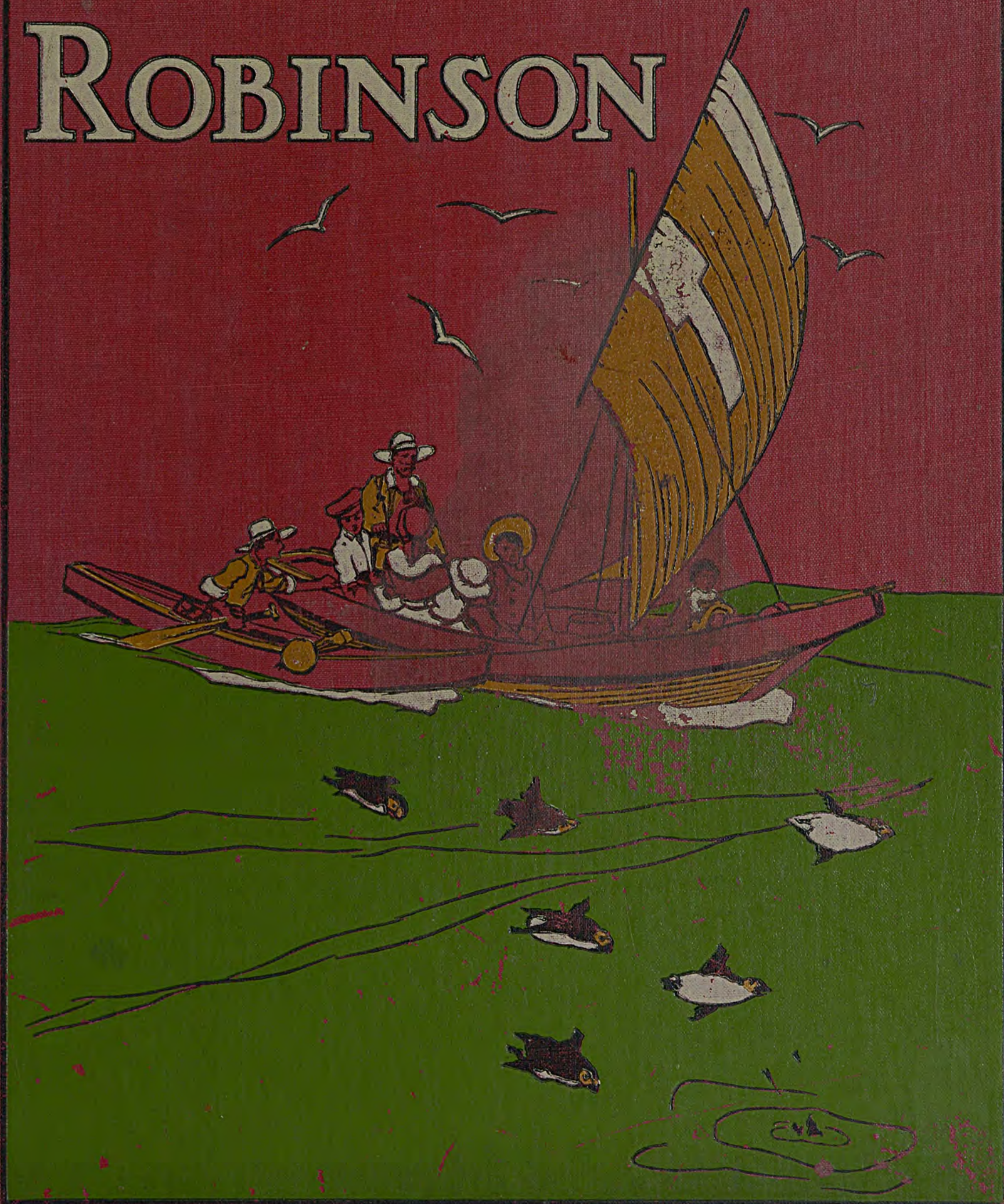


THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



H/2/B13

1st ed [1910]

damp mark to front board

£25-00

16 col pls. - far better printing than
toprints (8 pls only)

©IP

The Swiss Family Robinson

J. Hugh Garratt
from Father & Mother

Christmas 1910

The Swiss Family Robinson



THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

RETOLD FOR LITTLE FOLK

BY
EDITH ROBARTS



Illustrated by JOHN HASSALL, R.I.

BLACKIE AND SON LIMITED
LONDON GLASGOW DUBLIN BOMBAY



M
of
the
too
lan
of
wh
win
cou
piec
the



The Swiss Family Robinson

CHAPTER I

MY wife and I had made up our minds to leave our native village in Switzerland, and go to settle in one of the newly discovered countries of the Southern Ocean. We, therefore, with our four sons, Fritz, Jack, Ernest, and Frank, took passage in a ship which was about to start for the strange land. We had a very fair voyage until we arrived within sight of New Guinea, but here we were overtaken by a severe storm which lasted for six whole days. So great was the fury of wind and waves, that the ship was driven far out of her true course, her masts were torn up and broken, and her sails rent in pieces; while leaks were sprung upon every side, through which the water rushed rapidly.

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

"Dear children," said I to my four young sons, who were overcome by terror, "if God pleases He can save us even from this fearful peril. But if it is His will that we should die, let us do so bravely, for at least we shall all be together on this our last voyage, and can hope soon to be united in another and a better world."

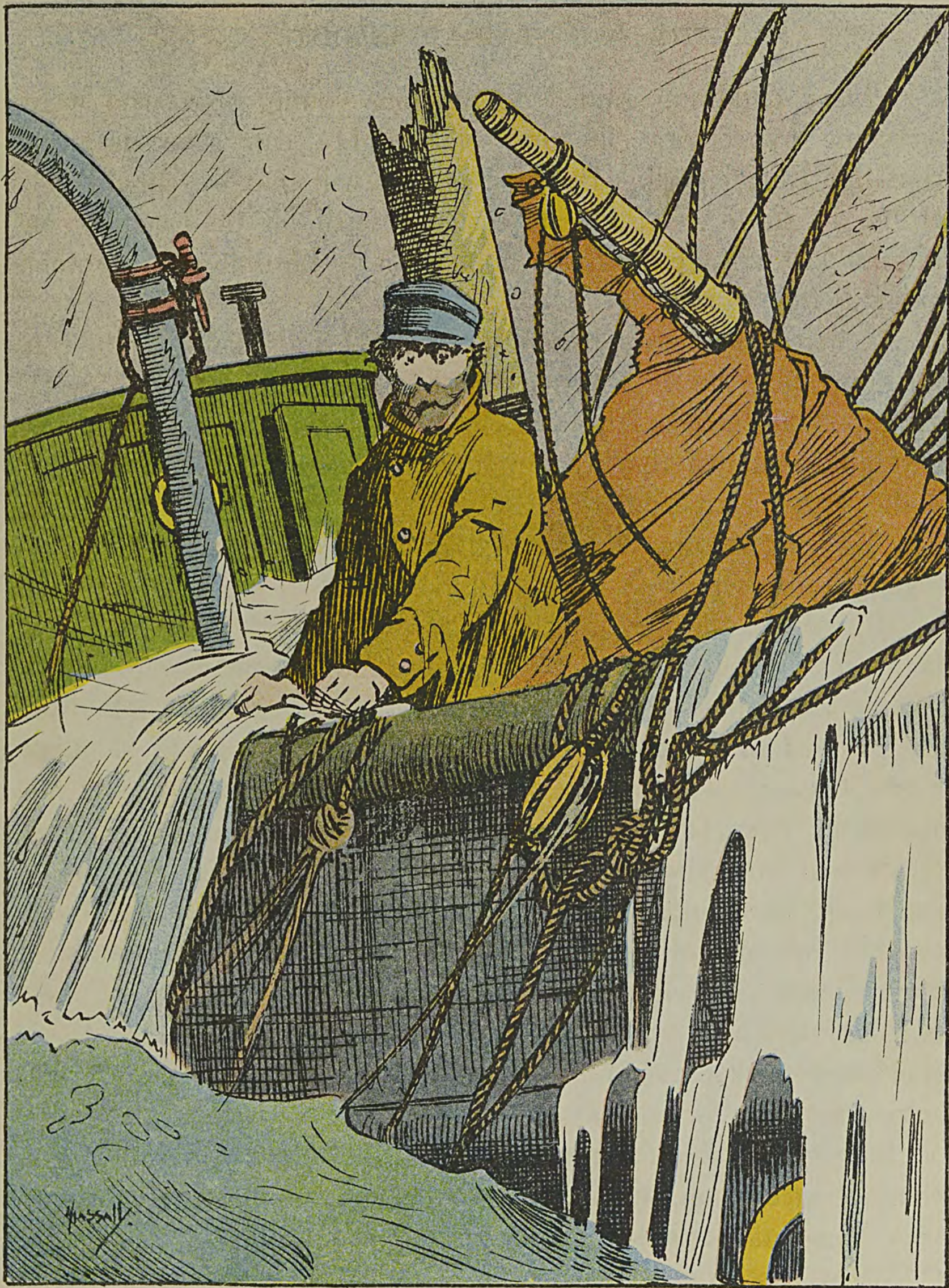
At that moment we heard a cry of "Land! land!" while at the same time the vessel struck with a terrible shock, and every one upon deck was thrown violently down. Then followed dreadful sounds of the breaking-up of the ship, and the roaring of the water as it poured in upon us.

"Lower away the boats! We are lost!" shouted the Captain.

I left my wife and sons and hastened on deck, to be met by a huge wave which for the moment almost stunned me with its force. When I was able to see amid the foam and spray I beheld, to my horror, the only remaining boat leave the ship, and the last of the sailors spring into her and push off, heedless of my cries and entreaties that they would wait to receive me and mine. As I glanced around in despair I discovered that the vessel was jammed between two rocks, which held her firmly up, and, straining my eyes through the clouds of mist, I saw a line of rocky coast in the distance. My heart bounded at the sight, for I hoped that, with God's aid, we might be able to reach that land.

Returning to my family I did my best to quiet their fears. "Courage, dear ones!" I said cheerfully, "we are at least safe for the present, as the ship is so placed that our cabin will remain above water; and to-morrow, when the storm is over, we shall doubtless find means of getting ashore."

My words brought great relief to my poor wife and children,



"I BEHELD THE ONLY REMAINING BOAT LEAVE"

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

and we all agreed to put our trust in Providence, and hope that our lives might yet be spared. My wife then prepared some food, for although we did not feel inclined to eat, we knew we must do so to give us strength for the work before us. When we had finished our meal, the three younger boys went to their berths and were very soon asleep, while my eldest son, Fritz, kept watch with his mother and me. "Father," said he, after a long silence, "don't you think we might make something to keep mother and the boys afloat in the water; then, if we should be cast into the sea, we could help them to reach land, for you and I can swim?"

"A very good idea," I replied. "Let us try and find something in the ship that we can make use of."

Fortunately we soon discovered several empty flasks and tin cans that seemed just large enough to suit our purpose. These we firmly fastened together in pairs, and having fixed them on four stout pieces of rope, we thus obtained some useful, though odd-looking swimming-belts, which my wife and the three younger boys willingly put round their waists.

We then collected as many things as we could carry about us, such as knives, string, matches, and other small articles that we should be most likely to need. At length the long, weary night was over, and as the morning dawned we were thankful to see the angry clouds disappear and calm follow the storm. When I called the three boys on deck they were very surprised to find no one else on board the ship.

"Why, Father, where are the men?" they cried. "Have they all gone? And have they taken the boats? Oh! why did they leave us behind? What can we do by ourselves?"

"My good children," I replied, "we must not despair



THE MAKING OF THE SWIMMING-BELTS

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

although those upon whom we depended have deserted us in the hour of danger. Let us all set to work, and leave the rest to God."

"Can we not build a raft that will carry us to shore?" said Ernest.

"I think it will be difficult," I answered. "However, we will see what can be done. But first, let each go and find those things that will be of most use to take with us."

I then went to see what supply of food and fresh water was left, while my wife and youngest son, Frank, attended to the poor animals which were on board. The other boys all departed to search different parts of the ship. Fritz returned loaded with two guns, a bag of shot, and some well-filled powder flasks: Ernest brought a box of carpenter's tools: and Jack came rushing up with two large dogs bounding round him, which he had found shut in the Captain's cabin.

"They will help us to hunt when we get on shore, Father," he cried.

"No doubt they will, if ever we get there, Jack," I answered. "And now you must all assist me to build the raft that is to take us."

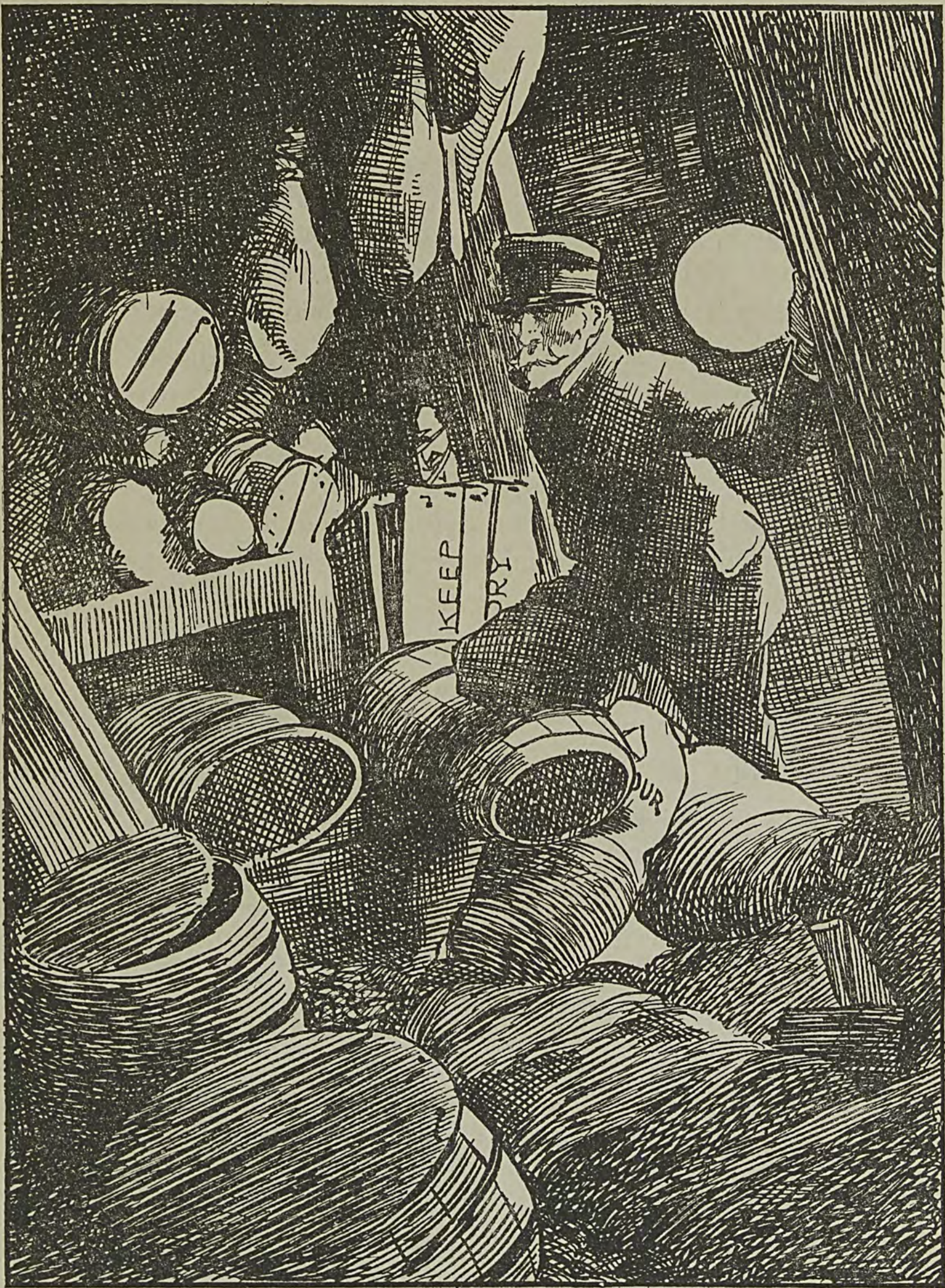
Just then Master Frank appeared, followed by his mother.

"I have found a packet of fishing-hooks and some lines!" exclaimed the little fellow, joyfully.

