France, were called "the Dauphin," taken from our name.

Are we not distinguished? And do you wonder

that we have a somewhat exalted idea of ourselves after such honors as these have been heaped upon us? And do you think, in view of these facts, that I am taking on too grand a title in announcing myself as "Lord Dolphin"?

Dear me, I do hope not! It would be such a pity to make a mistake right at the outset in telling a story. For truth to tell, I am not a bit proud, but just a good-natured chap that has decided to spin a sea-yarn for the amusement, and I hope the instruction, it may be, of young Folks, being perfectly willing the older Folks should hear it, too, if they like. And I don't believe the smaller Folks will object to the title, even if they don't have "lords" in this country. It must be they are all lords here, all the nice men-Folks.

Do you wonder what I live on? Fishes, of course, for we do not have a very great chance at getting other kinds of food under water. I like herrings best of all, and feed on them oftener than on any other kind of fish.

There is just one fellow that I cannot endure. That is the flying-fish. I fight, make war on him, and drive him away every time he comes around. Oh, but he is the trying creature! Forever flying in your face, getting in your way, prying into your affairs, a kind of gossip-fish, that I despise.

Why I feel so great a dislike for him I cannot say, it must be there is something in my nature that sets me against him, but a flying-fish and a Dolphin cannot live along the same wave.

There is another page in my history that must be mentioned.

Several hundred years ago our flesh used to be eaten, and what is more, it was thought to be fine, so that only those who had a great deal of money could afford to have it on their tables. But nowadays we are never used for food, but are thought to be coarse, and not nearly as nice as most other kinds of fish.

All right! We are very glad not to be in danger of being devoured. We go sailing along under the bright surface of the sea, in groups of just ourselves, and such leaps as we can take! By and by, you will hear of leaps I have taken which have been the means of my learning a great deal.

Away we scud, passing ships that think they are going pretty fast, but, O Neptune! our fins and tails take us along at a spanking rate, which makes the ships seem slow.

In one thing we are much like Folks. Don't laugh, please, but we are very, very fond of music. Sometimes we catch the sound of voices singing

on a vessel, and up we go, leaping fairly into the air to get as near the sound as possible.

And should there be a violin, a guitar, flute, or a cornet — oh, yes, I know them all! — on a passing vessel, we float alongside just far enough under water to keep our bodies out of sight, while we take in the strains in our own peculiar way. For although our ears might be hard to find, we yet absorb or draw in sound very readily.

And now that you know quite a little about the Dolphin family, I will tell you some things that may interest you about my watery home. For home, you know, is wherever one lives, whether it be in the air, on the earth, in the earth, or in the waters under the earth.

## CHAPTER II.

### UNDER THE WAVES

PRETTY soon I must describe my playground, but first you must learn a few simple things about the place I love best of all places in the world, my home in the deep, deep sea.

Do you suppose that when the sky is dark and threatening up where you live, and when the wind is blowing like a hurricane, and the great waves lash about, acting as if mad, that there is great disturbance far below?

Do you suppose that when shipmasters are shouting out orders to the crew, and trying to keep their vessels from turning topsy-turvy or going down out of sight, that the fishes are scampering about wild, driven here and there by the fierce winds, and scared half to death by the fury of the storm?

Do you suppose there is a terrible roar of wind and wave that bangs us against each other at such times, and makes of the under-sea a raging bedlam?

Oh, by no means! There is nothing of the kind down in what Folks call "the lower ocean." It is calm and quiet as the surface of a pond on a pleasant summer day.

And yet, if you wonder how I first learned about the lashing and the thrashing of the waves above our heads when there is a storm, let me tell about the time when I was a naughty, wilful fish, bound to have my own way and do just as I pleased. It was when I was quite young, yet pretty well grown. And this makes me wonder if growing little men-Folks and women-Folks ever are determined to have their own way, no matter what the mother may say.

I have an idea it is what is called the "smart age," when the young, whether fish, flesh, or fowl, start up all at once, and think they know more than — "than all the ancients." I heard that expression used once, and it seemed somehow to fit in here.

Well, I was a young, big fellow, when one day I felt the will strong within me to take leaps toward the upper sea. Now, I have already said that my mother took the best and most watchful care of me when I was a chicken-fish. So when she saw how restless and venturesome I appeared

that day, she tried her best, poor dear, to turn me from my purpose.

For she was older and wise, and could tell by certain signs when the upper currents were seething and boiling. So when I darted upwards with a strong swirl that cut the waters apart for my passage, she thrust herself farther ahead, trying to drive me back, and said plainly by her actions:

"Don't go aloft, my son, you will rush into danger; heed the warnings of your mother and stay where the waters are untroubled and safe."

No, I was getting to be a smart man-fish, and must be allowed to go where I would.

Very well, I went. Upward and upward I dove, until, oh, distress! I was caught by the turmoil and confusion of a great storm. I had gone too far because of knowing far less than I thought I did.

Do you ask why I did not immediately dive downwards again? Alas, I couldn't! I had raised myself into the storm circle, and big creature that I was, I had need to learn that there were mighty forces of the sea that made all my strength as a mere wisp of straw when placed against them.

Do not Folks, I wonder, sometimes find it much easier to get into a hard place than to get out of

it? That was what I found then, being driven about first this way, then that. I was slammed against a great, roaring billow that sent me off presently in another direction, merely to be met by another wave that dashed me against a third one.

My instincts, that serve me for mind and brains, taught me that if I wanted to get down to quiet, restful depths, I must dive head foremost directly toward the bottom of the sea.

Oh, what folly to try! No sooner would I get my great head and long nose pointed for a swift downward plunge, than a thundering billow would actually toss me into the air, just as I have seen a spurt of spray toss a cockle-shell.

Oh, but I saw strange sights and heard strange sounds that night! Once when two waves came together I was not only tossed high in air, but for several moments I actually rode atop of the rolling foam.

It was then that I had my first view of "Folks." What wonderful beings! My first thought was, could it be some new, amazing kind of fish that could stand upright? You see, I had up to that time only known creatures that lay flat, that flapped fins in order to get along, or in order to try what is called by the long word, lo-co-mo-tion.

But here were fine, tall objects that were in every way so different! I indeed knew at once that they were far above and superior to the little creatures that flew, to anything that crawled, and to any kind of fish that swam the seas.

A great vessel was straining and tugging, and I could see lights here and there that showed the water black as night. Sailors' voices rose high above the surging of water and the tempest's loud cry. There were queer little holes in the sides of the vessel that I know now are called "port-holes," and big guns were pointed out through them.

A sailor with a rope about his waist tried to walk across the deck, but was thrown along the wet and slippery boards like a ball tossed from the hands of a child. In a queer set of outside garments that I have learned are called "oil-skins," the crew, officers, and captain went to and fro, trying their best to keep things straight.

In some way I knew that the brave captain was not afraid. A little pale he was, surely, but his voice was firm as he called through a strange fixture called the ship's trumpet. And his hands did not shake as he tried to peer through a great glass across the rolling sea.

The sailor with the rope about him was again

and again tossed and tumbled about as he tried to make the passage across the deck, but as often as he tried his mates would have to pull on the rope and right him. And I still think, as I did that night, that a ship's crew, sailors, officers, and captain, are brave, brave folk, — the bravest Folks I know.

As the storm went crashing on, I kept thrusting myself downward, in hopes to plunge lower than the storm circle. No use. I was upborne every time, and after many attempts knew it would be best to simply float as I must.

I had drifted far from the sailing-vessel, when, as I floated high on the crest of a wave, I looked upon a pleasure-craft of some kind, riding high upon the breakers. Men who were not regular sailors looked with startled eyes on the terrible sea. They were calm and quiet, but from the way they questioned the staunch skipper, and watched the men forming the crew, I knew they carried anxious hearts, and longed to see the waters grow calmer.

A hard fling sent me afloat again, and I had a peep inside the cabin, where ladies with white faces and clasped hands were whispering of the storm, and listening with fear in their eyes to the wild clamor of the winds.

Then there was a peep beyond that showed me something that to this day I cannot understand, but I tell it because my instincts assure me that boy-Folks and girl-Folks in good homes with good parents will know just what it meant. And although I am only Lord Dolphin, a great fish of the sea, there was something about it that has comforted me, and I think always will comfort me as long as I live.

I saw a little girl, oh, a fair little creature, with fluffy, golden hair shading her babyish face, who was on her knees beside a white and gilded berth.

A berth, you know, is a small bed built right against the wall in any kind of a vessel, be it sailer, steamship, or yacht. I think this was some rich man's yacht.

The fair little lady, then, was on her knees beside her gilded berth, her elbows resting on the pretty white bed, eyes closed, tiny white hands clasped, and lips moving. She surely was talking to some One, but Who I cannot even guess.

But this much was certain: that child was not afraid. Not in the least! She must have wakened from sleep, else she would not have been alone. And hearing the wild storm, she had slipped from

her little bed, put herself on her knees, and raised her dear, fearless little hands and heart — where?

Oh, surely that child had a Friend somewhere whom she trusted. How beautiful!

They say that fishes and some other creatures are cold of blood and have but little feeling. But I have gone far enough to think out one thing, and it all comes of that child on her knees: if a dear mite of a woman like that had a great, powerful Friend she could talk to in the dark, and feel safe with in such a tempest, just as true as I am a living Dolphin, I believe it must be some One strong enough and good enough to care for all kinds of creatures. I do, indeed! Do you wonder it comforts me?

It was strange that after awhile the moon came struggling through the black and angry sky. She rode high, did Luna, — that is the moon's name, — and was at the full, and wherever the clouds parted for a moment, a broad streak of luminous light shone down on great mountains of water, leaping up and up, as if eager to crush everything before them.

The wind did not soon go down, it could not; neither could I with my utmost strength dive downwards through the piled-up, violent waves

that still rushed and roared, bounded and snapped with wild force.

Luna had sailed toward the west, and a gleam of daylight was streaking the sky at the east, before the churning, choppy waters began leaping less high, and once again I was tossed crest-high, where I was glad to catch sight of a sailing-vessel that was steadying herself in the distance, and a white yacht was skipping like a frightened but rescued bird afar off.

I do not know whether I had been terribly afraid or not. I was not afraid of the sea itself, it was what Folks call my "native element," the place in which I was born, was natural to me, and I was native to it.

