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By
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GASCOYN THE SANDAL-WOOD TRADER.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GOAT'S PASSAN ATTACK, A BLOODLESS VICTORY, AND A SERMON.

When Ole Thorwald was landed at the foot of that wild gorge in the cliffs which have been designated the Goat's Pass, he felt himself to be an aggrieved man, and growled accordingly.

"It's too bad o' that fire-eating fellow to fix on me for this particular service," said he to one of the settlers named Hugh Barnes, a cooper, who acted as one of his captains; "and at night, too; just as if a man of my years were a cross between a cat (which everybody knows can see in the dark) and a kangaroo, which is said to be a powerful leaper, though whether in the dark or the light I don't pretend to know, not being informed on the point. Have a care, Hugh. It seems to me you're going to step into a quarry hole, or over a precipice. How my old flesh quakes, to be sure! If it was only a fair, flat field and open day, with any odds you like against me, it would be nothing; but this abominable Goat'sHah! I knew it! Help! hold on there! murder!"

Ole's sudden alarm was caused by his stumbling in the dark over the root of a shrub which grew on the edge of, and partly concealed, a precipice, over which he was precipitated, and at the foot of which his mangled and lifeless form would soon have reposed had not his warlike forefathers, being

impressed with the advantage of wearing strong sword-belts, furnished the sword which Ole wore with such a belt as was not only on all occasions sufficient to support the sword itself, but which, on this particular occasion, was strong enough to support its owner when he was suspended from, and entangled with, the shrubs of the cliff.

A ray of light chanced to break into the dark chasm at the time, and revealed all its dangers to the pendulous Thorwald so powerfully that he positively howled with horror.

The howl brought Hugh and several of his followers to his side, and they with much difficulty, for he was a heavy man, succeeded in dragging him from his dangerous position and placing him on his feet, in which position he remained for some time, speechless and blowing.

"Now, I'll tell you what it is, boys," said he at length, "if ever you catch me going on an expedition of this sort again, flay me alivethat's all; don't spare me. Pull off the cuticle as if it were a glove; and if I roar don't mindthat's what I say."

Having said this, the veteran warrior smiled a ghastly smile, as if the idea of being so excruciatingly treated were rather pleasant than otherwise.

"You're not hurt, I hope?" inquired Hugh.

"Hurt; yes, I am hurt,hurt in my feelings, not in my body, thanks to my good sword and belt; but my feelings are injured. That villain, that rascal, that pirateas I verily believe him to beselected me especially for this service, I am persuaded, just because he knew me to be unfit for it. Bah! but I'll pay him off for it. Come, boys, forwardperhaps, in the circumstances, it would be more appropriate to say upward! We must go through with it now, as our retreat is cut off. Lead the way, Hugh; your eyes are younger and sharper than mine; and if you chance to fall over a cliff, pray give a yell, like a good fellow, so that I may escape your sad fate."

In the course of half an hour's rough scramble, the party gained the crest of the Goat's Pass and descended in rear of the native village. The country over which they had to travel, however, was so broken and so beset with rugged masses of rock as to retard their progress considerably, besides causing them to lose their way more than once. It was thus daybreak before they reached the heights that overlooked the village; and the shot from the Avenger, with the broadside from the frigate, was delivered just as they began to descend the hill.

Ole, therefore, pushed on with enthusiasm to attack the village in rear; but he

had not advanced half a mile when the peculiar and to him inexplicable movements of the two vessels, which have been already described, took place, leaving the honest commander of the land forces in a state of great perplexity as to what was meant by his naval allies, and in much doubt as to what he ought to do.

"It seems to me," said he to his chiefs, in a hastily-summoned council of war, "that we are all at sixes and sevens. I don't understand what maneuvers these naval men are up to, and I doubt if they know themselves. This being the case, and the fleet, if I may so name it, having run away, it behooves us, my friends, to show these sailors how we soldiers do our duty. I would advise, therefore, that we should attack at once. But as we are not a strong party, and as we know not how strong the savages may be, I think it my duty, before leading you on, to ask your opinions on the point."

The officers whose opinions were thus asked were Hugh Barnes, already mentioned, Terence Rigg the blacksmith of the settlement, and John Thomson the carpenter. These, being strong of body, powerful of will, and intelligent withal, had been appointed to the command of companies, and when on duty were styled "captain" by their commanding officer, who was, when on duty, styled "general" by them.

Ole Thorwald, be it remarked in passing, was a soldier at heart. Having gone through a moderate amount of military education, and possessing considerable talent in the matter of drill, he took special pride in training the natives and the white men of the settlement to act in concert and according to fixed principles. The consequence was that although his men were poorly armed, he had them in perfect command, and could cause them to act unitedly at any moment.

The captains having been requested to give their opinions, Captain Rigg, being senior, observed that he was for "goin' at 'em at wance, neck or nothing;" to which warlike sentiment he gave a peculiar emphasis by adding, "an' no mistake," in a very decided tone of voice.

"That's wot I says too, General," said Captain Thomson, the carpenter.

Captain Barnes being of the same opinion, General Thorwald said:

"Well, then, gentlemen, we shall attack without delay;" and proceeded to make the necessary arrangements.

When the Talisman fired her broadside of blank cartridge at the native village, there was not a solitary warrior in itonly aged men, women, and children. These, filled with unutterable consternation on hearing the thunderous discharge, sent up one yell of terror and forthwith took to their heels and made

for the hills en masse, never once looking behind them, and, therefore, remaining in ignorance of the ulterior proceedings of the ship.

It was some time before they came in sight of Ole Thorwald and his men.

The moment they did so Ole gave the word to charge; and, whirling his sword round his head, set the example. The men followed with a yell. The poor savages turned at once and fled,such of them at least as were not already exhausted by their run up hill,and the rest, consisting chiefly of old men and children, fell on their knees and faces and howled for mercy.

As soon as the charging host became aware of the character of the enemy, they came to a sudden halt.

"Sure, it's owld men and women we're about to kill!" cried Captain Rigg, lowering his formidable forehammer, with which, in default of a better weapon, he had armed himself; "but, hooray, Gineral! there may be lots o' the warrior reptiles in among the huts, and them poor craturs have been sent out to deceive us."

"That's true. Forward my lads!" shouted Ole, and again the army charged; nor did they stop short until they had taken possession of the village, when they found that all the fighting men were gone.

This being happily accomplished without bloodshed, Ole Thorwald, like a wise general, took the necessary steps to insure and complete his conquest. He seized all the women and children, and shut them up in a huge temple built of palm trees and roofed with broad leaves. This edifice was devoted to the horrible practise of cutting up human bodies that were intended to be eaten.

Ole had often heard of the cannibalism that is practised by most of the South Sea Islanders, though some tribes are worse than others; but he had never before this day come directly in contact with it. Here, however, there could be no doubt whatever of the fact. Portions of human bodies were strewn about this hideous temple,some parts in a raw and bloody condition, as if they had just been cut from a lately slain victim; others in a baked state, as if ready to form part of some terrible banquet.

Sick at heart, Ole Thorwald turned from this sight with loathing. Concluding that the natives who practised such things could not be very much distressed by being shut up for a time in a temple dedicated to the gratification of their own disgusting tastes, he barricaded the entrance securely, placed a guard over it, and hurried away to see that two other buildings, in which the remainder of the women and children had been imprisoned, were similarly secured and guarded. Meanwhile the stalwart knight of the forehammer, to whom the duty

had been assigned, placed sentries at the various entrances to the village, and disposed his men in such a way as to prevent the possibility of being taken by surprise.

These various arrangements were not made a moment too soon. The savages, as we have said in a former chapter, rushed towards their village from all quarters, on hearing the thunder of the great guns. They were now arriving in scores, and came rushing over the brow of the neighboring hill, and down the slopes that rose immediately in rear of their rude homes.

On finding that the place was occupied by their enemies, they set up a yell of despair, and retired to a neighboring height, where Ole could see, by their wild gesticulations, that they were hotly debating what should be done. It soon became evident that an attack would be made; for, as their comrades came pouring in, the party from the settlement was soon greatly outnumbered.

Seeing this, and knowing that the party under command of Henry Stuart would naturally hasten to his aid as soon as possible, Ole sought to cause delay by sending out a flag of truce.

The natives had been so long acquainted with the customs of the Europeans that they understood the meaning of this, and the chief of the tribe, at once throwing down his club, advanced fearlessly to meet the Christian native sent out with the flag.

The message was to the effect that if they, the enemy, should dare to make an attack, all the women and children then in the hands of the settlers should have their heads chopped off on the spot!

This was a startling announcement, and one so directly in opposition to the known principles of the Christians, that the heathen chief was staggered, and turned pale. He returned to his comrades with the horrifying message, which seemed to them all utterly unaccountable. It was quite natural for themselves to do such a deed, because they held that all sorts of cruelties were just in war. But their constant experience had been that, when a native became a follower of the Christian missionary, from that moment he became merciful, especially towards the weak and helpless. Counting upon this, they were stunned as well as astonished at Thorwald's message; for they believed implicitly that he meant to do what he threatened. They did not know that Ole, although a worthy man, was not so earnest a believer in all of Mr. Mason's principles but that he could practise on their credulity in time of need. Like the missionary, he would rather have died than have sacrificed the life of a woman or child; but, unlike him, he had no objection to deceive in order to gain time.

As it turned out, his threat was unnecessary, for Henry and his men were close

at hand; and before the natives could make up their minds what to do, the whole band came pouring over the hill, with Jo Bumpus far ahead of the rest, leaping and howling like a maniac with excitement.

This decided the natives. They were now outnumbered and surrounded. The principal chief, therefore, advanced towards Bumpus with a piece of native cloth tied to the end of his war-club, which he brandished furiously by way of making it plain that his object was not war, but peace!

Naturally enough, the seaman misinterpreted the signal, and there is no doubt that he would have planted his knuckles on the bridge of the nose of the swarthy cannibal had not Henry Stuart made use of his extraordinary powers of speed. He darted forward, overtook Jo, and, grasping him around the neck with both arms, shouted:

"It's a flag of truce, man!"

"You don't say so?well, who'd ha' thought it? It don't look like one; so it don't."

With this remark, Jo subsided into a peaceable man. Pulling a quid out of his pocket, he thrust it into his cheek, and, crossing his arms on his breast, listened patientlythough not profitably, seeing that he did not understand a wordto the dialogue that followed.

It will be remembered that poor Mr. Mason, after being saved by Henry, was taken into the gig of the Talisman and put ashore. After the two vessels had disappeared, as has been already described, Henry at once led his party towards the native village, knowing that Ole Thorwald would require support, all the more that the ship had failed to fulfil her part in the combined movement.

As the almost heartbroken father had no power to render further aid to his lost child, he suffered himself to be led, in a half-bewildered state, along with the attacking party under his young friend. He was now brought forward to parley with the native chief.

The missionary's manner and aspect at once changed. In the hope of advancing the cause of his Master, he forgot, or at least restrained, his own grief for a time.

"What would the chief say to the Christians?" he began, on being confronted with the savage and some of his warriors who crowded round him.

"That he wishes to have done with war," replied the man.

"That is a good wish; but why did the chief begin war?"

"Keona began it!" said the savage, angrily. "We thought our wars with the Christians were going to stop. But Keona is bad. He put the war spirit into my people."

Mr. Mason knew this to be true.

"Then," said he, "Keona deserves punishment."

"Let him die," answered the chief; and an exclamation of assent broke from the other natives. Keona himself, happening to be there, became pale and looked anxious; but remained where he stood, nevertheless, with his arms crossed on his dark breast. A bandage of native cloth was tied round his wounded arm. Without saying a word he undid this, tore it off, and allowed the blood to ooze from the reopened wound.

It was a silent appeal to the feelings and the sense of justice of his comrades, and created a visible impression in his favor.

"That wound was received by one who would have been a murderer!" said Mr. Mason, observing the effect of this action.

"He struck me!" cried Keona, fiercely.

"He struck you in defending his own home against a cowardly attack," answered the missionary.

At this point Ole Thorwald saw fit to interfere. Seeing that the natives were beginning to argue the case, and knowing that no good could come from such a course, he quietly observed:

"There will be neither wife nor child in this place if I do but hold up my hand."

The missionary and his party did not, of course, understand this allusion, but they understood the result; for the savages at once dropped their tones, and the chief sued earnestly for peace.

"Chiefs and warriors," said Mr. Mason, raising his hand impressively, "I am a man of peace, and I serve the Prince of peace. To stop this war is what I desire most earnestly; and I desire above all things that you and I might henceforth live in friendship, serving the same God and Saviour, whose name is Jesus Christ. But your ways are not like our ways. If I leave you now, I fear you will soon find another occasion to renew the war, as you have often done before. I have you in my power now. If you were to fight with us we could easily beat you, because we are stronger in numbers and well armed. Yes, I have you in my power, and, with the blessing of my God, I will keep you in my power

forever."

There was a visible fall in the countenances of the savages who regarded this strange announcement as their death-warrant. Some of them even grasped their clubs, and looked fiercely at their enemies: but a glance from Ole Thorwald quieted these restive spirits.

"Now, chiefs and warrior, I have two intentions in regard to you," continued Mr. Mason. "The one is that you shall take your clubs, spears, and other weapons, and lay them in a pile on this mound, after which I will make you march unarmed before us halfway to our settlement. From that point you shall return to your homes. Thus you shall be deprived of the power of treacherously breaking that peace which you know in your hearts you would break if you could.

"My second intention is that the whole of your tribemen, women, and childrenshall now assemble at the foot of this mound and hear what I have got to say to you. The first part of this plan I shall carry out by force, if need be. But for the second part, I must have your own consent. I may not force you to listen if you are not willing to hear."

At the mention of the women and children being required to assemble along with them, the natives pricked up their ears, and, as a matter of course, they willingly agreed to listen to all that the missionary had to say to them.

This being settled, and the natives knowing, from former experience, that the Christians never broke faith with them, they advanced to the mound pointed out and threw down their arms. A strong guard was placed over these; the troops of the settlement were disposed in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of their being recovered, and then the women and children were set free.

It was a noisy and remarkable meeting that which took place between the men and women of the tribe on this occasion; but soon surprise and expectation began to take the place of all other feelings as the strange intentions of the missionary were spoken of, and in a very short time Mr. Mason had a large and most attentive congregation.

Never before had the missionary secured such an opportunity. His eccentric method of obtaining a hearing had succeeded beyond his expectations. With a heart overflowing with gratitude to God, he stood up and began to preach the gospel.

Mr. Mason was not only eccentric, but able and wise. He made the most of his opportunity. He gave them a very long sermon that day; but he knew that the

savages were not used to sermons, and that they would not think it long. His text was a double one,"The soul that sinneth it shall die," and "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

He preached that day as a man might who speaks to his hearers for the first and last time, and, in telling of the goodness, the mercy, and the love of God, the bitter grief of his own heart was sensibly abated.

