CHAPTER XVI

THE STORY OF THE SHIPWRECKED SAILOR

WHEN the early Spanish explorers led their expeditions to Florida, it was their intention to find the Fountain of Perpetual Youth, tales of its potent waters having reached Peter Martyr as early as 1511. This desire to discover the things pertaining to Fairyland has been, throughout history, one of the most fertile sources of adventure. From the days when the archaic Egyptians penetrated into the regions south of the Cataracts, where they believed that the inhabitants were other than human, and into Pount, the "land of the Gods," the hope of Fairyland has led men to search the face of the earth and to penetrate into its unknown places. It has been the theme of countless stories: it has supplied material for innumerable songs.

And in spite of the circumambulations of science about us, in spite of the hardening of all the tissues of our imagination, in spite of the phenomenal development of the commonplace, this desire for a glimpse of the miraculous is still set deeply in our hearts. The old quest of Fairyland is as active now as ever it was. We still presume, in our unworthiness, to pass the barriers, and to walk upon those paths which lead to the enchanted forests and through them to the city of the Moon. At any moment we are ready to set forth, like Arthur's knights, in search of the Holy Grail.

The explorer who penetrates into Central Africa in quest of King Solomon's mines is impelled by a hope closely akin to that of the Spaniards. The excavator who digs for the buried treasures of the Incas or of the

Egyptians is often led by a desire for the fabulous. Search was recently made in the western desert of Egypt for a lost city of burnished copper; and the Anglo-Egyptian official is constantly urged by credulous natives to take camels across the wilderness in quest of a town whose houses and temples are of pure gold. What archæologist has not at some time given ear to the whispers that tell of long-lost treasures, of forgotten cities, of Atlantis swallowed by the sea? It is not only the children who love the tales of Fairyland. How happily we have read Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill*, De la Motte Fouqué's *Undine*, Kenneth Graham's *Wind in the Willows*, or F. W. Bain's *Indian Stories*. Fairy plays, such as Barrie's *Peter Pan*, and Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird* have been enormously successful. Say what we will, fairy tales still hold their old power over us, and still we turn to them as a relief from the commonplace.

Some of us, failing to find Fairyland upon earth, have transferred it to the kingdom of Death; and it has become the hope for the future. Each Sunday in church the congregation of business men and hard-worked women set aside the things of their monotonous life, and sing the songs of the endless search. To the rolling notes of the organ they tell the tale of the Elysian Fields: they take their unfulfilled desire for Fairyland and adjust it to their deathless hope of Heaven. They sing of crystal fountains, of streets paved with gold, of meadows dressed with living green where they shall dwell as children who now as exiles mourn. There everlasting spring abides and never-withering flowers; there ten thousand times ten thousand clad in sparkling raiment throng up the steeps of light. Here in the church the most unimaginative people cry aloud upon their God for Fairyland.

"The roseate hues of early dawn,
The brightness of the day,
The crimson of the sunset sky,
How fast they fade away!
Oh, for the pearly gates of Heaven,
Oh, for the golden floor . . ."

They know no way of picturing the incomprehensible state of the future, and they interpret it, therefore, in the terms of the fairy tale.

I am inclined to think that this sovereignty of the fairies is beneficial. Fairy tales fill the minds of the young with knowledge of the kindly people who will reward with many gifts those who are charitable to the old; they teach a code of chivalry that brings as its reward the love of the beautiful princess in the tower; they tell of dangers overcome by courage and perseverance; they suggest a contact with nature which otherwise might never be developed. Where angels and archangels overawe by their omnipotence, the microscopic fairies who can sit singing upon a mushroom and dangle from the swaying stem of a bluebell, carry the thoughts down the scale of life to the little and really important things. A sleepy child will rather believe that the Queen of the Fairies is acting sentry upon the knob of the bedpost than that an angel stands at the head of the cot with great wings spread in protection—wings which suggest the probability of claws and a beak to match.