But yes, I think I was afraid that the coming together of those fierce waves might crush me as they met in their terrible strength. The noise of such a meeting could be heard miles away. Ships have been in great peril from them, and fish have often had the life beaten out of them in such a sea.

Yet, naughty fellow that I was, no great harm came to me. As soon as I saw my chance, head down I plunged, out of the harsh circle of the storm.

Oh, the peacefulness and the restfulness of those

quiet lower regions! For far below, all strife of angry billow and raging storm was unknown, and glad enough was I to reach my mother's side.

It may have been that my own plump sides were puffed out with the effort I had made, and the storm's rough tossing, and my absence and the direction I had taken all told my mother that something had gone hard with me, and that I was glad to again be near her in the silent depths of home. She floated with me close alongside, guided me to a restful grove midst shimmering weeds that made a soft and silken couch, where in the sweet stillness, lulled by the lap of gentle ripples against weed, or shell, or bending sea-flowers, I glided off to dreamless slumber.

And the last thing I saw before slipping off to quiet sleep was a little bright-haired child on her knees, eyes closed, hands upraised and folded: a child that was not afraid.

## CHAPTER III.

### A CORAL GROVE

PERHAPS you did not know that the fishes in the sea, both large and small, were playful creatures. Well, they are. They can frisk, frolic, play "hide-and-seek," "catch," and race and romp at a great rate.

Now I want to tell something of our playground, and if you are surprised at the beauty with which we are surrounded, why should you be? There surely are lovely things on the earth for all kinds of upper-air creatures, such as Folks, animals, birds, and insects, to enjoy.

Listen, then, while I tell about the "caverns of ocean." A cavern, you know, is a hollow or den, and old ocean holds many a cavern or den full of interest and beauty. But I will take you first to a kind of grove.

My home, where I spend most of my time, is in deep water. But not in the deepest, oh, no!

That is said to be two thousand fathoms down. Think of it! More than two miles below the surface. There probably is but very little life at that depth. But when I visit some groves, or the region of a reef, I must first sail and sail until I reach water that is not deep at all.

Do you think you have ever seen coral, real coral? Yes, doubtless you have, and you may have seen it in various forms. But I feel sure you have never seen coral to know very much about it, as you have never been to the bottom of the sea.

Ah, here are all kinds of graceful shapes shooting up from the depths, so singular and varied in form, that one would wonder what they are meant to stand for. Look at these trees, perfect little trees in coral, eight or ten feet high, with branches spreading out from the trunk. On the branches are delicate sprays of fairylike net or lace-work, all in white, but of various patterns. Should you get near enough, you would see that these branches, some of which seem to bear flowers in shapes like pinks or lilies, are dented or pitted as if tiny teeth had eaten into them. This may be partly the work of worms.

Now, this is simply a large piece of white coral, but all around and about are fanciful shapes, nearly as large as the one described. Here, too,

are what might be taken for thick bushes or shrubs, branching out with sprays of fretwork, white and spotless. Then there are smaller growths like low plants, and curiously colored, some pink, some red, others a yellowish white. These, too, appear to bear flowers, asters, carnations, or roses.

And for miles at a time we can rove and sport in a beautiful coral grove.

Think of a little house, if you can, made entirely of ivory, with here and there bright tints mingling with the white. For coral looks like ivory when its natural roughness is smoothed and polished. Think of swimming through little rooms, under arches, over lovely walks, through make-believe doors, slipping past upright altars of red and white coral, resting on spreading seats, or under outreaching canopies, or stopping to look at another outreaching shape like the arms of candelabra or candlestick holders. Sliding over footstools, and under culverts, all soft and gleaming in color. Then again there are curves and passages in which we can hide and stay hidden as long as we please. Is it not beautiful? And all so clean and clear!

Yet there is need to take heed and be careful. These stretching shapes and branches, these candle-holders and bushy twigs have sharp, hard points, and bouncing against them too suddenly might

severely wound a fish, or it might slip into a crevice where it would be pricking work to get out.

Now, what is coral. Is it alive? Does it live and breathe? It is one of the curious, mysterious things of the ocean about which Folks have written and studied, and the wise ones say that coral is neither insect nor fish, but a kind of sea-animal, that lives in both deep and shallow waters. In the beginning it appears to be a tiny sea-creature, like a small, fleshy bag, with a mouth at one end, while with the other it clings to some object, almost always a rock.

These little creatures are said to have the power to sting if they are provoked. From these tiny frames there comes a hard, stony substance that spreads and spreads as we have seen, while the part that was alive becomes a mere dead shell.

This is the best explanation I can give about coral and the tiny creatures from which it takes its start, and that seem so exceedingly small to me to be called "sea-animals." But think of the wonderful formations that grow from the bodies of these mites of creatures! Why, there are whole reefs or chains of rocky borders along some coasts made entirely of coral. Some of them are known as barrier reefs.

Bless you! it may be hard to believe, but a barrier reef twelve hundred miles long runs along the coast of Australia between the Pacific and Indian Oceans! Then there are coral islands in the Pacific Ocean, whole platforms of solid coral which shut in portions of quiet water in some places.

The little corals themselves do not work in deep water, nor above the surface of the sea. But the bony substance spreads and spreads, up, down, and across the sea. And as many shell-fish eat into coral, great quantities of fine coral-sand sink to the bottom, making a nice white carpet for the fishes to glide over. Folks do not take coral from the sea at any time but during the months you call April, May, and June.

Now remember these things when you go into houses and see fine large pieces of coral on the mantel, or it may be standing against the wall.

Perhaps you have a coral necklace of little, uneven, red, stick-like beads. The jeweller-man can tell you how very hard it is to drill the holes in these beads; it is like drilling through hard rock. But if you happen to have a necklace, brooch, or bracelet of pink coral, my! you had better take good care of it, for it must have cost a little bag of gold. Pink coral is rare, beautiful, and very

expensive. The genuine pink-tinted is said to have sold for so great a price as five hundred dollars for a single ounce.

Heigho! I want neither necklace, brooch, nor bracelet. For where, pray, would Lord Dolphin wear a breastpin, or how would he look with a string of coral beads about his neck, or a bracelet pinched about his tail?

You needn't laugh so hard. I have seen Folks who hung too much jewelry about themselves and seemed to think it becoming. A few pieces of nice jewelry may be tasteful and ornamental, but when too much is worn, I have a fancy that it might make a coral mite or an oyster want to laugh.

Pretty soon I must explain why an oyster might have a right to be amused at seeing too many gems crowded on at once. But first you must hear something funny about coral, something so silly, too, that even a fish is almost ashamed to tell of it; but this was true long in the past, Folks are much wiser now.

Long years ago there were Folks who believed that wearing a "charm," which often was a little piece of coral, perhaps made into an ornament, would charm away harm or danger, and keep them safe from "the evil eye."

"Dear sakes!" you cry, "what was 'the evil eye'?"

Well, it is almost sad to think that any one could be so foolish, yet when Folks know but little, they will catch up strange notions and listen to silly signs without an atom of truth or common sense in them. So some ignorant Folks once believed that a witch, or some witchy Folk with an evil eye, might look upon them and cause them harm, or make them meet some danger.

And they pretended that hanging a bit of coral somewhere about them would keep off a look from "the evil eye," and that making children wear a piece of it would charm away sickness and act as a medicine. Now did you ever!

Chinese Folks and Hindoos have made most exquisite and wonderful carvings of the coral of the Mediterranean, and there is such a thing as black coral, also known as brain coral, but it is too brittle to be worked upon.

Ah, who would not be a Dolphin, merry and free, whisking through deep, still water, coasting over coral sands, and diving and sporting through coral groves!

Nor is this the only rare and curious place through which I rove, chasing my comrades, wandering about in search of caverns below, and sweet

music above, while forever making war on my enemy, the flying-fish.

You see, these fish can cut through the water, reach the surface, then really fly with finny wings across short spaces right in the air. They think themselves smart, and are great braggarts.

One morning a flying-fish was bent on worrying me, swishing its flapping fins directly before my face, then darting upward, sending the spray crosswise into my eyes. I made a snap or two at the vexing creature, but as I missed him he became bolder, and stopped a race I was having with one of my mates.

Suddenly I made a great leap after the flier, but up he went, up, up, and I after him, sharp! Further up he went, and I pursued. He laughed, fish-fashion, his big mouth sprawling way across his face as he sped above the surface.

I poked my nose into upper air and saw which way he was going, and to my joy he made a dip just as up went my beak again, and I had him, squeezed securely between my jaws.

Of all the wriggling and squirming, the begging and the pleading that ever you saw or heard! But I did not want to eat him, nor did I mean to kill him, either. But I did mean to teach old Mister

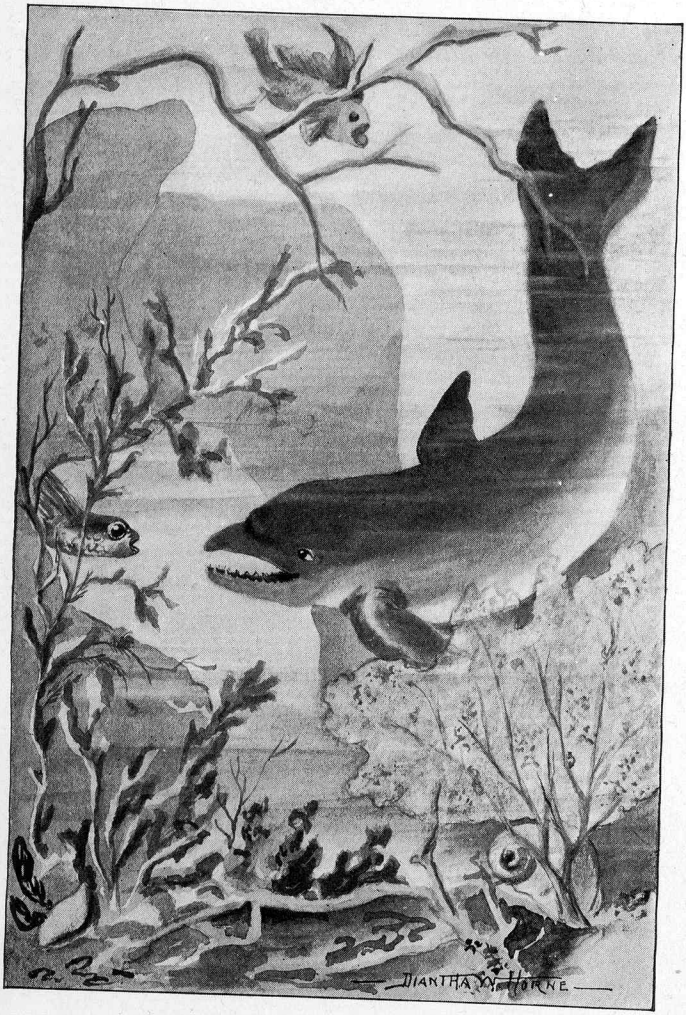
Flier a lesson, showing it was neither wise nor in good taste to torment a fish-fellow that was ever so much larger and stronger than himself.