After his discourse was over and prayer had been offered up, the savage warriors were silently formed into a band and marched off in front of the Christians to the spot where Mr. Mason had promised to set them free. They showed no disinclination to go. They believed in the good faith of their captors. The missionary had, indeed, got them into his power that day. Some of them he had secured forever.

CHAPTER XIX.
SORROW AND SYMPATHYTHE WIDOW BECOMES A PLEADER AND HER SON ENGAGES IN A SINGLE COMBAT.

There are times in the life of every one when the heart seems unable to bear the load of sorrow and suffering that is laid upon it,times when the anguish of the soul is such that the fair world around seems enshrouded with gloom, when the bright sun itself appears to shine in mockery, and when the smitten heart refuses to be comforted.

Such a time was it with poor Frederick Mason when, after his return to Sandy Cove, he stood alone, amid the blackened ruins of his former home, gazing at the spot which he knew, from the charred remnants as well as its position, was the site of the room which had once been occupied by his lost child.

It was night when he stood there. The silence was profound, for the people of the settlement sympathized so deeply with their beloved pastor's grief that even the ordinary hum of life appeared to be hushed, except now and then when a low wail would break out and float away on the night wind. These sounds of woe were full of meaning. They told that there were other mourners there that night,that the recent battle had not been fought without producing some of the usual bitter fruits of war. Beloved, but dead and mangled forms, lay in more than one hut in Sandy Cove.

Motionless, hopeless, the missionary stood amid the charred beams and ashes, until the words "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," descended on his soul like sunshine upon ice. A suppressed cry burst from his lips, and, falling on his knees, he poured forth his soul in prayer.

While he was yet on his knees, a cry of anguish arose from one of the huts at the foot of the hill. It died away in a low, heart-broken wail. Mr. Mason knew its meaning well. That cry had a special significance to him. It spoke reproachfully. It said, "There is comfort for you, for where life is there is hope; but here there is death."

Again the word of God came to his memory,"Weep with them that weep." Starting up hastily, the missionary sprang over the black beams, and hurried down the hill, entered the village, and spent the greater part of the remainder of that night in comforting the bereaved and the wounded.

The cause of the pastor's grief was not removed thereby, but the sorrow itself was lightened by sympathy; and when he returned, at a late hour, to his temporary home, hope had begun to arise within his breast.

The widow's cottage afforded him shelter. When he entered it, Henry and his mother were seated near a small table on which supper was spread for their expected guest.

"Tom Armstrong will recover," said the missionary, seating himself opposite the widow, and speaking in a hurried, excited tone. "His wound is a bad one, given by a war-club, but I think it is not dangerous. I wish I could say as much for poor Simon. If he had been attended to sooner he might have lived; but so much blood has been already lost that there is now no hope. Alas for his little boy! He will be an orphan soon. Poor Hardy's wife is distracted with grief. Her young husband's body is so disfigured with cuts and bruises that it is dreadful to look upon; yet she will not leave the room in which it lies, nor cease to embrace and cling to the mangled corpse. Poor, poor Lucy! she will have to be comforted. At present she must be left with God. No human sympathy can avail just now; but she must be comforted when she will permit any one to speak to her. You will go to her to-morrow, Mrs. Stuart, won't you?"

As this was Mr. Mason's first meeting with the widow since the Sunday morning when the village was attacked, his words and manner showed that he dreaded any allusion to his own loss. The widow saw and understood this; but she had consolation for him as well as for others, and would not allow him to have his way.

"But what of Alice?" she said, earnestly. "You do not mention her. Henry has told me all. Have you nothing to say about yourselfabout Alice?"

"Oh! what can I say?" cried the pastor, clasping his hands, while a deep sob almost choked him.

"Can you not say that she is in the hands of Godof a loving Father?" said Mrs. Stuart, tenderly.

"Yes, I can say thatI have said that; butbut"

"I know what you would say," interrupted the widow; "you would tell me that she is in the hands of pirates,ruthless villains who fear neither God nor man, and that, unless a miracle is wrought in her behalf, nothing can save her"

"Oh! spare me, Mary; why do you harrow my broken heart with such a picture?" cried Mr. Mason, rising and pacing the room with quick, unsteady steps, while with both hands on his head he seemed to attempt to crush down the thoughts that burned up his brain.

"I speak thus," said the widow, with an earnestness of tone and manner that almost startled her hearers, "because I wish to comfort you. Alice, you tell me, is on board the Foam"

"On board the pirate schooner!" cried Henry, almost fiercely; for the youth, although as much distressed as Mr. Mason, was not so resigned as he, and his spirit chafed at the thought of having been deceived so terribly by the pirate.

"She is on board the Foam," repeated the widow, in a tone so stern that her hearers looked at her in surprise, "and is therefore in the hands of Gascoyne, who will not injure a hair of her head. I tell you, Mr. Mason, that she is perfectly safe in the hands of Gascoyne."

"Of the pirate Durward!" said Henry, in a deep, angry voice.

"What ground have you for saying so?" asked the widow, quickly. "You only know him as Gascoyne the sandal-wood trader,the captain of the Foam. He has been suspected, it is true; but suspicion is not proof. His schooner has been fired into by a war-vessel; he has returned the fire: any passionate man might be tempted to do that. His men have carried off some of our dear ones. That was their doing, not his. He knew nothing of it."

"Mother, mother," cried Henry, entreatingly, "don't stand up in that way for a pirate; I can't bear to hear it. Did he not himself describe the pirate schooner's appearance in this room, and when he was attacked by the Talisman did he not show out in his true colors, thereby proving that he is Durward the pirate?"

The widow's face grew pale and her voice trembled as she replied, like one who sought to convince herself rather than her hearer, "That is not positive proof, Henry, Gascoyne may have had some good reason for deceiving you all in this way. His description of the pirate may have been a false one. We cannot

tell. You know he was anxious to prevent Captain Montague from impressing his men."

"And would proclaiming himself a pirate be a good way of accomplishing that end, mother?"

"Mary," said Mr. Mason, solemnly, as he seated himself at the table and looked earnestly in the widow's face, "your knowledge of this man and your manner of speaking about him surprise me. I have long thought that you were not acting wisely in permitting Gascoyne to be so intimate; for, whatever he may in reality be, he is a suspicious character, to say the best of him; and although I know that you think you are right in encouraging his visits, other people do not know that; they may judge you harshly. I do not wish to pry into secrets; but you have sought to comfort me by bidding me have perfect confidence in this man? I must ask what knowledge you have of him. How far are you aware of his character and employment? How do you know that he is so trustworthy?"

An expression of deep grief rested on the widow's countenance as she replied, in a sad voice;

"I know that you may trust Gascoyne with your child. He is my oldest friend. I have known him since we were children. He saved my father's life long, long ago, and helped to support my mother in her last years. Would you have me to forget all this because men say that he is a pirate?"

"Why, mother," cried Henry, "if you know so much about him you must know that, whatever he was in time past, he is the pirate Durward now."

"I do not know that he is the pirate Durward!" said the widow, in a voice and with a look so decided that Henry was silenced and sorely perplexed; yet much relieved, for he knew that his mother would rather die than tell a deliberate falsehood.

The missionary was also comforted; for although his judgment told him that the grounds of hope thus held out to him were very insufficient, he was impressed by the thoroughly confident tone of the widow, and felt relieved in spite of himself.

Soon after this conversation was concluded, the household retired to rest.

Next morning Henry was awakened out of a deep sleep by the sound of subdued voices in the room underneath his own. At first he paid no attention to these, supposing that, as it was broad daylight, some of their native servants were moving about. But presently the sound of his mother's voice induced him

to listen more attentively. Then a voice replied, so low that he could with difficulty hear it at all. Its strength increased, however, and at last it broke forth in deep bass tones.

Henry sprang up and threw on his clothes. As he was thus engaged the front door of the opened, and the speakers went out. A few seconds sufficed for the youth to finish dressing him; then, seizing a pistol, he hurried out of the house. Looking quickly round, he just caught sight of the skirts of a woman's dress as they disappeared through the doorway of a hut which had been formerly inhabited by a poor native, who had subsisted on the widow's bounty until he died. The door was shut immediately after.

Going swiftly but cautiously round by a back way, Henry approached the hut. Strange and conflicting feelings filled his breast. A blush of deep shame and self-abhorrence mantled on his cheek when it flashed across him that he was about to play the spy on his own mother. But there was no mistaking Gascoyne's voice.

How the supposed pirate had got there, and wherefore he was there, were matters that he did not think of or care about at that moment. There he was; so the young man resolved to secure him and hand him over to justice.

Henry was too honorable to listen secretly to a conversation, whatever it might be, that was not intended for his ears. He resolved merely to peep in at one of the many chinks in the log but for one moment, to satisfy himself that Gascoyne really was there, and to observe his position. But as the latter now thought himself beyond the hearing of any one, he spoke in unguarded tones, and Henry heard a few words in spite of himself.

Looking through a chink in the wall at the end of the hut, he beheld the stalwart form of the sandal-wood trader standing on the hearth of the hut, which was almost unfurnished,a stool, a bench, an old chest, a table, and a chair being all that it contained. His mother was seated at the table, with her hands clasped before her, looking up at her companion.

"Oh! why run so great a risk as this?" said she earnestly.

"I was born to run risks, I believe," replied Gascoyne, in a sad, low voice. "It matters not. My being on the island is the result of Manton's villainy; my being here is for poor Henry's sake and your own, as well as for the sake of Alice the missionary's child. You have been upright, Mary, and kind, and true as steel ever since I knew you. But for that I should have been lost long ago"

Henry heard no more. These words did indeed whet his curiosity to the utmost; but the shame of acting the part of an "eavesdropper" was so great

that, by a strong effort of will, he drew back, and pondered for a moment what he ought to do. The unexpected tone and tenor of Gascoyne's remark had softened him slightly; but, recalling the undoubted proofs that he had had of his really being a pirate, he soon steeled his heart against him. He argued that the mere fact of a man giving his mother credit for a character which everybody knew she possessed, was not sufficient to clear him of the suspicions which he had raised against himself. Besides, it was impertinence in any man to tell his mother his opinion of her to her face. And to call him "poor Henry," forsooth! This was not to be endured!

Having thus wrought himself up to a sufficient degree of indignation, the young man went straight to the door, making considerable noise in order to prepare those within for his advent. He had expected to find it locked. In this he was mistaken. It yielded to a push.

Throwing it wide open, Henry strode into the middle of the apartment, and, pointing the pistol at Gascoyne's breast, exclaimed:

"Pirate Durward, I arrest you in the king's name!"

At the first sound of her son's approach, Mrs. Stuart bent forward over the table with a groan, and buried her face in her hands.

Gascoyne received Henry's speech at first with a frown, and then with a smile.

"You have taken a strange time and way to jest, Henry," said he, crossing his arms on his broad chest and gazing boldly into the youth's face.

"You will not throw me off my guard thus," said Henry, sternly. "You are my prisoner. I know you to be a pirate. At any rate you will have to prove yourself to be an honest man before you quit this hut a free man. Mother, leave this place, that I may lock the door upon him."

The widow did not move, but Gascoyne made a step towards her son.

"Another step and I will fire. Your blood shall be on your own head, Gascoyne."

As Gascoyne still advanced, Henry pointed the pistol straight at his breast and pulled the trigger, but no report followed; the priming, indeed, flashed in the pan, but that was all!

With a cry of rage and defiance, Henry leaped upon Gascoyne like a young lion. He struck at him with the pistol; but the latter caught the weapon in his powerful hand, wrenched it from the youth's grasp, and flung it to the other end of the apartment.

"You shall not escape me," cried Henry, aiming a tremendous blow with his fist at Gascoyne's face. It was parried, and the next moment the two closed in a deadly struggle.

It was a terrible sight for the widow to witness these two herculean men exerting their great strength to the utmost in a hand-to-hand conflict in that small hut, like two tigers in a cage.

Henry, although nearly six feet in height, and proportionally broad and powerful, was much inferior to his gigantic antagonist; but to the superior size and physical force of the latter he opposed the lithe activity and the fervid energy of youth, so that to an unpractised eye it might have seemed doubtful at first which of the two men had the best chance.

Straining his powers to the utmost, Henry attempted to lift his opponent off the ground and throw him. In this he was nearly successful. Gascoyne staggered, but recovered himself instantly. They did not move much from the center of the room, nor was there much noise created during the conflict. It seemed too closetoo full of concentrated energy, of heavy, prolonged strainingfor much violent motion. The great veins in Gascoyne's forehead stood out like knotted cords; yet there was no scowl or frown on his face. Henry's brows, on the contrary, were gathered into a dark frown. His teeth were set, and his countenance flushed to deep red by exertion and passion.

Strange to say, the widow made no effort to separate the combatants; neither did she attempt to move from her seat to give any alarm. She sat with her hands on the table clasped tightly together, gazing eagerly, anxiously, like a fascinated creature, at the wild struggle that was going on before her.

Again and again Henry attempted, with all the fire of youth, to throw his adversary by one tremendous effort, but failed. Then he tried to fling him off, so as to have the power of using his fists or making an overwhelming rush. But Gascoyne held him in his strong arms like a vice. Several times he freed his right arm and attempted to plant a blow; but Gascoyne caught the blow in his hand, or seized the wrist and prevented its being delivered. In short, do what he would, Henry Stuart could neither free himself from the embrace of his enemy nor conquer him. Still he struggled on; for, as this fact became more apparent, the youth's blood became hotter from mingled shame and anger.

Both men soon began to show symptoms of fatigue. It was not in the nature of things that two such frames, animated by such spirits, could prolong so exhausting a struggle. It was not doubtful now which of the two would come off victorious. During the whole course of the fight Gascoyne had acted

entirely on the defensive. A small knife or stiletto hung at his left side, but he never attempted to use it, and he never once tried to throw his adversary. In fact, it now became evident, even to the widow's perceptions, that the captain was actually playing with her son.

All along, his countenance, though flushed and eager, exhibited no sign of passion. He seemed to act like a good-humored man who had been foolishly assaulted by a headstrong boy, and who meant to keep him in play until he should tire him out.

Just then the tinkling of a bell and other sounds of the people of the establishment beginning to move were heard outside. Henry noticed this.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, in a gasping voice, "I can at least hold you until help comes."

Gascoyne heard the sounds also. He said nothing, but he brought the strife to a swift termination. For the first time he bent his back like a man who exerts himself in earnest, and lifted Henry completely off the ground.

Throwing him on his back, he pressed him down with both arms so as to break from his grasp. No human muscles could resist the force applied. Slowly but surely the iron sinews of Henry's arms straightened out, and the two were soon at arms' length.

But even Gascoyne's strength could not unclasp the grip of the youth's hands, until he placed his knee upon his chest; then, indeed, they were torn away.

Of course, all this was not done without some violence; but it was still plain to the widow that Gascoyne was careful not to hurt his antagonist more than he could help.

