AN UUBAN MISTERI.

Though it is nearly twenty years ago since the events related below occurred, yet the impression left my upon mind has never faded or lost the vividness of its outlines; and though there is nothing really explicable about it, yet the dash of mystery connected with it has always marked it in my memory an ancident of an unusual order.

We were driving on our way northwards from the gloomy and savage neighborhood of Cape Horn, homeward bound in Her Majesty's frigate the dear old Brille water, now, alas, long since consigned to the shipbreiker, The fact of our being homewardbound should have made all hearts light and all faces brightemong our five bundred bouls; but for all that, there was a general air of gloom in the ship, which was not to be accounted for save by one theory only—that of superstition. For things had not gone well with us since we had hoisted our homeward-bound pennant. True, we had sailed out of Valparaise Bay with the said pendant streaming away, and with all our "chummy ships" playing " should A ld & cousintance be forgot?" as we passed by them; and we had received and returned cheer upon cheer as we made our way to the open sea; while from the midshipmen's berth had rolled strain so well known and so lovingly cherished in Her Majesty's service :

And when we arrive at Plymouth Docks. The pretty little girls come round in flocks, And one to the other they do say; "Oh, here comes Jack with his three years' pay; For I see he's homeward bou-ou-ound, For I'me he's homeward bound."

But still, as I say, things had not gone well with us. We had speedily left the warmth of the tropical weather, and had gradually found it colder and colder each morning as we made our way down south towards the dreaded Cape of Storms. That was natural and we were prepared for it; but no sooner had we got to the latitude of the Cape itself, than the wind had shifted, and we had it day after day, night after night, a hard gale right in our teeth. Bitter cold it was too, with tearing storms of snow and hail-heavy thundering seas sweeping us fore and aft, bursting in on our weatherbow, and covering us with spray, that froze ere it fell upon our decks. Up aloft, everything frozen hard-running rigging as stiff and unmanageable as a steel hawser; blocks jammed with ice and snow; canvas as unyielding as a board; men up aloft for an hour or more trying to take a reef in the foretopsail, and then so stiffened with cold themselves, as to be unable to come down without assistance; while below, the close, musty, damp, dark ship was the picture of discomfort, her decks, main and lower, always wet, often with an inch or two of ice-cold water washing about on them; soaking clothes hung up all over the place, in the wild hope that they might eventually get dry; ports and scuttles tight shut to keep out the seas that thundered ceaselessly at them as the ship plunged and wallowed in the angry element; no fires allowed anywhere except at the cook's galley, which was always fully occupied; and no warmth to be obtained anywhere except in your hammock, and even this, in most cases, what with faulty stowage and leaky decks, was wet through.

Day after day, night after night, this state

older hands, always and deeply imbued with the spirit of superstition a sort of dim suspicion that the ship was under a ban-bewitched, in fact; that, as they said, there was a Jonah aboard; and until he went overboard, we should never weather the dreaded Cape, but were doomed to thrash continually to windward, never gaining an inch on our way. Strange as it may seem, there were many, very many, among our blue-jackets who held this belief firmly, and expressed it openly. We, of course, in the midshipmen's berth, careless and light-hearted from our extreme youth, laughed at the solemn tones of the old quartermasters, who employed their hours of midnight watch on deck in narrating to us similar instances of vessels which had been thus doomed to struggle with the storm with some unknown criminal the confessed his cruse or had volun tarily paid the penalty of it. But, as the bad was ther confibured, and the ship seemed quite unable to advance upon her hometrack, some of us, too, began to allow our minds to be influenced to a certain degree by the mysterious language and ominous hints of these men, so much our elders in years, and our superiors in

of things kept on, until their gradually crept

in among the men-started, no doubt, by the

practical experience.