So down, down I went, until I reached a cell in a coral grove, and in I popped his Majesty, and sat down and grinned at him. My turn to show a wide mouth now.

Did you know a fish could tremble? That fellow trembled and shook as if he had a fishy fit when he found himself in that den, with a great Dolphin's eye on him. Perhaps it was indeed "an evil eye" to him. He could have slipped out and away would I only move and give him room. Oh, no, not just yet! I lashed the water with my strong tail, and "made up eyes" at him, I am afraid, in a truly evil way.

Then I began to feel that it was neither kind nor noble to carry my punishment too far, so off I slowly sailed, and out from his tight corner slid my slippery prisoner. And he tormented me no more. I did not mean to harm him, and do not think I did, but he slipped sideways through the water ever after that.

It must be that he jammed a fin in his haste to escape from his cubby, but I see him often, and always with that sideways gait. I hope he is




"MY TURN TO SHOW A WIDE MOUTH NOW"

cured forever of making of himself a pester and a plague.

I was glad to see that he still could fly, and that swift as an arrow he could dart over and under, through and across, the thousand winding ways of our coral groves.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MERMAID'S CAVE

AS I have never been in a truly house, I cannot know of all the kinds of carpets or coverings that Folks use on the floors.

Yet I have had peeps at very lovely carpets, as in a ship's cabin, and I know that velvet and fine, beautiful straw, as well as other kinds of nice carpets, must be used in what Folks call their houses.

Oh, but never has a floor of wood been covered with such wonderful material, or covering of such marvellous workmanship, as that over which I have roamed, and on which I have rested all my life. Yet, except in deep waters, I will not pretend that my carpets are always very soft.

In the deeper waters that I love, there are miles and miles of soft, blue mud, that to a Dolphin is far more luxurious and enjoyable than the thickest of velvet or the most closely, evenly plaited straw

could be. But when, after a long, delightful journey, I visit the regions of shallower waters, ah, the beautiful things I could bring you, were there a tunnel, a car, or an air-shaft to convey me safely to land!

What are these shining, many-colored things I see lying about, with all kinds of fishes sailing around and playing with, as a child plays with blocks or cards?

Shells! all kinds and shapes, many of them rough outside but smooth and glossy as glass inside.

What is a shell? You know the word "marine," called ma-*reen,* means belonging to the sea, so shells are marine curiosities, for they are always found in or near the sea. And they are really the hard, outer covering of some sea-animal or other.

But how can I describe shells such as I have looked upon a thousand times? You have seen some kinds, I know, but they would not even pass as samples of the splendid shapes and tints that lie scattered around my floor. A few Folks have made a study of the different kinds of shells that have floated or been carried to the shore, and have been able to tell the class of sea-animals to which they have belonged. They once were the coats or outside garment of a swimmer or a clinger of the sea.

One day a mother-Dolphin missed her boy-Dolphin, and as he was quite a young fellow, she felt much distressed. Away she sailed, peering amidst the many objects covering the sea-floor.

Do you suppose it is an easy matter to find a fish that has got lost? I caught the flying-fish because he never got far away from me. But here was a young rascal that had gone off roaming, almost before he knew how to feed himself, and search as she might, nowhere could his mother find the rogue of a runaway.

If you will believe it, he was gone a week, then back he came, his eyes as big as saucers. You see, I know how to say some things that Folks do; by and by you will find out how I learned them.

Master Dolphy had a story to tell. He made us understand in fish-language that he had found a wonderful, wonderful cave, where a party of mermaids had collected a lot of shells, oh, enough to fill a great house!

Now, I can't tell a thing as to the truth about mermaids. But "they say," that is, Folks and fishes say, that they are strange, fascinating creatures, with the head, shoulders, arms, and breast of a beautiful woman, and part of the body and the tail of a fish. Sometimes they are called sea-nymphs; others call them sirens.

Have you ever lived by the sea? And on stormy evenings, when rain was rattling on the window-pane, and the wind went screaming around the house, have you ever imagined there were queer calls, and have you seen strange shapes thrown up by the waves?

Or have you ever heard an old sailor or an old fisherman tell stories of the deep? If not, you cannot take in the kind of spell or enchantment that lingers about the sea after listening to these sounds or hearing these stories. They are all mixed up with the "myth" stories you heard of a little way back.

But these stories have been told ever since the world was young. And the mermaids are said to be daughters of the river-god that have lived ever in the deep and sounding ocean.

And they were strange and weird — that is, wild, unnatural, and witching. They would appear in both calm and stormy weather.

Sirens were sometimes thought to be different from mermaids, but we fishes know them to be one and the same thing — that is, if they exist at all. It used to be said that a mermaid murmured, but that a siren sang, with dangerous sweetness. Both murmur and both sing, one as much as the other.

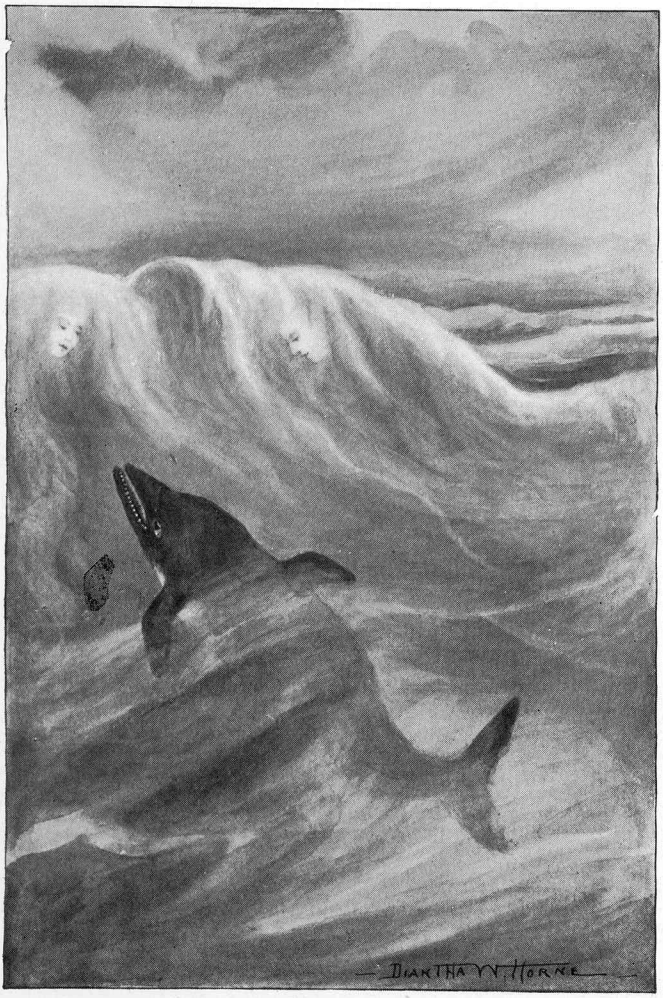
They will all at once be seen poised on perilous rocks, their long and splendid hair floating back in the wild wind, their eyes shining like stars, their faces bright and glorious, their white arms and gleaming shoulders rising like snow from midst the dark and stormy waves.

Ah! the singing, the beckoning, and the coaxing of a mermaid! Let me tell you how they work.

They have a sly, four-legged creature on land, all dressed in fur, and sporting a fine, thick tail, and they say that when this Madame Puss wants to catch a bird that is wheeling in the air, she will manage to first catch its eye. Then the little creature will not be able to look away, but will wheel and circle, and circle and wheel, all the time coming nearer, until, if no one frightens Madame Puss away, she will keep her yellow eye fixed on the eye that she has caught, until the bird flies close to her and is caught.

This is called "charming a bird." And the truth must be that poor birdie, after catching sight of that great, shining eye, does not see Madame Puss herself, but only the bright eye, and being unable to look away, flies nearer and nearer the strange, glittering light, until Madame Puss makes a spring, and all is over.

Just so, it is said, the sailors cannot look away




"WHITE FACES SEEMED TO RISE AND RIDE ATOP OF THE FOAMING BILLOWS"

from the fair, wonderful creatures tossing their rich hair, beckoning wildly, singing and singing with a sweetness that is not natural or earthly, until, what with the beauty and luring, and voices of honey, the poor sailormen are close against the rocks, and do not seem to know that they are charmed or harmed when the waters close softly over them.

I do not know whether I have ever seen a mermaid or not. But when I took that dangerous voyage up into the storm circle, I saw strange shapes that I never saw before, and heard sounds that were new to my ear. Two or three times I thought I saw streaming hair, and white faces seemed to rise and ride atop of the foaming billows.

But when one is very much excited, will not imagination produce almost any kind of an object that happens to come into the mind? Ah, I am afraid so. Still, there are both Folks and fishes that believe in the mermaids and their songs, and what am I that I should dare dispute them!

Yet — let me whisper — I have heard that Folks who do not know so very much, will tell about "goblins," "spooks," and "catch-ums," and whenever there is talk about the mermaids and

the sirens, I think of those Folks who believe in creatures that "never were."

But it would not do to talk in my watery home as if I had no belief in mermaids, because, you see, as most fishes have never been with Folks, and learned a thing or two from them, they do not know any better than to believe in these sweet, dangerous creatures.

So, now, here came Dolphy, with flapping fins, wild eye, and his story of a mermaid's cave. Then a party was made up to go and see the rare and amazing place.