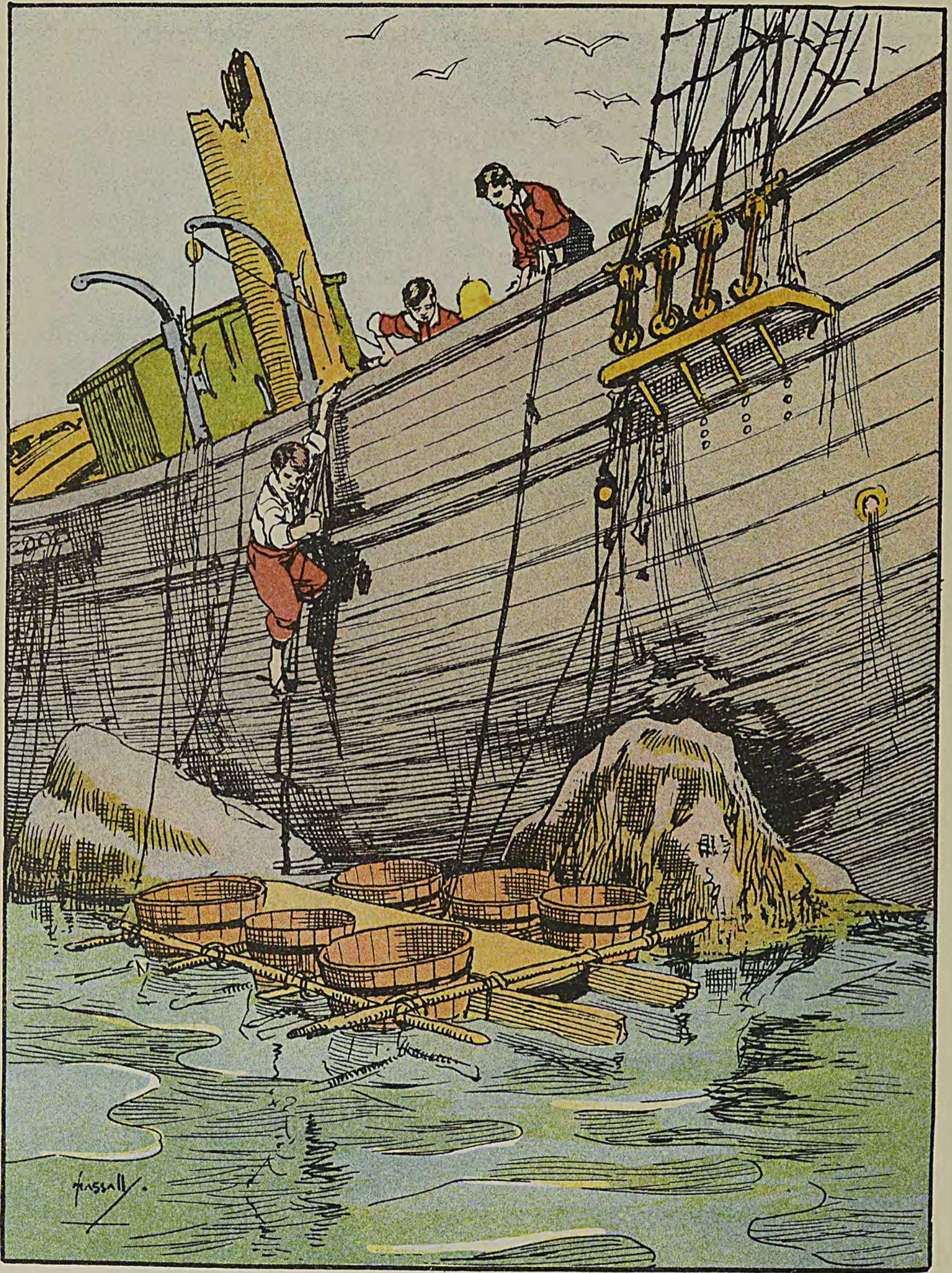
"Well done, Frank!" I cried. "They will procure food for us."

"I also have good news," said my wife, "for I find we have a cow, an ass, two goats, six sheep, a ram, a pig, and a sow, all alive and well."

"That is excellent," I answered. "We must think of some way to get them all to shore."



LOOKING AFTER SUPPLIES



THE LAUNCH OF THE RAFT

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

We then busily set to work upon the raft. This we succeeded in making out of some empty casks and planks of wood.

The casks, fortunately, were all of excellent wood, well guarded by iron hoops, and in every respect in sound condition: they were, therefore, exactly suited for the purpose which we had in view.

We cut them in halves, so that they formed small round boats, which we made fast to the planks, and thus we had a very fair raft for our use.

But when we had got thus far, a fresh difficulty confronted us, for our craft proved so heavy that with our united strength we were unable to move it from its place. This difficulty we were, however, able to surmount by simple means; for, having obtained a thick, round pole, I sawed it into several pieces for rollers, which I placed under the raft, raising it for the purpose by means of a crowbar.

Then, after we had launched it upon the water, and safely secured it to the ship's side, a new misfortune presented itself, for our craft leaned so much to one side that none of the boys appeared to like the idea of venturing in it.

I stood for a moment somewhat perplexed, until it occurred to me that nothing more than ballast was required to set the raft right.

I then threw into the tubs a sufficient number of weighty articles, and thus got the raft to float straight.

Thereafter, we went to enjoy some hard-earned food and welcome rest.

It was then too late to attempt to reach the shore that day, so we lay down in our berths, and were soon in a deep, refreshing sleep.

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



CHAPTER II

AT break of day we were all on deck, and our first thought was to thank God for keeping us safely through the night, and to beg Him to continue to protect us.

“Now, boys,” said I, “we must do our best to reach the shore; but before we go we must give the poor beasts on board enough food and water to last them some days, in case we are not able to return at once to rescue them.”

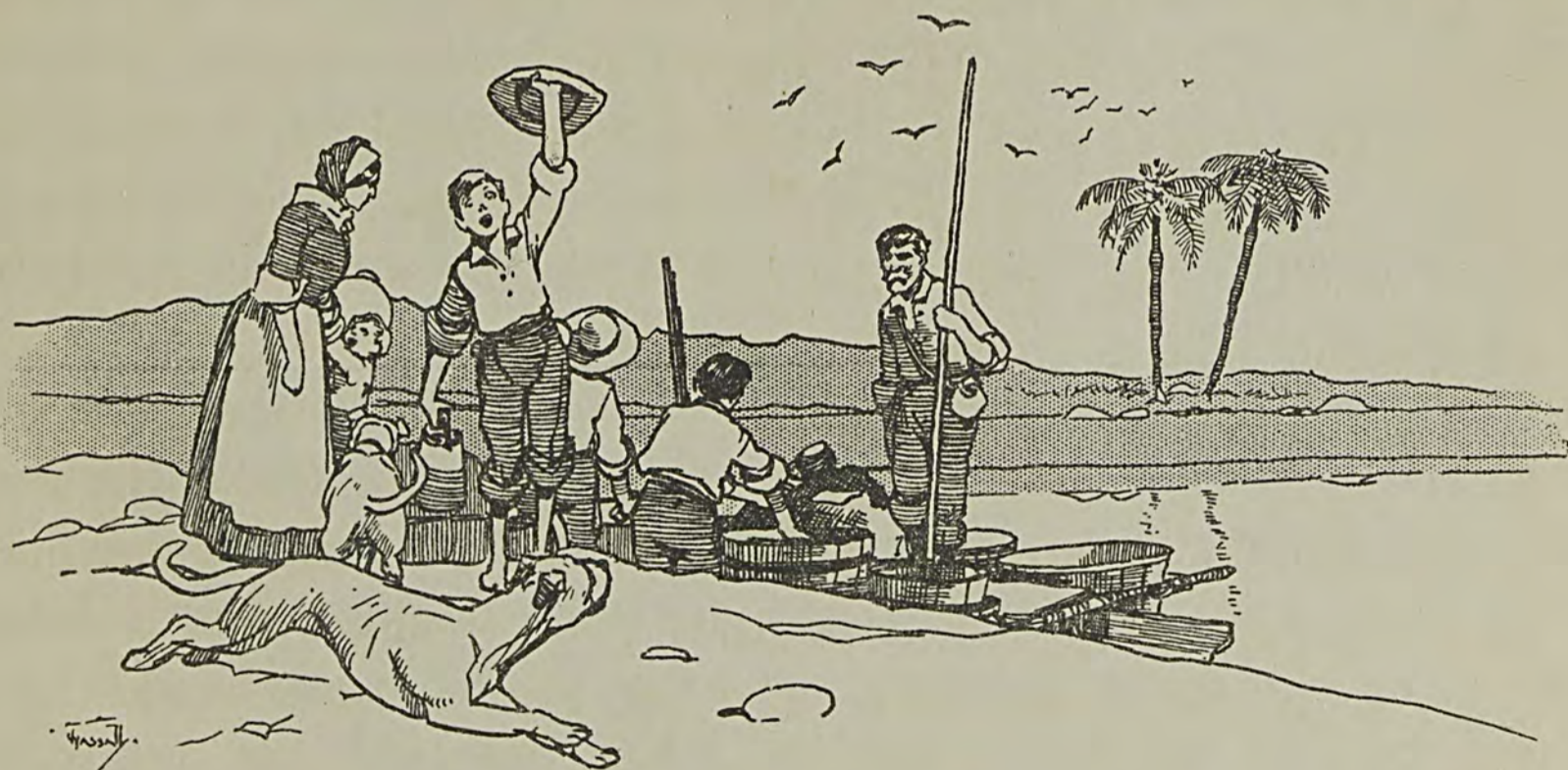
We then proceeded to place as many things as we possibly could upon the raft, and ten live hens and two cocks were put in one of the tubs. We let some ducks and geese loose upon the water, in the hope that they would swim to shore, while a pair of doves were also set free, as they could fly to land.

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

All being ready, we each got into our queer, round boat, and, being provided with oars, pushed off. As soon as the two dogs, Turk and Juno by name, saw us quit the vessel, they jumped overboard and swam after us. Both were too large to be taken upon the raft, but they managed to keep well up with us by every now and then leaning their paws upon one of the planks, and so gaining a little rest and breathing space. They were dogs of great strength, belonging to the breed of mastiff.

Our course was slow, but, the sea remaining calm, we at length reached the shore in safety. As we drew near we were very pleased to see various trees, some of which were palms: and Ernest delighted his brothers with the prospect of gathering cocoanuts.

Our ducks and geese had made their way to a small bay, so, thinking we could not do better than follow their example, I succeeded in steering our craft in after them. We pulled up alongside a low, shady bank, where we all joyfully leapt on



THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

shore. The dogs showed their pleasure by loud barks and gambols, while the ducks, geese, and pigeons made the air ring with their cries.

When we had secured the raft with a strong rope, we took out all our belongings, and with some spars and stakes and an old sailcloth we erected a tent in the most sheltered spot we could find. The children gathered a quantity of moss and dried grass, which, after being spread in the sun, furnished us with comfortable beds. While they were busy at this I constructed a rude fireplace of stones, and with some twigs and branches of trees I soon had a cheerful fire, upon which my wife warmed some soup we had brought with us. Fritz, carrying one of the guns, went off by himself; Ernest took a stroll along the seashore; while Jack scampered away among the rocks to look for mussels. Just as I was engaged in trying to land two big casks which had been washed up from the wreck, I was startled by a loud cry from Jack. Snatching up a hatchet, I ran to see what the matter was, and discovered him vainly trying to shake off a large lobster, which had seized him by the leg. The animal let go its hold as I approached, and attempted to make off; but as I thought it would serve us for food, I struck it with my hatchet and threw it ashore. Jack was overjoyed with his prize, and ran off in high glee to show it to his mother.

When I got back to the tent I found Ernest had returned from his walk. He told me he had seen plenty of salt in the crevices of the rocks, also a number of oysters along the shore. I at once sent him back to get some of the fish, and a little salt with which to flavour our soup. The latter was then ready for us to drink, but as Fritz had not yet returned



"VAINLY TRYING TO SHAKE OFF A LARGE LOBSTER"



FRITZ RETURNS WITH THE AGOUTI

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

we waited for him to join us before commencing our meal.

“Now, how are we to eat our soup without spoons?” asked my wife. “We cannot lift this large pot to our mouths.”

“I have it!” cried Ernest. “Let us use the oyster shells!”

“Bravo!” I responded. “Up with you, boys, and clean out a few shells! They will do very well as spoons, although rather short in the handle.”

A few minutes after Fritz arrived, holding his hands behind his back.

“Nothing! nothing!” he said dolefully.

But his brothers slipped round him and called out: “He’s got a sucking pig! Where did you get it, Fritz?”

He then showed his booty, which he said he had met with on the other side of the stream, and which I at once recognized to be an agouti, a beast not unlike a pig, that is a native of South America, where it makes its nest under the roots of trees, and lives upon fruit and nuts.

“It is much nicer where I have been than it is here,” said Fritz. “The beach is low, and strewn with chests, casks, and all sorts of things, which the sea has brought up from the wreck. Why not leave this place and go there?”

“All in good time, my boy,” I replied. “We will remain here for to-night, and to-morrow I may go and see the part you speak of. But tell me, did you see no traces of our shipmates?”

“Not a sign of them, either on land or sea,” responded Fritz; “but I saw numbers of animals like this you call the agouti. They look like hogs, but have feet like hares, and can run very swiftly.”

As our shell spoons were now ready, we all gathered round the fire and dipped them in the pot, though not without a few

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

scalded fingers! The dogs were not forgotten, some of the soup being left to cool and be given them to drink. My wife then produced a bag of corn which she had brought from the ship, and with this grain she fed the hungry fowls.

When we had finished our meal it was near sunset, so, as we were all very tired after the labours of the day, we decided to retire to rest within our tent. I loaded the guns and pistols in case they should be needed in the night, and, having said our evening prayers, we stretched ourselves upon our mossy beds and were soon sleeping soundly.

At daybreak I was wakened by the crowing of the cocks, which also roused my wife; so we talked over our plans for the future.

“First of all,” I said, “Fritz and I will go in search of the men who left the ship, while the other boys will remain here with you.”

My wife quite agreed with this, and hastened to prepare some food for us, that we might start as soon as possible. When Fritz heard of my intention he said, “Why should we trouble about those who so cruelly abandoned us?”

“My boy,” I replied, “we should not return evil for evil; and you must remember that they took nothing with them from the ship, so may be perishing of hunger.”

As soon as we had eaten our breakfast we shouldered our guns and went upon our way along the coast. Turk came with us, while Juno stayed to guard the others. In vain we looked upon every side to discover our unfortunate companions; we shouted and halloed as loudly as we could, but no answering call reached our ears. After about two hours' walk we reached a wood not far from the sea, where Fritz stumbled against

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



something hard upon the ground. We found it was a cocoanut, which we split open, to refresh ourselves with the delicious cream and milk it contained.

Having passed through the wood, we entered upon a wide, open space, in which grew single trees of the most curious appearance.

“Oh, what strange-looking trees, Father!” cried Fritz. “See what queer bumps there are upon the trunks!”

When I went to examine them I found, to my joy, that they were calabash, or gourd trees, the fruit of which grows on the stems, and has a hard rind that can be made into bowls, spoons, and bottles.

“Try to get one of those queer lumps off the bark,” I said to my son, “and I will show you how to make a capital dish from it.”



WE DISCOVER THE SUGAR CANES

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

Very much astonished at my words, Fritz brought down one of the gourds, which he handed to me. I took a piece of string from my pocket and tied it tightly round the husk, then, tapping the string with the handle of my knife, I made it cut through the outer shell. When this was done I pulled the string yet tighter, and the gourd divided in half, each piece forming a splendid dish or bowl.

“That is clever!” cried Fritz. “I must try to make some too.”

So we set to work and soon had quite a small collection of this new sort of pottery, which we laid out to harden in the sun before we continued our journey. Not far off we could see a grove of fine palm trees, so we decided to go and rest beneath their shade. But to reach this spot we had to pass through a sort of swamp, thickly set with reeds and long grass. I knew this was just the place likely to be haunted by snakes, so we each cut one of the reeds, that we might beat them off should we meet with any. I had carried this weapon but a little way, when I noticed a thick juice oozing from one end. I put it to my lips, and found it had a sweet and pleasant taste, which proved to me that we were in a field of sugar canes. Fritz, who had also discovered and tasted the juice, came up to me in great delight.

“Father, Father!” he shouted, “a sugar cane! Let us cut some of the best to take back with us.”

So we cut a dozen of the largest canes, and bound them into a bundle, which he willingly carried under his arm.

When we arrived at the clump of palms, suddenly a number of monkeys sprang from every direction, and with much chattering and grimacing darted up to the very top of the trees.

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



“Oh, what a noisy tribe!” cried Fritz. “And see, Father, the palms are laden with cocoanuts.”

“Wait a moment,” said I. “I think I can make use of those gentlemen.”

So saying, I gathered a handful of small stones and threw them up towards the apes. The stones did not go near them, but, in their usual manner of imitating others, they instantly seized all the cocoanuts within their reach and hurled them down upon us. It was just as much as we could do to escape being hit, as the earth was literally strewn with them. Fritz was immensely pleased at the success of my trick, and as soon as the shower of nuts ceased, he picked up as many as he could to take home. After a quiet rest in the shade, during which we, including Turk, enjoyed the food we had brought with us, we took up our nuts and our canes, and set out on our journey homeward. On the way back we went to

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

get the gourd plates and dishes, which we found quite hard and dry, and very light and easy to carry.

As we passed through the wood, Turk darted away from us to spring among a group of monkeys who were playing on the turf.

In a moment he had seized and brought down one poor animal, whom he killed before we could reach the spot to prevent him.

It happened to be a mother ape, who had a tiny monkey on her back. When the dog flew at her, this little creature leapt away; but as soon as it caught sight of Fritz, with one bound it was on his shoulders, and there, holding fast by his curly hair, it firmly kept its seat, in spite of all his efforts to remove it.

However, at last I managed to coax it from its perch, when it lay in my arms like a child.





THE APE RIDES ON TURK'S BACK

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

Fritz then looked at it with interest, and begged to be allowed to take it home, suggesting that its natural instincts might aid us in discovering fresh sources of food supplies.

“Very well,” I replied, “let the little orphan be yours. But you must care for it and train it well.”

He allowed the monkey to sit upon his shoulder for some time, when, growing tired, he suddenly thought he would make Turk carry it on his back.