Matters had got to this pitch, and no change appeared about to take place in the aspect of the weather or the direction of the wind, when one wild and wretched forenoon at seven bells (eleven-thirty) the men were piped to muster on the main-deck for that one drop of comfort which they could look forward to in the day-the serving out of ach man's "tot" of grog. Faces which at other times wore a look of gloom, were brightening under the influence of the spirit; the ever-present growl was stilled for a while; the joke began to pass around as the through the veins, when a whisper a sort of muttered suggestion, made at first with kind of apologetic reluctance, but with growing confidence and insistence as it gained ground passed through the throng of men that one of their number was missing. Such a whisper makes its way through a ship's company, however large, like a current of electricity, and so it was in this case; but at first the men kept it to themselves. - It. at first the men kept it to themselves. It could not long, however, be concealed; and presently it spread to the midshipment when we want to berth; next, the wardroom heard it; when ward to the wardroom heard it; when ward to the wardroom heard it; soon the captain himself was made aware of the suspicion. Well I remember, how we sat in the cold, damp, comfortless, diety. berth, discussing the matter with boy eagerness, the sudden shrill pipe of the boatswain's mate burst upon our ears, followed by the hoarse cry of : "Hands muster by open list !" So, then, the captain thought it important enough to make serious and offigalinguity into The dans the calling over of those five hardred name with most ato his text, the had seen for a second time of which we had been familiar for three years or more of our commission in the Pathose five hundred. There came a time when the name of one, a petty officer, was called; but no reply came to the call, and a

the gale and the thundering seas never for a moment ceased their tumult. Then followed the grave and searching investigation into the mystery. Who had seen him last! Mare whehe then! In what state! How long ago tree its and so on, and so on until at last the whole ship's company knew that one of their number had gone overboardpresumably in the morning watch; probably swept off by a peculiarly heavy sea, well remembered in that watch, But unknown, unheard, unseen- his cry for help, if such a cry he gave, utterly drowned and smothered in the ceaseless roar of the sea, the shriek of the wind. And so the men were dismissed, each to his special duty; and the paymaster was directed to see that the fatal letters D. D. (Discharged dead) were placed against theunhappy man's name in the ship's

And now occurred a circumstance which took the whole ship by storm, as it were, and which, mere accident and coincidence as it was, made all the old seadogs nod their heads and eye the younger men meaningly, as who would say, "What did I tell you?" while they, on their part, were firmly impressed with the lesson in cause and effect thus so pointedly placed before them. It was close upon noon when the fact of a man being lost was clearly established; and ere the afternoon watch was over, the sky had cleared, the storm had dropped, the wind had shifted right around, and was now blowup in a rich volume of sound, every ing dead fair! There was no room for more night for more than a week before, the old argument—the oldsters had it all their own way; the scoffers were silenced.

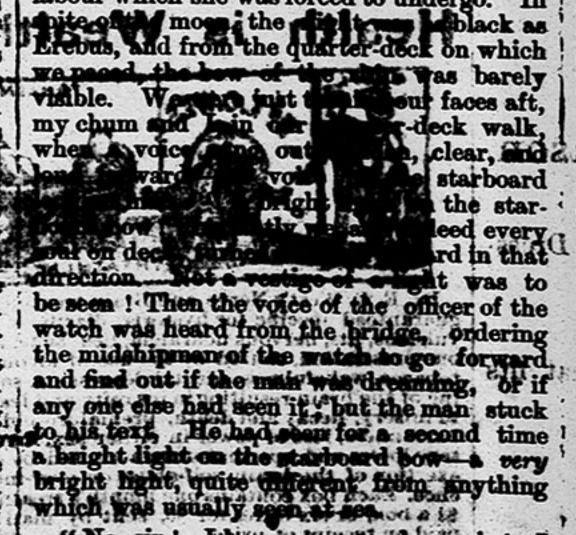
The ship now, in a few hours, rounded the

Cape, which before had seemed an impossible obstruction to her, and made her way unhindered to the north; but the feelings engendered by the events immediately preceding this change had taken too strong a hold upon the men to pass lightly away, and in many a long first or middle watch the subject of the disappearance of the lost shipmate and its immediate effect upon the elements was discussed with bated breath, and many an ominous shake of the head was given as the opinion was moodily expressed that "We'd not done with him yet." And when, a few days afterwards, on a Sunday morning during divine service, the quartermaster of the watch came creeping and tiptoeing down the ladder to report something to the commander, who at once followed him silently up the after-hatchway, but a few minutes afterwards returned and whispered mysteriously to the captain, who in his turn mounted on deck and did not come down again, we all felt that something more might be in store for us, and was even now perchance at hand. How impatiently we sat as the sermon dragged out its seemingly interminable length, and then, when at last the blessing had been given and the quick sharp voice of the first-lieutenant had issued the order, "Boatswain's mate, pipe down!" we literally tumbled up on the deck, to learn what it was that had disturbed the calm of that Sabbath forenoon. It needed but a glance. "Icebergs!" There they were, a long array of cold, filmy, shadowy giants, looming huge in the mist with which each surrounded himself-ghostly, ghastly, clammy spectres from the very land of Death itself. Not that we thought of them then as such; no, we were glad, we youngters; we liked them: we said they were "jolly," though any object less gifted with an aspect of joviality one can hardly imagine. Each, as we meared it, wrapped us in its clammy shroud of death-cold fog, and chilled us to the very marrow, and, towering far above our mainroyal-mast head, seemed to threaten us with instant and appalling destruction.

