COBUS ON DEATH.

(From *The Good Hope*. A Sea Play by H. HEIJERMANS.

Translated by Christopher St. John.)

Cobus.—It's a good job for Daan that he's unconscious. He's frightened of death.

Clementine.—Why, so is everyone, Cobus.

Cobus.—Everyone ? I'm not so sure. If my turn came to-morrow, I should think to myself :—We must all come to it—all the water in the sea can't keep it away. God gives—God takes. You see how it is . . . now don't laugh . . . God takes us, and we take the fish. On the fifth day He created the beasts of the sea, and all the creeping things that abound in the waters . . . and he said " Be fruitful," and blessed 'em, and the evening and the morning were the fifth day. And on the sixth day He made man . . . Well, you may notice He said very much the same to man. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Why do you laugh ? It's easy enough to laugh, but I tell you it all comes clear when you're out herring fishing. Sometimes I was quite afraid to split and clean the fish . . . When you take a herring's head and run your knife into him till the yellow oozes out—I tell you the fish looks at you with such an expression—well, you feel ashamed ! Yet you split two casks full in an hour and cut off 1,400 heads. 1,400 heads ! That means 2,800 eyes looking at you— just looking—always looking. How many fish haven't I killed ! There were few so good at splitting a herring as I was ! The fish were frightened, frightened, I tell you. They looked up at the clouds as if to say : " God blessed us as well as you." What do you make of that ? I say, we take the fish, and God takes us. We must all die—beasts must die, and men must die . . . We must all come to it . . . but we can't all come to it together. That would be like turning a full cask into an empty one. I might be frightened if I stayed behind in the empty cask . . . but not if we all went together into the other cask. To be frightened is nothing . . . to be frightened only means you've stood on tiptoe and looked over the edge . . .