"Now, Henry, my lad," said he, holding the youth down by the two arms, "I have given you a good deal of trouble this morning, and I mean to give you a little more. It does not just suit me at present to be tried for a pirate, so I mean to give you a race. You are reputed one of the best runners in the settlement. Well, I'll give you a chance after me. If you overtake me, boy, I'll give myself up to you without a struggle. But I suspect you'll find me rather hard to catch!"

As he uttered the last words he permitted Henry to rise. Ere the youth had quite gained his footing, he gave him a violent push and sent him staggering back against the wall. When Henry recovered his balance, Gascoyne was standing in the open doorway.

"Now, lad, are you ready?" said he, a sort of wild smile lighting up his face.

Henry was so taken aback by this conduct, as well as by the rough handling which he had just received, that he could not collect his thoughts for a few seconds; but, when Gascoyne nodded gravely to his mother, and walked quietly away, saying, "Good-by, Mary," the exasperated youth darted through the doorway like an arrow.

If Henry Stuart's rush may be compared to the flight of an arrow from a bow, not less appropriately may Gascoyne's bound be likened to the leap of the bolt from a cross-bow: The two men sprang over the low fences that surrounded the cottage, leaped the rivulet that brawled down its steep course behind it, and coursed up the hill like mountain hares.

The last that Widow Stuart saw of them, as she gazed eagerly from the doorway of the hut, was, when Gascoyne's figure was clearly defined against the sky as he leaped over a great chasm in the lava high up the mountain-side. Henry followed almost instantly, and then both were hidden from view in the chaos of rocks and gorges that rose above the upper line of vegetation.

It was a long and a severe chase that Henry had undertaken, and ably did his fleet foot sustain the credit which he had already gained. But Gascoyne's foot was fleeter. Over every species of ground did the sandal-wood trader lead the youth that morning. It seemed, in fact, as if a spirit of mischief had taken possession of Gascoyne; for his usually grave face was lighted up with a mingled expression of glee and ferocity. It changed, too, and wore a sad expression at times, even when the man seemed to be running for his life.

At last, after running until he had caused Henry to show symptoms of fatigue, Gascoyne turned suddenly round, and shouting "Good-by, Henry, my lad!" went straight up the mountain, and disappeared over the dividing ridge on the summit.

Henry did not give in. The insult implied in the words renewed his strength. He tightened his belt as he ran, and rushed up the mountain almost as fast as Gascoyne had done; but when he leaped upon the ridge, the fugitive had vanished!

That he had secreted himself in one of the numerous gorges or caves with which the place abounded was quite clear; but it was equally clear that no one could track him out in such a place unless he were possessed of a dog's nose. The youth did indeed attempt it; but, being convinced that he was only searching for what could not by any possibility be found, he soon gave it up, and returned, disconsolate and crestfallen, to the cottage.

CHAPTER XX.

MYSTERIOUS CONSULTATIONS AND PLANSGASCOYNE ASTONISHES HIS FRIENDS, AND MAKES AN UNEXPECTED CONFESSION.

"A pretty morning's work I have made of it, mother," said Henry, as he flung himself into a chair in the cottage parlor, on his return from the weary and fruitless chase which has just been recorded.

The widow was pale and haggard; but she could not help smiling as she observed the look of extreme disappointment which rested on the countenance of her son.

"True, Henry," she replied, busying herself in preparing breakfast, "you have not been very successful; but you made a noble effort."

"Pshaw! a noble effort, indeed! Why, the man has foiled me in the two things in which I prided myself most,wrestling and running. I never saw such a greyhound in my life."

"He is a giant, my boy; few men could hope to overcome him."

"True, as regards wrestling, mother; I am not much ashamed of having been beaten by him at that; but running,that's the sore point. Such a weight he is, and yet he took the north gully like a wildcat; and you know, mother, there are only two of us in Sandy Cove who can go over that gully. Aye, and he went a full yard further than ever I did. I measured the leap as I came down. Really, it is too bad to have been beaten so completely by a man who must be nearly double my age. But, after all, the worst of the whole affair is, that a pirate has escaped me after I actually had him in my arms!the villain!"

"You do not know that he is a villain," said the widow in a subdued tone.

"You are right, mother," said Henry, looking up from the plate of bacon, to which he had been devoting himself with much assiduity, and gazing earnestly into his mother's face,"you are right and, do you know, I feel inclined to give the fellow the benefit of the doubt; for, to tell you the truth, I have a sort of liking for him. If it had not been for the way in which he has treated you, and the suspicious character that he bears, I do believe I should have made a friend of him."

A look of evident pleasure crossed the widow's face while her son spoke; but as that son's eyes were once more riveted on the bacon, which his morning exercise rendered peculiarly attractive, he did not observe it.

Just then the door opened, and Mr. Mason entered. His face wore a dreadfully

anxious expression.

"Ha! I'm glad to see you, Henry," said he; "of course you have not caught your man. I have been waiting anxiously for you to consult about our future proceedings. It is quite evident that the pirate schooner cannot be far off. Gascoyne must either have swam ashore, or been landed in a boat. In either case the schooner must have been within the reef at the time, and there has been little wind since the squall blew itself out yesterday."

"Quite enough, however, to blow such a light craft pretty far out to sea in a few hours," said Henry, shaking his head.

"No matter," replied Mr. Mason, with a sigh; "something must be done, at any rate. I have borrowed the carpenter's small cutter, which is now being put in order for a voyage. Provisions and water for a few days are already on board, and I have come to ask you to take command of her, as you know something of navigation. I will go, of course, but will not take any management of the little craft, as I know nothing about the working of vessels."

"And where do you mean to go?" asked Henry.

"That remains to be seen. I have some ideas running in my head, of course; but before letting you know them, I wish to hear what you would advise."

"I would advise, in the first place, that you should provide one or two thorough sailors to manage the craft. By the way, that reminds me of Bumpus. What of him? Where is he? In the midst of all this bustle I have not had time for much thought; and it has only just occurred to me that if this schooner is really a pirate, and if Gascoyne turns out to be Durward, it follows that Bumpus is a pirate too, and ought to be dealt with accordingly."

"I have thought of that," said Mr. Mason, with a perplexed look, "and intended to speak to you on the subject; but events have crowded so fast upon each other of late that it has been driven out of my mind. No doubt, if the Foam and the Avenger are one and the same vessel, as seems too evident to leave much room for doubt, then Bumpus is a pirate; for he does not deny that he was one of the crew. But he acts strangely for a pirate. He seems as much at his ease amongst us as if he were the most innocent of men. Moreover, his looks seem to stamp him a thoroughly honest fellow. But, alas! one cannot depend on looks."

"But where is the man?" asked Henry.

"He is asleep in the small closet off the kitchen," said Mrs. Stuart, "where he has been lying ever since you returned from the heathen village. Poor fellow,

he sleeps heavily, and looks as if he had been hurt during all this fighting."

"Hurt! say you?" exclaimed Henry, laughing; "it is a miracle that he is now alive after the flight he took over the north cliff into the sea."

"Flight!over the north cliff!" echoed Mrs. Stuart, in surprise.

"Aye, and a fearful plunge he had." Here Henry detailed poor Jo's misadventure. "And now," said he, when he had finished, "I must lock his door and keep him in. The settlers have forgotten him in all this turmoil; but, depend upon it, if they see him they will string him up for a pirate to the first handy branch of a tree, without giving him the benefit of a trial; and that would not be desirable."

"Yet you would have shot Gascoyne on mere suspicion, without a thought of trial or justice," said Mrs. Stuart.

"True, mother; but that was when I was seizing him, and in hot blood," said Henry, in a subdued voice. "I was hasty there, no doubt. Lucky for us both that the pistol missed fire."

The widow looked as if she were about to reply, but checked herself.

"Yes," said Mr. Mason, recurring to the former subject; "as we shall be away a few days, we must lock Bumpus up to keep him out of harm's way. Meanwhile"

The missionary was interrupted here by the sudden opening of the door. An exclamation of surprise burst from the whole party as they sprang up, for Gascoyne strode into the room, locked the door, and taking out the key handed it to Henry, who stood staring at him in speechless amazement.

"You are surprised to see me appear thus suddenly," said he; "but the fact is that I came here this morning to fulfil a duty; and although Master Henry there has hindered me somewhat in carrying out my good intentions, I do not intend to allow him to frustrate me altogether."

"I do not mean to make a second attempt, Gascoyne, after what has occurred this morning," said Henry, seating himself doggedly on his chair. "But it would be as well that you should observe that Mr. Mason is a stout man, and, as we have seen, can act vigorously when occasion offers. Remember that we are two to one now."

"There will be no occasion for vigorous action, at least as regards me, if you will agree to forget your suspicions for a few minutes and listen to what I have got to say. Meanwhile, in order to show you how thoroughly in earnest I am,

and how regardless of my personal safety, I render myself defenselessthus."

Gascoyne pulled a brace of small pistols from their place of concealment beneath the breast of his shirt, and drawing the knife that hung at his girdle, hurled them all through the open window into the garden. He then took a chair, planted it in the middle of the room, and sat down. The sadness of his deep voice did not change during the remainder of that interview. The bold look which usually characterized this peculiar man had given place to a grave expression of humility which was occasionally varied by a troubled look.

"Before stating what I have come for," said Gascoyne, "I mean to make a confession. You have been right in your suspicions,I am Durward the pirate! Nay, do not shrink from me in that way, Mary. I have kept this secret from you long, because I feared to lose the old friendship that has existed between us since we were children. I have deceived you in this thing only. I have taken advantage of your ignorance to make you suppose that I was merely a smuggler, and that, in consequence of being an outlaw, it was necessary for me to conceal my name and my movements. You have kept my secret, Mary, and have tried to win me back to honest ways; but you little knew the strength of the net I had wrapped around me. You did not know that I was a pirate!"

Gascoyne paused, and bent his head as if in thought. The widow sat with clasped hands, gazing at him with a look of despair on her pale face. But she did not move or speak. The three listeners sat in perfect silence, until the pirate chose to continue his confession.

"Yes, I have been a pirate," said he; "but I have not been the villain that men have painted me." He looked steadily in the widow's face as he said these words deliberately.

"Do not try to palliate your conduct, Gascoyne," said Mr. Mason, earnestly. "The blackness of your sin is too great to be deepened or lightened by what men may have said of you. You are a pirate. Every pirate is a murderer."

"I am not a murderer," said Gascoyne, slowly, in reply, but still fixing his gaze on the widow's face, as if he addressed himself solely to her.

"You may not have committed murder with your own hand," said Mr. Mason, "but the man who leads on others to commit the crime is a murderer, in the eye of God's law as well as in that of man."

"I never led on men to commit murder," said Gascoyne, in the same tone, and with the same steadfast gaze. "This hand is free from the stain of human blood. Do you believe me, Mary?"

The widow did not answer. She sat like one bereft of all power of speech or motion.

"I will explain," resumed the pirate captain, drawing a long breath, and directing his looks to Henry now.

"For reasons which it is not necessary that you should know, I resolved some years ago to become a pirate. I had been deceivedshamefully deceived and wrongedby wealthy and powerful men. I had appealed to the law of my country, and the law refused to right me. No, not the law, but those who sat on the judgment-seat to pervert the law. It matters not now; I was driven mad at the time, for the wrong done was not done so much to me as to those whom I loved. I vowed that I should be avenged.

"I soon found men as mad as myself, who only wanted a leader to guide them in order to run full swing to destruction. I seized the Foam, of which schooner I was mate, called her the Avenger, and became a pirate. No blood was shed when I seized the schooner. Before an opportunity occurred of trying my hand at this new profession, my anger had cooled. I repented of what I had done; but I was surrounded by men who were more bent on mischief than I was. I could not draw back, but I modified my plan. I determined to become merely a robber, and use the proceeds of my trade to indemnify those to whom injustice had been done. I thought at the time that there was some justice in this. I called myself, in jest, a tax-gatherer of the sea. I ordered the men aft one day, and explained to them my views. I said that I abhorred the name and the deeds of pirates; that I would only consent to command them if they agreed never to shed human blood except in fair and open fight.

"They liked the idea. There were men among them who had never heartily agreed to the seizing of the schooner, and who would have left her if I would have allowed them; these were much relieved to hear my proposal. It was fixed that we should rob, but not murder. Miserable fool that I was! I thought it was possible to go just so far and no farther into sin. I did not know at that time the strength of the fearful current into which I had plunged.

"But we stuck to our principles. We never did commit murder. And as our appearance was always sufficient to cause the colors of any ship we ever came across to be hauled down at once, there has been no occasion for shedding blood, even in fair and open fight. Do you believe me, Mary?" said Gascoyne, pausing at this point.

The widow was still silent; but a slight inclination of her head satisfied the pirate, who was about to resume, when Mr. Mason said: "Gascoyne, do you call warfare in the cause of robbery by the name of 'fair and open fight?'"

"No, I do not. Yet there have been great generals and admirals in this world who have committed wholesale murder in this same cause, and whose names stand high on the roll of fame!"

A look of scorn rested on the pirate's face as he said this, but it passed away quickly.

"You tell me that there were some of the men in the schooner whom you kept aboard against their will!" said Mr. Mason. "Did it never occur to you, Gascoyne, that you may have been the murderer of the souls of these men?"

The pirate made no reply for some time, and the troubled, anxious look that had more than once crossed his face returned.

"Yes," said he, at length, "I have thought of that. But it is done now, and cannot be undone. I can do no more now than give myself up to justice. You see, I have thrown away my arms and stand here defenseless. But I did not come here to plead for mercy. I came to make to you all the reparation I can for the wrong I have done you. When that last act is completed, you may do with me what you please. I deserve to die, and I care not to live."

"O Gascoyne! speak not thus!" exclaimed the widow, earnestly. "However much and deeply you have sinned against man, if you have not taken life you do not deserve to die. Besides, there is a way of pardon open to the very chief of sinners."

"I know what you mean, Mary, I know what you mean; butwell, well, this is neither the time nor place to talk of such things. Your little girl, Mr. Mason, is in the hands of the pirates."

"I know that," said the missionary, wincing as if he had received a deep wound; "but she is not in your power now."

"More's the pity; she would have been safer with me than with my first mate, who is the greatest villain afloat on the high seas. He does not like our milk-and-water style of robbing. He is an out-and-out pirate in heart, and has long desired to cut my throat. I have to thank him for being here to-night. Some of the crew who are like himself seized me while I was asleep, bound and gagged me, put me into a boat, and rowed me ashore; for we had easily escaped the Talisman in the squall, and, doubling on our course, came back here. The mate was anxious to clear off old scores by cutting my throat at once, and pitching me into the sea. Luckily some of the men, not so bloodthirsty as he, objected to this; so I was landed and cast loose."

"But what of Alice?" cried Mr. Mason, anxiously. "How can we save her?"

"By taking my advice," answered Gascoyne. "You have a small cutter at anchor off the creek at the foot of the hill. Put a few trusty men aboard of her, and I will guide you to the island where the Avenger has been wont to fly when hard pressed."

"But how do you know that Manton will go there?" inquired Henry, eagerly.