So we sped on, iceberg after iceberg rising above the horizon as we held our course; and, if sources of anxiety and alarm by day, how much more so by night! Often we entered a vast bank of impeentrable fog, conscious that somewhere, in its inmost recesses, lay concealed, as if waiting for its prey, gigantic berg, but never knowing from moment to moment when or where exactly to expect it. This was a spleudid chance for croakers. Many a great solemn head was shaken, and many a jaw wagged with gloomy forbodings over that unusual and unexpected appearance of ice in the Southern Sea. By and bye the wind began to freshen, and again of mouner gain appeared, mough this time from a quarter lawly tayoutable to make and with her wines suugged down

and a bright lookout forward, the old ship began to shake her sides as she hurried away from those inhospitable seas with their spectral occupants towards the inviting warmth of the tropics and the steady blast of the trade-winds.

turning in to my half-godden hammock, I ship right ahead of us !" went on deck to take a turn with a chum, and enjoy, as we often did together, a few anticipations of the delights of home more. It was a wild a very wild night out to durantense supprise and inspeakable. There was a small moon; but the cleans wonder, the huge, shadowy, ghostly outline were hurrying over her face in ragged streamers, and in such constant succession, that her light was seldom visible; and when she did show it for a fleeting moment, it fell upon a black, tossing, angry sea, whose waves broke into clouds of icy foam as they fell baffled off the bow of the great ship, or tried to leap savagely over her quarter. It was a hard warmed and flowed more rapidly theady gale, the windshricking and humming through the rigging, and the old ship herself noming made pourly but in existibly at the great mountains of water before her, and creaking, groaning, and complaining as she did so, masts, yards, hull, all in one strident crew muttered uneasily among themselves, concert together, as if remonstrating at the labour which she was forced to undergo. In



"No, sir! I beg your pardon," sir! Walter Ballet parties I Wad awake By the true all habits were on the

tumbled up from below at the hall, But, my good man, if it was really light which you saw, some one else must have noticed it too.

"Don't know nothin' about that, sir; but I can swear to it. What I seen were

"A bright light on the starboard beam! sang out the starboard waist lookout at this moment, and "I saw it!" and "I saw it !" echoed several voices; but before the officer the watch could turn round towards the direction indicated, it was gone and the starboard beam presentedone uniform sheet of impenetrable blackness.

Waist there! What was it like?" "Somethin' of a flash-light, I should say, sir," replied the lookout. "Very bright and very short—gone in a moment-like." By this time the captain and commander were both on the bridge, and the whole ship

was alive with curiosity. "What can it be?" I asked of the old boatswain against whom I brushed in the

darkness as I walked aft. "Tis a boat," said he; "that's what it must be. The cap'n he allows it's a boat, and he's pretty sure to be right. Some poor souls whose vessel has foundered among the ice—whalers, most likely—took to the boats, they have. I saw that there light myselfseemed very close to the water, it did. They seen our lights, and burnt a flash-light. they got another, they'll show that, too, presently.

And now the voice of the commander rang out : " Mr. Sights !

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the gunner. "Clear away your two foremost guns on the maindeck, and fire blank charges at short intervals; and get some blue lights, and show them in the fore-rigging at once !' "Ay, ay, sir." And away went the gun-

ner to see his orders carried out instantly. But ere his head had disappeared down the hatchway-"A bright light on the starboard quarter !" roared out the marine sentry at the lifebuoy right aft; and once more everybody turned sharp round to find nothing to gaze at but the universal darkness.