At first Turk did not at all like this, but after a while he yielded to it, and the small ape rode along, clinging tightly to his thick coat.

Meanwhile Fritz led the dog with a string, so that he could not rush away, and throw off his charge.

Before long we reached the part of the coast where our tent was pitched, and our dear ones all ran eagerly to welcome us.

There was great excitement when the boys beheld Fritz's baby ape, and a thousand questions were showered upon us. As soon as we could we related all our adventures, and I was sorry to have to tell them we had seen no trace of our shipmates.

“God's will be done,” said my wife. “Let us thank Him that you have returned safely to us.”

Everyone was delighted with the sugar canes, cocoanuts, and gourd dishes, also with my description of the lovely country which surrounded us.

While we had been away Ernest had shot a wild goose, which was now being cooked for our supper. There was also a Dutch cheese from the ship, and with cocoanuts for dessert we made a splendid meal.

CHAPTER III

THE next day Fritz and I returned to the wreck to save the animals left upon it, and bring back as many things as our raft would carry. The only way in which we could get the animals to shore was by fixing floats to their sides and throwing them in the sea. We then tied one end of a rope to the head or horns of each, fastening the other to the raft, and thus we took the whole herd in tow. The sow was the most unmanageable of all the beasts, and at last we were obliged to let her go; but we were glad to see she soon made for land on her own account, arriving some time before we did. Our boat-tubs were filled with food and other useful things, and, with our train of live stock following, we gradually neared the shore. A strange sight we must indeed have been, could anyone have seen us!

As we were thus proceeding, I was alarmed by a loud cry from Fritz.

“Father! Father!” he called. “We are lost! See, a huge shark is on its way to us!”

Although pale with fear, he had the presence of mind to take aim with his gun, which he discharged with such success that he hit the monster in the head. It sank at once, leaving a track of blood on the calm water.

“Well done, my boy,” I cried, “you will become a crack shot one of these days!”

We then got to land, and made fast our boat. So soon as the water became low enough, the animals gladly walked out of the sea, when we at once relieved them of their swimming-belts.



Hassall

FRITZ KILLS THE SHARK

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



The rest of that day was spent in unloading all our treasures, and in the evening my wife prepared some ham and eggs for supper. A tablecloth was spread on the top of a cask, while we each had a tub for a chair. Thus, with the knives and forks we had brought from the ship, we enjoyed a meal quite in civilized style. When we had finished eating, my wife told me that, while Fritz and I were at the wreck, she and the other boys had been exploring the country in order to find some sheltered spot where we could make a home. *

“We have discovered a beautiful grove, in which grow enormous trees,” said she; “and if we could but build some sort of dwelling among the branches, I should feel perfectly happy and safe.”

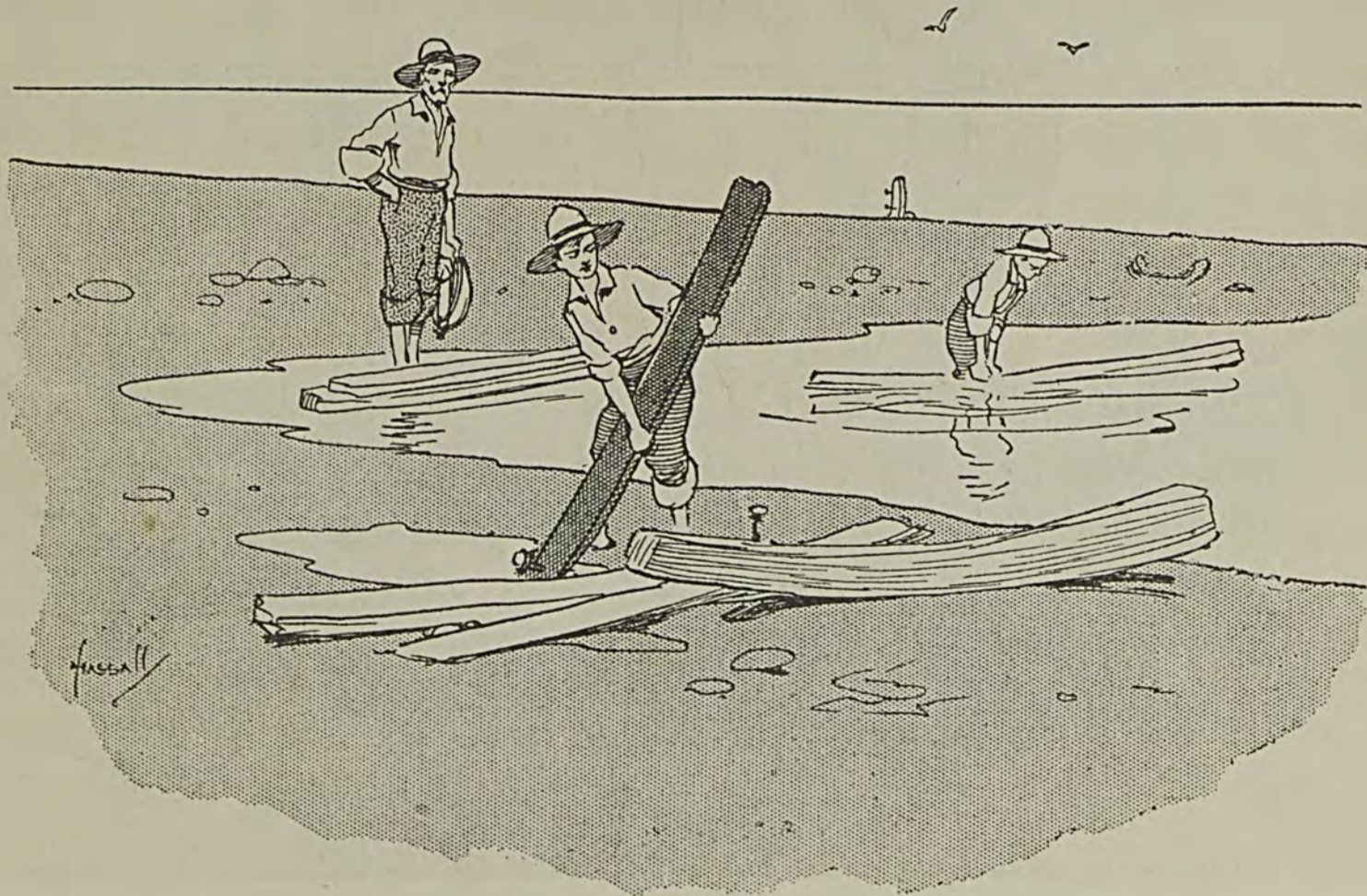
“So you wish to go to roost like a bird, little wife,” I replied,

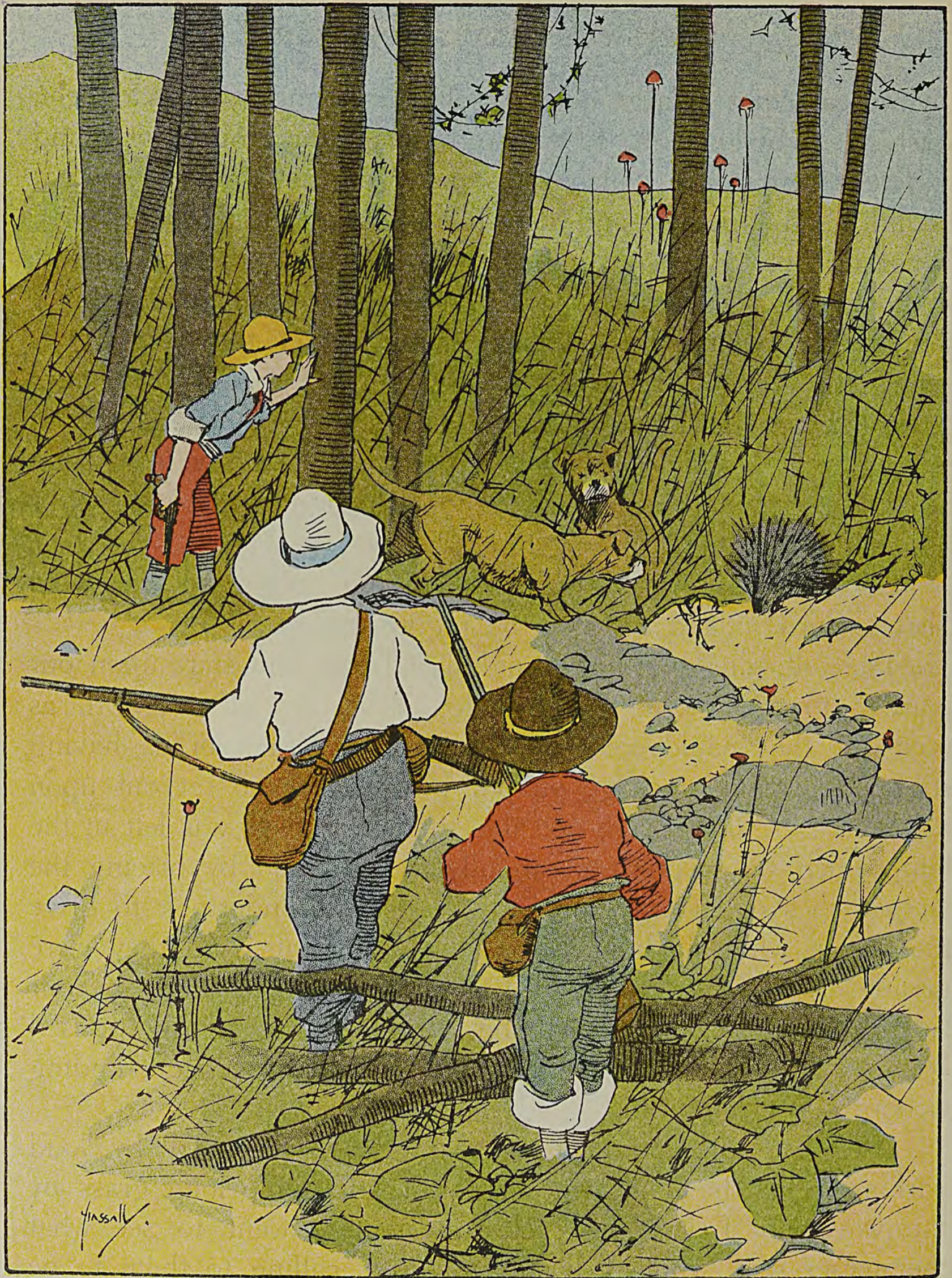
THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

with a smile. "Truly I do not know how such a resting-place is to be contrived, but I will go and see your grove and think about it seriously."

After a little longer conversation it began to grow dark, so, having knelt to say our evening prayer, we turned in beneath our tent.

My first thought the next morning was of my wife's suggestion, and of leaving our present place of abode. To get to the grove she mentioned it was necessary to cross a stream, and, although we could wade through the water ourselves, it would be difficult to take all our provisions and gunpowder across without risk of wetting. I therefore determined to make a bridge. After breakfast, Fritz, Ernest, and I went to get our boat ready for another trip to the wreck, to procure some strong planks for this purpose. When we reached the shore, to our great





THE DOGS AND THE PORCUPINE

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

joy we saw that a large quantity of boards and spars had been washed up by the sea, so we were saved the trouble of going to fetch them. We collected as many of these as we wanted, bound them together, and tied them to the stern of our boat. We then put to sea, pulling the wood after us until we got it round to the side of the stream over which we intended to build the bridge. Our next care was how to get the boards put across the water. This was a very difficult matter, but, after a long time and much thought and labour, we succeeded in putting each board in its place. In doing so we were assisted by the willing cow and ass, who helped to pull the heavy beams into position.

It was dusk when we finished our work, so we were glad to turn in and rest for the night.

The following morning found us all eager to start upon our journey to the grove. We loaded the cow and ass with as much as they could comfortably carry, and, each of us having strapped a small package on our own backs, we set out upon our march. All we were not able to take with us was left in the tent, which we secured as carefully as we could by placing the largest chests and casks around it. Ernest undertook to drive the sheep, while Jack took charge of the goats, and they were greatly assisted by Turk and Juno, who bounded along by our side. When we arrived at the bridge it was highly praised by my wife, and we passed over it in grand procession, finding it bore our weight thoroughly well.

A short time after we were suddenly surprised by loud barking from the dogs, who had run into some long grass by the wayside. Fritz and Jack immediately went to see what the matter was, while I hastily followed, calling to them to be

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



upon their guard in case it was some wild beast. As I drew near Jack shouted, "Father! Father! Come quickly! A huge porcupine!"

Sure enough, Turk and Juno were rushing round and round a large porcupine, trying to seize it with their teeth. But each time they ventured near, the animal shot out its quills with a loud, rattling noise, and they were severely pricked. Drawing his pistol from his belt, Jack shot straight at the beast, which fell dead on the spot. As porcupines are good to eat, we took this one with us, wrapping it in grass and a piece of cloth.

At length we reached the beautiful spot where grew the trees my wife had spoken about.

"You have certainly chosen a delightful place for our home, dear wife," I said; "and if we can but manage to fix our tent up among those branches, we shall indeed have little cause to fear the attack of any wild beast."

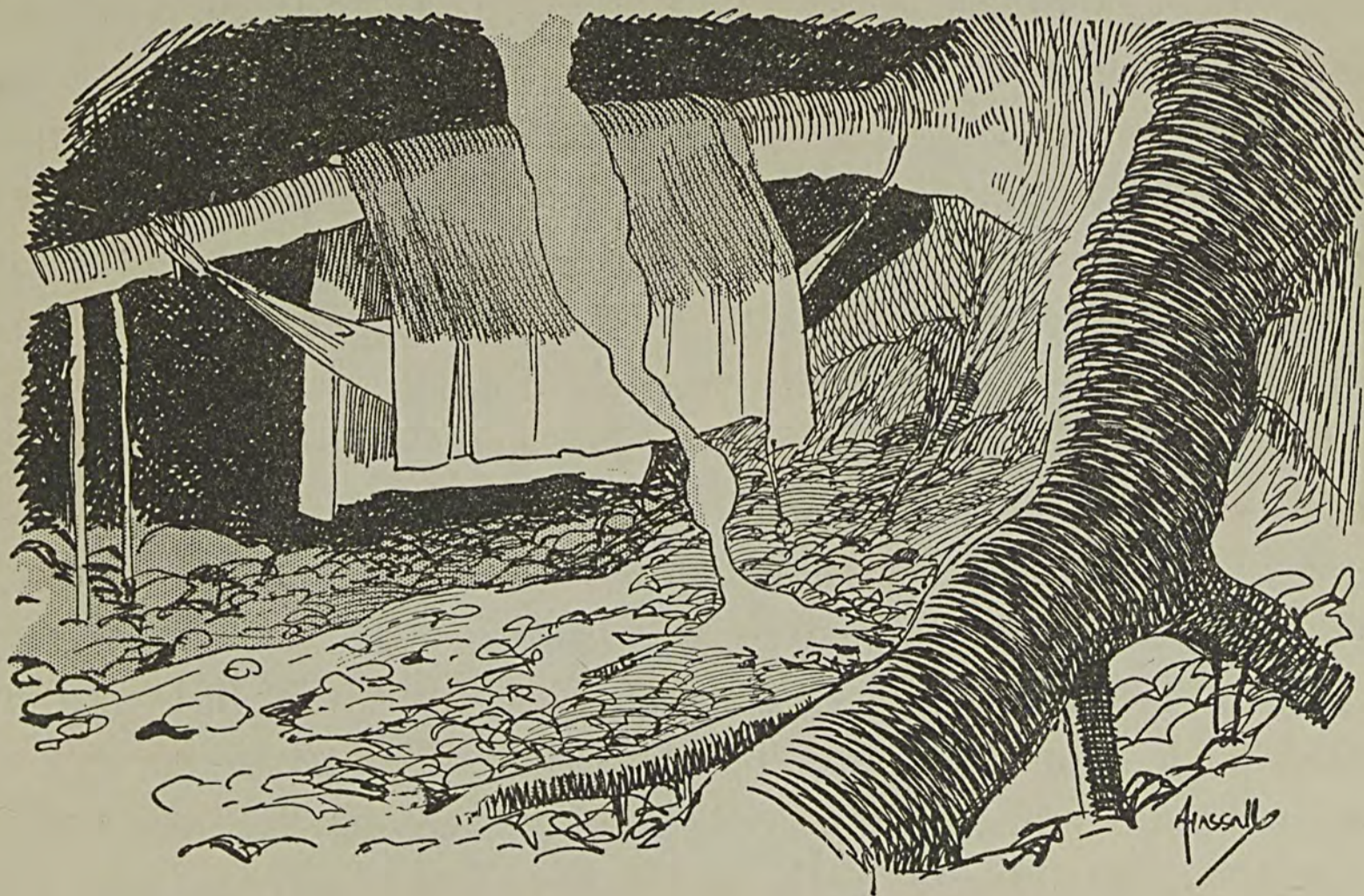
THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

“What kind of trees do you think they are, Father?” asked Ernest.

“I believe they must be fig trees, my son,” I replied. “I have heard that they sometimes grow to an enormous size.”

We then unloaded our beasts of burden and left them to graze. Ernest, Jack, and I turned our attention to the porcupine, which we skinned and gave to my wife to cook for dinner. Fritz strolled round with his gun, while little Frank busied himself in collecting dry wood for the fire. When our meal was ready we all drew round, eager to taste porcupine soup. The boys and I thought it very good, but my wife preferred some of the ham and cheese we had brought with us.