"Because he is short of powder, and all our stores are concealed there, besides much of our ill-gotten wealth."

"And how can you expect us to put ourselves so completely in your power?" said Mr. Mason.

"Because you must do so if you would save your child. She is safe now, I know, and will be until the Avenger leaves the island where our stores are concealed. If we do not save her before that happens, she is lost to you forever!"

"That no man can say. She is in the hands of God," cried Mr. Mason, fervently.

"True, true," said Gascoyne, musing. "But God does not work by miracles. We must be up and doing at once. I promise you that I shall be faithful, and that, after the work is done, I will give myself up to justice."

"May we trust him, mother?" said Henry.

"You may trust him, my son," replied the widow, in a tone of decision that satisfied Henry, while it called forth a look of gratitude from the pirate.

The party now proceeded to arrange the details of their plan for the rescue of Alice and her companions. These were speedily settled, and Henry rose to go and put them in train. He turned the key of the door, and was on the point of lifting the latch, when this was done for him by some one on the outside. He had just time to step back, when the door flew open, and he stood face to face with Hugh Barnes the cooper.

"Have you heard the news, Henry?hallo!"

This abrupt exclamation was caused by the sight of Gascoyne, who rose quietly the moment he heard the door open, and turning his back towards it, walked slowly into a small apartment that opened off the widow's parlor, and shut the door.

"I say, Henry, who's that big fellow?" said the cooper, casting a suspicious glance towards the little room into which he had disappeared.

"He is a friend of mine," replied Mrs. Stuart, rising hastily, and welcoming her visitor.

"Humph! it's well he's a friend," said the man, as he took a chair; "I shouldn't like to have him for an enemy."

"But what is the news you were so anxious to tell us?" inquired Henry.

"That Gascoyne, the pirate captain, has been seen on the island by some of the women, and there's a regular hunt organizing. Will you go with us?"

"I have more important work to do, Hugh," replied Henry; "besides, I want you to go with me on a hunt which I'll tell you about if you'll come with me to the creek."

"By all means. Come along."

Henry and the cooper at once left the cottage. The latter was let into the secret, and prevailed on to form one of the crew of the Wasp, as the little cutter was named. In the course of the afternoon everything was in readiness. Gascoyne waited till the dusk of evening, and then embarked along with Ole Thorwald; that stout individual having insisted on being one of the party, despite the remonstrances of Mr. Mason, who did not like to leave the settlement, even for a brief period, so completely deprived of all its leading men. But Ole entertained a suspicion that Gascoyne intended to give them the slip; and having privately made up his mind to prevent this, he was not to be denied.

The men who formed the crewtwelve in numberwere selected from among those natives and settlers who were known never to have seen the pirate captain. They were chosen with a view to their fighting qualities; for Gascoyne and Henry were sufficient for the management of the little craft. There were no large guns on board, but all the men were well armed with cutlasses, muskets, and pistols.

Thus equipped, the Wasp stood out to sea with a light breeze, just as the moon rose on the coral reef and cast a shower of sparkling silver across the bay.

CHAPTER XXI.
A TERRIBLE DOOM FOR AN INNOCENT MAN.

"So, you're to be hanged for a pirate, Jo Bumpus, ye are. That's pleasant to think of, anyhow."

Such was the remark which our stout seaman addressed to himself when he awoke on the second morning after the departure of the Wasp. If the thought

was really as pleasant as he asserted it to be, his visage must have been a bad index to the state of his mind; for at that particular moment Joe looked uncommonly miserable.

The wonted good-humored expression of his countenance had given place to a gaze of stereotyped surprise and solemnity. Indeed, Bumpus seemed to have parted with much of his reason, and all of his philosophy; for he could say nothing else during at least half an hour after awaking except the phrase, "So you're going to be hanged for a pirate." His comments on the phrase were, however, a little varied, though always brief; such as, "Wot a sell! Who'd ha' thought it! It's a dream, it is,an 'orrible dream! I don't believe it; who does? Wot'll your poor mother say?" and the like.

Bumpus had, unfortunately, good ground for making this statement.

After the cutter sailed it was discovered that Bumpus was concealed in Mrs. Stuart's cottage. This discovery had been the result of the seaman's own recklessness and indiscretion; for when he ascertained that he was to be kept a prisoner in the cottage until the return of the Wasp, he at once made up his mind to submit with a good grace to what could not be avoided. In order to prove that he was by no means cast down, as well as to lighten the tedium of his confinement, Jo entertained himself by singing snatches of sea songs; such as, "My tight little craft,""A life on the stormy sea,""Oh for a draught of the howling blast!" etc.; all of which he delivered in a bass voice so powerful that it caused the rafters of the widow's cottage to ring again.

These melodious, not to say thunderous, sounds also caused the ears of a small native youth to tingle with curiosity. This urchin crept on his brown little knees under the window of Bumpus's apartment, got on his brown and dirty little tip-toes, placed his brown little hands on the sill, hauled his brown and half-naked little body up by sheer force of muscle, and peeped into the room with his large and staring brown eyes, the whites of which were displayed to their full extent.

Jo was in the middle of an enthusiastic "Oh!" when the urchin's head appeared. Instead of expressing his passionate desire for a "draught of the howling blast," he prolonged the "Oh!" into a hideous yell, and thrust his blazing face close to the window so suddenly that the boy let go his hold, fell backwards, and rolled head over heels into a ditch, out of which he scrambled with violent haste, and ran with the utmost possible precipitancy to his native home on the sea-shore.

Here he related what he had seen to his father. The father went and looked in upon Jo's solitude. He happened to have seen Bumpus during the great fight,

and knew him to be one of the pirates. The village rose en masse. Some of the worst characters in it stirred up the rest, went to the widow's cottage, and demanded that the person of the pirate should be delivered up.

The widow objected. The settlers insisted. The widow protested. The settlers threatened force. Upon this the widow reasoned with them; besought them to remember that the missionary would be back in a day or two, and that it would be well to have his advice before they did anything, and finally agreed to give up her charge on receiving a promise that he should have a fair trial.

Bumpus was accordingly bound with ropes, led in triumph through the village, and placed in a strong wooden building which was used as the jail of the place.

The trial that followed was a mere mockery. The leading spirits of it were those who had been styled by Mr. Mason, "enemies within the camp." They elected themselves to the offices of prosecutor and judge, as well as taking the trouble to act the part of jurymen and witnesses. Poor John Bumpus's doom was sealed before the trial began. They had prejudged the case, and only went through the form to ease their own consciences and to fulfil their promise to the widow.

It was in vain that Bumpus asserted, with a bold, honest countenance, that he was not a pirate, that he never had been, and never would be a pirate; that he didn't believe the Foam was a piratethough he was free to confess its crew "wos bad enough for anything a'most;" that he had been hired in South America (where he had been shipwrecked) by Captain Gascoyne, the sandal-wood trader; that he had made the voyage straight from that coast to this island without meeting a single sail; and that he had never seen a shot fired or a cutlass drawn aboard the schooner.

To all this there was but one coarsely-expressed answer,"It is a lie!" Jo had no proof to give of the truth of what he said, so he was condemned to be hanged by the neck till he should be dead; and as his judges were afraid that the return of the Wasp might interfere with their proceeding, it was arranged that he should be I executed on the following day at noon.

It must not be imagined, that, in a Christian village such as we have described, there was no one who felt that this trial was too hastily gone into, and too violently conducted. But those who were inclined to take a merciful view of the case, and who plead for delay, were chiefly natives, while the violent party was composed of most of the ill-disposed European settlers.

The natives had been so much accustomed to put confidence in the wisdom of the white men since their conversion to Christianity, that they felt unable to cope with them on this occasion; so that Bumpus, after being condemned, was

led away to his prison, and left alone to his own reflections.

It chanced that there was one friend left, unintentionally, in the cell with the condemned man. This was none other than our friend Toozle, the mass of ragged door-mat on which Alice doted so fondly. This little dog had, during the course of events which have taken so long to recount, done nothing worthy of being recorded. He had, indeed, been much in every one's way, when no one had had time or inclination to take notice of him. He had, being an affectionate dog, and desirous of much sympathy, courted attention frequently, and had received many kicks and severe rebuffs for his pains; and he had also, being a tender-hearted dog, howled dreadfully when he lost his young mistress; but he had not in any way promoted the interests of humanity, or advanced the ends of justice. Hence our long silence in regard to him.

Recollecting that he had witnessed evidences of a friendly relation subsisting between Alice and Bumpus, Toozle straightway sought to pour the overflowing love and sorrow of his large little heart into the bosom of that supposed pirate. His advances were well received, and from that hour he followed the seaman like his shadow. He shared his prison with him, trotted behind him when he walked up and down his room in the widow's cottage; lay down at his feet when he rested; looked up inquiringly in his face when he paused to meditate; whined and wagged his stump of a tail when he was taken notice of, and lay down to sleep in deep humility when he was neglected.

Thus it came to pass that Toozle attended the trial of Bumpus, entered his cell along with him, slept with him during the night, accompanied him to the gallows in the morning, and sat under him when they were adjusting the noose, looking up with feelings of unutterable dismay, as clearly indicated by the lugubrious and woebegone cast of his ragged countenance. But we are anticipating.

It was on the morning of his execution that Bumpus sat on the edge of his hard pallet, gazed at his manacled wrists, and gave vent to the sentiments set down at the beginning of this chapter.

Toozle sat down at his feet, looking up in his face sympathetically.

"No, I don't believe it's possible," said Bumpus, for at least the hundredth time that morning. "It's a joke; that's wot it is. Ain't it, Toozle, my boy?"

Toozle whined, wagged his tail, and said, as plainly as if he had spoken:

"Yes, of course it is,an uncommonly bad joke, no doubt; but a joke, undoubtedly; so keep up your heart, my man."

"Ah! you're a funny dog," continued Bumpus; "but you don't know what it is to be hanged, my boy. Hanged! why it's agin all laws o' justice, moral an' otherwise, it is. But I'm dreamin'; yes, it's dreamin' I am; but I don't think I ever did dream that I thought I was dreamin' an' yet wasn't quite sure. Really, it's perplexin', to say the least on it. Ain't it, Toozle?"

Toozle wagged his tail.

"Ah, here comes my imaginary jailer to let me out o' this here abominably real-lookin' imaginary lockup. Hang Jo Bumpus!why, it's"

Before Jo could find words sufficiently strong to express his opinion of such a murderous intention, the door opened, and a surly-looking mana European settlerentered with his breakfast. This meal consisted of a baked breadfruit and a can of water.

"Ha! you've come to let me out, have you?" cried Jo, in a tone of forced pleasantry, which was anything but cheerful.

"Have I though!" said the man, setting down the food on a small deal table that stood at the head of the bedstead; "don't think it, my man; your time's up in another two hours. Hallo! where got ye the dog?"

"It came in with me last night,to keep me company, I fancy, which is more than the human dogs o' this murderin' place had the civility to do."

"If it had know'd you was a murderin' pirate," retorted the jailer, "it would ha' thought twice before it would ha' chose you for a comrade."

"Come, now," said Bumpus, in a remonstrative tone; "you don't really b'lieve I'm a pirate, do you?"

"In coorse I do."

"Well, now, that's 'xtror'nary. Does everybody else think that too?"

"Everybody."

"An' am I really goin' to be hanged?"

"Till you're dead as mutton."

"That's entertainin', ain't it, Toozle?" cried poor Bumpus, with a laugh of desperation; for he found it utterly impossible to persuade himself to believe in the reality of his awful position.

As he said nothing more, the jailer went away, and Bumpus, after heaving two

or three very deep sighs, attempted to partake of his meager breakfast. The effort was a vain one. The bite stuck in his throat; so he washed it down with a gulp of water, and, for the first time in his life, made up his mind to go without his breakfast.

A little before twelve o'clock the door again opened, and the surly jailer entered, bearing a halter, and accompanied by six stout men. The irons were now removed from Bumpus's wrists, and his arms pinioned behind his back. Being almost stupefied with amazement at his position, he submitted without a struggle.

"I say, friends," he at last exclaimed, "would any amount of oaths took before a maginstrate convince ye that I'm not a pirate, but a true-blue seaman?"

"If you were to swear from this time till doomsday it would make no difference. You admit that you were one of the Foam's crew. We now know that the Foam and the Avenger are the same schooner. Birds of a feather flock together. A pirate would swear anything save his life. Come,time's up."

Bumpus bent his head for a minute. The truth forced itself upon him now in all its dread reality. But no unmanly terrors filled his breast at that moment. The fear of man or of violent death was a sensation which the seaman never knew. The feeling of the huge injustice that was about to be done filled him with generous indignation; the blood rushed to his temples, and, with a bound like a tiger, he leaped out of the jailer's grasp, hurling him to the ground in the act.

With the strength almost of a Samson he wrestled with his cords for a few seconds; but they were new and strong. He failed to burst them. In another moment he was overpowered by the six men who guarded him. True to his principles, he did his utmost to escape. Strong in the faith that while there is life there is hope, he did not cease to struggle, like a chained giant, until he was placed under the limb of the fatal tree which had been selected, and round which an immense crowd of natives and white settlers had gathered.

During the previous night the Widow Stuart had striven to save the man whom she knew to be honest; for Gascoyne had explained to her all about his being engaged in his service. But those to whom she appealed, even on her knees, were immovable. They considered the proof of the man's guilt quite conclusive, and regarded the widow's intercession as the mere weakness of a tender-hearted woman.

On the following morning, and again beside the fatal tree itself, the widow plead for the man's life with all her powers of eloquence; but in vain. When all hope appeared to have passed away, she could not stand to witness so horrible a murder, she fled to her cottage, and, throwing herself on her bed, burst into

an agony of tears and prayer.

But there were some among the European settlers there who, now that things had come to a point, felt ill at ease, and would fain have washed their hands of the whole affair. Others there were who judged the man from his countenance and his acts, not from circumstances. These remonstrated even to the last, and advised delay. But the half-dozen who were set upon the man's deathnot to gratify a thirst for blood, but to execute due justice on a pirate whom they abhorredwere influential and violent men. They silenced all opposition at last, and John Bumpus finally had the noose put round his neck.

"O Susan! Susan!" cried the poor man, in an agony of intense feeling, "it's little ye thought your Jo would come to such an end as this when ye last sot eyes on himan' sweet blue eyes they wos, too!"

There was something ludicrous as well as pathetic in this cry. It did more for him than the most eloquent pleading could have done. Man in a crowd is an unstable being. At any moment he will veer right round and run in an opposite direction. The idea that the condemned man had a Susan who would mourn over his untimely end touched a chord in the hearts of many among the crowd. The reference to her sweet blue eyes at such a moment raised a smile, and an extremely dismal but opportune howl from poor Toozle raised a laugh.

Bumpus started and looked sternly on the crowd.