"Hands, about ship !" was now the order; and in quick succession came from the bridge and well-known commands in the sharp, imperative voice of the lieutenant of the watch: "Ease down the helm !"-" Helm's a lee !"

-" Raise tacks and sheets!" &c. And as the splendid old ship answered her helm like a boat, and began to fill on the other tack, " Maintopsail haul !"-for our courses were furled-"Head braces !" "Off all, haul !" and we were on the other tack.

The ship was now brilliantly illuminated by half-a-dozen blue lights burnt in her fore and main rigging; while, as we began to move ahead once more, our bow guns blazed forth from the maindeck one after the other -a roar which we fondly imagined would be more welcome than the most delicious music to the ears of the poor storm-tossed castaways in that frail boat which we now hoped to rescue from the wrath of the raging sea. At intervals there appeared again the bright but transient flash which had first attracted our notice; and through the roar of the waves and the shriek of the wind, we at times imagined that we could hear human voices shouting no doubt for help, and all eyes were strained to the uttermost through the blackness to try and discern the first glimpse of the boat itself. The last flash had told us that we were steering directly for it, and on we sped, our blue lights hissing and flaring in our rigging, our guns ceaselessly roaring out our sympathy and our desire to save.

"Keep a sharp lookout forward there -"Lifeboat's crew, fall in aft!" and we prepared to lower the port quarter-boat, which was told off as a "lifeboat"—that is, for any purposes of rescue, although the state of the sea was anything but favourable for boat-duty; but when we thought of that poor boat tossing about on the storm-vexed sea with its freight of shivering and halfdrowned men, ay, and maybe a woman or two among them, and then remembered the with 'istorical hassociations." " Maybe frowning icebergs and the fearful dangers which they represented, no man hesitated, and had volunteers been called for to man ly, sir, you 'ave read the works of your great the lifeboat, the whole ship's company have come forward. Well can I remember the almost choking heard o' him. Wha was he?" " Sir, that is feeling of thankfulness in my own heart perfectly hincredible; you a Scotchman, when I thought of the wild joy of these and never eard of the man who wrote the poor outcasts at the prospect of so speedy a rescue, and anticipated the delight of wel- Lake, and all that sort of thing ?" "Never coming them on the quarter-deck of so staunch and safe a ship, But all in a moment my anticipations and my sentiments of tempt at such atrocious ignorance, and an gratitude were scattered to the winds.

"Keep her away, sir! keep her away!". came a roar from the forecastle. "You'll be Anxious for a breath of fresh air before a right down upon her! A large fall-rigged

> of an unusually large vessel. No signs of had first attracted our notice was now no longer to be seen. Her masts, yards, and sails were only just visible. not as a black. hard shadow against the sky, but pale, spectral, as if mere vapour-barely to be discernable, yet leaving no room for doubt. There: she sailed, a veritable phantom ship. All lights were allowed to burn out, and no fresh ones were lighted. The great guns ceased to thunder on the maindeck. The lifeboat's as if dreading the possibility of being ordered to board so uncanny a craft; while the older hands once more shook their heads, and said "they knowed we sadn't seen the last of that poor feller as fell overboard. But there was nothing more for us to do.

Who and what the mysterious stranger hanging on our port quarter was we could not possibly ascertain on such a night, in such a gale; and, at length the order was hour. As we did so, we could see he too altered his course; his spectral yards, with their shadowy sails, swung round, and he disappeared without a sign in the darkness

"Don't tell me," said the boatswain, "as of the night. that there were a real ship. Didn't that poor feller disappear suddbattly finst before we sighted her? Answer me that ! Well, then-did we ever know what became of well, then! That to tell us as how he was drownded, that's what that were, and

that. - How do I explain them bright lights ? Answer me this: Were them lights ornery lights, such as a ship shows at night !- No : of course they weren't. Corpse lights !that's my answer; and when I says corpselights, I means it."