As soon as we had finished eating I set about preparing a resting-place for the night. As it would not be possible to

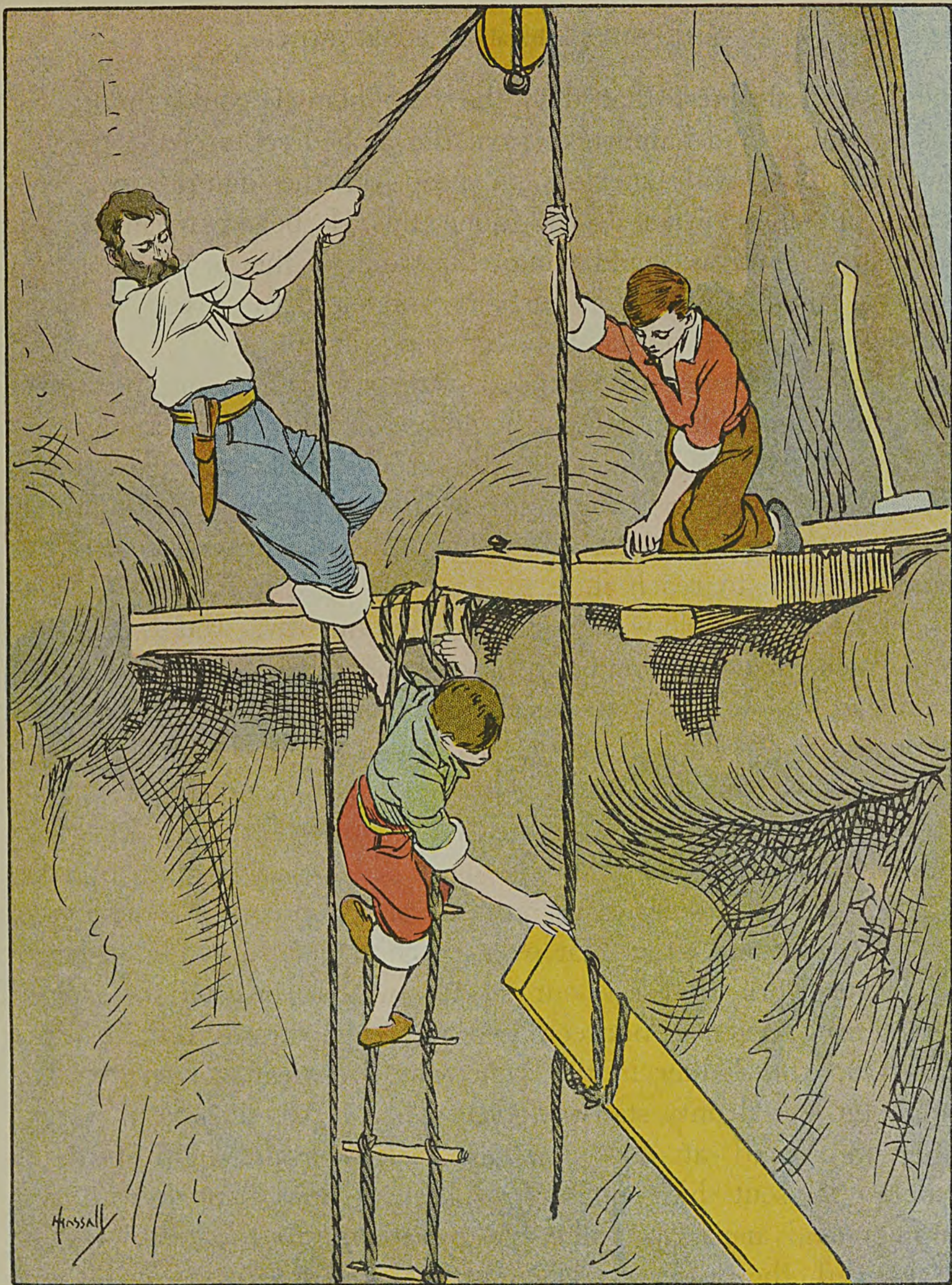


THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

build our lofty nest that day, the best plan I could think of was to sling some hammocks from the arched roots of the trees, covering them with sailcloth to keep off the damp air. It being still light when I had done this, I began to make a ladder, by which we could mount the trunk of the largest tree to select a suitable place for our airy abode. Ernest and I discovered a number of bamboos growing in the sand just near, which, when cleaned and stripped of their leaves, made splendid steps for the ladder. Even the lowest branch of the mighty tree was such a height from the ground, however, that the boys could not find anything with which to measure the distance, to enable them to judge the number of steps we should require to reach it.

“I know a simple way to master that difficulty,” said I.

I then made a bow out of a strong bamboo stick, and some arrows out of reeds filled with sand, and finished with the feathers of a flamingo which Fritz had shot. Having found a ball of stout thread, I secured the end of it to my arrow, then took aim at the branch above me. The arrow shot clean over it and fell to the ground upon the other side, carrying the thread with it. It was then easy to tie a piece of cord to the end of the thread, and draw that over the branch also. This done, we set to work to make our ladder, which consisted of cane steps firmly fastened between two pieces of strong rope. We hauled up this ladder in the same way, by means of the cord, and then our trunk stairway was ready. All the boys were eager to ascend at once, but as Jack was the lightest and nimblest I sent him up first. Fritz followed next with a hammer and nails, to make the ropes fast to the tree, while I attached the lower ends to stakes firmly driven into the



THE BUILDING OF THE TREE-HOUSE

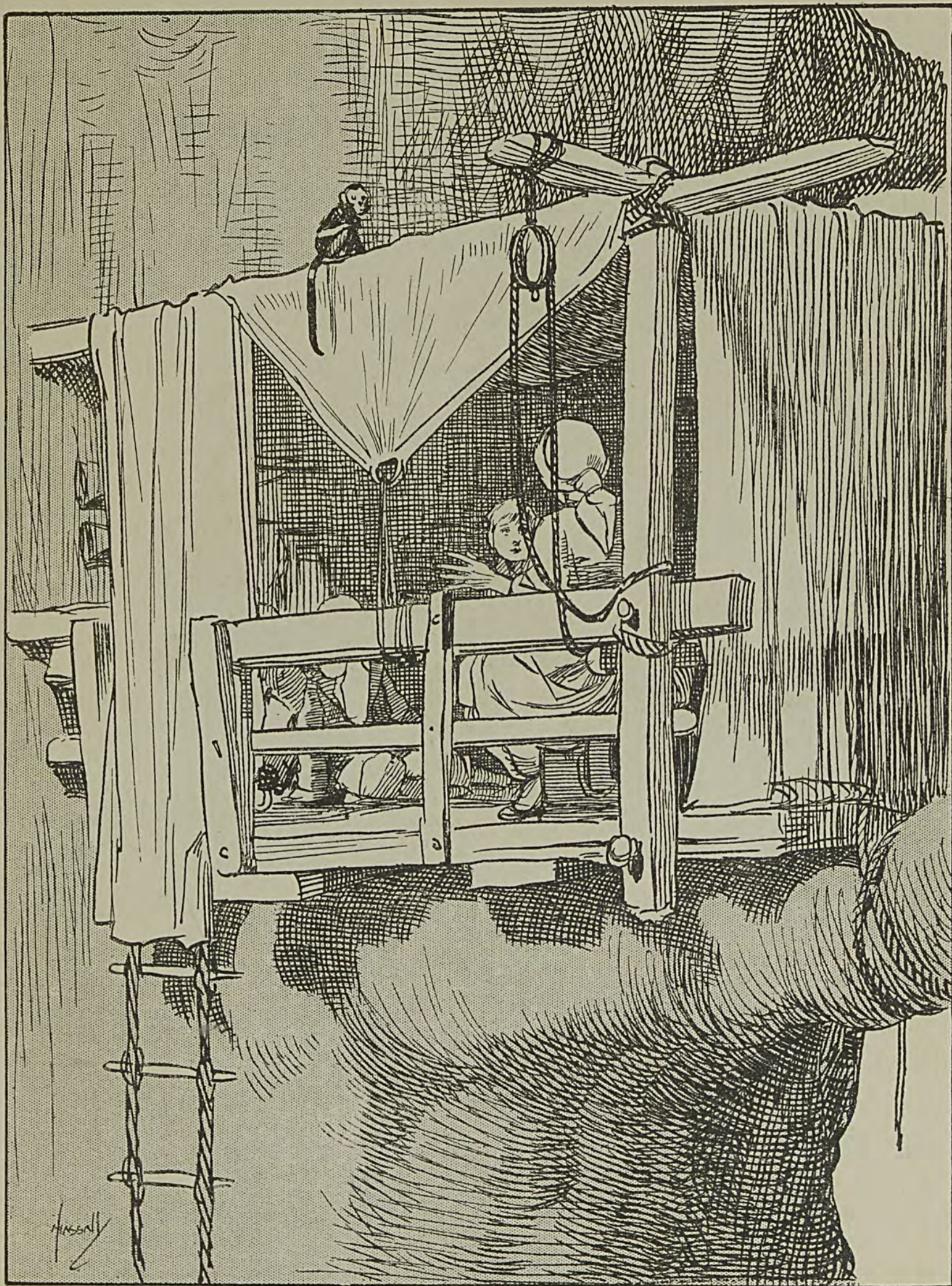
THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

ground. Then, taking with me my axe and a large pulley, I mounted the ladder myself. The pulley I fixed to a branch so that I could raise the planks needed to build our castle in the air, and with my axe I cut and smoothed the huge bough that was to form its foundation. I sent the boys down out of my way, and, as it was a clear moonlight night, I kept hard at work until I was quite tired out.

Early the next morning we were all astir, ready to begin work. We hoisted up the planks, and laid them across the branches, nailing them down so as to form a smooth, solid floor. Round this we erected a strong wooden paling, fixing a sailcloth to serve for a roof until we had time to make a better one. We were very pleased with the result of our labour, and very glad to go to rest in our nest. My wife was a little timid at mounting the ladder, but when she was safely up she was delighted to lie down to sleep, feeling we were all out of harm's way.

CHAPTER IV

WHEN we awoke it was broad day, and the sun was shining brightly down upon us. While we were at breakfast I reminded my family that it was Sunday, therefore we should do no work. After we had eaten, and fed our birds and beasts, we all sang a psalm and some hymns. My wife fetched a Bible she had brought from the ship, from which the boys read parts of the sacred Scripture aloud. I spoke to them for a little time about God's goodness and mercy, and we passed the morning in quiet content. While we were at dinner it occurred to me that we might give names to the



"WE PASSED THE MORNING IN QUIET CONTENT"



"A USEFUL, IF SOMEWHAT ODD-LOOKING, CARRIAGE"

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

different parts of the land we were living upon, as it would be a great help to us when speaking about the same. My idea was received with much praise, and everyone began to suggest suitable names.

We started with the bay in which we had landed, and fixed upon the name of Safety Bay for it. The spot where we spent our first night on shore was called "Tent House", the islet in the bay "Shark's Island", and the place from which Fritz and I had looked in vain for a sign of our lost shipmates was to be known as "Cape Disappointment". The bridge over the stream was "Family Bridge", and our leafy castle was "Falcon's Nest".

When the heat of the day was over, we all decided to take a walk; so, shouldering our guns, and with Turk and Juno at our heels, we set off in the direction of Tent House. As we went along, Ernest discovered a large space of ground on which grew a fine kind of potato. We were extremely delighted at this find, and soon had a bag full of the useful vegetables. When we arrived at Tent House we found all just as we had left it. We at once collected as much as we could carry to take back with us, including our ducks and geese, which we had been obliged to leave behind when we moved. These had grown so wild, that it took us some time to catch them: and we had to tie their legs and wings to enable us to get them home. Even so, they were very noisy, troublesome burdens, and we were right glad to set them free when we reached the Nest. We had a delicious supper, then went to "roost".

I was awake at dawn, so while the others lay asleep I thought out a plan of the day's work. It occurred to me that if we could make a sledge that the donkey could draw, it would

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

enable us to fetch all we wanted from Tent House without so many journeys and so much trouble. Therefore, as soon as our morning meal was over, I called the boys to assist me to get wood for this purpose. We then commenced our carpentering, and after some hard toil we had a useful if somewhat odd-looking carriage, which proved quite a success.

The next day Fritz and I went over to the wreck and brought off some chests of clothes, sacks of maize, oats, peas, and wheat, a small handmill, a ploughshare, some cartwheels, and a number of other treasures. We even succeeded in breaking off some of the cabin doors, windows, and other parts of the ship, with which we could make our house more comfortable and secure. These we bound together with cords, and made them float to shore at the stern of our raft.

Having landed all our wealth, we sent for the sledge, upon which we took most of it to the Nest. My wife suggested that we should pay another visit to Gourd Wood in order to get a good supply of plates and dishes of all sorts and sizes. We readily agreed to this plan, and decided to go together, taking a store of provisions upon the sledge to last us during our journey. One fine morning we rose at dawn and set out in high spirits, Fritz's little monkey, whom we called Knips, accompanying us, as well as Turk and Juno. When we arrived at the wood where the apes had pelted Fritz and me with cocoanuts, Ernest gazed longingly at the ripe fruit.

"How I wish some would fall!" he sighed.

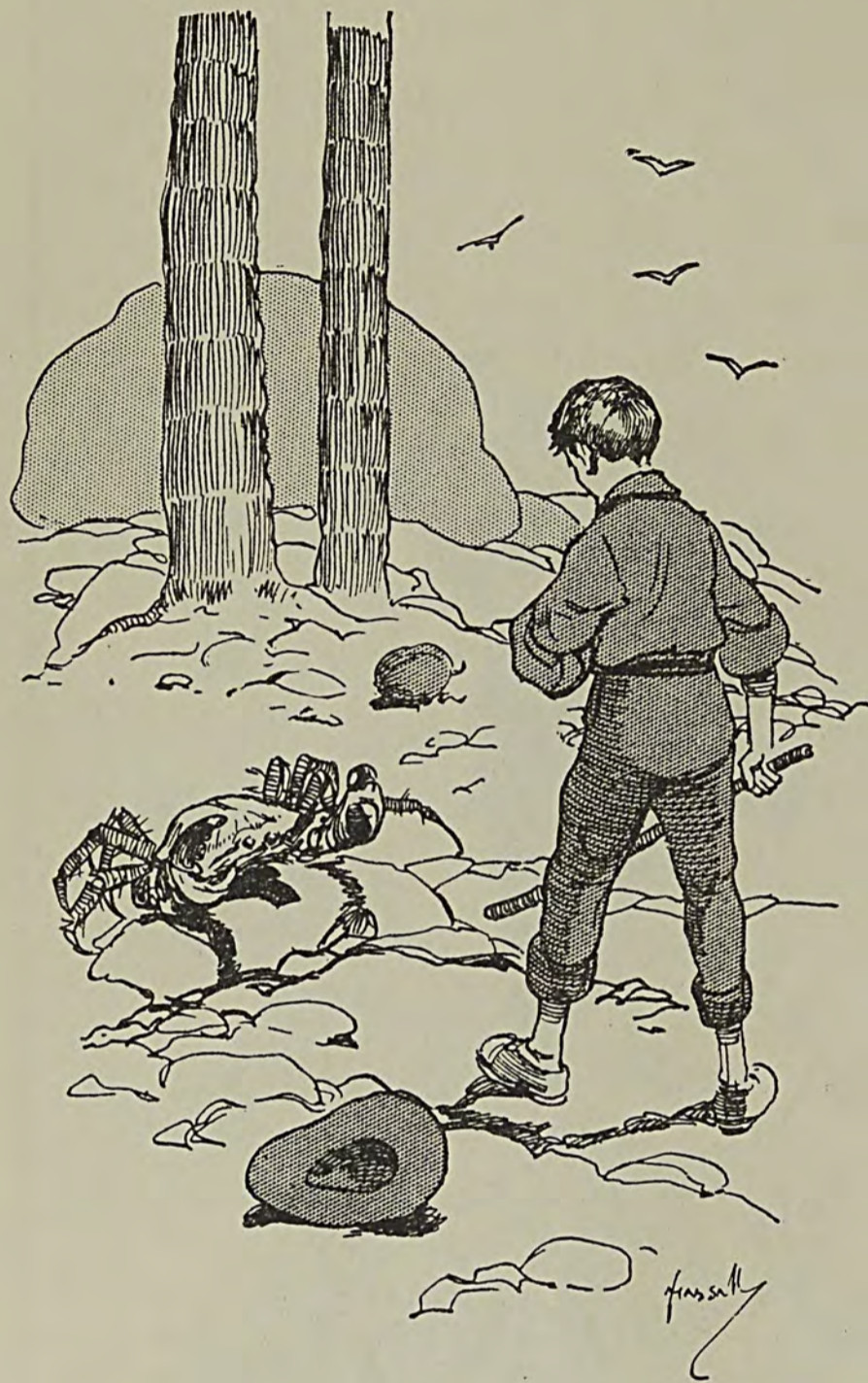
He had scarcely said the words, when down plumped a large nut at his feet: and almost immediately down came two more.

"Why, it is like a fairy tale!" he cried. "My wish is granted as soon as spoken."



"DOWN PLUMPED A LARGE NUT AT HIS FEET"

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



“I think the fairy in this case is some cross old ape who wants to drive us away,” I replied, with a smile.