Well, it did look as if some creatures of surprising taste and skill had brought together a collection of shells such as are never seen above the surface of the sea, and formed, indeed, a cave fit for a mermaid's home.

I know little about time, but it must have been days and nights I stayed in the enchanting place, roving hither and thither, rubbing my fins against the soft, smooth shells, and half wondering how they really came to be grouped together in such shining rows.

And the colors! And the shapes! Some were well-opened on the inside, and looked as if entirely covered with pink enamel. They were of clear, ivory white, pinkish white, pale rose, deep rose,

pale yellow, or straw color, orange yellow, blue and green mixed in glossy sheen, shades of pink running into rich reds, purples and grayish pinks, making the fair, sweet mother-o'-pearl.

Some were cup-shaped, having deep hollows. Should you hold your ear fairly shut into one of these, it is said you would hear always as often as you so held it, the roaring of the ocean. And a roaring sound you would hear, in very truth. Yet, let me tell you! Take a common china cup, shut your ear into it, and the same roaring will be heard.

Is that old ocean? No, it is simply the sound of your own blood coursing through your veins.

A wide-awake Frenchman once wrote that, could you look within your own body and see the engines pumping, the valves opening and shutting, the pipes working, and the whole machinery in action, it would surprise and perhaps scare you into the bargain.

We have got a little off the track, but it is well to know the facts about these things. Now we will return to the shells.

Look at that splendid one shaped like a bowl, but with pink lips rolled back, through which can be seen changing tints of pink and white. Here

is one that is oblong, lined with rose enamel, but having strange horns pointing out at one side.

See that beauty, wide open and shaped like a saucer. Dear me, hold it a little toward the light, and there gleams every color of the rainbow on the polished surface. Here is another, striped with hair-like lines in red, yellow, blue, and brown. There is a fan, wide open, beautifully polished; it has no handle, but its coloring is in nearly all tints, and changeable in the light. What a lovely thing is this heart-shaped shell, with a line along the centre, and beautifully blending colors on either side. There are many of these scattered around.

Now, how can I describe these singular yet perfect shapes banked up against rocks that are completely hidden on the inside of the cave?

Over there is a funny, snarly head, with fine shreds of hair laced over a smooth shell. Ah, what gleams of colored light shoot through the hair! Here is a bird's nest on a bar, lying side of a wide fan, shaped like a palm leaf; in the plaitings are curled all colors, pink, blue, yellow, and green.

This shell is like a foot with eighteen or twenty toes, smooth, shining, and of flesh-like tints. This is like a bat's wing, with lines and webs finely

tinted. Look at that enamelled jug with a pipe at the top. Near by is a perfect leaf on a small branch.

Do see this worm, ringed around with dark purple stripes. Isn't it queer? In that corner is a trumpet, splendidly colored inside. That shape over there must be a fool's cap, one mass of sheeny tints inside. Here are beautifully rounded little bowls, all scalloped around the top; ah, see them glisten and change shades as the light strikes them!

See the beetle-bugs, with horns sticking out in every direction. And if here isn't a perfect shape of a lady's slipper! The lady should wear it inside out, so all could see its exquisite mother-o'-pearl.

Here are shells exactly like the feathery wing of a bird, and how birdie would enjoy snuggling his soft head against the exquisite smoothness of these shells!

Is that a large carrot split lengthwise? It looks like it, but no carrot split along its length ever brought to light such rainbows as glint along these. Those shells looking so much like rattles would amuse a lot of babies if they could play in the mermaid's cave. They would try to catch the fine colors, and might cry when they changed and changed, and then appeared to dance away.

Those serpents, some half uncoiled, some out straight, will not bite. Those flashes are not from dangerous eyes, but are only fine shell tints.

Here are a lot of squat jars for holding small ornaments. They are ornaments themselves. Are they not? And what queer combs with three shining rows of teeth, each tooth a point of color.

Really, I might as well stop. There would be no use in trying to describe a third of these shapes, and as to coloring, with all I have said, you can have but a faint idea of the soft, brilliant, ever changing hues and gleams in the mermaid's cave.

## CHAPTER V.

### MY GARDENS

LONG as I have talked of shells, I must say a word or two more about shells that are used as stones.

When I was on land a little while, I noticed in front of a few houses, walks, that I knew at a glance were made from clam-shells. So I knew that Folks must have machines for pounding up shells. Such a beautiful, clean, white walk as they make!

Then, before some fine-looking houses were great conch-shells, oblong and twisted in shape, but pink and smooth inside. Many of them were placed around lovely fountains, or urns of flowers.

But I want to tell of one very beautiful and costly kind of ornament that is made from some conch-shells, pronounced "konk."

Romans and Greeks, but especially the Greeks, used to cut "cameos" from the onyx-stone. And

men skilled in cutting fine stones and jewels have cut most exquisite cameos, or faces, from the kind of conch-shell that has two layers, one dark, the other light.

The word "cameo" is said to mean one stone upon another. The "queen conch" is a splendid shell, with two distinct layers, one white, the other pink. Out of the white layer is carved perhaps the face of a woman, with a crown of flowers on her head, or it may be the head of a knight, with a helmet on.

But think of the fineness of the tools that must be used, the tiny files and chisels in carving the lovely, delicate shells. The shell cameos with the pink lower stone and white upper figure, are most expensive of all; other shells have brown or black lower layers, and these are not as choice.

But when you see your grandma or great-auntie wearing a lovely old-fashioned breastpin, bound around with gold, and holding a pink stone, shining like crystal, with a white carved head or other figure standing out from the lower stone, you may know it is a very valuable ornament, and was probably made from one of the finest shells found in the sea. Imitations are made from porcelain, but very likely grandma's or great-auntie's will be the real conch-shell.

Perhaps you did not know that there are fair and beautiful gardens in my watery home. You may have picked up sprays or bunches of seaweed when running along the beach, and some were perhaps quite pretty, while others had turned brown and looked much like leather.

Would you like to come with Lord Dolphin and take a swim through an ocean garden? You would doubtless see such a sight as you had never dreamed could be seen down in the blue water.

All right, I'll turn into a fairy godfather, clap you on to my back, give you the lungs of a mermaid, to prevent your choking in the water, and then, come on! Or, rather, I should say, come down!

"Why, why! A fairylike scene indeed!" you cry.

Now you have not taken on "the evil eye" in coming to the bottom of the sea, but you have taken a "fish eye." Folks usually hate fishy eyes, but no matter, you couldn't see the first thing down here with your own natural peepers, so be thankful that for a time you can see with eyes like mine.

Now, this is not a coral grove, it is a garden of flowers, and when you exclaim again, "Oh, but I had no idea of this!" I should have to reply, "Of course you hadn't; no more had I of the

strange and beautiful things on the land, until I had to live there a little while."

Folks call these flowers, such as they have seen of them, weeds, seaweeds. And I suppose they have to come under that name, as they are not planted from seeds, but are a wild growth. Ah, but some great Planter or Gardener surely put all these wonderful shapes and splendid tints in the soft earth of a sea-garden. And it is all so blithe and gay!

Here are nearly all the shapes in bushes and almost trees that you have in your garden on land. And as to flowers, there are leaves, spires, cups, bells, tassels, very much such as you see in your garden at home.

See these beautiful crimson leaves, as large as the top of a small table, and cut in such fine, even scallops around the edges, and here is one with a great pad of yellow right on the crimson. My! My! is it not colored richly?

Here are leaves shooting out like rafts, thick, like the leaves of a rubber-tree, but larger and of a deep red. You might take a sail on one of them. And here is a bush, shooting upright from its muddy bed, all covered with pink sprays, on which are pink blossoms. Doesn't it make you think of a syringa bush? Only these flowers are pink.

Next comes this plant with a large olive green stem covered thickly with branches, bearing flowers resembling pink roses. Were this plant taken to the church some Sunday morning and placed on the pulpit-stand, you may believe that after the service Folks would go crowding about the altar, eager to find out its name and whence it came.

What a clucking of surprise there would be when it was told that not from any hothouse whatever, but from the depths of the ocean came the full, lovely sea-roses.

Are these sprays of pink coral? No, they are sea-rods and branches. If you pinch the thick stems, water will ooze out, for they are partly hollow, like the pond-lily stem.

I do not wonder you look with questioning surprise at that next plant. It is like a mass of purple bushes, a very sweet growth rather hard to describe. All through the delicate branches are what look like small dark berries, seen through a mist of pinkish, hairy spires.

Don't start. These merry fishes darting through the next clump of bushes have only come to smell of the carnation pinks the bushes bear. Are they not strangely like your garden carnations?

See the fishes nip at those singular pink flowers with a thick fringe hanging from the edges. It

is a shame to spoil them, but some fishes always seem to think that graceful fringe droops down on purpose for them to peck at.

Now if the baby were only here, you could seat him on these broad, flat leaves, with delicate spires all along the edges, and all of so deep a crimson they surely would attract any child.

What a queer flower! like the backbone of a fish with all the little bones at the side standing out stiff and pointed, and all in pinks and purples.

Right in the midst of another plot of thick, flat leaves rises a mass of pink sea-lilies, and they are beautiful; but do examine the next bed of leaves. Are they not curious? A thick, hollow-looking stem goes through the middle of them, and on one side of the stem they are a deep pink, on the other side, yellow.

Here are flowers shaped like horns and trumpets. What a forest of pinks, greens, and yellows! And here are the greens. Such greens as you have never seen before.

Now suppose you were going to have a party. What decorations you could have if only the ocean blooms would keep fresh for you to use. There would be masses of fine furze that would be perfectly beautiful to crowd over the pictures; silky threads that, placed on creeping green plants, would

look lovely carried along the table; yellow flowers in the midst of masses of fine sea-mosses, and sea-ferns would make your little mates wonder where the fresh, strange things grew.

And there could be yards and yards of ribbons. Ribbons? Yes, long, long sprays of yellowish green sea-ribbon, four or five inches wide, going down to narrower ones not more than an inch in width.

Perhaps you would like some sea-thistles. Here they are, in thick bunches, fine and hairy, in faint, fair shades of green. And what can this be that looks so much like a sponge? Ah, it is a tuft of moss with green spires shooting up in the middle.

Take care! Here are bunches of cactus with prickly leaves. Look out! don't catch your toe in those sea-ferns. Even that sweet green maiden-hair fern might pin down your foot so firmly that it would take a fish's sharp tooth to set you free.