The dragons which can only be slain by the noble knight, the enchantments which can only be broken by the outwitting of the evil witch, the lady who can only be won by perils bravely endured, form the material of moral lessons which no other method of teaching could so impress upon the youthful mind.

And when mature years are attained the atmosphere of Fairyland remains with us. The lost songs of the little people drift through the brain, recalling the infinite possibilities of beauty and goodness which are so slightly out of reach; the forgotten wonder of elves and brownies suggests itself to us from the heart of flowers and amidst the leaves of trees. The clear depths of the sea take half their charm from the memory of the mermaid's palace; the silence of forests is rich with the expectancy of the Knight of the Golden Plume; the large spaces of kitchens and corridors are hushed for the concealment of Robin Goodfellow.

It is the elusiveness, the enchantment of Fairyland which, for the mature mind, constitutes its greatest value and charm; it is a man's desire for the realms of Midsummer-night that makes the building of those realms in our childhood so valuable. We are constantly endeavouring to recapture the grace of that intangible kingdom, and the hope of ultimate success retains the elasticity of the mind. Held fast by the stiffened joints of reason and closeted with the gout of science, we are fettered prisoners in the world unless there be the knowledge that something eludes us to lead us on. We know quite well that the fairies do not exist, but at the same time we cannot deny that the elusive atmosphere of Fairyland is one with that of our fondest dreams.

Who has not, upon a grey morning, awakened from sleep with the knowledge that he has passed out from a kingdom of dream more dear than all the realms of real life? Vainly we endeavour to recall the lost details, but only the impression remains. That impression, however, warms the tone of our whole day, and frames our thoughts as it were with precious stones. Thus also it is with the memory of our childhood's idea of Fairyland: the impression is recalled, the brain peers forward, the thoughts go on tiptoe, and we feel that we have caught a glimpse of Beauty. Indeed, the recollection of the atmosphere created in our youthful minds by means of fairy tales is perhaps the most abundant of the sources of our knowledge of Beauty in mature years.

I do not suppose that I am alone in declaring that some of the most tender feelings of childhood are inspired by the misfortunes of the Beast in the story of "Beauty and the Beast"; and the Sleeping Beauty is the first love of many a small boy. Man, from his youth up, craves enchantment; and though the business of life gives him no opportunity for indulging in day-dreams, there are few of us indeed who have not at some time sought the phantom isles and sought in vain. There is no stormy night, when the wind moans through the trees, and the

moon-rack flies overhead, but takes something of its mystery from the recollection of the enchantments of the dark ages. The sun does not sink into the sea amidst the low-lying clouds but some vague thought is brought to mind of the uncharted isle whereon that maiden lies sleeping whose hair is dark as heaven's wrath, and whose breast is white like alabaster in the pathway of the moon. There she lies in the charmed circle under the trees, where none may enter until that hour when some pale, lost mariner shall surprise the secret of the pathway, and, coming suddenly upon her, shall kiss her shadowed lips. Vague, elusive, undefined, as such fancies must be, they yet tinge the thoughts of almost every man at certain moments of his life, and set him searching for the enchantment of bygone days. Eagerly he looks for those

> ". . . Magic casements opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn " ;

and it is the fact of their unreality that gives them their haunting value.

The following story, preserved in a papyrus now believed to be at Petrograd, describes a mysterious island whereon there dwelt a monster most lovable and most forlorn : a creature so tenderly drawn, indeed, that the reader will not fail to enthrone him in the little company of the nobility of the kingdom of the fairy tale. Translations of the story by two or three *savants* have appeared ; but the present version, which I give in its literal form, has been prepared especially for me by Dr. Alan Gardiner ; and, coming from him, it may be said to be the last word of the science upon the subject of this difficult text, which, after much study, I had to confess was beyond my powers as a student of the Ancient Egyptian language.