But at that moment Jack suddenly exclaimed: “Look! look! I see him! It’s not a monkey, but a hideous creature with claws!”

I glanced in the direction Jack pointed to, and saw a large land-crab coming down the trunk of the tree.

When it reached the ground, Jack threw his coat over the crab’s head, whereupon I soon made an end of it with my axe.

The dead body was then placed on the sledge, and we continued our tramp.

When we reached Gourd Wood we sat down to make the bowls and flasks. After an hour’s work the two elder boys and myself went in search of a spring, while my wife and the younger ones rested. Jack ran on in front, towards some high rocks, among which he hoped to discover a cool stream. Suddenly he startled us by a loud cry:

“Father—Fritz—come! A crocodile! a crocodile!”

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

"Nonsense, Jack!" I answered, as I hurried to his side. "There could not be a crocodile in this dry, parched place."

"What is it then, Father?" said Jack, pointing out a long reptile lying perfectly still upon the ground.

"Why, that is an iguana, the largest kind of lizard there is," I replied. "It is quite harmless, but the flesh is very good to eat, so it would be a valuable prize to take back with us."

Fritz would have shot at it, but I told him that the scales of the iguana's coat were shot-proof. Instead, I threw a noose round its neck, then, holding it tight, I sprang on the animal's back, thrusting a light switch into its nostril. It died almost at once, without appearing to suffer any pain. Next followed the question of how we were going to get the dead reptile to our sledge. As there seemed no better way, I took it upon my back and marched off with it, Jack acting as train-bearer and supporting the tail. Returning to the others, we packed up and set off for the Nest, where we arrived tired out.



CHAPTER V

ONE day, when Fritz and I were out for a walk in the woods, my attention was attracted by some bushes that were loaded with small white berries. Upon examining these I found them to be wax trees, the berries of which could be made into candles.

We gathered a number of the berries, and put them in one of the canvas bags we had with us. A little farther on we saw a large tree with sticky-looking balls clinging to its bark. Fritz tried to pull one off, but could not get it from the tree, although he was able to bend it into any shape.

"Oh, look, Father," he said, "this gum is quite elastic! Can it possibly be indiarubber?"

I felt the stuff myself and found that he was quite right.

"This is a splendid find!" I cried. "This gum will be of use to us in many ways, but especially to make us boots that will keep out the damp."

"How can that be done?" enquired Fritz, in surprise.

"First you must fill a sock with sand," I explained, "then put the gum all round it. When the coating is as thick as you need, leave it to harden in the sun, then pour out the sand, and you have a good waterproof boot!"

We met with no more adventures that day, but with our wax berries and indiarubber we felt we had done very well.

My next piece of work was the making of a cart, and, as we had brought some wheels from the ship, this did not prove such a very difficult task.

"As you are so clever," said my wife, with a smile, "I



"FRITZ TRIED TO PULL ONE OFF"

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



do wish you could invent some other way of climbing to the Nest. I should so like to get up there without scaling that dreadful ladder. Could you not make a flight of steps?"

After carefully thinking it over, I came to the conclusion that I might manage to carry out this idea. I knew that a swarm of bees had made their home in the trunk of the tree we lived upon, which led me to believe it was hollow. When they knew this, the boys tapped the wood to try and judge by the sound how far the cavity extended. They paid dearly for their attempt, as the whole swarm of bees burst out angrily, and stung them on the face, neck, and hands. When their pain was eased, they were all very anxious for me to punish their tormentors by driving them out of their home. As this had to be done before I could arrange to build my stairs, I at once set to work about it. First, I

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

converted a large gourd into a beehive, for which, to protect it from wind and rain, I made a straw roof-covering. The new home was then quite ready to receive the swarm.

Directly we were up the next morning we set about removing the bees. We got some moist clay, with which we closed up every hole in the tree, except that through which they usually entered. Then I took a pipe of tobacco, and, having lighted it, I put the bowl into the open hole and fitted it tightly round with clay. I then began to puff the tobacco fumes into the bees' nest, and in this way drugged them. Then we cut out a piece of the trunk, just below the hole, and inside we saw the whole hollow full of wax combs and honey. The bees were clinging to one of the combs, as if fast asleep. I carefully and quickly removed them, comb and all, and placed them under the gourd. We then took the rest



THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

of the delicious honey and put it into a cask. As the queen bee quickly settled in the new hive, the others soon lived there contentedly enough. In this way we had a hive of fine bees, and the tree was left free for our use.

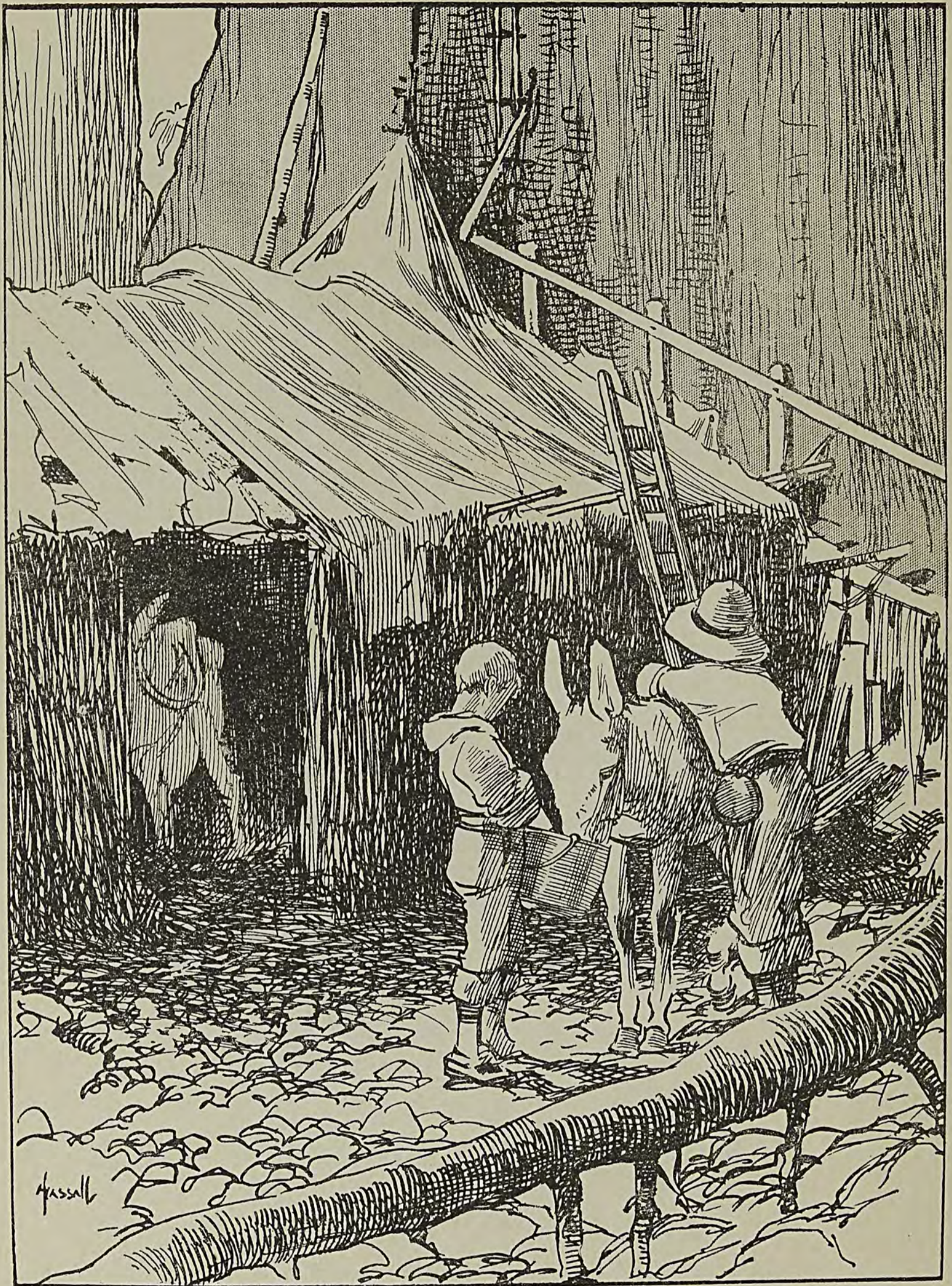
The next thing to be done was to find out how far the hollow of the tree-trunk extended, and to our great joy we discovered that it reached right to the branch upon which our little house was built. We therefore cut a doorway in the bottom part, and fitted in one of the cabin doors which we had brought from the wreck. After this we cleared the rotten wood away from the inside, and made it smooth all the way up. Then we fixed a strong pole firmly in the centre, and with some planks and the staves of a large barrel we built the stairs round it. To do this, we cut a notch in the pole and one in the side of the trunk to support each step. Upward and upward we worked, cutting open spaces in the side of the trunk as we ascended, to let in the light and air. We afterwards fitted some of the cabin windows into these spaces, and, when all was finished, we had a nice closed-in flight of steps leading to our leafy home.

When upon one of his rambles, Fritz discovered an eagle's nest, out of which he took one of the young birds. At first it was very wild and fierce, but after a time he was able to tame it, so that it would perch upon his wrist whenever he called or whistled to it.

I knew we must now be near the rainy season, so that it was time to make a good roof for the Nest, as well as some place of shelter for our animals. After we had put as stout a covering as we could over our little dwelling-place, we built a long shed for the live stock, together with a barn, hay loft,



"IT WOULD PERCH UPON HIS WRIST"



“WE BUILT A LONG SHED FOR THE LIVE STOCK”

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

and storeroom. We made the roof of these with bamboo canes, laid close together, and bound tightly. Upon these we spread clay and moss and a thick coat of tar, that the wet could not get through. Having prepared a place to receive them, we next employed ourselves in laying in a stock of provisions to last us during the time when we should not be able to go hunting.

While we were all busy at this work, little Frank came running to show us some blades of long grass he had found.

Taking one from him, I discovered it to be a kind of flax plant, the sight of which gave my wife the greatest pleasure.

The boys at once started off to collect as much of the precious grass as they could, while I thought of a way in which to prepare the flax for weaving. I should also have to make my wife a spindle and some wheels, reels, and combs, with which to turn it into good, strong homespun.

CHAPTER VI

AT length the clouds burst and the rain came down in floods. We soon found that, in spite of all our efforts, the Nest was not strong enough to weather the storms. The wind blew part of the roof off, and let the damp in upon us, so we were obliged to sit on the stairs in the trunk of the tree. As we were afraid the Nest would be entirely destroyed by the violence of the tempests, we then took refuge in the shed we had built on the ground, where we managed as best we could. In the daytime we sat upon the stairs near one of the windows in the trunk, and while my wife mended our

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

clothes, the boys and I busied ourselves making the spindle and combs.

Week after week rolled by and saw us still prisoners. So uncomfortable were we in our cramped quarters, that we determined not to spend another winter at our present abode.

"As soon as the weather will allow," I said, "we will go to the rocks round Tent House, and try to find there some place where we can take shelter from next year's storms."

I cannot express our delight when we once more saw the bright sun, and felt the warmth of its brilliant rays. When we had repaired the damage done to Falcon's Nest, Fritz, Jack, and I set out for Tent House, with the object of making a cave in the rocks. Having fixed upon a place which seemed to me to be the most suitable for our purpose, we commenced to hew away at the hard earth with all our strength. After hours of toil we had made so little progress that we began to grow disheartened. However, we steadily persevered, spending day after day at our labour, until we were rewarded in a way which far exceeded our hopes. Once, while Fritz and I were carrying away the loose earth, we were surprised to hear a loud shout from Jack, who was still busy with his pickaxe.

"Father! Fritz! It has gone through!" he cried. "I have pierced the rock right through!"

Fritz and I hurried to his side, when to our great amazement we found that he had really come upon an open space in the rock. We set to work with a will, and in a very short time had made an opening large enough for us to walk through. But before venturing in I set fire to some dry grass, which I thrust into the hole. This was to see if the air was fit for man to breathe; and as the fire went out at once I knew that



"HE HAD REALLY COME UPON AN OPEN SPACE"

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

it was not. I then sent Fritz to fetch some signal rockets we had brought from the ship, which were stored at Tent House. By letting these off in the cave we might clear away the foul gas and make it fit to enter. When the lighted rockets had been thrown in, I once more tried the burning grass, and this time it flared brightly. So great was Jack's joy and excitement at his wonderful discovery, that he ran off as fast as he could to tell his mother and brothers. In a little while they all returned with him, bringing a number of candles with which to light up the cave. Then in we marched, each carrying our candle. For a few minutes we were speechless with wonder at the grand and beautiful sight which met our eyes. We were in a grotto of diamonds!—a vast cavern of glittering crystal! Great shining pillars rose up from the floor, while above us hung hundreds of bright, glass-like drops, which



THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



sparkled with every colour of the rainbow. I broke off a piece of the crystal and put it to my tongue. Then I knew we were in a cavern of rock salt.

We returned to Falcon's Nest with minds full of plans for turning this splendid cave into a house for us to live in.

The following day we were all eager to start upon this new work, and the first thing we did was to hew holes in the rock to let in light and air. I then fitted them with some of the glass we had from the ship, and so made a row of windows. Then came the task of dividing the cave into rooms. We planned two bedrooms, a sitting and eating room, a kitchen, and a workshop; and we made cosy stables and a storehouse. I also contrived to build a fireplace with a proper chimney.

While the fair weather lasted we visited our tree home now and then, and once when we were on our way there we



PICKING THE COTTON PLANT

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

came across some curious little bushes, the branches of which were covered with pure white flakes.

“Why, it is the cotton plant!” I exclaimed, “which we have often looked for in vain.”

My wife was delighted, and made us all gather as much as we could carry, not forgetting to pluck some of the ripe seed, that we might raise a crop at Rock House.

As there were still three months before the rain set in, we made up our minds to pass the time in planning a farm, and building a cottage and some stables and barns. We chose a beautiful spot, where there was plenty of fine grass, growing amid shady trees. Here we set to work to make a comfortable home for the animals, as well as one for ourselves when we wished to live there; so that we now had three residences: Falcon's Nest, Rock House, and Woodlands, our farmhouse.

We were all safe in our rocky castle before the rain began to fall. Our cave dwelling was very cosy and weather-proof, and we found plenty of work and amusement to keep us from being dull. My wife sat at her spindle while I made stools, chairs, and tables with the help of a lathe I had got from the ship. The boys also did a good deal of carpentering, fitting up shelves and cupboards for our use. We had a box of books from the wreck, which gave us much pleasure while resting from our labours. But although we were quite contented, we were very glad when the rain ceased, so that we could once more roam in the open air.

A few days after, while we were standing outside our house, Fritz suddenly exclaimed, “I see something so strange in the distance, Father. It seems to be drawn in coils on the ground like a cable. What can it be?”

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

I at once looked through the spyglass in the direction he pointed to.

"It is an enormous serpent!" I cried in alarm. "Go, all of you, into the cave at once, for I fear it is coming here."

We all hastened into our dwelling, and put bars up to the windows and door. Then we placed ourselves at an opening we had made high up in the rock, and there stood with fast-beating hearts, watching the advance of the horrible reptile. The boys and myself took aim and fired at it, but our shots did not appear to have any effect. After a while it glided away and disappeared among the reeds in the marsh.

For the three following days we dared not stir more than a few yards from our door, for fear the snake was still about. On the fourth morning, when I went to let out some of the animals to graze, our good old ass suddenly broke away from the halter and bolted off as hard as he could go towards the marsh. In vain we called and shouted to get him back. In another moment we saw, to our intense horror, the huge snake rear itself up from its hiding-place and open its cruel jaws. Our poor donkey was too near to escape, and in less time than it takes to tell he was tight in the folds of the monster. When it had crushed the life out of its prey it slowly swallowed the body whole, then lay down upon the sand as if insensible.