It may have been an honest merchantman. outward-bound, and too intent upon making a speedy voyage to "speak" us, but nevertheless, the boatswain's opinion was pretty generally accepted as the correct solution of what was considered to be an ocean mys-

Meteoric Terrors. In transito interest you in this subject, so remote from the stadies of most of you, I rely upon your sense of the unity of all science, and at the same time upon the strong hold which these weird bodies have ever had upon the imaginations of men. In ancient times temples were built over the meteorite. images that fell down from Jupiter, and divine worship was paid them, and in these latter days a meteorite stone that fell last year in India became the object of daily anointings and other ceremonial worship. In the fearful imagery of the Apocalypse the terrors are deepened by there falling "from heaven a great star burning as a torch," and by the stars of heaven falling "unto the earth as a fig tree casteth her unripe figs when she is shaken of a great wind." The "great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his head seven dia- shadowy vale. The third companion ten horns, and upon his head seven dia-dems" is presented in the form of a huge sings of departed greatness, "which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness, "which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness, "which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness," which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness, "which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness," which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness, "which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness," which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness, "which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness," which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness, "which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness," which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness, "which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness," which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness, "which writes epitaphs on tombstances of departed greatness," which writes epitaphs on the properties of the p of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." Records of these feared visitors. under the name of flying dragons, are found all through the pages of the monkish chroniclers of the middle ages. The Chinese appointed officers to record the passage of meteors and comets, for they were thought to have somewhat to say to the weal or woe of rulers and people.

By gaining in these later days a sure place in science, these bodies have lost their terrors, but so much of our knowledge about them is fragmentary, and there is still so much that is mysterious, that men have loved to speculate about their origin, their functions, and their relations to other bodies in the solar system. It has been easy, and quite common, too, to make these bodies the cause of all kinds of things for which other causes could not be found.

They came from the moon; they came from the earth's volcanoes; they came from the sun; they came from Jupiter and the other planets; they came from the comets; they came from the nebulous mass from which the solar system has grown; they came from the fixed stars; they came from the depths of space. They supply the sun with his radiant energy; they give the moon her accelerated motion; they break in pieces heavenly bodies; they threw up the mountains on the moon; they made large gifts to our geologic strata; they cause the autoras; they give regular and irregular changes to our weather. A comparative geology has been built up from the relations of the earth's rocks to the meteorites; a large list of new animal forms has been named from their concretions; and the possible introduction of life to our planet has been credited to them. They are satellites of the earth; they travel in streams, and in groups, and in isolated orbits about the sun: they travel in groups and singly through stellar spaces; it is they that reflect the zodiacal light; they constitute the tails of comets; the solar corona is due to them; the long coronal rays are meteor-streams seen edgewise.

On His Holidays.

"Very interesting scenery, sir," observed a dapper, loudly-dressed Cockney tourist to a hard-featured, grim-looking Scot on board the Loch Katrine steamer, "Im pleased ye think sae," answered Sawney. but I dinna ken onything about them. "What !" exclaimed the Englishman, "surecountryman, Sir Walter Scott, the 'Wizard of the North' you know." !! Never even Waverly Novels, Marmion, the Lady of the in my life. The disgusted Cockney turned away with a muttered expression of conindividual wwho everheard the colloquy, blushed for his uninformed compatriot, and took an opporttunity of asking whether his confession was actually true, Toot, man, was the testy reply. "I, didna want to Up went our helm, and the ship's head hear any o' that English idiot's sentimental paid off ; and as we strained our eyes in the bletherin', Heard of Watthy Scott ! For the last twelve months I've had enough of Sir Walter Scott, and his novels too. I'm a printer's reader, and gor firm have been printin' a new edition o' his works. I'm on life appeared about her. The light which my holidays, man, and cannot be bathered. speakin' about shop !"

We ought, in justice to youth, to lead it to expect pleasure in the actual performance. she sailed, a veritable phantom ship. All of its labours, to taste the delights of excel-hands gazed as her in silence. The blue lence, to revel in the exercise of climbing, to feel enthusiasm in compacting difficulties. Youth is especially alive to these influences, and might easily be fed to welcome them; but, when we coldly ignors them, and urge industry and effort only for the sake of what may afterwards secree, when we assume that work is hard and antinteresting, and exhort its performance as a painful duty of a dire necessity, we cannot wonder if they take us at the world and a will as much of it

gigen to "Wear ship " and we once more Caller—"I am so glad to see you looking turned our back on the vessel which we had!" I would be a vessel which we had!" I would be a vessel which we had!" I notice. Very sennot of long duration, I notice. Very sensible, very sensible.