The scene with which the story opens is clearly indicated by the introductory sentences, though actually it is not described. A large war-galley had come swinging down the Nile from the land of Wawat in the south, the oars flashing in the Nubian sunlight. On the left the granite

rocks of the island of Bigeh towered above the vessel; on the right the island of Philae, as yet devoid of buildings, rested placidly on the blue waters. Ahead were the docks of Shallal, where the clustered boats lay darkly against the yellow of the desert, and busy groups of figures, loading and unloading cargoes, moved to and fro over the sand. Away to the left, behind Bigeh, the distant roar of the First Cataract could be heard as the waters went rushing down from Nubia across the frontier into Egypt.

The great vessel had just returned from the little-known country of Ethiopia, which bordered the Land of Ghosts, having its frontiers upon the shores of the sea that encircled the world; and the sailors were all straining their eyes towards these docks which formed the southernmost outpost of Egypt, their home. The greatest excitement prevailed on deck; but in the cabin, erected of vari-coloured cloth in the stern of the vessel, the noble leader of the expedition which was now at its conclusion lay in a troubled sleep, tossing nervously upon his bed. His dreams were all of the terrible ordeal which was before him. He could take no pleasure in his home-coming, for he was driven nigh crazy by the thought of entering the presence of the great Pharaoh himself in order to make his report.

It is almost impossible to realise nowadays the agonies of mind that a man had to suffer who was obliged to approach the incarnation of the sun upon earth, and to crave the indulgence of this god in regard to any short-comings in the conduct of the affairs entrusted to him. Of all the kings of the earth the Pharaoh was the most terrible, the most thoroughly frightening. Not only did he hold the lives of his subjects in his hand to do with them as he chose, but he also controlled the welfare of their immortal souls; for, being a god, he had dominion over the realms of the dead. To be censured by the Pharaoh was to be excommunicated from the pleasures of this earth and outlawed from the fair estate of heaven. A well-known Egyptian noble named Sinuhe, the hero of

a fine tale of adventure, describes himself as petrified with terror when he entered the audience chamber. "I stretched myself on my stomach," he writes, "and became unconscious before him (the Pharaoh). This god addressed me kindly, but I was as a man overtaken by the twilight: my soul departed, my flesh trembled; my heart was no more in my body that I should know life from death."[1] Similarly another personage writes: "Remember the day of bringing the tribute, when thou passest into the Presence under the window, the nobles on each side before his Majesty, the nobles and ambassadors (?) of all countries. They stand and gaze at the tribute, while thou fearest and shrinkest back, and thy hand is weak, and thou knowest not whether it is life or death that is before thee; and thou art brave (only) in praying to thy gods: 'Save me, prosper me this one time.'"[2]

Of the Pharaoh it is written—

"Thine eye is clearer than the stars of heaven;
Thou seest farther than the sun.
If I speak afar off, thine ear hears;
If I do a hidden deed, thine eye sees it."[3]

Or again—

"The god of taste is in thy mouth,
The god of knowledge is in thy heart;
Thy tongue is enthroned in the temple of truth;
God is seated upon thy lips."[4]

To meet face to face this all-knowing, all-seeing, celestial creature, from whom there could be no secrets hid nor any guilt concealed, was an ordeal to which a man might well look forward with utter horror. It was this terrible dread that, in the tale with which we are now concerned, held the captain of this Nubian vessel in agony upon his couch.

As he lay there, biting his finger-nails, one of the ship's officers, himself a former leader of expeditions, entered the cabin to announce their arrival at the Shallal docks.

[1] Sinuhe, 254-256.
[2] Papyrus Koller, 5, 1-4.
[3] Anastasi Papyri, 4, 5, 5ff.
[4] Kubban stela.

"Good news, prince," he said cheerfully to his writhing master. "Look, we have reached home. They have taken the mallet and driven in the mooring-post; the ship's cable has been put on land. There is merrymaking and thanksgiving, and every man is embracing his fellow. Our crew has returned unscathed, without loss to our soldiers. We have reached the end of Wawat, we have passed Bigeh. Yes, indeed, we have returned safely; we have reached our own land."