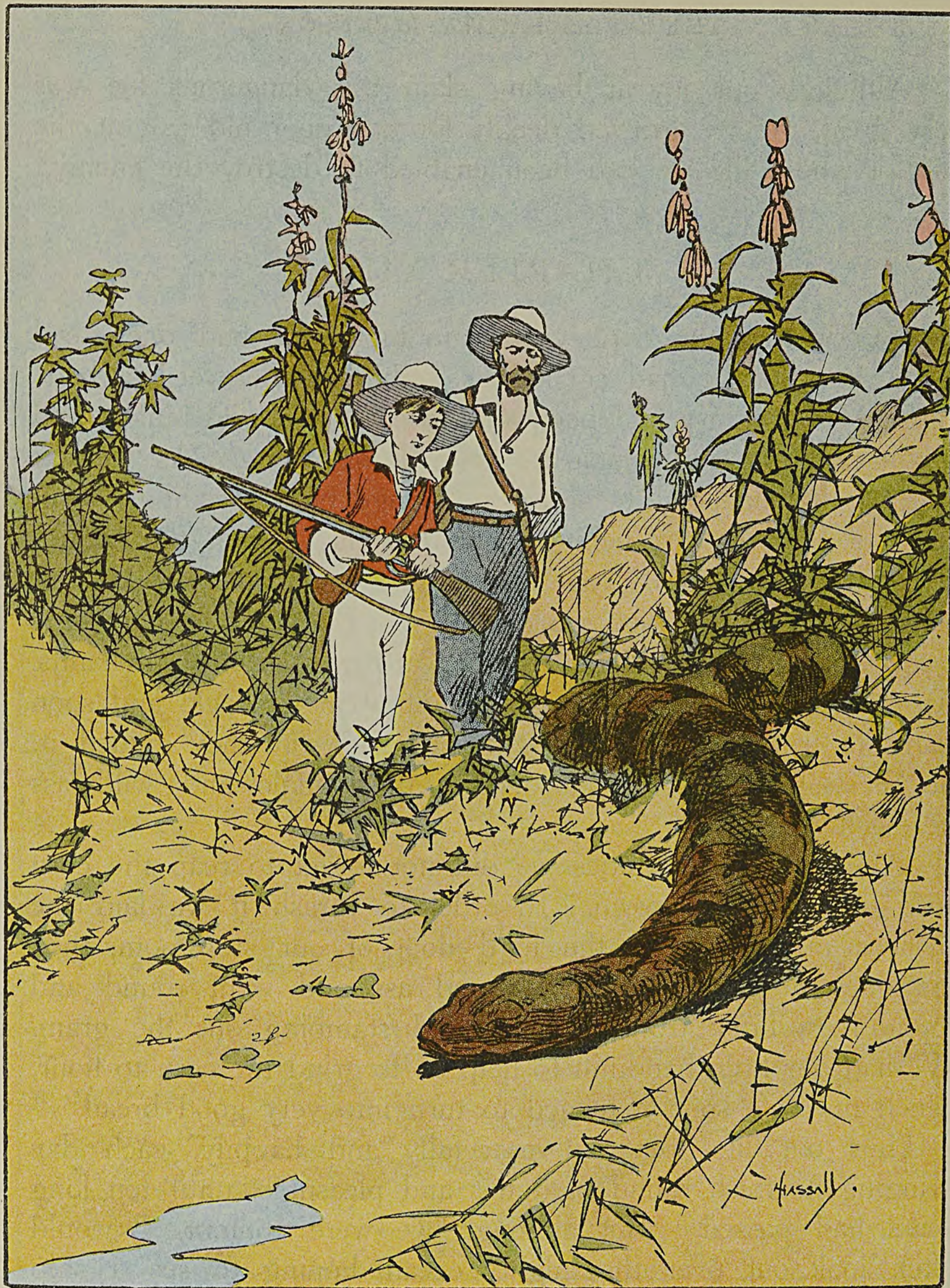
"Now," said I to Fritz, "is our time to go and kill it."

Shouldering our guns at once, we hurried to the outstretched reptile. When we drew near enough we took a straight aim, and each lodged a bullet in its head. Our next shot went in its eye, and, with a violent shudder, the hideous creature lay dead on the plain.



Hassall

"I AT ONCE LOOKED THROUGH THE SPYGLASS"



"THE HIDEOUS CREATURE LAY DEAD ON THE PLAIN"

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

Although our joy at having slain this dangerous foe was very great, yet we grieved deeply for our poor old ass, at the cost of whose life we had been enabled to destroy the enemy.

CHAPTER VII

NOW that the donkey was no more, we had one steed less, for he had carried us faithfully wherever we bade him. However, we had been able to capture a wild buffalo and a wild ass, both of which we trained for riding. As well as these, Fritz managed to secure a strange but exceedingly swift beast of burden, this being a fine ostrich. When the beautiful and majestic bird was first caught it was very wild, and refused to take the food we offered it. But after a short time it became so tame that it would eat grain from our hands. At last it allowed the boys to mount upon its back, and soon learnt to trot or gallop and go whichever way they guided it. So marvellous was its speed, that the buffalo and wild ass were left far behind.

Amid our many duties we did not forget to reap the corn and grain we had sown. In order to thrash it we laid the sheaves in a circle on the hard floor of our storeroom, then the boys mounted the buffalo and ass and went round and round at a brisk trot, tramping and stamping out the grain. We had our little handmill to help us to grind the corn to flour, which my wife soon managed to turn into very good bread.

Thus our life went on peacefully and happily, each day bringing its fresh round of duties and pleasures, until ten long years had passed. But although we were content, I would often look out over the mighty ocean, hoping to see a ship

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

that would bring us news of our friends in the wide world beyond. Fritz, who was now a grown man, would sometimes take long trips by himself, as he liked to explore the surrounding coast. Once, when he returned from one of these excursions, he drew me away from the others to tell me that a very strange thing had happened. He said he had been surrounded by a flock of large birds, called albatrosses, and, in his endeavour to get free of them, he had struck one with a stick. The bird was stunned and fell at his feet. Then, to his great amazement, he saw that it had a piece of white linen tied to its leg, upon which were written these words: "Save a poor Englishwoman who is on the smoking rock". At first he could hardly believe his eyes, and did not know what to think; but as at that moment the albatross began to show signs of returning life, he immediately felt that the appeal must be answered, and the bird must carry the answer back to her who sent it. Hastily tearing a strip from his handkerchief, he traced these words upon it: "Do not despair! Help is near!" Having tied the linen to the bird's leg, he did all he could to assist it to recover from its blow. It very soon did so, and stretching its wings flew swiftly away, bearing its message with it.

Fritz told me he was determined to search for the "smoking rock", and do all in his power to save the poor woman who was upon it. I was most astonished at his wonderful tale, and as anxious as he to find and assist the stranger; indeed, the thought of seeing another human being brought tears to my eyes.

It was therefore decided that we should make a tour round the coast to look everywhere for the smoking rock.



"IT FLEW SWIFTLY AWAY, BEARING ITS MESSAGE"

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

I arranged for my wife, the three younger boys, and myself to sail in the large boat we had built, while Fritz would go in the small canoe.

We thought it wiser not to tell the others yet of the real object of our journey, so they imagined that it was only a little pleasure trip.

One fine morning we set sail, Fritz starting ahead as our guide.

For some days we were at sea, going from place to place, the while Fritz and I kept a sharp lookout for a sign of smoke coming from the rocks. But not a glimpse of any did we see, and at length I told my son that we could not spend further time in searching.

He was very disappointed, but said he saw that I was quite right.

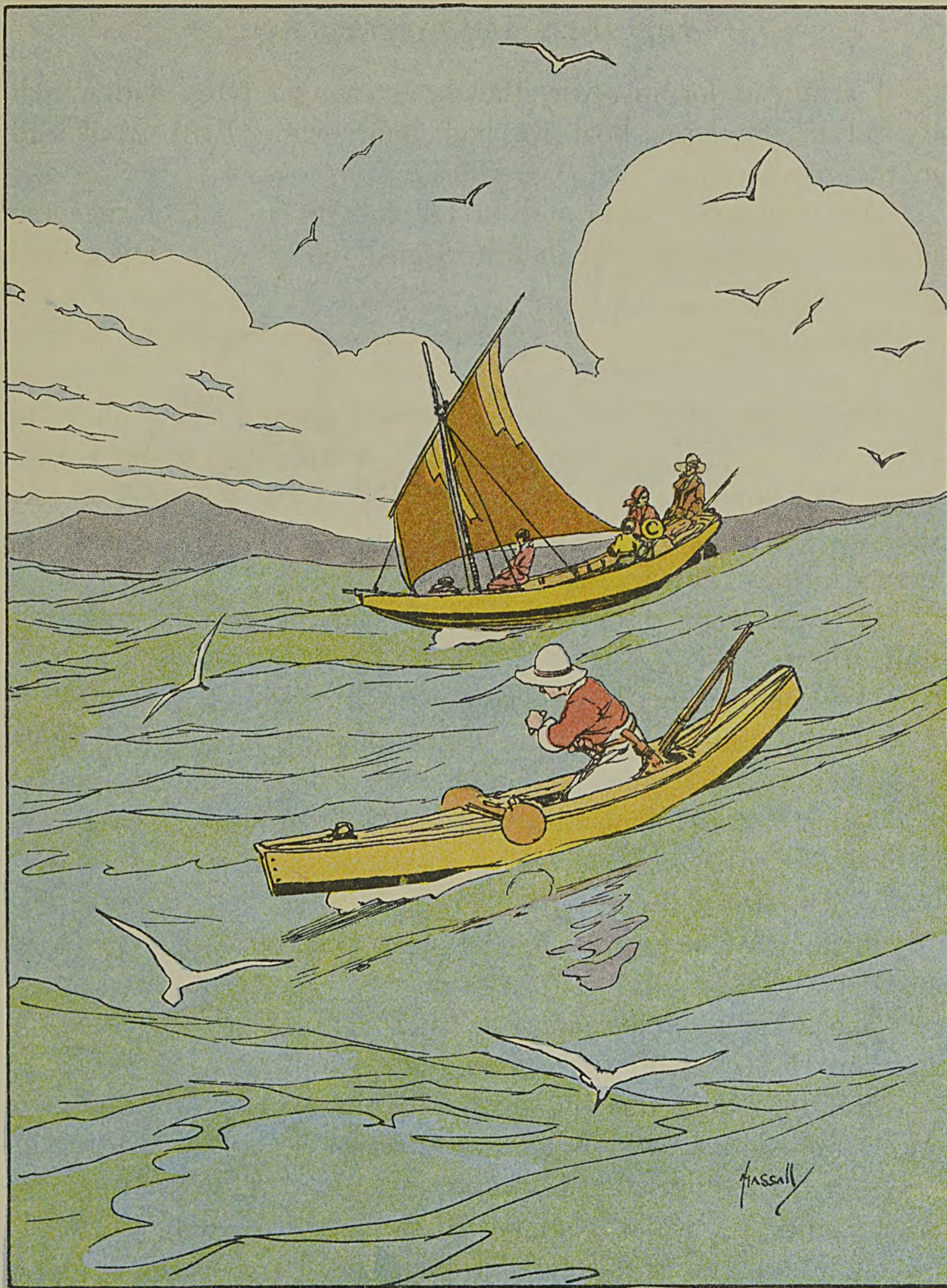
However, when I awoke the next morning I found he had started off alone in his canoe, leaving me a little note in which he told me he could not give up the search, so had gone farther along the coast, and begged we would wait a little while for him.

When two days passed and he did not return, my wife began to get somewhat anxious, so I told her the reason of his departure.

She was as much amazed as I had been, but said she felt sure Fritz would succeed in his quest.

Not long after this the small boat appeared in the distance. We strained our eyes to see who was in it, but discovered no one but Fritz himself. However, as soon as he came up to us I could see by his glad face that he had good news to tell.

“Father,” he whispered joyfully, “I have found the one



"ONE FINE MORNING WE SET SAIL"

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



I went to seek. She is a young girl who has been shipwrecked, and has been alone upon the coast for some time. At present she is dressed as a man, because she found men's clothes the most suitable while on board ship. I have come back to take you all to her!"

The glad tidings were told to my wife, but the boys were kept in ignorance, as we wished to see their surprise when they beheld the fair stranger.

An hour's sail took us to a small island, from which could be seen a column of rising smoke. Here Fritz guided our craft to land, and, springing upon shore, bade us all follow him. Having made fast our boat, we hastened to do so, the boys wondering very much what it was all about. Presently we came to a trodden footpath leading through a group of

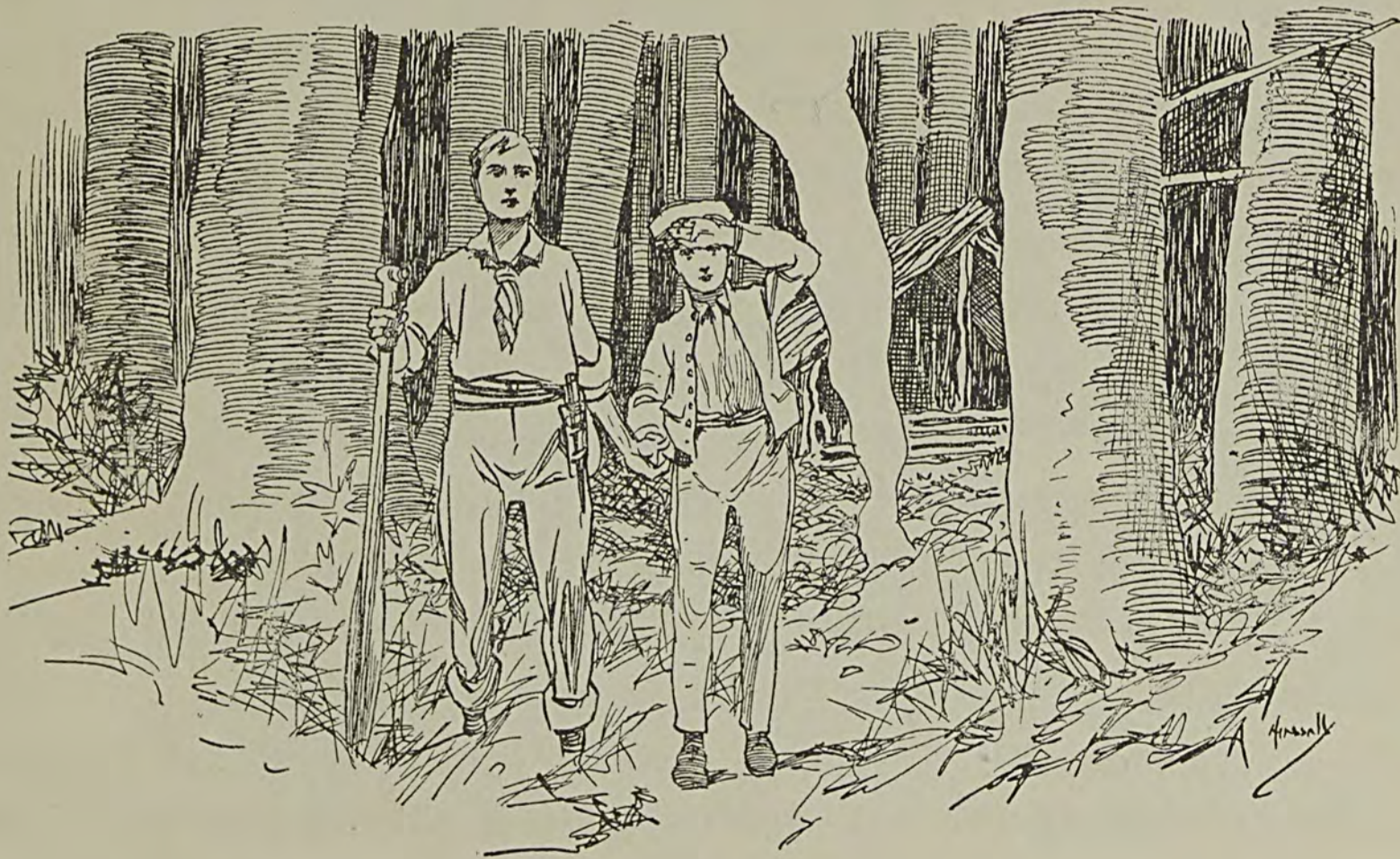
THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

trees, in the midst of which we beheld a small hut, with a bright fire burning at the entrance. Fritz disappeared into this shelter, only to reappear the next moment, leading by the hand a slight, handsome youth, dressed as an English midshipman. The boys stood staring, mute with astonishment, while the pair advanced to meet us.

“Father and Mother,” said Fritz, “this is Edward Montrose; will you not welcome him as a friend?”

“That we will indeed,” I exclaimed, holding out my hands to the young stranger, “and with all our hearts.”

My wife then warmly embraced the supposed youth, while the boys, having recovered their speech, said all they could to express their delight. But they were not deceived by the midshipman's attire, and made Fritz own that his new friend was really a girl. As soon as the greetings were over, we all sat down to enjoy a good meal, during which Fritz told us



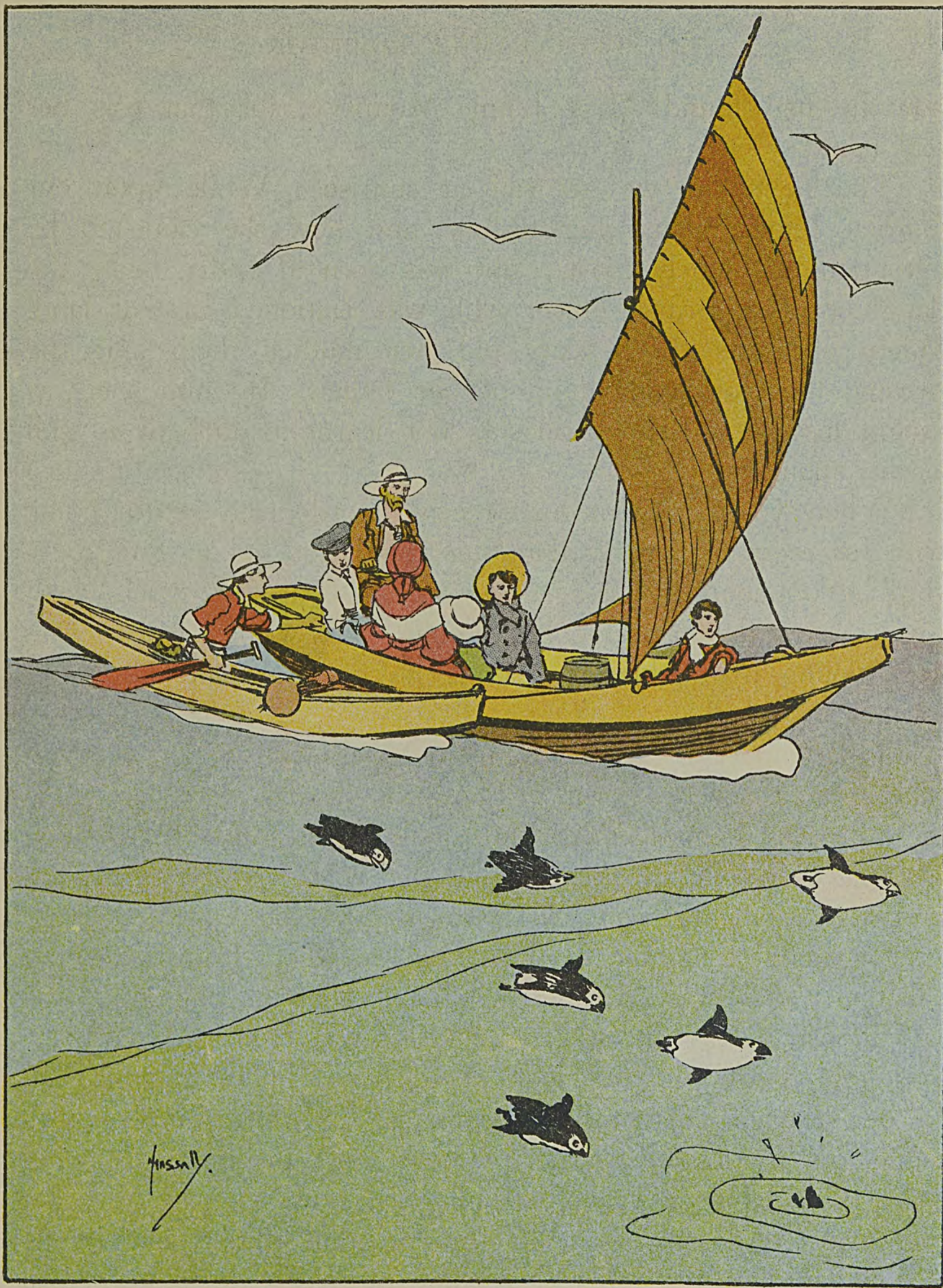
THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

how he had found Miss Jenny Montrose, for that was her real name.