"You may think me a pirate," said he; "but I know enough of the feelin's of honest men to expect no mercy from those wot can laugh at a fellow-creetur in such an hour. You had better get the murder over as soon as you can. I am readyStay! one moment more. I had almost forgot it. There's a letter here that I want one o' you to take charge of. It's the last I ever got from my Susan; and if I had taken her advice to let alone havin' to do with all sandal-wood traders, I'd never ha' bin in such a fix as I am this day. I want to send it back to her with my blessin' and a lock o' my hair. Is there an honest man among ye who'll take in hand to do this for me?"

As he spoke, a young man, in a costume somewhat resembling that of a sailor, pushed through the crowd, leaped upon the deal table on which Jo stood, and removed the noose from his neck.

An exclamation of anger burst from those who surrounded the table; but a sound something like applause broke from the crowd, and restrained any attempt at violence. The young man at the same time held up his hand, and asked leave to address them.

"Aye! aye! let's hear what he has got to That's it: speak up, Dan!"

The youth, whose dark olive complexion proclaimed him to be a half-caste, and whose language showed that he had received at least the rudiments of education, stretched out his hand and said:

"Friends, I do not stand here to interfere with justice. Those who seek to give a pirate his just reward do well. But there has been doubt in the minds of some that this man may not be a pirate. His own word is of no value; but if I can bring forward anything to show that perhaps his word is true, then we have no right to hang him till we have given him a longer trial."

"Hear! hear!" from the white men in the crowd, and "Ho! ho!" from the natives.

Meanwhile the young man, or Dan, as some one called him, turned to Bumpus and asked for the letter to which he had referred. Being informed that it was in the inside pocket of his jacket, the youth put his hand in and drew it forth.

"May I read it? Your life may depend on what I find here."

"Sartinly,by all manner of means," replied Jo, not a little surprised at the turn affairs were taking.

Dan opened and perused the epistle for a few minutes, during which intense silence was maintained in the crowd, as if they expected to hear the thoughts of the young man as they passed through his brain.

"Ha! I thought so," exclaimed Dan, looking up and again addressing the crowd. "At the trial yesterday you heard this man say that he was engaged at San Francisco by Gascoyne on the 12th of April last, and that he believed the schooner to be a sandal-wood trader when he shipped."

"Yes, yes,ho!" from the crowd.

"If this statement of his be true, then he was not a pirate when he shipped, and he has not had much time to become one between that time and this. The letter which I hold in my hand proves the truth of this statement. It is dated San Francisco, 11th April, and is written in a female hand. Listen,I will read it; and you shall judge for yourselves."

The young man then read the following letter, which, being a peculiar as well as an interesting specimen of a love-letter, we give verbatim et literatim:

"Peelers farm near
Sanfransko Aprile 11

"For
John bumpuss,
aboord the Schooner fome

"my darlin Jo,

"ever sins you towld me yisterday that youd bin an gaged yerself into the fome, my mind has been Onaisy. Ye no, darlint, from the our ye cald me yer own Susan, in clare county, More betoken, iv bin onaisy about ye yer so bowld an Rekles. but this is wurst ov all. iv no noshun o them sandle-wood skooners. the Haf ov thems pirits and The other hafs no better, whats wus is that my owld master was drownded in wan, or out o wan, but shure its All the Saim. down he wint and that wos the Endd.

"now Deer jo dont go to say in that skooner i beseech ye, jo. Ye towld me that ye liked the looks o the cappen and haited the looks o the Krew. Now deer, take warnin think ov me. think ov the words in the coppie book weev writ so often together at owld makmahons skool, eevil cmunishakens Krupt yer maners, i misrember it, but ye no wot id be sayin' to ye.

"o jo Dont go, but cum an see me as soon as iver ye can

"yours til deth.
"SUSAN."

"p.s. the piggs is quite livly but ther not so hansum heer as in the owld country, don't forgit to rite to your susan."

No one can conceive the indignation that swelled the broad chest of honest John Bumpus when he listened to the laughter with which some parts of this letter were received.

"Now," said Dan, "could any man want better proof than this that John Bumpus is not a pirate?"

This question was answered by a perfect yell from the crowd.

"Set him free! cut his cords!" cried a voice.

"Stop, friends," cried a big, coarse-looking man, leaping on the table and jostling Dan out of the way. "Not quite so fast. I don't pretend to be a learned feller, and I can't make a speech with a buttery tongue like Dan here. But wot I've got to say isJustice forever!"

"Hurrah!" from some of the wild spirits of the crowd. "Go on, Burke," from others.

"Yes, wot I say isJustice forever! Fair play an' no favor: that's wot I say!"

Another cheer greeted the bold assertion of these noble sentiments.

"Now, here it is," continued Burke, becoming much excited, "wot's to hinder that there letter bein' a forgery?aye, that's the word, a forgery? (Hear! hear!), got up apurpose to bamboozle us chaps that ain't lawyers. D'ye see?"

Burke glanced at Dan, and smote his thigh triumphantly as he said this.

"It does not look like a forgery," said Dan, holding up the letter and pointing to the writing. "I leave it to yourselves to say if it sounds like a forgery"

"I don't care a farthin' dip for yer looks and sounds," cried Burke, interrupting the other. "No man is goin' for to tell me that anybody can trust to looks and sounds. Why, I've know'd the greatest villain that ever chewed the end of a smuggled cigar look as innocent as the babe unborn. An' is there a man here wot'll tell me he hasn't often an' over again mistook the crack of a big gun for a clap o' thunder?"

This was received with much approval by the crowd, which had evidently more than half-forgotten the terrible purpose for which it had assembled there, and was now much interested in what bade fair to be a keen dispute. When the noise abated, Dan raised his voice and said:

"If Burke had not interrupted me, I was going to have said that another thing which proves the letter to be no forgery is, that the postmark of San Francisco is on the back of it, with the date all right."

This statement delighted the crowd immensely, and caused Burke to look disconcerted for a few seconds; he rallied, however, and returned to the charge.

"Postmarks! wot do I care for postmarks? Can't a man forge a postmark as easy as any other mark?"

"Ah! that's true," from a voice in the crowd.

"No, not so easily as any other mark," retorted Dan; "for it's made with a kind of ink that's not sold in shops. Everything goes to prove that the letter is no forgery. But, Mr. Burke, will you answer me this. If it was a forgery, got up for the purpose of saving this man's life, at what time was it forged? for Bumpus could not know that he would ever need such a letter until yesterday afternoon, and between that time and this there was but little time to forge a letter from San Francisco, postmark and all, and make it soiled and worn at the edges like

an old letter. ['Hear!' and sensation.] More than that," cried Dan, waxing eager and earnest, "if it was a forgery, got up for the purpose, why was it not produced at the trial? ['Hear! hear!' and cheers] And, last of all why, if this forgery was so important to him, did John Bumpus forget all about it until he stood on this table; aye, until the rope was round his neck?"

A perfect storm of cheers and applause followed this last sentence, in the midst of which there were cries of "You're floored, Burke! Hurrah for Bumpus! Cut the ropes!"

But although John's life was now safe, his indignation at Susan's letter having been laughed at was not altogether allayed.

"I'll tell ye wot it is," said he, the instant there was a lull in the uproar of voices. "If you think that I'll stand here and see my Susan's letter insulted before my eyes, you're very far out o' your reckoning. Just cut them ropes, an' put any two o' yer biggest men, black or white, before me, an' if I don't show them a lot o' new stars as hasn't been seed in no sky wotiver since Adam was a little boy, my name's"

Up to this point Jo was heard; but the conclusion of his defiance was drowned in roars of laughter.

"Cut the ropes!" shouted the crowd.

Dan drew a clasp-knife from his pocket, and with one stroke set Bumpus free.

"Shoulder high!" yelled a voice; "Hurrah!"

A wild rush was made at the table. Jo's executioners were overturned and trampled under foot, and the table, with himself and his young advocate sprawling on it, was raised on the shoulders of the crowd and borne off in triumph.

Half an hour later, Bumpus was set down at the widow's door. Mrs. Stuart received him with a scream of surprise and joy, for she had given him up as a lost man.

"Now, then, Mrs. Stuart," said Jo, throwing himself on a chair and wiping the perspiration from his forehead, "don't make such a fuss about me, like a good creetur. But do get me a bit o' bacon, and let's be thankful that I'm here to eat it. Cut it fat, Mrs. Stuart; cut it fat; for it's wonderful wot a appetite I've got after such a mornin's work as I've gone through. Well, well, after all that yer friends have said of ye, Jo Bumpus, I do believe that yer not born to be hanged!"

CHAPTER XXII.
THE RENDEZVOUSAN EPISODEPECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCESOTHER MATTERS.

About five or six days' sail from the scene of our tale there lies one of those small rocks or islets with which the breast of the Pacific is in many places thickly studded.

It is a lonely coral isle, far removed from any of its fellows, and presenting none of those grand features which characterize the island on which the settlement of Sandy Cove was situated. In no part does it rise more than thirty feet above the level of the sea; in most places it is little more than a few feet above it. The coral reefs around it are numerous; and as many of them rise to within a few feet of the surface, the navigation in its neighborhood is dangerous in the extreme.

At the time of which we write, the vegetation of the isle was not very luxuriant. Only a few clusters of cocoanut palms grew here and there over its otherwise barren surface. In this respect it did not resemble most of the other islands of the Pacific. Owing partly to its being out of the usual course of ships, and partly to the dangerous reefs already referred to, the spot was never approached by vessels, or, if a ship happened to be driven towards it, she got out of its way as speedily as possible.

This was the rendezvous of the pirates, and was named by them the Isle of Palms.

Here, in caverns hollowed out of the coral rock, Gascoyne had been wont to secrete such goods and stores as were necessary for the maintenance of his piratical course of life; and to this lone spot did Manton convey his prisoners after getting rid of his former commander. Towards this spot, also, did Gascoyne turn the prow of the cutter Wasp in pursuit of his mutinous first mate.

Manton, for reasons best known to himself (certainly not from goodness of heart), was kind to his captives to the extent of simply letting them alone. He declined to hold any intercourse whatever with Captain Montague, and forbade him to speak with the men upon pain of being confined to his berth. The young people were allowed to do as they pleased, so long as they kept out of the way.

On reaching the Isle of Palms the pirates at once proceeded to take in those stores of which they stood in need. The harbor into which the schooner ran was a narrow bay, on the shores of which the palm trees grew sufficiently high

to prevent her masts being seen from the other side of the island. Here the captives were landed; but as Manton did not wish them to witness his proceedings, he sent them across the islet under the escort of a party who conveyed them to the shores of a small bay. On the rocks in this bay lay the wreck of what once had been a noble ship. It was now completely dismantled. Her hull was stove in by the rocks. Her masts and yards were gone, with the exception of their stumps and the lower part of the main-mast, to which the mainyard still hung with a ragged portion of the mainsail attached to it.

A feeling of depression filled the breast of Montague and his companions as they came in sight of this wreck, and the former attempted to obtain some information in regard to her from his conductors; but they sternly bade him ask no questions. Some time afterwards he heard the story of this vessel's fate. We shall record it here.

Not many months prior to the date of our tale, the Avenger happened to have occasion to run down to the Isle of Palms. Gascoyne was absent at the time. He had been landed at Sandy Cove, and had ordered Manton to go to the rendezvous for supplies. On nearing the isle a storm arose. The wind was fair, however, and the schooner ran for her destination under close-reefed sails. Just before reaching it they fell in with a large full-rigged ship, which, on sighting the schooner, ran up her flag half-mast high, as a signal of distress. She had sprung a leak, and was sinking.

Had the weather been calmer, the pirates would have at once boarded the vessel and carried her as a prize into the harbor; but the sea ran so high that this was impossible. Manton therefore ran down as close to the side of the merchantman (for such she seemed to be) as enabled him to hail her through the speaking-trumpet. When sufficiently near he demanded her name and destination.

"The Brilliant, from Liverpool, bound for the Sandwich Islands. And you?"

"The Foamfrom the Feejeesfor Calcutta. What's wrong with you?"

"Sprung a leak; is there anchorage in the bay?" sang out the captain of the merchantman.

"No; it's too shoal for a big ship. Bear away round to the other side of the island. You'll find good holding ground there. I'll show you the way."

The pirate accordingly conducted the unsuspecting stranger away from the only safe harbor in the island, and led him through a complete labyrinth of reefs and rocks, to the bay on the other side, in which he knew full well there was scarcely enough of water to float his own little schooner.

With perfect confidence in his guide, the unfortunate captain of the merchantman followed until both vessels were in the comparatively still and sheltered waters of the bay. Here Manton suddenly put down the helm, brought his vessel up to the wind, and allowed the stranger to pass in.

"Hold on about sixty fathoms further, and then let go your anchor," he shouted, as the ship went steadily on to her doom.

"Aye, aye, and thank'ee," cried the captain, who had already taken in nearly all sail and was quite prepared to anchor.

But Manton knew that before twenty fathoms more should be passed over by the ship she would run straight on a coral reef, which rose to within about five feet of the surface of the sea. In an exposed place this reef would have formed a line of breakers; but in its sheltered position the water gave no indication of its existence. The gale, though not blowing direct into the bay, entered it in a sufficiently straight line to carry the ship onward with great speed, notwithstanding the reduction made in her canvas.

"Stand by to let go the anchor," cried her captain.

That was his last order. Scarcely had the words passed his lips when the ship struck with a shock that caused her to quiver like a leaf from stem to stern. All the top-masts with their yards and rigging went over the side, and in one instant the fine vessel was a total wreck.

The rest of the story is soon told. The pirates, showing their true colors, ran alongside and took possession without opposition; for the crew of the merchantman were so overwhelmed by the suddenness and appalling nature of the calamity that had befallen them that they had no heart to resist.

Of course it was out of the question that the crew of the Brilliant could be allowed to remain on the island. Some of the pirates suggested that they should be put on a raft, towed to leeward of the island, and, when out of sight of it, be cast adrift to float about until they should be picked up or get blown on one of the numerous islands that lay to the southward of the rendezvous. Manton and Scraggs advocated this plan, but the better-disposed among the men protested against such needless cruelty, and suggested that it would be better to put them into the long-boat of the ship, bandage their eyes, then tow them out of sight of land, and cast them loose to steer where they pleased.

This plan was adopted and carried into execution. Then the pirates returned, and at their leisure unloaded and secured the cargo of their prize. It was richer than they had anticipated, being a miscellaneous cargo of valuable

commodities for the trading stores of some of the South Sea merchants and settlers.

The joy felt by the pirates on making this discovery was all the benefit that was ever derived from these ill-gotten gains by any one of those who had a hand in that dastardly deed. Long before they had an opportunity of removing the goods thus acquired, the career of the Avenger had terminated. But we must not anticipate our story.

On a green knoll near the margin of this bay, and in full view of the wreck, a rude tent or hut was constructed by the pirates out of part of an old sail which had been washed ashore from the wreck, and some broken spars. A small cask of biscuit and two or three blankets were placed in it, and here the captives were left to do as they pleased until such time as Manton chose to send for them. The only piece of advice that was given to them by their surly jailer was that they should not on any pretense whatsoever cross the island to the bay in which the schooner lay at anchor.