At this the prince seems to have groaned anew, much to the distress of his friend, who could but urge him to pull himself together and to play the man.

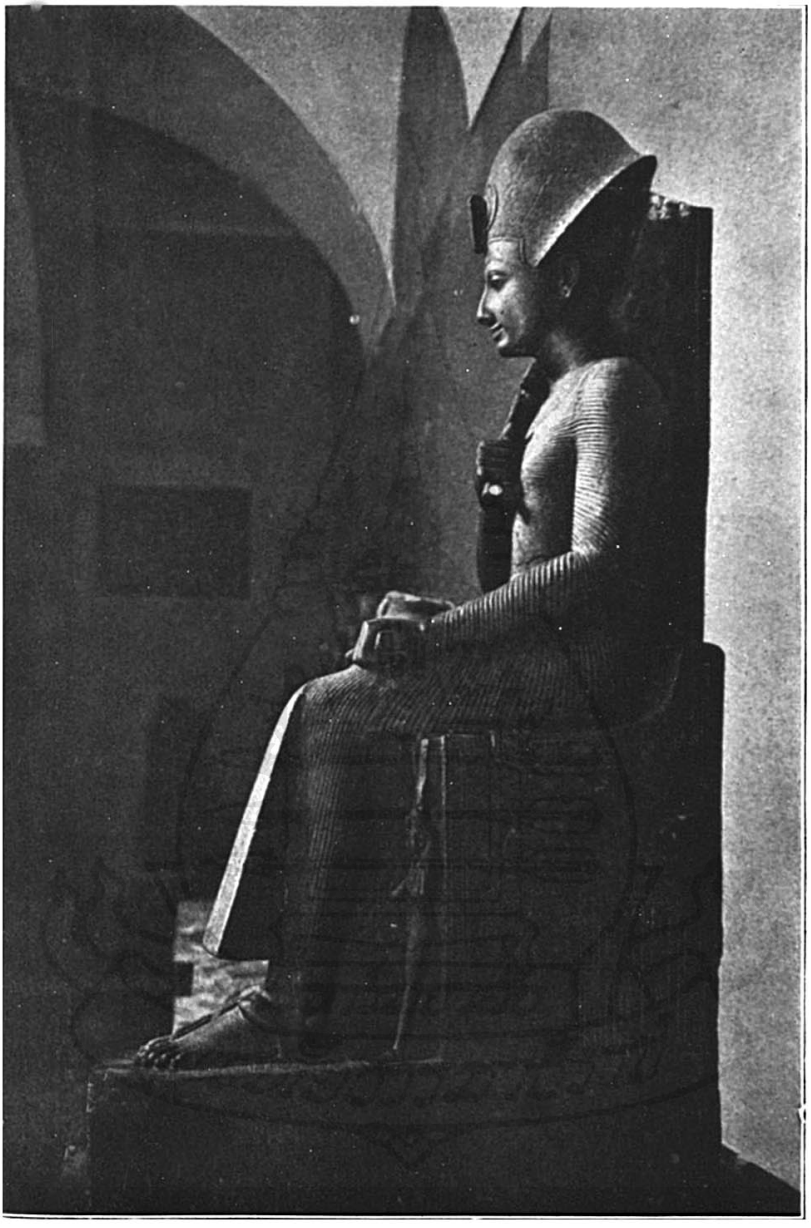
"Listen to me, prince," he begged, "for I am one void of exaggeration. Wash yourself, pour water on your fingers."

The wretched man replied, it would seem, with a repetition of his fears; whereupon the old sailor seems to have sat down by his side and to have given him a word of advice as to how he should behave in the king's presence. "Make answer when you are addressed," he said; "speak to the king with a heart in you; answer without restraint. For it is a man's mouth that saves him . . . But do as you will: to talk to you is wearisome (to you)."