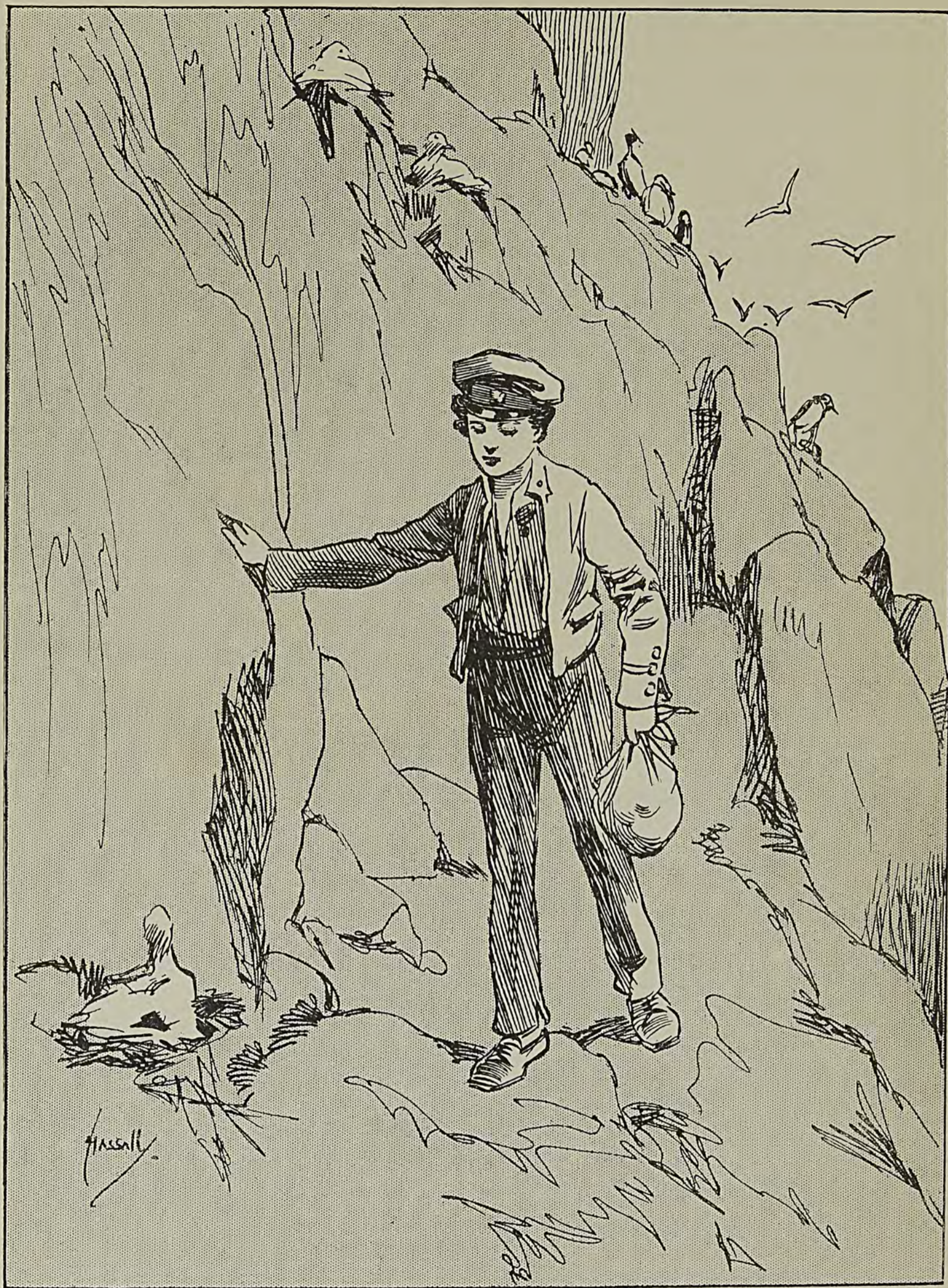
The next day we set sail at sunrise. While upon our journey Jenny related her history, and how she came to be left upon that lonely coast. She was born in India, being the daughter of a British officer who was stationed in that land. When she was three years old her mother died, and she became the close companion of her father. By him she was taught to ride and shoot, till she soon learnt to do both as well as any man.

When Colonel Montrose received orders to return home with his regiment, as his daughter could not sail in the troopship he obtained a passage for her on board a vessel which was to leave India at the same time. He wished her to pass as a young man while at sea, as he felt it would be better for her to do so.

The ship had not sailed many weeks when it was overtaken by a severe storm. Those on board were forced to try to save themselves in the small boats, and Jenny took her place in one of these. But the wild sea overturned it, and its occupants were all thrown into the water. Jenny was a good swimmer, so managed to keep from drowning till the waves washed her on shore. For a long time she lay almost dead, but at length her senses returned, and she was able to get up and look about her. There was no sign to be seen of any of her shipmates, and she found herself alone on a desolate coast, without any prospect of being rescued. Being a brave, strong girl, however, she did not give way to despair even in this dreadful plight, but immediately set herself to discover what means of keeping herself



THE RETURN SAIL



"SHE COLLECTED SHELL-FISH AND BIRDS' EGGS"

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

alive were within her reach. She collected shell-fish and birds' eggs to eat, and actually contrived to build a small hut, made of branches of trees, as a place of shelter.

Fortunately she had a knife and a flint in her pocket, with which she was enabled to kindle a fire of dry twigs, that she kept continually burning ever after. She also made a bow and arrows; so, being a good shot, she was able to kill some wild birds, and thus provide herself with more food.

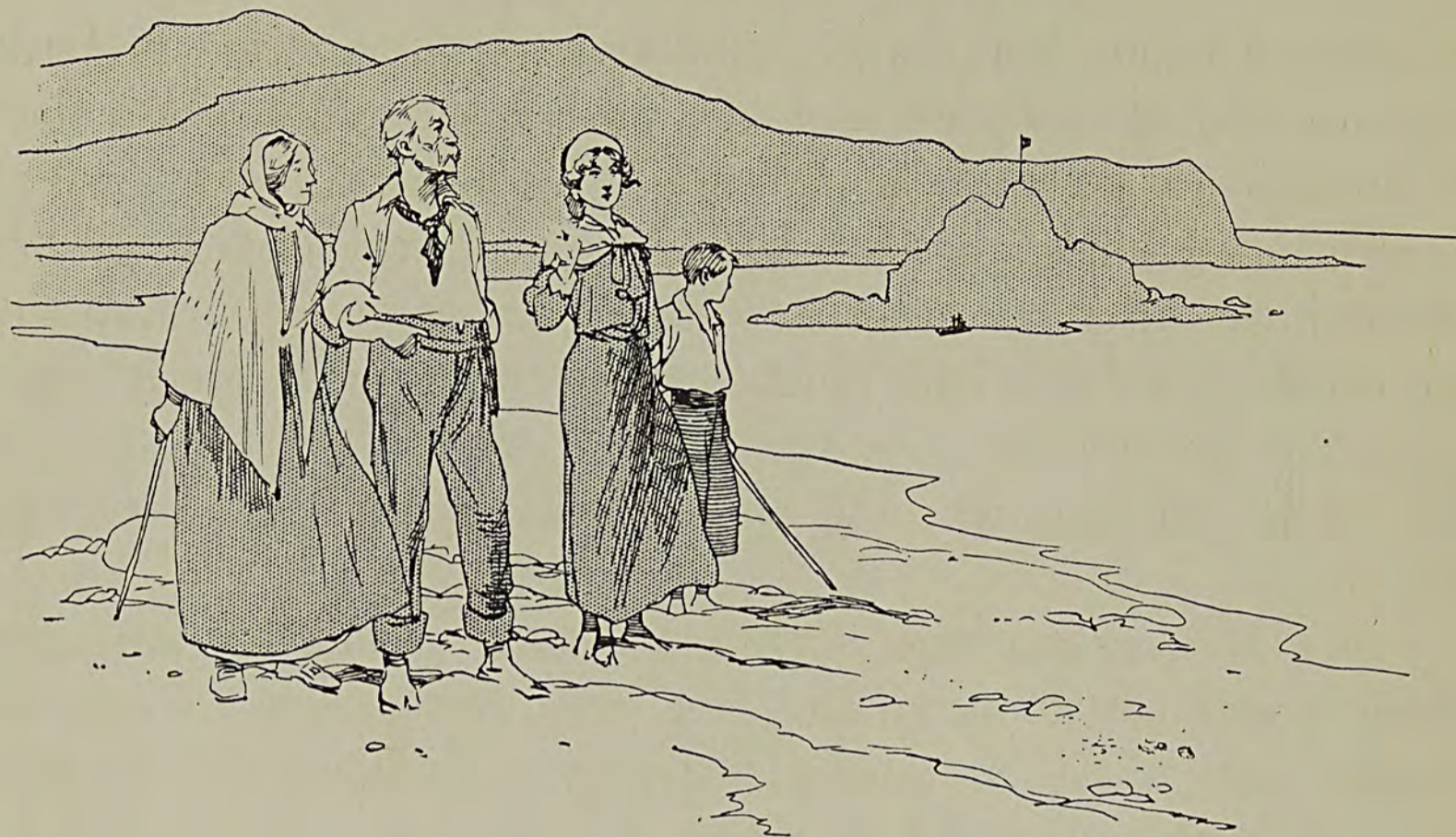
By thus exercising her mind and making good use of her physical powers, she not only kept herself in good health, but was also able to fix her thoughts so steadily upon other matters that there was scarcely any chance for her to grow gloomy and sad, on thinking over her unhappy lot.

Once she caught an albatross in a snare she had laid upon the ground, when, having tied the linen Fritz had seen to its leg, she let it fly, hoping that someone would read her message and come to her aid.

As we knew, this hope had been realized, greatly to Jenny's joy and our own as well.

When we arrived at Safety Bay, and led our welcome guest to Rock House, her astonishment was unbounded. She said she could scarcely believe that she was far from any civilized nation, and among a family who had been wrecked like herself upon a lonely coast. After she had been with us a few days, and had seen Falcon's Nest and Woodlands, with all the other work of our hands, her surprise increased, and she declared we were quite the most wonderful people she had ever met.

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



CHAPTER VIII

THE rainy season came and went, and once more spring smiled upon us. One morning I sent Fritz, Jack, and Frank to Shark Island to repair the flagstaff and guns which we had set up there. While they were gone the rest of us strolled up and down the beach, enjoying the cool sea breeze. As soon as the boys had cleaned and loaded the guns, they fired them off to let us know all was well. Scarcely had they done so, when the sound of three other guns came booming across the water, as if in answer to their shots. We stopped short in our walk, speechless with astonishment. "Could it be possible that we had heard guns from a strange ship?" was the question in each of our hearts as we strained our eyes across the water. We saw the boys leap hurriedly into their boat and begin paddling quickly to land. I knew not what to

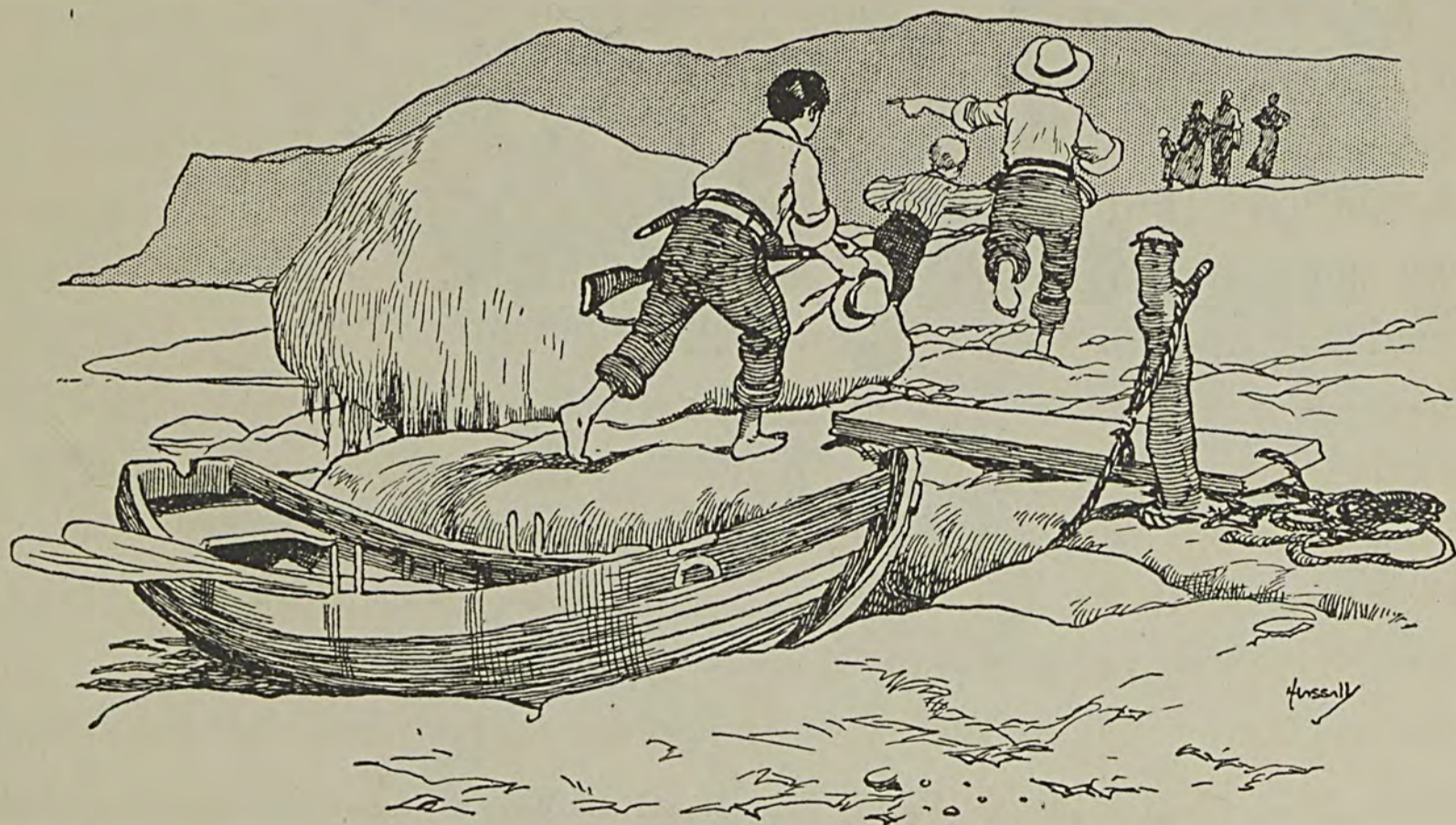
THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

think. Anxiety, hope, joy, and doubt all sprang into my mind at once, for if a ship was really near us it might either be a European vessel that would bring us news of the civilized world, or it might be a ship of pirates who would rob and murder us. Before any of us were able to express our thoughts in words, the boys had reached shore, and run eagerly up to us.

“Did you hear them?” they cried excitedly. “What shall we do?”

“It is too late now for us to do anything,” I answered, “for it will soon be dusk. We must go home to talk the matter over, and to-morrow morning we will find out from what ship the guns were fired.”