"If ye do," said the man who was the last of the party to quit them, "ye'll wish ye hadn'tthat's all. Take my advice, and keep yer kooriosity in yer breeches pockets."

With this caution they were left to their own devices and meditations.

It was a lovely, calm evening, at sunset, when our four unfortunate friends were thus left alone in these strange circumstances. The effect of their forlorn condition was very different on each. Poopy flung herself down on the ground, inside the tent, and began to sob; Alice sat down beside her, and wept silently; whilst Montague, forgetting his own sorrows in his pity for the poor young creatures who had been thus strangely linked to him in affliction, sat down opposite to Alice, and sought to comfort her.

Will Corrie, feeling that he could do nothing to cheer his companions in the circumstances, and being unable to sit still, rose, and going out at the end of the tent, both sides of which were open, stood leaning on a pole, and contemplated the scene before him.

In a small creek, or indentation of the shore, close to the knoll on which the tent stood, two of the pirates were working at a boat which lay there. Corrie could not at first understand what they were about; but he was soon enlightened; for, after hauling the boat as far out of the water as they could, they left her there, and followed, their comrades to the other side of the island, carrying the oars along with them.

The spirit that dwelt in Corrie's breast was a very peculiar one. Up to this point

in his misfortunes the poor boy had been subdued,overwhelmed by the suddenness and the terrible nature of the calamity that had befallen him, or, rather, that had befallen Alice; for, to do him justice, he only thought of her. Indeed, he carried this feeling so far that he had honestly confessed to himself, in a mental soliloquy, the night on which he had been captured, he did not care one straw for himself, or Poopy, or Captain Montague; that his whole and sole distress of mind and body was owing to the grief into which Alice had been plunged. He had made an attempt to comfort her one night on the voyage to the Isle of Palms, when she and Poopy and he were left alone together; but he failed. After one or two efforts he ended by bursting into tears, and then, choking himself violently with his own hands, said that he was ashamed of himself, that he wasn't crying for himself but for her (Alice), and that he hoped she wouldn't think the worse of him for being so like a baby. Here he turned to Poopy, and in a most unreasonable manner began to scold her for being at the bottom of the whole mischief, in the middle of which he broke off, said that he believed himself to be mad, and vowed he would blow out his own brains first, and those of all the pirates afterwards. Whereupon he choked, sobbed again, and rushed out of the cabin as if he really meant to execute his last awful threat.

But poor Corrie only rushed away to hide from Alice the irrepressible emotions that nearly burst his heart. Yes, Corrie was thoroughly subdued by grief. But the spring was not broken; it was only crushed flat by the weight of sorrow that lay like a millstone on his youthful bosom.

The first thing that set his active brain agoing once morethereby overturning the weight of sorrow and causing the spring of his peculiar spirit to reboundwas the sight of the two pirates hauling up the boat and carrying off the oars.

"Ha! that's your game, is it?" muttered the boy, between his teeth, and grasping the pole with both hands as if he wished to squeeze his fingers into the wood. "You don't want to give us a chance of escaping, don't you, eh! is that it? You think that because we're a small party, and the half of us females, that we're cowed, and wont think of trying any other way of escaping, do you? Oh yes, that's what you think; you know it, you do, but you're mistaken" (he became terribly sarcastic and bitter at this point); "you'll find that you've got men to deal with, that you've not only caught a tartar, but two tartarsone o' them being ten times tartarer than the other. Oh, if"

"What's all that you're saying, Corrie?" said Montague, stepping out of the tent at that moment.

"O Captain!" said the boy, vehemently, "I wish I were a giant!"

"Why so, lad?"

"Because then I would wade out to that wreck, clap my shoulder to her bow, shove her into deep water, carry you, and Alice, and Poopy aboard, haul out the main-mast by the roots, make an oar of it, and scull out to sea, havin' previously fired off the biggest gun aboard of her to let the pirates know what I was doing."

Corrie's spirit was in a tumultuous and very rebellious state. He was half inclined to indulge in hysterical weeping, and more than half disposed to give way to a burst of savage glee. He spoke with the mantling blood blazing in his fat cheeks, and his two eyes glittering like those of a basilisk. Montague could not repress a smile and a look of admiration as he said to our little hero:

"Why, Corrie, if you were a giant it would be much easier to go to the other side of the island, wring off the heads of all the pirates, and, carrying me on your shoulders, and Alice and Poopy in your coat pockets, get safely aboard the Foam, and ho! for Sandy Cove."

"So it would," said Corrie gravely. "I did not think of that; and it would be a far pleasanter way than the other."

"Ah, Corrie, I fear that you are a very bloodthirsty fellow."

"Of course I am when I have pirates to deal with. I would kill them every man, without a thought."

"No, you wouldn't, my boy. You couldn't do it in cold blood, even although they are bad men."

"I don't know that," said Corrie, dubiously. "I would do it without more feeling than I would have in killing a cat."

"Did you ever kill a cat?" asked Montague.

"Never," answered Corrie.

"Then how can you tell what your feelings would be if you were to attempt to do it. I remember once, when I was a boy, going out to hunt cats."

"O Captain Montague! surely you never hunted cats," exclaimed Alice, who came out of the tent with a very pale face, and uncommonly red eyes.

"Yes, indeed, I did once; but I never did it again. I caught one, a kitten, and set off with a number of boys to kill it; but as we went along it began to play with my necktie, and to purr. Our hearts were softened, so we let it go. Ah, Corrie,

my boy, never go hunting cats!" said Montague, earnestly.

"Did I say I was going to?" replied Corrie indignantly.

Montague laughed, and so did Alice, at the fierce look the boy put on.

"Come," said the former, "I'm sure that you would not kill a pirate in cold blood any more than you would kill a kittenwould you?"

"I'm not sure o' that," said Corrie, half laughing, but still looking fierce. "In the first place, my blood is never cold when I've to do with pirates; and, in the second place, pirates are not innocent creatures covered with soft hair, andthey don't purr!"

This last remark set Alice into a fit of laughter, and drew a faint "hee! hee!" from Poopy, who had been listening to the conversation behind the canvas of the tent.

Montague took advantage of this improved state of things. "Now, Alice," said he cheerfully, "do you and Poopy set about spreading our blanket tablecloth, and getting supper laid out. It is but a poor one,hard biscuit and water,but there is plenty of it, and, after all, that is the main thing. Meanwhile, Corrie and I will saunter along shore and talk over our plans. Cheer up, my little girl; we will manage to give these pirates the slip somehow or other, you may depend upon it."

"Corrie," said Montague, when they were alone. "I have spoken cheeringly to Alice, because she is a little girl and needs comfort, but you and I know that our case is a desperate one, and it will require all our united wisdom and cleverness to effect oar escape from these rascally pirates."

The commander of the Talisman paused, and smiled in spite of himself at the idea of being placed in circumstances that constrained him to hold a consultation, in matters that might involve life and death, with a mere boy! But there was no help for it; besides, to say truth, the extraordinary energy and courage that had been displayed by the lad, combined with a considerable amount of innate sharpness in his character, tended to create a feeling that the consultation might not be altogether without advantage. At all events, it was better to talk over their desperate position even with a boy than to confine his anxieties to his own breast.

But although Montague had seen enough of his young companion to convince him that he was an intelligent fellow, he was not prepared for the fertility of resource, the extremity of daring, and the ingenuity of device that were exhibited by him in the course of that consultation.

To creep over, in the dead of night, knife in hand, and attack the pirates while asleep, was one of the least startling of his daring propositions; and to swim out to the wreck, set her on fire, and get quietly on board the Avenger, while all the amazed pirates should have rushed over to see what could have caused such a blaze, cut the cable and sail away, was among the least ingenious of his devices.

These two talked long and earnestly while the shades of evening were descending on the Isle of Palms; and in the earnestness of their talk, and the pressing urgency of their case, the man almost forgot that his companion was a boy, and the boy never for a moment doubted that he himself, in everything but years, was a man.

It was getting dark when they returned to the tent, where they found that Alice and Poopy had arranged their supper with the most scrupulous care and nicety. These, too, with the happy buoyancy of extreme youth, had temporarily forgotten their position, and, when their male companions entered, were deeply engaged in a private game of a "tea-party," in which hard biscuit figured as bun, and water was made to do duty for tea. In this latter part of the game, by the way, the children did but carry out in jest a practise which is not altogether unknown in happier circumstances and in civilized society.

CHAPTER XXIII.
PLANS PARTIALLY CARRIED OUTTHE CUTTER'S FATEAND A SERIOUS MISFORTUNE.

The cutter was a fast sailer, and, although the pirate schooner had left Sandy Cove nearly two days before her, the Wasp, having had a fair wind, followed close on her heels. The Avenger cast anchor in the harbor of the Isle of Palms on the morning of her fifth day out; the Wasp sighted the island on the evening of the same day.

It was not Gascoyne's purpose to run down at once and have a hand-to-hand fight with his own men. He felt that his party was too weak for such an attempt, and resolved to accomplish by stratagem what he could not hope to compass by force. He therefore hove-to the instant the tops of the palm trees appeared on the horizon, and waited till night should set in and favor his designs.

"What do you intend to do?" inquired Henry Stuart, who stood on the deck watching the sun as it sank into the ocean behind a mass of golden clouds, in which, however, there were some symptoms of stormy weather.

"I mean to wait till it is dark," said Gascoyne, "and then run down and take possession of the schooner."

Henry looked at the pirate captain in surprise, and not without distrust. Ole Thorwald, who was smoking his big German pipe with great energy, looked at him with undisguised uneasiness.

"You speak as if you had no doubt whatever of succeeding in this enterprise, Mr. Gascoyne," said the latter.

"I have no doubt," replied Gascoyne.

"I do believe you're right," returned Thorwald, smoking furiously as he became more agitated "I make no question but your villains will receive you with open arms. What guarantee have we, Mister Gascoyne, or Mister Durward, that we shall not be seized and made to walk the plank, or perform some similarly fantastic featin which, mayhap, our feet will have less to do with the performance than our neckswhen you get into power?"

"You have no guarantee whatever," returned Gascoyne, "except the word of a pirate!"

"You say truth," cried Ole, springing up and pacing the deck with unwonted energy, while a troubled and somewhat fierce expression settled on his usually good-humored countenance. "You say truth, and I think we have been ill-advised when we took this step; for my part, I regard myself as little better than a maniac for putting myself obstinately, not to say deliberately, into the very jaws of a lion,perhaps I should say a tiger. But, mark my words, Gascoyne, alias Durward" (here he stopped suddenly before the pirate, who was leaning in a careless attitude against the mast, and looked him full in the face), "if you play us false, as I have no hesitation in saying I believe that you fully intend to do, your life will not be worth a pewter shilling."

"I am yet in your power, Mr. Thorwald," said Gascoyne; "if your friends agree to it, I cannot prevent your putting about and returning to Sandy Cove. But in that case the missionary's child will be lost!"

"I do not believe that my child's safety is so entirely dependent on you," said Mr. Mason, who had listened in silence to the foregoing dialogue; "she is in the hands of that God on whom you have turned your back, and with whom all things are possible. But I feel disposed to trust you, Gascoyne; and I feel thus because of what was said of you by Mrs. Stuart, in whose good sense I place implicit confidence. I would advise Mr. Thorwald to wait patiently until he sees more cause than he does at present for distrust."

Gascoyne had turned round, and, during the greater part of this speech, had gazed intently towards the horizon.

"We shall have rough weather to-night," said he; "but our work will be done before it comes, I hope. Up with the helm now, Henry, and slack off the sheets; it is dark enough to allow us to creep in without being observed. Manton will of course be in the only harbor in the island; we must therefore go round to the other side, and take the risk of running on the reefs."

"Risk!" exclaimed Henry; "I thought you knew all the passages about the island!"

"So I do, ladall the passages; but I don't profess to know every rock and reef in the bottom of the sea. Our only chance is to make the island on the south side, where there are no passages at all except one that leads into a bay; but if we run into that, our masts will be seen against the southern sky, even from the harbor where the schooner lies. If we are seen they will be prepared for us, in which case we shall have a desperate fight with little chance of success and the certainty of much bloodshed. We must therefore run straight for another part of the shore, not far from the bay I have referred to, and take our chance of striking. I think there is enough of water to float this little cutter over the reefs, but I am not sure."

"Think! sure!" echoed Thorwald, in a tone of exasperated surprise; "and if we do strike, Mr. Gascoyne, do you mean us to go beg for mercy at the hands of your men, or to swim back to Sandy Cove?"

"If we strike, I shall take the boat, land with the men, and leave the cutter to her fate. The Avenger will suffice to take us back to Sandy Cove."

Ole was rendered speechless by the coolness of this remark; so he relieved himself by tightening his belt, and spouting forth volcanoes of smoke.

Meanwhile, the cutter had run to within a short distance of the island. The night was rendered doubly dark by the rapid spreading of those heavy clouds which indicated the approach of a squall, if not a storm.

"This is well," said Gascoyne, in a low tone, to Henry Stuart, who stood near him; "the worse the storm is to-night the better for the success of our enterprise. Henry lad, I'm sorry you think so badly of me."

Henry was taken aback by this unexpected remark, which was made in a low, sad tone.

"Can I think too badly of one who confesses himself to be pirate?" said Henry.

"The confession is at least in my favor. I had no occasion to confess, nor to give myself up to you."

"Give yourself up! It remains to be seen whether you mean to do that or not."

"Do you not believe me, Henry? Do you not believe the account that I gave of myself to you and your mother?"

"How can I?" said the young man, hesitatingly.

"Your mother believed me."

"Well, Gascoyne, to tell you the plain truth, I do feel more than half inclined to believe you; and I'm sorry for you; I am, from my soul. You might have led a different life, you might even do so yet."

"You forget," said Gascoyne, smiling sadly. "I have given myself up, and you are bound to prevent my escaping."

Henry was perplexed by this reply. In the enthusiasm of his awakened pity he had for a moment forgotten the pirate in the penitent. Before he could reply, however, the cutter struck violently on a rock, and an exclamation of alarm and surprise burst from the crew, most of whom were assembled on deck.

"Silence!" cried Gascoyne, in a deep, sonorous tone, that was wonderfully different from that in which he had just been speaking to Henry; "get out the boat. Arm yourselves, and jump in. There is no time to lose."

"The cutter is hard and fast," said Henry; "if this squall does not come on, or if it turns out to be a light one, we may get her off."

"Perhaps we may, but I have little hope of that," returned Gascoyne. "Now, lads, are you all in the boat? Come, Henry, get in at once."

"I will remain here,", said Henry.

"For what end?" said Gascoyne, in surprise.

"The cutter belongs to a friend; I do not choose to forsake her in this off-hand manner."

"But nothing can save her, Henry."