Presently the old sailor was seized with an idea. He would tell a story, no matter whether it were strictly true or not, in which his own adventures should be set forth. He would describe how he was wrecked upon an unknown island, how he was saved from death, and how, on his return, he was conducted into the Pharaoh's presence. A narrative of his own experiences before his sovereign might give heart to his captain, and might effectually lift the intolerable burden of dread from the princely shoulders.

"I will relate to you," he began, "a similar thing which befell me my very self. I was making a journey to the mines of the sovereign . . ."

The prince may here be supposed to have sat up and given gloomy attention to his friend's words, for Egyptians



The Pharaoh Rameses II, B.C. 1292-1225. From his statue now at Tyrin

of all ages have loved a good story, and tales of adventure in the south were, in early times, most acceptable. The royal gold-mines referred to were probably situated at the southernmost end of the eastern Egyptian desert. To reach them one would take ship from Kossair or some other Red Sea port, sail down the coast to the frontiers of Pount, the modern Somaliland, and then travel inland by caravan. It was a perilous undertaking, and, at the time when this story was written, the journey must have furnished material for amazing yarns.

"I went down on the Great Green Sea," continued the speaker, "in a ship one hundred and fifty cubits[1] in length and forty cubits in breadth, and in it were a hundred and fifty sailors, picked men of Egypt. They scanned the heavens and they scanned the earth, and their hearts were stouter than lions. They foretold the storm or ever it came, and the tempest when as yet it was not."

A storm arose while they were out of sight of land, and rapidly increased in violence, until the waves, according to the very restrained estimate of the narrator, were eight cubits high—that is to say, about thirteen or fourteen feet. To one who was accustomed to the waves of the Nile, and was not familiar with those of the Red Sea, this would be a great height; and the passage thus suggests that the scribe was an untravelled man. A vessel of 150 cubits, or about 250 feet, in length might have been expected to ride out a storm of this magnitude; but, according to the story, she went to pieces, and the whole ship's company, with the single exception of the teller of the tale, were drowned. The survivor managed to cling to a plank of wood, which was driven by the wind towards the shores of an uncharted island, and here at length he was cast up by the waves.

Not far from the beach there was a small thicket, and to this the castaway hastened, sheltering therein from the fury of the storm. For three days in deep despair he lay hidden, "without a companion;" as he said, "save

[1] The average cubit was about 20½ inches.

my heart"; but at last the tempest subsided, the sun shone in the heavens once again, and the famished mariner was able to go in search of food, which, to his delight, he found in abundance.

The scene upon which he gazed as he plucked the fruit of the laden trees was most mysterious, and all that he saw around him must have had an appearance not altogether consistent with reality, for, indeed, the island was not real. It had been called into existence, perhaps, at the bidding of some god to relieve the tedium of an eternal afternoon, and suddenly it had appeared, floating upon the blue waters of the ocean. How long it had remained there, how long it would still remain, none could tell, for at any moment the mind of the god might be diverted, and instantly it would dissolve and vanish as would a dream. Beneath the isle the seas moved, and there in the darkness the fishes of the deep, with luminous, round eyes, passed to and fro, nibbling the roots of the trees above them. Overhead the heavens stretched, and around about spread the expanse of the sea upon which no living thing might be seen, save only the dolphins as they leapt in the sunshine and sank again amidst the gleaming spray.

There was abundant vegetation upon the island, but it does not appear to have looked quite real. The fig-trees were heavy with fruit, the vines were festooned from bough to bough, hung with clusters of grapes, and pomegranates were ripe for the plucking. But there seems to have been an unearthliness about them, as though a deep enchantment were upon them. In the tangled undergrowth through which the bewildered sailor walked there lay great melons and pumpkins. The breeze wafted to his nostrils the smell of the incense-trees; and the scent of the flowers, after the storm, must have made every breath he breathed a pleasure of Paradise to him. Moving over the luxuriant ground, he put up flights of wonderful birds which sped towards the interior, red, green, and golden, against the sky. Monkeys chattered at him from

the trees, and sprang from branch to branch amidst the dancing flowers. In shadowed pools of clear water fishes were to be seen, gliding amidst the reeds; and amongst the rocks beside the sea the castaway could look down upon the creatures of the deep imprisoned between the tides.