You may ask, why are not these beautifully colored and curiously shaped things brought on shore and sold, as they might be, for much money? And why are they not at least put where Folks can see, learn about them, and admire them?

But wait a moment; what would be the effect

if any one took a bunch of your garden roses, pinks, or lilies, put them under water, and kept them there? They would very soon be a drooping, shapeless mass. They are formed for a different element, and could not flourish under water, especially salt water.

Just so ocean-flowers, and sea-tints can only live in their own element, which is not air, but water. And the faces on our water-pansies — for we have them — would soon fade in what to them would be lifeless air, just as the garden pansies would lose their bright faces in the salt sea.

Great quantities of seaweeds float ashore and are often dried and used as fuel, or perhaps are put around garden plants to make them grow.

But nothing that grows on the land, or in the water, can exchange places one with the other and keep alive. It is all very curious, and more than I can understand. Yet every creature and every plant is fitted to the place it grows in, and is natural to it. The food, the flowers, and the land for the use of Folks, and the food, the plants, and the water for the use of fishes, are just what the nature of each requires. What wisdom!

## CHAPTER VI.

### MY TREASURE GROUNDS

ARE you tired? No? Well, that is no great wonder. It is ever so much easier to glide through the water on the broad back of a great fish than to ride horseback, or in a car.

My sails or fins flap quietly to and fro, the water parts readily to make us a path, no rough winds blow away your hat, there is no danger way down here that a boat will bang against us, and roll you off into a cavern or a cave.

Now I am taking you into deeper water, which still is not so very deep, but I want to show you some other strange things in the world I live in.

Here we go sailing in and out of rocks, but do not be alarmed, I know them all. Perhaps you wonder what it is that we keep pressing against, something soft and smooth that sends extra sprays of water over us. What can it be?

Well, now, put on your thinking-cap. What

does your mother wash the baby with? What does Michael wash the carriage with? And what is that object in the wire holder in the bath-tub?

"Ah, a sponge!" you exclaim. Yes, and here is where they grow. "What, sponges grow?" you ask. Certainly. And just as with the coral, it took Folks a long time to find out whether sponges were plants, shrubs, or insects.

Now it is decided that the sponge is an animal growth. And the same as with coral, the tiny creature that it starts from dies, and out from the skeleton, or frame, branches the sponge that sometimes grows very large, and sometimes is of a kind that remains small. One may be as big as a mop, others no larger than an egg.

Down in the blue Mediterranean Sea are found the best sponges that grow. They are called "horny sponges," and grow in great masses, fine, yet tough and durable. A sponge from the Mediterranean, called the "Turkey sponge," will cost three times as much as a coarser, more brittle one from other waters. They are porous, or full of little holes and hollows.

We fishes like to bang against the sponges and feel the sudden spray dash over us. Water we have all around and about us, but a shower-bath is not as common a thing.

When you buy a sponge, it is round, flat, or cone-shaped. Now see what they look like under water. Here is a little tree, you say. Oh, no, it is only a mass of sponges piled together and branching out as they grow.

Here are fans, arches, tiny caves, and many different shapes forming a sponge-garden. Queer, isn't it? Oh, lots of things are queer until you learn about them.

Would you like to see how I wash myself? Don't laugh so loud, you might scare the fishes. I know very well that it seems to you as if I was washing or bathing all the time, but there! Some kind of a water-bug has plumped right down onto my head, and left a lot of sticky sand on it, that the water does not wash away.

Now don't be alarmed. I won't let you be swept from my back. I am only going to wash my head. See me swim directly under this mass of sponge, swaying out from a rock. There will be no bits of sand clinging to me after I have been sponged a few moments.

Here is a sponge that looks as if almost as large as your sun when it rises out of the water, but if you squeeze that fellow dry — the sponge, not the sun — it will not begin to be the size it is now. You could press it into a bowl of mod-

erate size when dry, but then take it to the pump or the faucet, fill it with water, and my, what a balloon!

Sponges were once called "worm-nests," and were thought to be a mere kind of seaweed. But looked at under the sea, it would be known at once that they are neither nest nor weed.

Once in awhile sponges seem to spring directly up from the mud without anything to cling to, but generally they are fastened to rocks or large stones, and spread out and out from them. Here they look so much like a kind of herb, that Folks who make a study of things in nature, and are called naturalists, for a long time took them to be a kind of sea-plant, and for years it was a puzzle as to just what they were.

All are full of pores or layers of small cells, and some are quite pretty from having a fringe about the cells like eyelashes. There are others curiously shaped, looking like coral sprays, and here and there they look like helmets; then there is another form that seems to have long fingers running out, and is called "mermaid's gloves."

The form called "Venus flower-basket," large and basket-shaped, might answer for a mermaid's work-basket, and hold her thimble, scissors, and thread. You had better take care! A mer-

maid may be near this very moment, and hear you laughing. And remember, she could spin you round from one end of the sea to another, then leave you high and dry on a big rock in the middle of the ocean.

Now, on what do sponges feed? Dear sakes, as if they fed on anything! Yet they do. Although they branch and bunch out in the forms described, yet they do not roam about, but only float or swim out as far as they can stretch themselves while firmly fastened to a rock. Here they take in specks or particles that float through the water; they pass through the open pores of the body, and answer for food. The water constantly passing through them serves to refresh and keep them round and healthy.

Here we come to a perfect thicket of sponges, and see the fishes playing "tag" all around and about them. There! that sly little fish, like a salt-water pickerel, nipped the tail of that great clumsy porpoise — porpus — so hard, I heard the big fish grunt. The teeth of a pickerel are fearfully long and sharp.

Oh! Oh! What is that most beautiful thing we see shining with a faint, sweet glow, down at the bottom of the sea? It is in plain sight, nestled in the heart of a conch-shell. It is round, has a

milk-like murkiness, yet pinky, changing lights like tiny stars, that glint and gleam as you look upon it.

Now believe me! Of all the treasures of the sea I have told you of or shown you, this is far and away the most precious.

It is a pearl. Only once in a great while will so perfect and so valuable a gem be found near my deep-water home. And although we are not so very far east, yet it would be called an "Orient," or an "Eastern pearl."

Perhaps it has floated in its polished pink bed from a far eastern sea. I told you a little while ago that I must explain what an oyster had to do with Folks that sported too many jewels, and why it might be amused at the sight.

Did you know that inside of an oyster-shell grew the lovely, costly pearls that Folks will give a great deal of money for? Why, Queen Victoria of England had a Scotch pearl that cost two hundred dollars. Queens and princes, rich Folks, jewellers, and dealers in precious stones, will give great sums of money for necklaces, brooches, or rings that have in them the precious Oriental pearls.

I had to listen very hard to find out what I did about pearls. But I found that they have

been known, talked of, and written about, almost ever since the beginning of the world.

Oyster-beds are generally much nearer the shore than most kinds of shells. It is said to be when an oyster gets restless or uneasy that a strange substance enters the edge of the shell, and after a time a pearl is formed. And while many pearls are found in oyster-shells, they also are often found fastened to the pink bosom of a conch-shell.

There are black pearls of much value, but though rare, they are never half as beautiful as a white or pink one. Some pink pearls are very lovely, and when large-sized, are also very expensive.

The pearl we see lying here is a splendid white one, and my! the money it would bring! Pick up that shell, carry it with you to a jeweller, and see the dollars the fair round gem will bring to your purse. You could buy yourself beautiful clothes, or a pony, or could have with it a fine party, flowers, favors, treat and all.

What? Don't dare to? Oh, me, me, what a little coward! I can't pick it up very well. If I took it in my mouth, down my throat it would go. If I tried to catch it up with a fin, over into the water it would bounce.

Never mind. Look at the sweetly beautiful

conch-shell, with the splendid gem resting so softly on its pink, polished side. And let me tell you what I think.

The opinion of a fish, even a great lordly one, may not be worth much, but to me that exquisitely lovely stone, reposing on that exquisitely lovely shell, is a far more beautiful thing to look upon than the jewel ever could be when fitted into the costliest setting of gold.

Now it is just as it was made, and I think that Whoever formed and set that pearl knew more about real beauty and fitness, and what is simple, natural, and very beautiful, than all the Folks and jewellers in the world.

Look at that white splendor. Don't you agree with me?

## CHAPTER VII.

### WHAT I SAW ONE DAY

NOW I do not know how brave an English lord may be or how much it may take to scare him, but I, Lord Dolphin, inhabitant of the great Mediterranean Sea, was scared nearly out of my wits and skin by the sight I saw one day.

But there is this to comfort me: if I was a coward at the sight, there were plenty of other creatures in the sea to keep me company. Mercy on us! Such a scuttling and rushing, such a whisking and a whacking, flying and plunging, I for one never saw before. There was actually a chorus of flapping fins and thumping tails as we raced for our lives.

Was it a steam-engine or a monster boiler that was coming right down from upper regions into our midst? Or, had some new sea-monster fallen from the skies to drive us from our hunting and fishing grounds?

We knew something about sea-lions, the huge creature that you may have seen at the Zoo, or in a tank at the park, lifting itself like an enormous sea-horse, and roaring like the animal whose name it bears. But a sea-lion would not have cut through the water from way above. It would have come steering along like a great black vessel, puffing and blowing, while all the time it would have been a creature of the sea, and we should have known it, and not have been so terrified.

Or, had a whale come bearing down from upper waters, as they sometimes do, there would have been a disturbance first, made by the spouting and slashing that our instinct at once would have told us came from some monster of the deep.

Or, again, had it been the hulk of a vessel that could not stand some violent storm, oh, yes, we should have known what that was, too. But now, off tore the fishes, mad with terror, big fishes, little fishes, fat fellows, lean fellows, pleasant ones, and grumblers.

I laughed, yes, with all my fright I had to laugh at such a funny sight. I was behind what Folks call "whole schools of fishes," only they speak of "a school of fish," meaning many of one kind, but the madcap crowd I looked upon was made up of almost every size and sort.

"OFF TORE THE FISHES, MAD WITH TERROR"

I saw a porpoise — porpus — my enormous cousin, all of fifteen feet long, crowd in midst a multitude of swift little swimmers, as if he meant to make them help in spinning him through the water faster than he could go by himself. Then on the back of another Dolphin, I saw a crowd of little fishes that seemed so stiff with fear, they had been knowing enough to cling to the back of the great fish, making a boat of him to bear them to a place of safety.