"Perhaps not. Nevertheless, I will do what I can. She moves a little. If she is lifted over this reef while we are on shore, she will be carried out to sea and lost, and that must not be allowed. Leave me here till you land the men, and then send the boat back with two of them. We will put some of the cutter's

ballast into it, and try to tow her off. It won't take half an hour, and that will not interfere with your plans, I should think, for the whole night lies before us."

Seeing that he was determined, Gascoyne agreed, and left the cutter, promising to send off the boat directly. But it took half an hour to row from the Wasp to the shore, and before the half of that time had elapsed, the storm which had been impending burst over the island.

It was much more violent than had been expected. The cutter was lifted over the reef by the first wave, and struck heavily as she slid into deep water. Then she rushed out to sea before the gale. Henry seized the helm and kept the little vessel right before the wind. He knew nothing of the sea around, and the intense darkness of the night prevented his seeing more than a dozen yards beyond the bow.

It was perhaps as well that he was kept in ignorance of what awaited him; for he was thus spared at least the anticipation of what appeared certain destruction. He fancied that the rock over which he had been carried was the outer reef of the island. In this he was mistaken. The whole sea around and beyond him was beset with reefs, which at that moment were covered with foam. Had daylight revealed the scene, he would have been appalled. As it was, he stood stoutly and hopefully to the helm, while the cutter rushed wildly on to her doom.

Suddenly she struck with terrific violence, and Henry was hurled to the deck. Leaping up, he sprang again to the helm and attempted to put about, but the shock had been so great that the whole framework of the little craft was dislocated. The fastenings of the rudder had been torn out, and she was unmanageable. The next wave lifted her over the reef, and the gale swept her away.

Even then the hopes of the young man did not quite fail him. He believed that the last reef had now been passed, and that he would be driven out to the open sea, clear at least of immediate danger. It was a vain hope. In another moment the vessel struck for the third time, and the mast went over the side. Again and again she rose and fell with all her weight on the rocks. The last blow burst out her sides, and she fell to pieces, a total wreck, leaving Henry struggling with the waves.

He seized the first piece of wood that came in his way, and clung to it. For many hours he was driven about and tossed by the winds and waves until he began to feel utterly exhausted; but he clung to the spar with the tenacity of a drowning man. In those seas the water is not so cold as in our northern climes,

so that men can remain in it for a great length of time without much injury. There are many instances of the South Sea islanders having been wrecked in their canoes, and having spent not only hours but days in the water, clinging to broken pieces of wood, and swimming for many miles, pushing these before them.

When, therefore, the morning broke, and the bright sun shone out, and the gale had subsided, Henry found himself still clinging to the spar, and, although much weakened, still able to make some exertion to save himself.

On looking round he found that numerous pieces of the wreck floated near him, and that the portion to which he clung was the broken lower mast. A large mass of the deck, with part of the gunwale attached to it, lay close beside him, held to the mast by one of the shrouds. He at once swam to this, and found it sufficiently large to sustain his weight, though not large enough to enable him to get quite out of the water. While here, half in and half out of the water, his first act was to fall on his knees and thank God for sparing his life, and to pray for help in that hour of need.

Feeling that it would be impossible to exist much longer unless he could get quite out of the water so as to allow the sun to warm his chilled frame, he used what strength remained in him to drag towards him several spars that lay within his reach. These he found to be some of the rough timbers that had lain on the deck of the cutter to serve as spare masts and yards. They were, therefore, destitute of cordage, so that it was not possible to form a secure raft. Nevertheless, by piling them together on the top of the broken portion of the deck; he succeeded in constructing a platform which raised him completely out of the water.

The heat of the sun speedily dried his garments, and as the day wore on the sea went down sufficiently to render the keeping of his raft together a matter of less difficulty than it was at first. In trying to make some better arrangement of the spars on which he rested, he discovered the corner of a sail sticking between two of them. This he hauled out of the water, and found it to be a portion of the gaff. It was a fortunate discovery; because, in the event of long exposure, it would prove to be a most useful covering. Wringing it out, he spread it over the logs to dry.

The doing of all this occupied the shipwrecked youth so long that it was nearly midday before he could sit down on his raft and think calmly over his position. Hunger now began to remind him that he was destitute of food; but Henry had been accustomed, while roaming among the mountains of his island home, to go fasting for long periods of time. The want of breakfast, therefore, did not inconvenience him much; but before he had remained inactive more than ten

minutes, the want of sleep began to tell upon him. Gradually he felt completely overpowered by it. He laid his head on one of the spars at last, and resigned himself to an influence he could no longer resist.

It was evening before he awoke from that slumber. The sun had just disappeared below the horizon, and the red clouds that remained behind were beginning to deepen, as night prepared to throw her dark mantle over the sea. A gull wheeled over the youth's head and uttered a wild cry as he awoke, causing him to start up with a feeling of bewildered uncertainty as to where he was.

The true nature of his position was quickly forced upon him. A dead calm now prevailed. Henry gazed eagerly, wistfully round the horizon. It was an unbroken line; not a speck that resembled a sail was to be seen. Remembering for the first time that his low raft would be quite invisible at a very short distance, he set about erecting a flag. This was easily done. Part of his red shirt was torn off and fastened to a light spar, the end of which he stuck between the logs. Having set up his signal of distress, he sat down beside it, and, drawing part of the sail over his shoulders, leaned on the broken part of the bulwark, and pondered his forlorn condition.

It was a long, sad reverie into which poor Henry Stuart fell that evening. Hope did not, indeed, forsake his breast; for hope is strong in youth; but he was too well acquainted with the details of a sailor's life and risks to be able to shut his eyes to the real dangers of his position. He knew full well that if he should be cast on any of the inhabited islands of the South Seas (unless it might be one of the very few that had at that time accepted the gospel) he would certainly be killed by the savages, whose practise it is to slay and eat all unfortunates who chance to be wrecked and cast upon their shores. But no islands were in sight; and it was possible that he might be left to float on the boundless ocean until the slow and terrible process of starvation did its work, and wore away the life which he felt to be so fresh and strong within him.

When he thought of this he shuddered, and reverted, almost with a feeling of pleasure, to the idea that another storm might spring up ere long, and, by dashing his frail raft to pieces, bring his life to a speedy termination. His hopes were not very clear even to his own mind. He did indeed hope, because he could not help it; but what it was that he hoped for would have puzzled him to state. A passing ship finding him in a part of the Pacific where ships were not wont to pass was perhaps among the least animating of all his hopes.

But the thoughts that coursed through the youth's brain that night were not centered alone upon the means or the prospects of deliverance. He thought of his mother,her gentleness, her goodness, her unaccountable partiality for

Gascoyne; but, more than all, he thought of her love for himself. He thought, too, of his former life,his joys, his sorrows, and his sins. As he remembered these last, his soul was startled, and he thought of his God and his Saviour as he had never thought before. Despite his efforts to restrain them, tears, but not unmanly tears, would flow down his cheeks as he sat that evening on his raft; meditated on the past, the present, and the future, and realized the terrible solemnity of his position,without water or foodalmost without hopealone on the deep.

CHAPTER XXIV.
AN UNEXPECTED MEETINGDOINGS ON THE ISLE OF PALMSGASCOYNE'S DESPAIR.

It was not without some difficulty that the boat reached the shore after the squall burst upon them. On landing, the party observed, dark though it was, that their leader's countenance wore an expression of the deepest anxiety; yet there were lines upon it that indicated the raging of conflicting passions which he found it difficult to restrain.

"I fear me," said Ole Thorwald, in a troubled voice, "that our young friend Henry Stuart is in danger."

"Lost!" said Gascoyne, in a voice so low and grating that it startled his hearers.

"Say not so," said Mr. Mason, earnestly. "He is a brave and a clever youth, and knows how to manage the cutter until we can row back and fetch him ashore."

"Row back!" exclaimed Gascoyne, almost fiercely. "Think you that I would stand here idly if our boat could live in such a sea as now rolls on the rocks? The Wasp must have been washed over the reef by this time. She may pass the next without being dashed to pieces, but she is too rickety to stand the third. No, there is no hope!"

While he spoke the missionary's eyes were closed, and his lips moved as if in silent prayer. Seizing Gascoyne nervously by the arm, he said; "You cannot tell that there is no hope. That is known only to One who has encouraged us to 'hope against hope.' Henry is a stout youth and a good swimmer. He may succeed in clinging to some portion of the wreck."

"True, true," cried Gascoyne, eagerly grasping at this hope, slight though it was. "Come; we waste time. There is but one chance. The schooner must be secured without delay. Lads, you will follow Mr. Thorwald. Do whatever he bids you. And now," he added, leading the merchant aside, "the time for action has come. I will conduct you to a certain point on the island, where you will

remain concealed among the bushes until I return to you."

"And suppose you never return to us, Mister Gascoyne!" said Ole, who regarded every act of the pirate captain with suspicion.

"Then you will remain there till you are tired," answered Gascoyne, with some asperity, "and after that do what you please."

"Well, well, I am in your power," retorted the obdurate Norseman; "make what arrangements you please. I will carry them out until"

Here Ole thought fit to break off, and Gascoyne, without taking notice of the remark, went on in a few hurried sentences to explain as much of his plan as he thought necessary for the guidance of his suspicious ally.

This done, he led the whole party to the highest part of the island, and made them lie in ambush there while he went forward alone to reconnoiter. The night was admirably suited to their purpose. It was so dark that it was difficult to perceive objects more than a few yards off, and the wind howled so furiously among the palms that there was no danger of being overheard in the event of their speaking too loud or stumbling over fallen trees.

Gascoyne, who knew every rock and tree on the Isle of Palms, went rapidly down the gentle slope that intervened between him and the harbor in which the Foam lay at anchor. Dark though it was, he could see the taper masts and yards of his vessel traced dimly against the sky.

The pirate's movements now became more cautious. He stepped slowly, and paused frequently to listen. At last he went down on his hands and knees and crept forward for a considerable distance in that position, until he reached a ledge of rocks that overhung the shore of the bay. Here he observed an object like a round lump of rock, lying a few yards before him, on a spot where he was well aware no such rock had previously existed. It moved after a moment or two. Gascoyne knew that there were no wild animals of any kind on the island, and, therefore, at once jumped to the conclusion that this must needs be a human being of some sort. Drawing his knife he put it between his teeth, and creeping noiselessly towards the object in question, laid his strong hand on the neck of the horrified Will Corrie.

That adventurous and desperate little hero having lain sleepless and miserable at the feet of Alice until the squall blew the tent over their heads, got up and assisted Montague to erect it anew in a more sheltered position, after which, saying that he meant to take a midnight ramble on the shore to cool his fevered brow, he made straight for the sea, stepped knee-deep into the raging surf, and bared his breast to the furious blast.

This cooled him so effectually that he took to running along shore in order to warm himself. Then it occurred to him that the night was particularly favorable for a sly peep at the pirates. Without a moment's hesitation, he walked and stumbled towards the high part of the island, at which he arrived just half an hour before Gascoyne reached it. He had seen nothing, however, and was on the point of advancing still further in his explorations, when he was discovered as we have seen.

Gascoyne instantly turned the boy over on his back, and nipped a tremendous yell in the bud by grasping his wind-pipe.

"Why, Corrie!" exclaimed Gascoyne, in surprise, at the same time loosening his grip, though still holding the boy down.

"Ah! you villain, you rascally pirate. I know you; I"

The pipe was gently squeezed at this point, and the sentence abruptly cut short.

"Come, boy, you must not speak so loud. Enemies are near. If you don't behave I'll have to throttle you. I have come from Sandy Cove with a party to save you and your friends."

Corrie did not believe a word of this. He knew, or at least he supposed, that Gascoyne had left the schooner, not having seen him since they sailed from Sandy Cove; but he knew nothing of the manner in which he had been put ashore.

"It won't do, Gascoyne," gasped poor Corrie, on being permitted again to use his windpipe. "You may kill me, but you'll never cow me. I don't believe you, you cowardly monster."

"I'll have to convince you then," said Gascoyne, suddenly catching the boy in his arms, and bearing him swiftly away from the spot.

Corrie struggled like a hero, as he was. He tried to shout, but Gascoyne's right hand again squeezed the windpipe; he attempted to bite, but the same hand easily kept the refractory head in order; he endeavored to kick and hit, but Gascoyne's left hand encircled him in such a comprehensive embrace, and pressed him so powerfully to his piratical bosom, that he could only wriggle. This he did without ceasing, until Gascoyne suddenly planted him on his feet, panting and disheveled, before the astonished faces of Frederick Mason and Ole Thorwald.

It is not necessary to describe in detail the surprise of all then and there

assembled, the hurried conversation, and the cry of joy with which the missionary received the information that Alice was safe and within five minutes' walk of the spot on which he stood. Suffice it to say that Corrie was now convinced of the good faith of Gascoyne, whom he at once led, along with Mr. Mason, to the tent where Alice and her friends slept, leaving Thorwald and his men where they were to await further orders.

The cry of wild delight with which Alice sprang into her father's arms might have been destructive of all Gascoyne's plans had not the wind carried it away from the side of the island where the pirate schooner lay. There was now no time to be lost. After the first embrace, and a few hurried words of blessing and thanksgiving, the missionary was summoned to a consultation.

"I will join you in this enterprise, Mr. Gascoyne," said Montague. "I believe what you say to be true; besides, the urgency of our present danger leaves me no room for choice. I am in your power. I believe that in your present penitent condition you are willing to enable us to escape from your former associates; but I tell you frankly that, if ever I have an opportunity to do so, I will consider it my duty to deliver you over to justice."

"Time is too precious to trifle thus," said Gascoyne, hurriedly. "I have already said that I will deliver myself upnot, however, to you, but to Mr. Masonafter I have rescued the party, so that I am not likely to claim any consideration from you on account of the obligation which you seem to think my present act will lay you under. But you must not accompany me just now."

"Why not?"

"Because your presence may be required here. You and Mr. Mason will remain where you are to guard the girls, until I return. All that I have to ask is, that you be in readiness to follow me at a moment's notice when the time comes."

"Of course what you arrange must be agreed to," said Montague.

"Come, Corrie, I will require your assistance. Follow me," said the pirate captain, as he turned and strode rapidly away.

Corrie was now thoroughly convinced of the good intentions of Gascoyne; so he followed him without hesitation. Indeed, now that he had an opportunity of seeing a little more of his gigantic companion, he began to feel a strange kind of pity and liking for him, but he shuddered and felt repelled when he thought of the human blood in which his hands must have been imbrued; for as yet he had not heard of the defense of himself which Gascoyne had made in the widow's cottage. But he had not much time to think; for in a few minutes they came upon Ole Thorwald and his party.

"Follow me quietly," said Gascoyne. "Keep in single file and close together; for if we are separated here, we shall not easily get together again."

Leading them over the same ground that he had formerly traversed, Gascoyne conducted his party to the shores of the bay where the Foam lay at anchor. Here he made them keep close in the bushes, with directions to be ready to act the instant he should call on them to do so.