Food in all forms was to hand, and he had but to fill his arms with the good things which Fate had provided. "I found there," he said, "figs, grapes, and all manner of goodly onions; melons and pomegranates were there, and pumpkins of every kind. Fishes were there and fowls; there was nought that was lacking in it. I satisfied myself, and set upon the ground the abundance of that with which my arms were filled. I took the fire-borer and kindled a fire, and made a burnt-offering to the gods."

Seated in the warm sunshine amidst the trees, eating a roast fowl seasoned with onions or some equally palatable concoction, he seems to have found the life of a shipwrecked mariner by no means as distressing as he had anticipated; and the wording of the narrative appears to be so arranged that an impression of comfortable ease and security may surround his sunlit figure. Suddenly, however, all was changed. "I heard," said he, "a sound as of thunder, and I thought it was the waves of the sea." Then "the trees creaked and the earth trembled"; and, like the Egyptian that he was, he went down on his shaking hands and knees, and buried his face in the ground.

At length "I uncovered my face," he declared, "and I found it was a serpent that came, of the length of thirty cubits"—about fifty feet—"and his tail was more than two cubits" in diameter. "His skin was overlaid with gold, and his eyebrows were of real lapis lazuli, and he was exceeding perfect."

"He opened his mouth to me," he continued, "as I lay on my stomach before him, and said to me: 'Who brought thee, who brought thee, little one?—who brought thee? If thou delayest to tell me who brought thee to this island I will cause thee to know thyself (again only)

when thou art ashes and art become that which is not seen ' "—that is to say, a ghost.

" Thus you spoke to me," whispered the old sailor, as though again addressing the serpent, who, in the narration of these adventures, had become once more a very present reality to him, " but I heard it not. I lay before thee, and was unconscious."

Continuing his story, he told how the great serpent lifted him tenderly in his golden mouth, and carried him to his dwelling-place, setting him down there without hurt, amongst the fruit-trees and the flowers. The Egyptian at once flung himself upon his stomach before him, and lay there in a stupor of terror. The serpent, however, meant him no harm, and indeed looked down on him with tender pity as he questioned him once more.

" Who brought thee, who brought thee, little one ? " he asked again. " Who brought thee to this island of the Great Green Sea, whereof the (under) half is waves ? "

On his hands and knees before the kindly monster the shipwrecked Egyptian managed to regain possession of his faculties sufficiently to give an account of himself.

" I was going down to the mines," he faltered, " on a mission of the sovereign, in a ship one hundred and fifty cubits in length and forty in breadth, and in it were one hundred and fifty sailors, picked men of Egypt. They scanned the heavens and they scanned the earth, and their hearts were stouter than lions. They foretold the storm or ever it came, and the tempest when as yet it was not. Every one of them his heart was stout and his arm strong beyond his fellow. There was none unproven amongst them. The storm arose while we were on the Great Green Sea, before we touched land ; and as we sailed it redoubled (its strength), and the waves thereof were eight cubits. There was a plank of wood to which I clung. The ship perished, and of them that were in her not one was left saving me alone, who now am at your side. And I was brought to this island by the waves of the Great Green Sea."

At this point the man seems to have been overcome once more with terror, and the serpent, therefore, hastened to reassure him.

"Fear not, little one," he said in his gentle voice; "fear not. Let not thy face be dismayed. If thou hast come to me it is God who has let thee live, who has brought thee to this phantom isle in which there is naught that is lacking, but it is full of all good things. Behold, thou shall pass month for month until thou accomplish four months upon this island. And a ship shall come from home, and sailors in it whom thou knowest, and thou shalt go home with them, and shalt die in thine own city."