Paddling sideways, I caught a glimpse of the flying-fish that had been my tormentor. All at once I stopped short.

Now they say that some Folks are very curious. I do not mean that they are odd or amusing to look at. But they have curiosity, and want to peer and pry into things. It is not at all nice to want to find out all about other Folks' affairs. It belongs to a poor, mean nature to want to do that. But to want to inquire into matters for the sake of getting true knowledge is right and worthy even for a fish.

And suddenly I had determined to see just what that amazing creature could be. If it caught and swallowed me alive, it might, but — it would take a pretty big swallow to make away with Lord Dolphin. I confess to going to work very much

like a sneak. But it was quite easy, seeing all the other fishes had made off and left me a clear field, to hide midst a bed of tall sea-bushes.

So, very gently back I paddled, with motion slow and noiseless, to the region where the monster had come down.

How shall I describe it? In the first place, I had never seen such a shape before. The time when I was borne aloft on high waves, and looked into a ship's cabin, I saw forms something like unto this one in some respects, but, dear sakes, not with such hideous parts! But now, to name at once and describe afterwards, —

It was a *diver!*

The diver belongs to the Folks family, but, bless us, his rig! Imagine, if you can, a black object, with a great bunchy machine of a head, and for the rest, a mass of fixtures, such as would puzzle a far more stupid creature than a Dolphin to make out.

I have seen a diver many times since then, and am now able to tell a little about the fantastic-looking being. Of course, there is very much more to be known, but if you remember what I say, it will give you some idea of a diver's outfit that may linger in your mind, to be added to as you grow older.

First, then, close to his skin are warm woollen garments, sometimes two or even three sets of them. If the weather is cold, he may have on two or three pairs of warm stockings. How would you like being bundled up in that way? Yet that is only the beginning.

Close to his head is a woollen cap coming down over his ears. Thick shoulder-pads keep his outside suit from grazing or hurting, and it may be that other pads are about his body. He next goes into an outside suit of India rubber, covered both inside and outside with a tanned twill which is water-proof, and the rubber itself has been treated in a way to make it very hard and lasting. There is a double collar about the neck, of tough, sheet rubber, and one is to draw well up about the neck.

He must have assistance in getting into these rigid clothes, for it is hard working the arms into the stiff sleeves, and forcing the hands through cuffs which are made to expand or let out as they are drawn on, then close tight in some odd way with rubber rings and joints at the wrist, making the sleeves perfectly air-tight.

Great care is taken in dressing the diver. Everything must fit perfectly, every screw must be properly wound in, every strap and buckle made fast, or the poor diver may be in great danger. His

breastplate of copper is fastened on with metal clasps or bolts. A fixture at his back steadies the weights both back and front, weighing forty pounds each. These weights, it must be, are in some way supported by the ropes with which they let him down.

Such boots! Stout leather, with soles of lead, securely strapped on, and weighing at least twenty pounds each. A band fitted about his waist is kept in place by strong braces.

Then his helmet! Tinned copper, and full of screws, pipes, and hooks. On the face part were three openings as in a lantern, in which were screwed plate-glasses, or bull's-eyes. These, of course, were to see through, and stood out like little telescopes, or half-tumblers, with brass frames around them called "guards" which protect the glass, that is thick and strong.

There were also queer valves, or tubes, in the helmet for letting out bad air, yet so contrived that no water could get in. A hook was on either side, through which ropes must pass.

The diver can breathe while under water by means of an air-pipe, and by pulling on a life-line, can make his wants known to those above.

When the diver is all ready to descend, a man at the pump begins supplying him with air, and

down he goes, first on an iron ladder at the vessel's side, then on long ladders of rope, with heavy weights at the ends.

I peeped from midst great weed-pads, and saw the diver as he reached the bottom of the sea. Do you wonder I trembled, yet was amused at what I saw? In his hands this time — for I saw him more than once after this — was a great hook and a light bag with a wide-open mouth. And what do you think? He had come to get sponges from the blue sea. Of course not at very great depth.

He knew his work. With the long hook, sponge after sponge was torn from its clung-to home on the slippery rocks, and quickly popped into the bag. He always moved backwards. If anything stopped him, rock, wreck, or floating weeds, he could turn slowly and carefully around, and see what it was. But should be meet an object suddenly at the fore, it might break even his shielded glass. Then he must immediately give the signal to be raised aloft.

Divers must begin by going down only a little way under the water, as it takes great skill and long practice to be able to go safely into deep water. A diver has about him a coil of line connected with the ladder, which he unwinds as he

moves away; but by winding it about him again, he can find his way back to the ladder.

If two divers go down at the same time, I notice they take great care not to let their air-lines or life-lines cross each other's, and so get entangled. It might be a very serious affair to get them mixed.

I see that divers may go down from either a barge, a sailing vessel, or a large yacht, but there must be a deck that can hold the necessary machines and rigging to help them in their work. By casting down heavy pieces of lead, the sailor-Folk can "sound," or tell the distance to the bottom of the sea. The diver's line must always be twice the length of the distance he goes down.

I did not find this all out at once. Oh, by no means, but by not running away I gradually learned a great deal. And I was so glad I saw the queer performance! The frightened fishes were not quick to come back to their playground, where such a looking object had come swinging down, and when he came again the next day, and the next, I had the place to myself, and watched while he pretty well cleared that region of its fine, valuable sponges.

The next time I saw a diver it was in deeper water. I was sporting to and fro at another time

when there was just such a panic among the fishes as I had seen before, and just such a scramble.

Down, down came the fearsome looking object, while I mixed myself in with a mass of sea-flowers, and keeping perfectly still, was not noticed. The diver's dress was much the same as the other's had been; he went backwards in the same cautious way, but instead of a long-handled hook, he carried only a queer bag that was let down to him by ropes.

The bag was deep, and had a frame along the top, with a scraper fastened to it. And what do you think again? He began scraping in all the conch-shells he could see that had what looked like a dab of mud or a milky spot on the side.

He was after pearls!

Divers often fish for pearls midst oyster-beds, and in more shallow water, but there are nets or dredgers also used for that purpose. But I at once knew that very valuable pearls must often be found in conch-shells and deep-sea oyster-shells, as the diver scraped in all of both that he could find.

Remember! All kinds of shell-fish are called "mollusca," have white blood, and breathe not only in the water, but also in the air.

And will you believe it? I have found out considerable about the signals that a diver gives to the man at the pump on deck.

If he wants to be pulled up, be gives the life-line four sharp pulls. If he wants more air, he gives one pull at the air-pipe. Two pulls on the life-line, and two pulls on the air-pipe, given quickly one after the other, mean that he is in trouble, and wants the help of another diver. One pull on the life-line means "all right."

There are many other signals I could not find out the meaning of, so can say nothing about. My instincts, as well as what I have noticed, tell me that a diver must be in the best of health, must be rather thin, have excellent eyesight, sound lungs, steady nerves, and a strong heart. The work is not easy. I wonder if work that pays well is often easy? I do not believe it is.

There used to be a strange machine in use called the "diving-bell." A great cast-iron cage, shaped something like a bell, let down by ropes, and so heavy that its own weight would sink it. Divers could sit inside, and fresh air was supplied by a force-pump. Bull's-eyes of heavy glass let in the light.

This must have frightened the fishes quite as much as did the diver, althought it was not as frightful in appearance.

After a time, when the diver came down, some of my mates, seeing I was not a bit afraid if only

hidden from sight myself, stayed near me under the broad seaweeds, but most of them fled far and wide at his approach.

The divers themselves are not free from danger. Great sea-serpents or sharks sometimes make it hot for them, but they are watchful, spry, and being "Folks," with power to think and plan, can generally look out for themselves and their safety.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MY STRANGE ADVENTURE

NOW come the most exciting and in some respects the hardest events of my life thus far.

I have told of my great love of music, and have also said that the Dolphin family is a very sociable one. Yes, and I could grow fond of Folks, I know, if only they could live in the sea, or I could live on the land. But as neither of these things can be, I must be content with liking them at a distance.

One afternoon I was full of sport, and felt lively as a cricket. Oh, yes, I know the small, frisky fellow you call a cricket, with his little old black legs, and have heard him sing. So on this calm and lovely afternoon I began leaping upward instead of forward, and all at once I heard sounds of music floating across the upper sea.

You can believe I floundered alongside, and oh, such sweetness as trilled out into the clear air!

The truth was, a great steamer was crossing the Mediterranean with a pleasure party on board. What I heard was the music of a brass band. My! My! Isn't it enough to delight the heart of any creature that has ears to hear? It actually would make a fish dance.

Now I didn't know it, but I made such plunges upward that my great dark body could be seen in the clear water, and some sailors began "laying" for me, half suspecting what might happen.

Well-a-well, I got so full of music, joy, and friskiness, that all at once I gave a tremendous jump, and flounced right on to the deck of the fine steamer. Had I not been so utterly surprised, I should immediately have flounced back again to my ocean bed "quick shot," as I afterward heard a sailor say. But dear, deary me! I hesitated just a moment too long, and when I made a flop intending to bounce away, lo! a stout rope was about my body, and another about my tail, and I was a prisoner!

Then the Folks all gathered about me, and the sailors went laughing off, saying something about "making the fellow's bed."

Oh, it was all very strange and unnatural. And

in a few moments I began panting for breath. Just as you would gasp, if by accident you popped over from a boat into the water. Only you would gasp for want of air, and I was gasping from too much of it.

But it was not long before I was taken to a side of the vessel, and after straining and tugging with my great weight, I was indeed bounced into water, but when I tried to swim, oh, misery! what kind of a place was I in?

Only a tank, some twenty feet long by fifteen feet wide, filled with sea water!

Truth was, there was a man-Folk on board who had caught, and wanted to carry to a great park in some far-distant land, a crocodile. Boo! a great sea-reptile that I wonder any one should want to have around, even as a curiosity. It had been taken from the river Nile in Egypt, much farther up the Mediterranean borders than I had ever been.

The crocodile did not live, so I was put into its tank, and that was the "bed" the sailors had made, by filling it with salt water. Shade of my royal grandfathers! how long I could live in such pinching quarters was a question.

