

DEAN'S
Illustrated Farthing Books.

THE
CHILD'S LITTLE VOYAGE;
The Rock, the Anchor, and the Chain.



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THE CHILD'S LITTLE VOYAGE;



It was afternoon. I stood on a steep, rocky shore, on a cliff that rose above a calm blue sea. I watched the sea-birds glide above the bosom of the deep, then poise their snowy wings; and where the rocks receding left a little cove, they lighted down on the sea-sand and stood beside the shallows and the little creeks, feeding on what the ocean-waves had brought and left for their supply. The

snow-white birds, the golden sands, and the blue sea, all made a scene of peace.

But, presently, as I stood upon the high cliff's brow, I heard a low, sweet song. The notes were those of childhood, and something in their music brought a sense of heaven to my heart more real and felt than all that scene of nature's peace. I looked down from the cliff and saw a little bark below, floating on the calm sea, and in it sat a child.

Surprised at this I looked abroad upon the ocean and saw that a larger vessel was in sight, and her's was bound by cords to it; so then, relieved, I turned to watch the child. She was seated all alone, chanting that heavenly melody. Close by her side I saw a BOOK; it was not open, but I knew its form; and beautiful to me was the contrast of that young child—whose life so small a space of time yet measured—and that most wondrous Book, the link between the past and future.

And when I heard the child's voice singing, breathing forth her soul, in that sweet hymn, I felt how both seemed one

—the child and that same book—that book which teaches Earth the harmony of Heaven—as if the little one were a living voice that from its pages woke ! I looked upon that child below, and felt more power of peace with her than had been shed before over that scene of nature. I saw her fingers busy with a task that seemed to please her well—sorting some coloured sea-weeds, and placing them upon a card that rested on her knee. The work looked suited for a child ; but as I watched her, something made me feel as if her interest in it rose above the work itself. The sea-weeds lay before her, and from the little heap she drew their delicate forms of beauty, which seemed to own her skill in grouping their bright array.

Then, presently, I felt how soon the child's light vessel would glide far away, and I felt sad at the thought of losing sight of her for ever ; so I looked along the cliff and saw a fissure in the rock near where the child must pass. I hastened there, and by the fissure's open space came down into the cove, just where her

little vessel floated ashore. She looked up from her work surprised, but with no sign of fear, for I doubt not that in my face she saw an expression of friendly interest.



“ May I sit down beside you for a little while,” I said, “ and look at your work ?”

“ Oh, yes !” the child replied : “ I am sorting sea-weed on a card. I think it

looks the prettiest when the waves go back and leave it wet upon the sand. But these things are put in baskets and sent round and sold, and all the money given for them is used to send good men to teach the heathen how to find the way to heaven. Many people make other things, —I like the sea-weed best.”

“Why do you like the sea-weed best?” I asked.

“I hardly know,” she answered, “only God made it, and it looks so beautiful upon the shore! and when I stand there, then the great wave comes and brings it up so gently from the deep sea’s bed, and leaves it at my feet, as if it came for me!

“Were you not singing at your work?” I asked.

“Oh, yes! I sing sometimes!”

“I wish you would sing that same sweet hymn again,” I said.

“It was a missionary hymn,” she replied. “Do you like missionary hymns?”

With that she sang—her little fingers all the while busy with the ocean-weed:

“Who are they whose little feet
Pacing life’s dark journey through,

Now have reached that heavenly seat,
They have ever kept in view?
'I from Greenland's frozen land;'
'I from India's sultry plain;'
'I from Afric's burning sand;'
'I from islands of the main.'

"All our earthly journey past,
Every tear and pain gone by,
Here together met at last,
At the portal of the sky.
Each the welcome 'COME' awaits,
Conquerors over death and sin!
Lift your heads, ye golden gates;
Let the little travellers in!"

"That is my favourite missionary hymn," the child made haste to say when she had ceased to sing.

"I do not wonder it is," I answered;
"but a dark wave may come, called
Death, before we reach heaven's 'Golden
Gates:' Are you not afraid when you
remember that?"

"Oh, no, I am not afraid, she said, "I
know about the Rock, the Anchor, and the
Chain."

"Will you tell me about them, then?"
I asked.

She replied : " The ROCK means JESUS CHRIST : no one who gets to Him can ever then be lost. The ANCHOR means our HOPE IN JESUS : the anchor goes far down into the sea and takes fast hold, and keeps the ship quite safe, just like our HOPE, which goes quite into heaven to Jesus Christ, keeping us safe on earth. And then the ship must have a CHAIN by which it holds the anchor fast ; and so must we, and our chain must be FAITH ; one end is in heaven with Jesus, holding our anchor HOPE, and we must hold the other end on earth : it must be very bright, like gold, and we must be quite sure not to let go that golden chain of Faith !"

" What is that makes FAITH'S golden chain so bright ?" I asked. The young child answered " PRAYER !"

I left her there, but never shall I forget the feelings to which this incident gave rise.