"How glad is he," exclaimed the old mariner as he related his adventures to the prince, "how glad is he that recounts what he has experienced when the calamity is passed!" The prince, no doubt, replied with a melancholy grunt, and the thread of the story was once more taken up.

There was a particular reason why the serpent should be touched and interested to hear how Providence had saved the Egyptian from death, for he himself had survived a great calamity, and had been saved from an equally terrible fate, as he now proceeded to relate.

"I will tell thee the like thereof," he said, "which happened in this island. I dwelt herein with my brothers, and my children were among them. Seventy-two serpents we were, all told, with my offspring and my brothers; nor have I yet mentioned to thee a little girl brought to me by fortune. A star came down, and all these went up in flames. And it happened so that I was not together with them when they were consumed; I was not in their midst. I could have died (of grief) for them when I found them as a single pile of corpses."

It is clear from the story that this great serpent was intended to be pictured as a sad and lonely, but most lovable, character. All alone upon this ghostly isle, the last of his race, one is to imagine him dreaming of the little girl who was taken from him, together with all his family. Although fabulous himself, and half divine, he

was yet the victim of the gods, and was made to suffer real sorrows in his unreal existence. Day by day he wandered over his limited domain, twisting his golden body amidst the pumpkins, and rearing himself above the fig-trees, thundering down to the beach to salute the passing dolphins, or sunning himself, a golden blaze, upon the rocks. There remained naught for him to do but to await the cessation of the phantasy of his life; and yet, though his lot was hard, he was ready at once to subordinate his sorrows to those of the shipwrecked sailor before him. No more is said of his distress, but with his next words he seems to have dismissed his own misfortunes, and to have attempted to comfort the Egyptian.

"If thou art brave," he said, "and restrainest thy longing, thou shalt press thy children to thy bosom and kiss thy wife, and behold thy house—that is the best of all things. Thou shalt reach home, and shalt dwell there amongst thy brothers."

"Thereat," said the mariner, "I cast me upon my stomach and touched the ground before him, and I said to him: 'I will tell of thy might to the Sovereign, I will cause him to be acquainted with thy greatness. I will let bring to thee the perfume and spices, myrrh and sweet-scented woods, and incense of the sanctuaries where-withal every god is propitiated. I will recount all that has befallen me, and that which I have seen by his might; and they shall praise thee in that city before the magistrates of the entire land. I will slaughter to thee oxen as a burnt-offering, geese will I pluck for thee, and I will let bring to thee vessels laden with all the goodly things of Egypt, as may be (fitly) done to a god who loves men in a distant land, a land unknown to me'."

At these words the serpent opened his golden mouth and fell to laughing. The thought that this little mortal, grovelling before him, could believe himself able to repay the kindnesses received tickled him immensely.

"Hast thou not much incense (here, then)?" he laughed. "Art not become a lord of frankincense?

And I, behold I am prince of Pount," the land of perfumes, "and the incense, *that* is my very own. As for the spices which thou savest shall be brought, they are the wealth of this island. But it shall happen when thou hast left this place, never shalt thou see this island more, for it shall be changed to waves."

The teller of the story does not relate in what manner he received this well-merited reproof. The gentle monster, no doubt, was tolerant of his presumptuousness, and soon put him at his ease again. During the whole period of the Egyptian's residence on the island, in fact, the golden serpent seems to have been invariably kind to him. The days passed by like a happy dream, and the spell of the island's enchantment possessed him so that, in after times, the details of the events of every day were lost in the single illusion of the whole adventure.

At last the ship arrived, as it had been foretold, and the sailor watched her passing over the hazy sea towards the mysterious shore. "I went and got me up into a tall tree," he said, "and I recognised those that were in it. And I went to report the matter (to the serpent), and I found that he knew it."