I was given plenty of herring — so called — and other kinds of fish to eat, and "Folks" visited

me about every hour of the day. There were children on the steamer, pretty little dears, that never tired of talking to me, and between them all, passengers, sailors, and the children, I learned how Folks talked, and a great many other things besides.

One fine, manly little fellow visited me constantly. He was voyaging for his health, and took much pleasure in sitting beside the tank, book in hand, yet watching my movements, and once he said something that made me wish I could talk in the language of Folks. Yet before I tell what it was, I want to say that there was one thing I did not like at all, but was not able to let the Folks know it.

The sailors called me "Dolly!" A great name to give a lord of the sea, a fellow bearing the title I owned!

The next morning after my capture, a really fine Jack — sailors are all "Jack," you know — came rolling toward my tank, and sang out in sea-breezy fashion:

"Hulloo, Dolly-me-dear, how do you find yourself to-day?"

I liked his hearty manner and cheery voice, but, dear me, I was "Dolly" to every man-Jack on board after that, and to all the others as well.

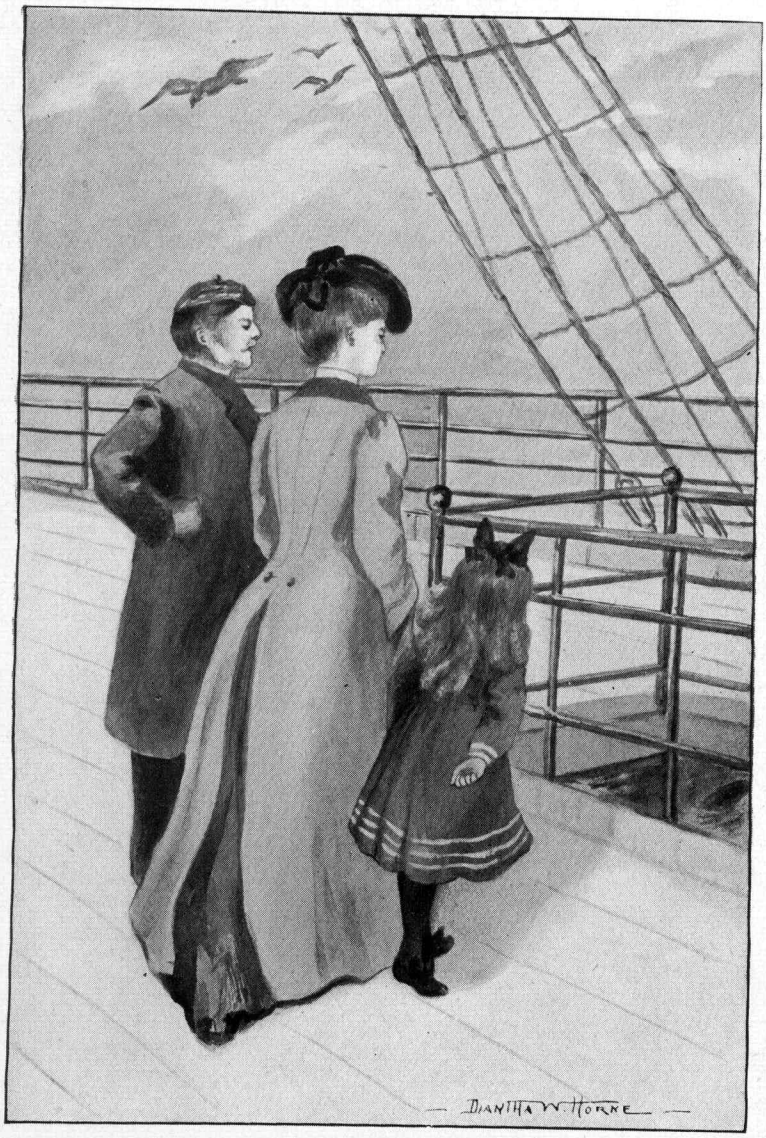
So this dear little man once said to me:

"Oh, Dolly, how I wish you could tell me about things under the sea! I know if you could only talk my way, you could tell stories by the hour, and what pleasure it would be to listen."

"Stories, indeed, my pretty," I thought, and I did wish I could open my wide mouth and entertain the little fellow with a few sea yarns. And now that in some way I can make Folks understand me, I only hope that my young steamer friend, among others, will see and enjoy Lord Dolphin's story.

Then the lady-Folks were fine, with their pretty dresses, nice manners, and soft voices. But I did so like the children! One cute little nymph of a girl was crazy to get near me, yet nearly scared to pieces if I so much as looked at her. Oh, she was so fair to see, with her golden hair flying back in the breeze, eyes blue as the sky, and her sweet, dimpled face full of smiles!

She would come running up to the tank with a great show of courage, crying bravely: "Hi, old Mister Dolly! I'se goin' a-put your great eye out!" But when the eye half-looked at her, off she would scud, and all I could see was a mass of flying yellow hair, a whisking of snowy skirts, and my little nymph was gone.




"ONE CUTE LITTLE NYMPH OF A GIRL WAS CRAZY TO GET NEAR ME"

A dozen times a day she would appear, and as long as I remained under water, she would hover near. There was a railing around the tank, which was sunk in, lower than the deck, so she could not fall in, nor could I possibly get out, but as soon as my head began rearing above the water, scoot! little Amy was missing.

We had no hard storm while steaming over the bright Mediterranean. But one day the little man, whose name was Roland, said to wee Amy:

"Clear day, isn't it?"

And Amy replied, woman-fashion, "Yes, booful day, but what sood you do if there comed a big storm, and we all went ricketty, rockerty, and couldn't stand up single minute? Wouldn't you be 'fraid?"

"N-o," said Roland, speaking slowly and thoughtfully, "I don't think I should be much afraid, but I should want to keep quiet and think. What should you do?" and he smiled.

"Oh, me would say my prayers, and keep a-sayin' them," said the child, soberly, then she added, "and up would go my prayers into the sky, and so I needn't be frightened a bit."

Now I don't know in the least what "prayers" mean, but I remembered at once what that other

child had done in the storm, and it made me think that the Friend the other little girl trusted lives up in the sky, and can hear when Folks tell that they need help. How lovely! Really, Folks ought to be very thankful for all they know!

## CHAPTER IX.

### LORD DOLPHIN ON LAND

WELL, we sailed and we sailed, but it was poor sailing for me, and every hour I longed to make a monster jump, clear the railing, and splash into the splendid bed beneath the cooped-up tank.

But Folks know how to make things strong and secure, and once or twice, when I tried leaping, it was only to bang my sides against the edges of the tank, and spatter the deck far and wide, making extra work for the sailors.

After a time, we ran through what Jack called "the Strait of Gibraltar," and were in the great Atlantic Ocean, and one day Jack said to me:

"Now then, me hearty, we're making a bee-line for New York City, and it's a big tub they'll be giving you at the fine park, I'm thinking."

So I knew I was to take the place of the crocodile, and be made a show of.

I tried to make the best of things. Folks amused me by standing near the tank and talking about affairs. The band played delightfully. Salt water was freshly supplied me every day or two. I learned that my fare was much greater than any other voyager's on board, that is, it cost more to carry me.

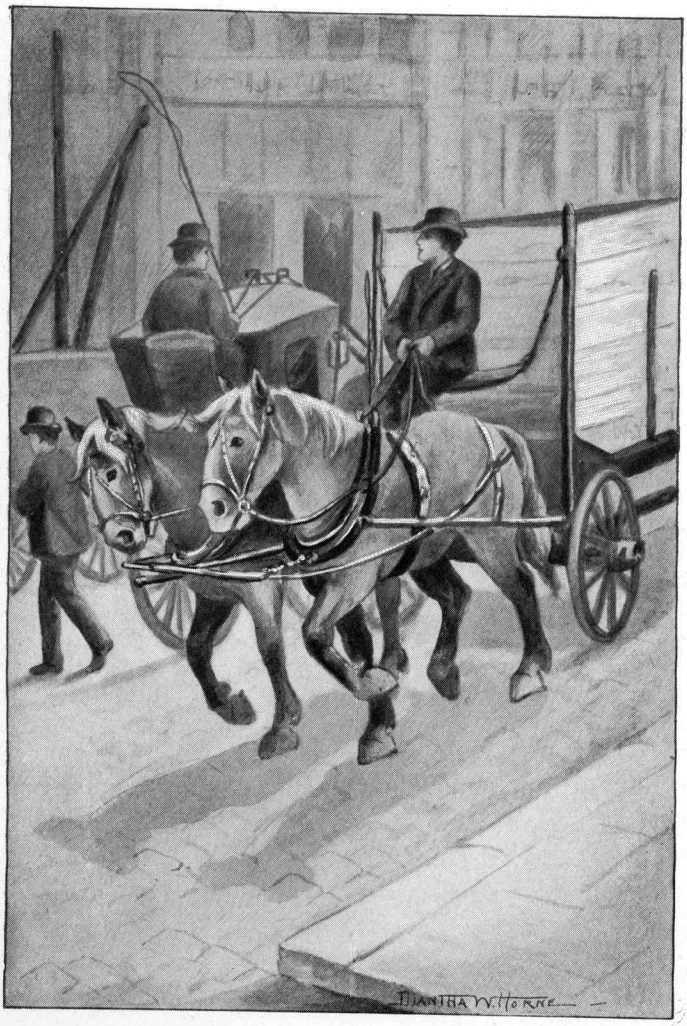
But think of a passenger that would have been perfectly thankful to have been thrown overboard! I was that same fellow.

After about ten days, which seemed like a year to me, there was great excitement all around. Such a running and tramping, such a waving of hats and handkerchiefs. Ah! we were landing. Roland came to my side and exclaimed:

"Good-by, Dolly, old boy! I may see you sometime in your new quarters." Little Amy lisped a hurried, "By, by, Dolly, good Fishy!" and after an hour or two, all the passengers had left the boat except the man who owned me and myself.

Nor was I moved until the next day. Then I was made to swim into a smaller tank, not much longer than I am, in which I could not have lived, it seemed to me, a single day.