Bride- My husband was perfectly willing to prolong the tour; but I knows that his presence was required at his place of

Caller-"Very few brides are so considerate as that." -treours u Bride-"Oh, I ceased to be a bride very early! In less than a week I became a wife.

Caller-"I do not understand." Builtie Bride-"We had not been merried a week before he asked me to sew on a but

The Dark Valley 17 certain man med trent country, and along with his companions whose company guile the way, and one beads to dear to him. Now it came a the end of his journey mal valley, at sight of which the bling and afraid, saying, "Who will
me through this dark valley; in it
go alone?" Then one of the three said, "Farewell, I must nor be neither can I linger a moment other said, "I will go with the trance of the valley, but farther cannot go." And the third speak well of thee to all speak well of thee to all my for thou hast entered the dark rule.

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will put the trumpet to my in the thy name abroad for many years to the traveler turn to in friend who was nearest and dear and said, "Come thou with me even enter this valley without feet the friend said, "I will never leave

Hear now the interpretation of the ble. The three companions are I. Wealth, and Fame. The first feet soul so soon as it comes in sight of its fort up to the last moment of the divi but though there be millions of nonup at the entrance of the death-olone penny has ever been carried

stasy the living lyre," afterthe soil But the faithful friend is called R though some there be who call be sweet name of Love; because she conthe bosom of God and doth remain love to man. This is a friend in she will not forsake the soul that h her, even in eternity; for there plead his cause before the immaculati and her plea shall prevail. Let en that hath a soul secure the farm? faithful friend!

Fickleness.

Wherever there is fickleness you me with truth to him who is characterized "Thou shalt not excel." The man continually changing his occupation stantly moving from one situation other, fails to better himself in an and lives only to illustrate the proven the "rolling-stone." The ancient saying, "Beware of the man of one h by which they marked their apprecia the quality of persistence, and affirmed he who has mastered one subject them is always a more formidable antagoir your scholar who so overloads his bring the production of others that it is imp for him to exercise the power of on thinking. Daily we see that he wh " focussed" himself upon some one of is pushed into the front, while the spread themselves over many, or give selves now to one thing and now to un are rarely heard of among men. Her always changing from object to object ishes nothing, and his life at last rese a heap of detached stones, which i'k but kept to one plan, might have been into a stately and commodious abole

Probably there is no quality more the in dispelling ignorance than the on which dares to confess it. The child is fast, chiefly because he has no self-cont fear of being thought uninformed. He all manner of questions without any of misgiving, and exposes his own de cies without any feeling of shame or dis It is by his free and eager inquiris to improves so rapidly. Were he arm show his ignorance, no one could he out of it. The enforced school-lessons comprise nearly the whole of his education and even they could not be adapted individual mental needs. As it is, genial and kind-hearted person with he comes in contact is interested in to his stock of knowledge. The same ilege might be enjoyed by the adult of a feeling of shame prevent him from knowledge in the same natural and way. But, as the years pass, he come feel that the confession of ignorance of pose him to ridicule, or contempt, a sure, and he therefore hides it under ever pretext he can find.

Actions and Words.

We should judge men by their rather than by their theories actions are the best interpreters a thoughts and feelings. Comperative men are able to express in words fully justly the state of their hearts; but man can act in harmony with his he will. Men frequently act hypocrite it is true. They find it bend their speech into deceptive form to bend their actions thus. Hence, there is a disposition to deceive, actions are not so apt so be fully at The with his real feelings as his words are

Home is sometimes thought for the was and too often made so, just for the recognising what it stands for. The relative recognising what it stands for the homehold see of life that go to form the homehold are source not only of life's richest joys and sacred memories, but also of some of the est and noblest characteristics of man love, the fidelity, the forhearmer, the sacrifice that are nourished by family Such life can never become wearing common-place, save to those who fail to or prehend its meaning or refuse to act in lar ony with it.

Devotion.

BY JOHN M. CAMEROX. Just as the hill-crowned lake reflects the at Just as the hill-crowned lake reflects the it.

That or'er it bends—shines blue shines like it.

Is gray when dim and hoary clouds fout by it.

And bright when sumet fining a government of eve with eximate discount it.

The tapestries of eve with eximate discount it.

And gleams when night's soft dusty high.

The heaven's star-standed discount it.

Whose million jewels glisten clear and its.

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