We all returned to Rock House in the greatest state of excitement, where we sat far into the night talking over the wonderful event, and discussing what would be the best course



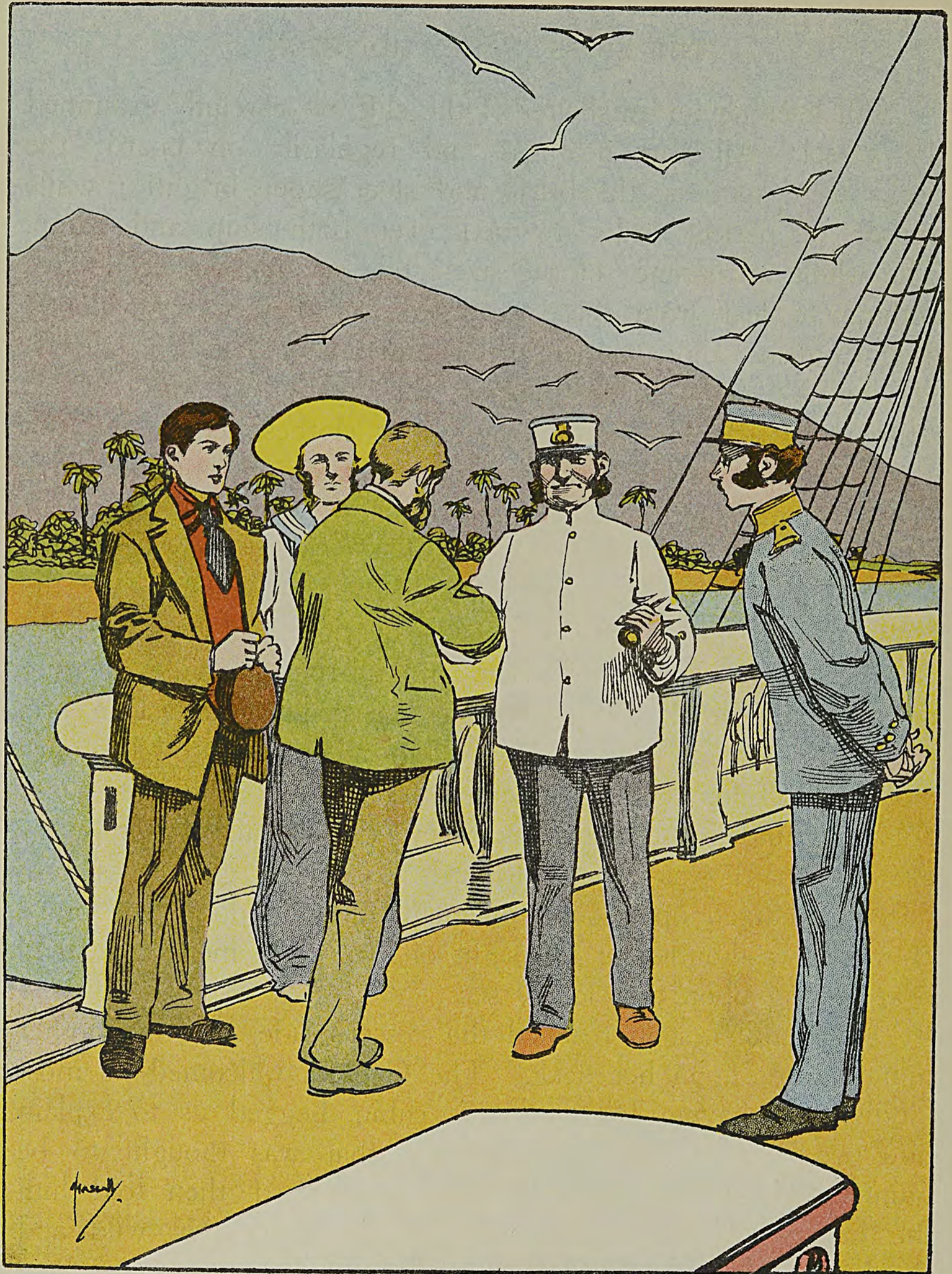


“FRITZ AND I PADDLED OFF ROUND THE HIGH CLIFFS”

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

for us to take. When at length we lay down to rest, none of us was able to sleep, and about midnight the wind began to rise and a terrific storm came on. For two days and two nights this hurricane continued, but on the third morning the sun again appeared, and the wind and waves grew calm. When all was still once more, I started off with Jack and Frank to Shark's Island. As soon as we arrived there we fired off the guns, then waited to hear what would happen. For a few moments there was silence, then an answering report rolled in the distance. This told us that, without doubt, there was a ship near, so I decided that Fritz and I should set out in the direction from which the firing appeared to come, to discover what kind of vessel it was. We then returned to Rock House, where we found the rest of the family anxiously awaiting us, all wildly excited at hearing the answering guns. Arming ourselves with pistols, cutlasses, and a spyglass, Fritz and I got into our boat and paddled off round the high cliffs on the left of the bay. For nearly an hour we went on without seeing the sign of a ship, but just as we rounded a point of land our hearts gave a leap of joy and thankfulness, for, lying in a sheltered cove, her sails furled and anchor dropped, was a brig-of-war, with the English colours flying at her mast. By the aid of the glass I could distinguish figures upon the deck, while on the shore beyond I saw several tents pitched beneath the shelter of the trees, with the smoke of fires rising among them. I then handed the glass to Fritz, who eagerly raised it to his eye.

“I can see the Captain, Father!” he exclaimed. “He is speaking to one of the officers, and I can see his face quite plainly. I am certain he is an Englishman!”



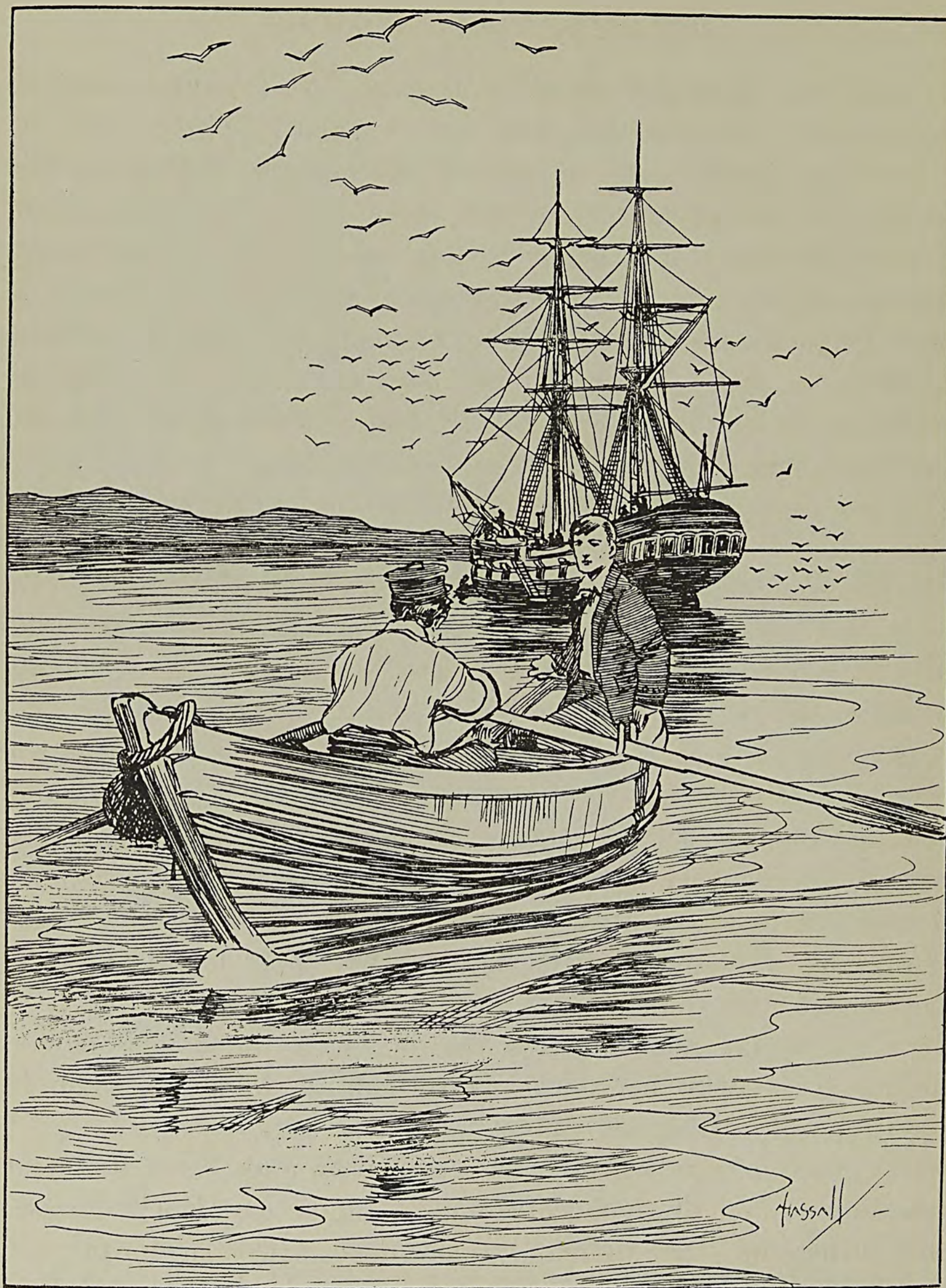
“THE CAPTAIN WELCOMED US MOST KINDLY”

Copyright, Blackie & Son, Limited

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

Still keeping under shelter of the cliff, we carefully examined the vessel. All was neatness and regularity on board: the decks were spotless, the brass and steel shone brightly; while an air of perfect order reigned over both ship and camp. The whole appearance of the scene told us that we need have nothing to fear from these strangers, as they were evidently true English sailors under the command of English officers. Having satisfied ourselves upon this point, we resolved to return to Rock House to change our clothes, as we did not care to appear before the Captain in our rough working garb. We therefore rowed back as quickly as we could, to make our little boat look as smart as possible. Meanwhile my wife overhauled our wardrobe, to find the neatest uniforms for the boys and myself. Jenny, who was overjoyed at the prospect of seeing her fellow-countrymen, and at the chance of hearing news of her father, did everything she could to assist in preparing us for our departure. When all was ready, we once more set off for the bay wherein the English ship was lying. As we rounded the point and drew within hail of her, every eye on board was turned towards us, every glass was produced and fixed upon our movements, and no doubt the brave crew were astounded at the sight of two white men in a small boat rowing upon that lonely sea.

Fritz and I soon reached the vessel's side, and in another minute were upon her deck. The Captain welcomed us most kindly, and, having led us to his cabin, begged us to explain how we came to be upon a coast that was thought to be uninhabited, or the abode of only savages. I then told him the history of the wreck, and our life upon that wild and desolate land; also the history of Jenny Montrose, and how



“FRITZ AND JACK HURRIED OFF IN THE SMALL BOAT”

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

my son had been the means of rescuing her from her terrible position.

“Then,” exclaimed the gallant officer, grasping Fritz by the hand, “let me heartily thank you in my own name and in that of Colonel Montrose, for it was the hope of finding that poor girl that brought me to these shores. Her loss has been a dreadful blow to the Colonel, yet, though he has heard no word of her since the disappearance of the ship in which she sailed from India, he has always felt that he would see his daughter again.”

Fritz having made a suitable reply to the praises he received, Captain Littlestone—for that was his name—then asked to be introduced to my wife and Miss Montrose. He despatched one of the officers in a boat to bring back the rest of our party, and before very long they were all on board.

Our kind host greeted them warmly, while the rest of the ship's officers could not do enough to give us pleasure. We had an excellent luncheon, the time passing very quickly while we were relating our experiences, and listening to news of the outer world. The Captain told us that an invalid gentleman, a Mr. Wolston, with his wife and two daughters, had sailed with him from Sydney, and that at present they were resting in the tents upon shore. In the course of the afternoon we went to visit them, finding them an exceedingly agreeable and pleasant family.

We spent that night with our new friends, and the next morning I invited them all to come and visit Rock House, and Fritz and Jack hurried off in the small boat to prepare for their reception.



THE PARTING WITH OUR SONS

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

No words can express the amazement of our guests when they arrived at the entrance to Safety Bay and saw our rock palace, surrounded by its beautiful grounds.

After a rest and a meal we showed them Falcon's Nest and our other property, which they admired and wondered at exceedingly.

But amid all the rejoicing and excitement my wife and I could not help being just a little sad, for we felt that the time had come when we must part with our sons. We ourselves had decided to remain upon the land that had now become very dear to us, but as our boys were young we did not think it right to keep them from the world. And Jenny, of course, must return to her father. We therefore agreed to allow our four sons to choose what they would do, either remain with us or go with Captain Littlestone. Ernest and Jack said they would not leave us, but we could see that Fritz and Frank wished to return to Europe. At first they remained silent, so I told them not to mind speaking out, as it was a very natural desire, and we should not blame them for it in any way. Fritz then admitted that he would like to leave the place for a few years, and he knew Frank wanted to go with him.

Having thus settled matters between ourselves, it only remained for us to ask Captain Littlestone if he would give the two boys a passage in his ship.

This he readily consented to do, the more so as Mr. Wolston and his wife and daughters had decided to make their home with us, so that Fritz and Frank could occupy one of their cabins.

My wife and I felt parting with our sons very deeply, but

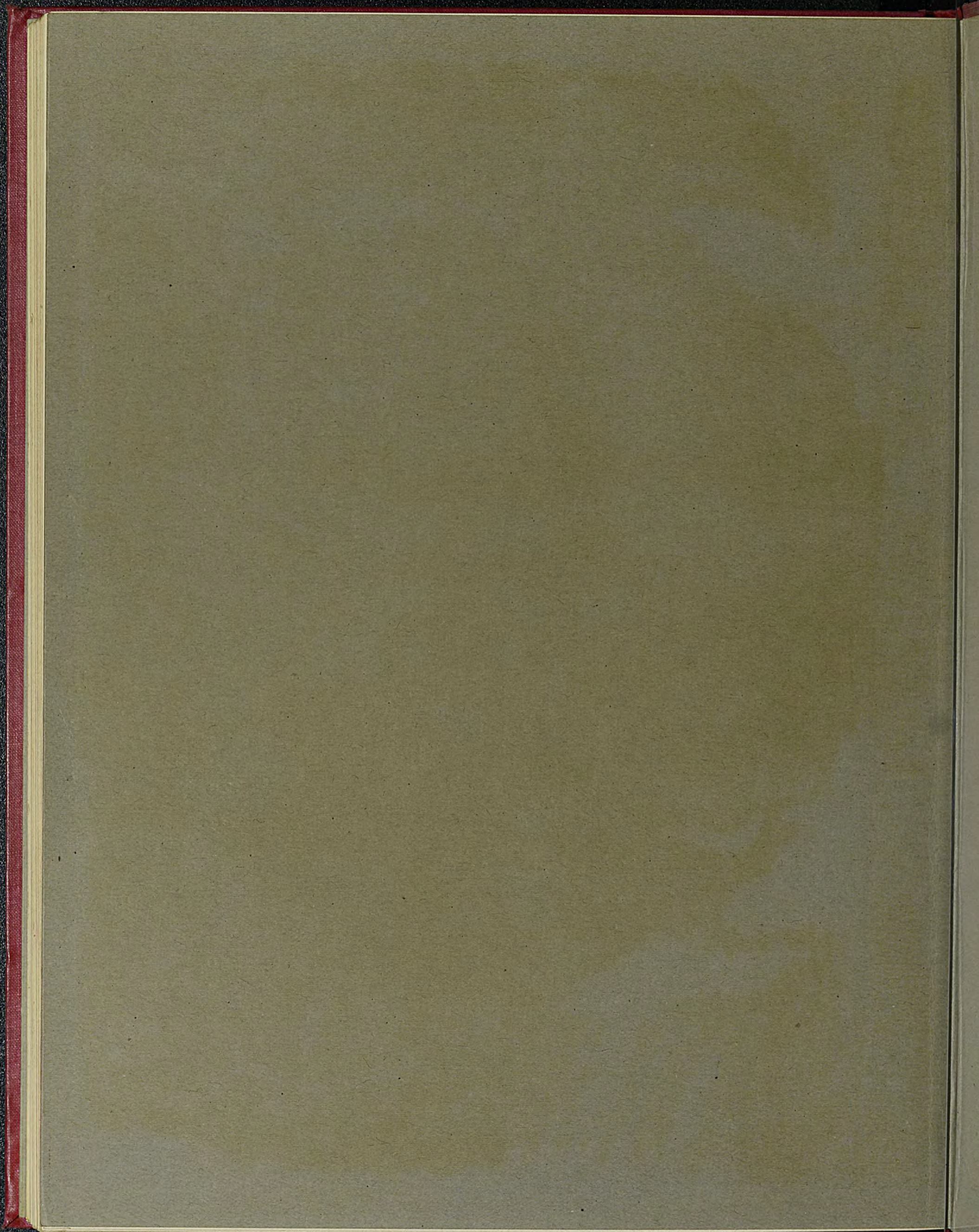
THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

we knew it was for the best, so we consoled ourselves with the thought that they would come back to see us.

The night before they started I had a long talk with my two sons, telling them always to act like just and honourable men, and remember to do God's will in all things. I packed up my store of pearls, coral, furs, spices, and fruit, giving half to Fritz and half to Frank. These treasures they could sell when they arrived in England, and thus obtain a good sum of money with which to begin their new life.

Now I have only time to add a few more words. I thank God for His great goodness and mercy, and I pray that He will give my sons a safe and prosperous voyage, and continue to keep us all in His most loving care.





A. W. GAMAGE,
LTD.
116
LONDON.