But I was next boosted, tank and all, on to a great dray, drawn by creatures called "horses." Sailors joked, drivers laughed, a crowd peered at




"I WAS GIVEN MY FIRST RIDE ON LAND"

me with eyes full of wonder, and I was given my first ride *on land,* yet in what to me was a mere puddle of water.

Ah, how new and strange! The jolting and the bouncing, the noise, the whistles, the voices, rattling of heavy wagons, booming of cars overhead and along the ground, strange calls and ringing of bells, the whole mixed racket nearly stunning me, for my hearing is very acute and sharp. I cannot tell you how distracting it all was to a poor, pent-up fish. I felt like anything but a "lord" then.

And what was this unknown matter floating into my squeezed-up basin? Dust! Something I had never seen before, and — I didn't like it!

The sea for me, first, last, and forever!

At the park I must say things were fine, and could they only have been more natural, I should have had considerable fun. I found that a Dolphin on land, although kept in a small square pond, was indeed quite a curiosity, both to young Folks and older ones.

I imagine that a quantity of coarse salt was thrown every little while into the larger space now given me, else I could scarcely have lived. But my keepers were attentive and kind, the young Folks threw me many kinds of strange food, and

"Bless my lights!" as Jack would say, what kind of things do Folks live on!

Great quantities of little oblong balls, snapped out of a shell, different from any kind of shell I had ever seen before, were thrown me nearly every hour of the day. Oh, yes, they were called "peanuts." Really, I liked them, only it took about a hundred to get enough to chew on.

Then there were white things, making me think of some small shells, as there were peeps of yellow inside. Ah, I remember again, they were named "popcorn." I preferred the peanuts.

I didn't know what to think of "taffy." Jinks! how it stuck to a fellow's jaws! Bah! the whole lot of stuff called "candy" was too sweet and sticky.

Some jolly-looking people that came to the park for what they called a "picnic," tossed me queer food named "doughnuts," and "ginger-snaps." Yes, I liked them, too, particularly the snaps. Then there was an everlasting fruit named "banana" that I liked at first, it was so soft and slipped down so easily, but I had too much of it, and grew tired of it.

I grew tame, would raise my great head close to the strong wire-netting, and over would come all kinds of what Folks call "treats." Once, how-

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ever, a man-Folk threw me part of a small round, dark roll or stick, such as men-Folks put in their mouths at one end, and send out smoke from the other end.

Boo, bumaloo, what stuff! bitter and horrid! Men-Folks must have a queer taste to enjoy tasting and smoking such black, weedy things. One taste of a "cigar" was enough for me.

I was sorry not to see the boy Roland or the little girl Amy again, but I think they may have gone to some other land-place, and so could not come to the park. But although I saw so many other pleasant young Folks, I did not forget them.

Then, to my sorrow, just as I was getting used to things, although always in a homesick way, I heard the keepers talking, and learned that I was to be moved to another great city, where there was to be an "exposition," or a showing of strange and useful things from many different lands and seas, really an "exhibition."

I began growing flabby and thin. My spirits were at ebb-tide, very low. I felt as if pining to death. Ah, me! I would have given all the pearls of the ocean and sea, could I have got hold of them, to be back in my own dear Mediterranean groves.

## CHAPTER X.

### HURRAH!

THEN the day came when I was again made to swim into that despised little tank. It was put on to a dray as before, and I was given my second ride on land. May it forever be my last!

The roar of the great city again filled my ears, dust troubled my eyes whenever I raised my head. I was faint, weary, and wretched. I could feel that I had grown lighter from loss of flesh, because of the unnatural life that I was leading.

How I wished I might escape! That some great and powerful Friend would help me. But I was only a fish, had only fins and tail to aid me, that I knew of, and those were at present of but very little use.

At length the boat was reached. There was some confusion, as they were "short of hands," which it appears meant they had not as many men

at the dock as were wanted. But the tank was got on board, and men ran for the railing that was to be put around the edge.

Their backs were turned for an instant. Oh! Oh! could I give a mighty lurch, bound over the deck-rail, and be free? No waiting this time! I slashed upward in a tremendous "heave-to." Whack! I struck the rail, wriggled quick as lightning over the side, and hurrah and hurrah! I was swimming the wide, free river!

Not my own sea. No, there must be first the shortest cut I could find into the ocean and salt water, then there would be many days of sweet, wholesome journeying and paddling before home grounds could be reached, but reached they would be all in good time.

Folks say that if Madame Puss, that land-creature who does not love the water overwell, is carried miles from her home in the dark, she will find the way back again. And I felt sure that, once out into the harbor, I could strike a bee-line for a far opposite shore, cut through the narrows at Gibraltar, and enter like a returning monarch on my own proud domain, the fair blue Mediterranean Sea. Oh, hurrah again!

I heard a loud and echoing shout as my great body splashed into the water, caught the sound

of rushing feet, and saw heavy ropes with strange loops at the ends, that were flung overboard in hopes to entangle me, and bring back their great fancy fish into that tank again.

Oh, no, Mister Sailorman, and Mister Deckhand. No, no! I had seen and felt quite enough of being on land, thank you, to last me all the rest of my life. And as the Dolphin family is very long lived, I hope that many years of sweet, delicious freedom, and enjoyment of my native element, are yet before me.

And if there was a great king of the Dolphins, as there must be a great Friend of the Folks, that guides our affairs, I would send him a letter a yard long, full of thanks for my freedom. It may be there is such a king, but real knowledge of such things is way beyond me.

I saw strange craft as I boomed along, always giving them a wide berth. And such fishes! Did you ever see an angel-fish? Don't ever wish to if you haven't. It ought to be called evil spirit fish. In appearance it is one of the quaintest, ugliest creatures that swims the sea. Some Folks call it monk-fish. It is all of four feet long, has fierce, goggly eyes, and a round, wicked-looking head, that seems nearly separated from the rest of its thick body by a thin, short neck. Then such a vicious-

looking tail! Oh, you had better keep clear of an angel-fish.

A toad-fish looked like an enormous, swimming toad. Bless me! I caught sight of a shark as I came well out into the ocean. He was more than twenty feet long. Think of that! But they are thirty feet sometimes. His great, fleshy, powerful tail takes him along as he looks from side to side for his prey. I saw his pointed nose and his rows of awful teeth, one over another.

There are sharks that can bite a man in halves. Once in awhile we see a shark in our Mediterranean, but they do not abound there. Yet now and then Mister Diver-man has had to rush for his life to reach the friendly ladder when the disturbance under water to right and left has warned him that one of these sea-monsters was approaching. Oh, they are dreadful creatures, and greedy, too. They will follow vessels for miles and miles, expecting that cast-off food will be thrown into the sea, as it often is. Their instinct tells them that food is likely to drop from vessels, and it does, indeed.

I also saw a sea-snipe, or trumpet-fish, but, oho, without a tooth! He made me think of a scorpion that has a poisonous, dangerous tail.

I came upon a funny sight while still in the

Atlantic Ocean. A whole school of whales went rushing along in a body, and pretty soon I saw what it meant. Then it was more funny for me than for the poor whales. Some whalers, men who go out in vessels to catch these enormous fishes for their flesh, their oil, and their bones, were banging great heavy pieces of tin of iron against stones, so frightening the whales that they crowded in a body into a little creek or inlet.

This was just what the whalers wanted them to do. Because, once in the narrow place, so many of them could not escape, and it became easy to capture them. Men-Folks do really know a very great deal. It makes me afraid of them.

An urchin-fish would make you laugh. Some call it a sea-hedgehog. It looks as if covered all over with great thorns, and a baby sea-urchin looks as if it was all ready to burst, it is so thick and round.

A sunfish was an odd piece. It had round eyes, and the queer little fins just back of its neck looked like shoulder-capes. It was so fat it had to swim with a waddle.

The herring I so much like for food are to be found in nearly all waters, and abundant, sweet, and inviting. Famous ramblers they are, going in great parties of thousands in number, through

wide tracts of ocean and sea. I have found that a great deal of "money," whatever that may be, is made by Folks out of the herring fisheries, along the Atlantic seacoast.

And let me whisper: Do you like sardines? Well, some Folks say that herring do not live in the Mediterranean Sea, that ancient Folks knew nothing about them, but that what we know as herring are really sardines. These are caught in great numbers, pickled in some way, then soaked in oil, are put in little tin boxes, tightly sealed, and sent all over the world.

But let me whisper again, and this makes Lord Dolphin smile; it may make you laugh. But honestly, they *say* that immense numbers of little herring, or alewives, a little fish very much like a herring, are caught on western shores of the Atlantic, pickled, packed in oil, and sold for sardines.

Isn't it all very funny? If I eat sardines and call them herring, and folks eat herring and call them sardines, why are we not square? But as I want to be very honest in all I say, it may be that in speaking of the herring I so much prefer, I ought to say they are found oftenest at the far western part of the Mediterranean, where the ancient Folk were not so likely to explore.

After I had sailed for days, gliding like a streak through the deep, untroubled water, I came again to the Strait of Gibraltar.

Oh, with what a thrill of delight I saw this time, in these far happier days than when last I passed through it, this narrow outlet from ocean to sea. I went through first in a tank, I returned with the broad ocean for my glorious bed.

I know now that the strait was named for the enormous Rock of Gibraltar, and that it once was called the Strait of Hercules.

Now "Hercules" is another "myth" you will study about in those old Greek fables called "mythology." He was one of the gods, and famed for his tremendous strength. The story goes, that, coming up to a monstrous rock in the Atlantic Ocean that entirely separated it from the Mediterranean Sea, Hercules, wishing to pass through from ocean to sea, rent the great rock into two parts, so making a passage through. And this was how the narrow outlet came to be called the Strait of Hercules.

Now, for many years the passage has been called the Strait of Gibraltar. But the two great rocks at the entrance of the strait are called "The Pillars of Hercules."

Well, through the dividing narrows I darted, and was home again!

And I am thankful to know three great and precious words that Folks have taught me: Friends! Liberty! Home! Are there any better words than these? Perhaps so. But I have not learned them. Yet Folks know so much more than a fish, even a lordly one, can understand, that it is quite likely they may be acquainted with words having a grander meaning than these.

But I, Lord Dolphin, traveller and story-teller, want to repeat, that I am very, very grateful to any One I ought to thank, that I find myself among friends again, free, and in my own glorious home, the bright blue Midland Sea.

THE END.

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