Very tenderly the great monster addressed him. "Fare thee well, little one," he said. "Fare thee well to thy house. Mayest thou see thy children and raise up a good name in thy city. Behold, such are my wishes for thee."

"Then," continued the sailor, "I laid me on my stomach, my arms were bended before him. And he gave me a freight of frankincense, perfume and myrrh, sweet-scented woods and antimony, giraffe's tails, great heaps of incense, elephant tusks, dogs, apes and baboons, and all manner of valuable things. And I loaded them in that ship, and I laid myself on my stomach to make thanksgiving to him. Then he said to me: "Behold, thou shall come home in two months, and shalt press thy children to thy bosom, and shalt flourish in their midst; and there thou shalt be buried."

To appreciate the significance of these last words it is

necessary to remember what an important matter it was to an Egyptian that he should be buried in his native city. In our own case the position upon the map of the place where we lay down our discarded bones is generally not of first-rate importance and the thought of being buried in foreign lands does not frighten us. Whether our body is to be packed away in the necropolis of our city, or shovelled into a hole on the outskirts of Timbuctoo, is not a matter of vital interest. There is a certain sentiment that leads us to desire interment amidst familiar scenes, but it is subordinated with ease to other considerations. To the Egyptian, however, it was a matter of paramount importance. "What is a greater thing," says Sinuhe in the tale of his adventures in Asia, "than that I should be buried in the land in which I was born?" "Thou shalt not die in a foreign land; Asiatics shall not conduct thee to the tomb," says the Pharaoh to him; and again, "It is no little thing that thou shalt be buried without Asiatics conducting thee." There is a stela now preserved in Stuttgart, in which the deceased man asks those who pass his tomb to say a prayer for his soul; and he adjures them in these words: "So truly as ye wish that your native gods should praise you, and that ye should be established in your seats, and that ye should hand down your offices to your children: that ye should reach your homes in safety, and recount your travels to your wives;—then say a prayer," &c.

The serpent was thus giving the castaway a promise which meant more to him than all the other blessings, and it was with a light heart indeed that he ran down to the beach to greet his countrymen. "I went down to the shore where the ship was," he continued, "and I called to the soldiers which were in that ship, and I gave praises upon the shore to the lord of this island, and likewise did they which were in the ship."

Then he stepped on board, the gangway was drawn up, and, with a great sweep of the oars, the ship passed out into the open sea. Standing on deck amongst the new

cargo, the officers and their rescued friend bowed low to the great serpent who towered above the trees at the water's edge, gleaming in the sunshine. 'Fare thee well, little one," his deep voice rolled across the water; and again they bowed in obeisance to him. The main-sail was unfurled to the wind, and the vessel scudded bravely across the Great Green Sea; but for some time yet they must have kept their eyes upon the fair shape of the phantom island, as the trees blended into the hills and the hills at last into the haze; and their vision must have been focussed upon that one gleaming point where the golden serpent, alone once more with his memories, watched the ship moving over the fairy seas.

"So sailed we northwards," said the sailor, "to the place of the Sovereign, and we reached home in two months, in accordance with all that he had said. And I entered in before the Sovereign, and I brought to him this tribute which I had taken away from within this island. Then gave he thanksgivings for me before the magistrates of the entire land. And I was made a 'Follower', and was rewarded with the serfs of such an one."

The old sailor turned to the gloomy prince as he brought his story to an end. "Look at me," he exclaimed, "now that I have reached land, now that I have seen (again in memory) what I have experienced. Hearken thou to me, for behold, to hearken is good for men."

But the prince only sighed the more deeply, and, with a despairing gesture, replied: "Be not (so) superior, my friend! Doth one give water to a bird on the eve, when it is to be slain on the morrow?" With these words the manuscript abruptly ends, and we are supposed to leave the prince still disconsolate in his cabin, while his friend, unable to cheer him, returns to his duties on deck.