"But it would comfort me mightily, Mister Gascoyne," said Thorwald, in a somewhat troubled voice, "if you would give some instructions or advice as to what I am to do in the event of your plans miscarrying. I care naught for a fair fight in open field; but I do confess to a dislike of being brought to the condition of not knowing what to do."

"It won't matter much what you do, Mr. Thorwald," said Gascoyne, gravely. "If my plans miscarry, you will be killed every soul of you. You'll not have the ghost of a chance of escaping."

Ole opened his eyes uncommonly wide at this.

"Well," said he, at length, with a sigh of resignation, "it's some comfort to know that one can only be killed once."

Gascoyne now proceeded leisurely to strip off his shirt, thereby displaying a chest, back, and arms in which the muscles were developed to an extent that might have made Hercules himself envious. Kicking off his boots, he reduced his clothing to a pair of loose knee-breeches.

"'Tis a strange time to indulge in a cold bath!" murmured Thorwald, whose state of surprise was beginning to render him desperately ironical.

Gascoyne took no notice of the remark, but calling Corrie to his side, said:

"Can you swim, boy?"

"Yes, like a duck."

"Can you distinguish the stem of the schooner?"

"I can."

"Listen, then. When you see a white sheet waved over the taffrail, throw off your jacket and shirt and swim out to the schooner. D'ye understand?"

"Perfectly," replied the boy, whose decision of manner and action grew with the occasion.

"And now, Mr. Thorwald," said Gascoyne, "I shall swim off to the schooner. If, as I expect, the men are on shore in a place that I wot of, and with which you have nothing to do, well and good. I will send a boat for you with muffled oars; but, mark you, let there be no noise in embarking or in getting aboard the schooner. If, on the other hand, the men are aboard, I will bring a boat to you myself, in which case silence will not be so necessary, and your fighting powers shall be put to the proof."

Without waiting for a reply, the pirate captain walked down the sloping beach and waded slowly into the dark sea. His motions were so noiseless and stealthy that those who watched him with eager eyes could only discern a figure moving gradually away from them and melting into the thick gloom.

Fierce though the storm was outside, the sheltered waters of the bay were almost calm, so that Gascoyne had no difficulty in swimming off to the Foam without making any noise. As he drew near, a footstep on the deck apprised him that there was at least a watch left. A few seconds later a man leaned over the low bulwarks of the vessel on the side on which the swimmer approached.

"Hist! what sort o' brute's that!" he exclaimed, seizing a handspike that chanced to be near him and hurling it at the head of the brute.

The handspike fell within a yard of Gascoyne, who, keeping up his supposed character, made a wild splash with his arms and dived like a genuine monster of the deep. Swimming under water as vigorously as he could, he endeavored to gain the other side of the vessel before he came up; but, finding that this was impossible, he turned on his back and allowed himself to rise gently until nothing but his face appeared above the surface. By this means he was enabled to draw a full breath, and then, causing himself to sink, he swam under water to the other side of the schooner, and rose under her quarter.

Here he paused a minute to breathe, then glided with noiseless strokes to the main chains, which he seized hold of, and, under their shelter, listened intently for at least five minutes.

Not a sound was to be heard on board save the footsteps of the solitary watchman who slowly paced the deck, and now and then beguiled the tedium of his vigil by humming a snatch of a sea song.

Gascoyne now felt assured that the crew were ashore, enjoying themselves, as they were wont to do, in one of the artificial caverns where their goods were concealed. He knew, from his own former experience, that they felt quite secure when once at anchor in the harbor of the Isle of Palms; it was therefore probable that all of them had gone ashore except this man, who had been left

to take care of the vessel.

Gascoyne now drew himself slowly up into the chains, and remained there for a few seconds in a stooping position, keeping his head below the level of the bulwarks while he squeezed the water out of his lower garments. This done, he waited until the man on deck came close to where he stood, when he sprang on him with the agility of a tiger, threw him down, and placed his hand on his mouth.

"It will be your wisest course to be still, my man," said Gascoyne, sternly. "You know who I am, and you know what I can do when occasion requires. If you shout when I remove my hand from your mouth, you die."

The man seemed to be quite aware of the hopelessness of his case; for he quietly submitted to have his mouth bound with a handkerchief, and his hands and feet tied with cords. A few seconds sufficed to accomplish this, after which Gascoyne took him up in his arms as if he had been a child, carried him below, and laid him on one of the cabin lockers. Then, dragging a sheet off one of the beds, he sprang up on deck and waved it over the stern.

"That's the signal for me," said Corrie, who had watched for it eagerly. "Now, Uncle Ole, mind you obey orders: you are rather inclined to be mutinous, and that won't pay to-night. If you don't look out, Gascoyne will pitch into you, old boy."

Master Corrie indulged in these impertinent remarks while he was stripping off his jacket and shirt. The exasperated Thorwald attempted to seize him by the neck and shake him, but Corrie flung his jacket in his face, and sprang down the beach like a squirrel. He had wisdom enough, however, to say and do all this in the quietest possible manner; and when he entered the sea he did so with as much caution as Gascoyne himself had done, insomuch that he seemed to melt away like a mischievous sprite.

In a few minutes he was alongside of the Foam; caught a rope that was thrown to him, and quickly stood on the deck.

"Well done, Corrie. Clamber over the stern, and slide down by that rope into the little boat that floats there. Take one of the oars, which you will find muffled, and scull to the shore, and bring off Thorwald and his men. And, hark'ee, boy, bring off my shirt and boots. Now, look alive; your friend Henry Stuart's life may depend on it."

"Henry's life!" exclaimed Corrie, in amazement.

"Come, no questions. His life may depend on your promptitude."

Corrie wanted no stronger motive for speed. In a state of surprise mingled with anxious forebodings, he leaped over the stern and was gone in a moment.

The distance between the shore and the schooner being very short, the boat was quickly alongside, and the party under stout Ole Thorwald took possession of their prize.

Meanwhile Gascoyne had set the jib and fore-topsail, which latter had been left hanging loose from the yard, so that by hauling out the sheets slowly and with great care, the thing was done without noise. The cable was then cut, the boat manned, and the Foam glided out of the bay like a phantom ship.

The moment she got beyond the shelter of the palms her sails filled, and in a few minutes she was rushing through the water at the rate of ten or eleven knots an hour.

Gascoyne stood at the helm and guided her through the intricacies of the dangerous coast with consummate skill, until he reached the bay where the wrecked ship lay. Here he lay to, and sent the boat ashore for the party that had been left at the tent. They were waiting; anxiously for his return. Great, therefore, was their astonishment when he sent them a message inviting them to go on board the Foam!

The instant they embarked, Gascoyne put about, and, ordering the mainsail to be hoisted, and one of the reefs to be shaken out of the topsail, ran round to the windward of the island, with the foam flying in great masses on either side of the schooner, which lay over so much before the gale that it was scarcely possible to stand on the deck.

The manner in which the pirate captain now acted was calculated to fill the hearts of those whose lives seemed to hang in his hands with alarm if not dismay. His spirit seemed to be stirred within him. There was indeed no anger, either in his looks or tones; but there was a stern fixedness of purpose in his manner and aspect which aroused, yet repelled, the curiosity of those around him. Even Ole Thorwald and Montague agreed that it was best to let him alone; for although they might overcome his great physical force by the united strength of numbers, the result would certainly be disastrous, as he was the only one who knew the locality.

On reaching the windward side of the island he threw the schooner up into the wind, and ordered the large boat to be hoisted out and put in the water. Gascoyne issued his commands in a quick, loud voice, and Ole shook his head as if he felt that this overbearing manner proved what he had expected; namely, that when the pirate got aboard his own vessel, he would come out in

his true colors.

Whatever men felt or thought, there was no hesitation in rendering prompt obedience to that voice. The large boat was hoisted off the brass pivot gun amidships and lowered into the water. Then Gascoyne gave the helm to one of the men, with directions to hold it exactly as it then lay, and, hurrying down below, speedily returned, to the astonishment of every one, with a man in his arms.

"Now, Connway," said Gascoyne, as he cut the cords that bound the man and removed the handkerchief from his mouth, "I'm a man of few words, and to-night have less time than usual to speak. I set you free. Get into that boat; one oar will suffice to guide it; the wind will drive it to the island. I send it as a parting gift to Manton and my former associates. It is large enough to hold them all. Tell them that I repent of my sins, and the sooner they do the same the better. I cannot now undo the evil I have done them. I can only furnish the means of escape, so that they may have time and opportunity to mend their ways; and, hark'ee, the sooner they leave this place the better. It will no longer be a safe retreat. Farewell!"

While he was speaking he led the man by the arm to the side of the schooner, and constrained him to get into the boat. As he uttered the last word he cut the rope that held it, and let it drop astern.

Gascoyne immediately resumed his place at the helm, and once more the schooner was running through the water, almost gunwale under, towards the place where the Wasp had been wrecked.

Without uttering a word of explanation, and apparently forgetful of every one near him, the pirate continued during the remainder of that night to steer the Foam out and in among the roaring breakers, as if he were trying how near he could venture to the jaws of destruction without actually plunging into them. As the night wore on the sky cleared up, and the scene of foaming desolation that was presented by the breakers in the midst of which they flew, was almost enough to appal the stoutest heart.

The crew looked on in moody silence. They knew that their lives were imperiled; but they felt that they had no resource! No one dared to address the silent, stern man who stood like an iron statue at the helm the whole of that night. Towards morning, he steered out from among the dangerous coral reefs, and ran south straight before the wind.

Then Corrie summoned up courage, and, going aft to Gascoyne, looked up in his face and said:

"You're searching for Henry, I think?"

"Yes, boy, I am," answered the pirate, and a gleam of kindliness crossed his face for a moment; but it was quickly chased away by a look of deep anxiety, and Corrie retired.

Now that the danger of the night was over, all the people on board became anxious to save Henry, or ascertain his fate; but although they searched the ocean far and wide, they saw not a vestige of him or of the Wasp. During this period Gascoyne acted like a bewildered man. He never quitted the helm night or day. He only ate a biscuit now and then when it was brought to him, and he did not answer when he was spoken to.

Every one felt sympathy with the man who seemed to mourn so deeply for the lost youth.

At last Montague went up to him and said, in a gentle voice: "I fear that Henry is gone."

Gascoyne started as if a sword had pierced him. For one moment he looked fiercely in the young captain's face; then an expression of the deepest sadness overspread his countenance as he said: "Do you think there is no hope?"

"None," said Montague. "I grieve to give pain to one who seems to have been an intimate friend of the lad."

"He was the son of my oldest and best friend. What would you advise, Mr. Montague?"

"I thinkthat is to say, don't you thinkthat it would be as well to put about now?"

Gascoyne's head dropped on his chest, and for some moments he stood speechless, while his strong hands played nervously with the tiller that they had held so long and so firmly. At last he looked up and said, in a low voice: "I resign the schooner into your hands, Mr. Montague."

Then he went slowly below, and shut himself up in his cabin.

Montague at once put down the helm, and, pointing the schooner's prow northward, steered for the harbor of Sandy Cove.

CHAPTER XXV.
SURLY DICK THE RESCUE.

We must turn aside here for a short time to follow the fortunes of the

Talisman.

When that vessel went in chase of the Foam, after her daring passage across the reefs, she managed to keep her in view until the island was out of sight astern. Then the increasing darkness caused by the squall hid the two vessels from each other, and before the storm passed away the superior sailing qualities of the Foam carried her far beyond the reach of the cruiser.

But Mr. Mulroy was not a man to be easily baffled. He resolved to continue the chase, and, supposing that his commander must have got safely to the shore, he made up his mind to proceed southward for a short time, thinking it probable that the pirate would run for the shelter of those remote islands which he knew were seldom visited by the merchant ships. The importance of keeping the chase in view as long as possible, and following it up without delay, he felt would be accepted as a sufficient excuse by Montague for not putting back to take him on board.

The squalls which happened to prevail at that time drove the Talisman further south than her first lieutenant had intended to go, and she failed to fall in with the pirate schooner. Mulroy cruised far and wide for fully a week; then he gave up the chase as hopeless. Two days after the breaking of the storm that wrecked the Wasp the Talisman's prow was turned northward towards Sandy Cove.

It was the close of a calm, beautiful evening when this was done. A gentle breeze fanned the topsails, although it failed to ruffle the sea.

"I don't like to be baffled in this way," said Mulroy to his second lieutenant, as they paced the quarter-deck together.

"It is very unfortunate," returned the other. "Would it not be well to examine the man called Surly Dick before leaving these waters? You know he let out that there is some island hereabout at which the pirates are wont to rendezvous. Perhaps by threats, if not by persuasion, he may be induced to tell us where it lies."

"True. I had forgotten that fellow altogether. Let him be sent for."

In a few minutes Surly Dick stepped on the quarter-deck and touched his cap. He did not appear to have grown less surly since his introduction on board the frigate. Discipline had evidently a souring effect on his temper.

"Your late comrades have escaped me," said the first lieutenant; "but you may depend upon it, I will catch the villains in the long run."

"It'll be a pretty long run before you do," remarked the man, sulkily.

Mulroy looked sternly at him. "You forget," said he, "that you are a prisoner. Let me advise you to be at least civil in your manner and tone. Whether the run shall be a long or a short one remains to be seen. One thing is pretty certain; namely, that your own run of life will be a very short one. You know the usual doom of a, pirate when he is caught."

Surly Dick moved uneasily. "I was made a pirate against my will," said he, in a still more sulky tone and disrespectful manner.

"You will find it difficult to prove that," returned Mulroy. "Meanwhile I shall put you in irons, and treat you as you deserve, until I can place you in the hands of the civil authorities."

Surly Dick stood first on one leg and then on the other; moved his fingers about nervously, and glanced in the lieutenant's face furtively. It was evident that he was ill at ease.

"I never committed murder, sir," said he, in an improved tone. "It wasn't allowed on board of the Avenger, sir. It's a hard case that a fellow should be made a pirate by force, and then be scragged for it, though he's done none o' the bloody work."

"This may be true," rejoined the lieutenant; "but, as I have said, you will find it difficult to convince your judges of it. But you will receive a fair trial. There is one thing, however, that will stand in your favor, and that is a full and free confession. If you make this, and give me all the information you can in order to bring your late comrades to justice, your judges will perhaps be disposed to view your case leniently."

"Wot more can I confess, sir?" said Dick, beginning to look a little more interested. "I've already confessed that I was made a pirate against my will, and that I've never done no murder; though I have plundered a little, just like the rest. As for helpin' to bring my comrades to justice, I only wish as I know'd how, and I'd do it right off, I would."

Surly Dick's expression of countenance when he said this was a sufficient guarantee that he was in earnest.

"There is an island somewhere hereabout," said the lieutenant, "where the pirates are in the habit of hiding sometimes, is there not?"

Surly Dick looked at his questioner slyly, as he replied, "There is, sir."

"Do you not think it very likely that they may have run there now,that they

may be there at this moment?"

"It's oncommon likely," replied Dick, with a grin.

"Can you direct me how to steer, in order to reach that island?"

Surly Dick's aspect changed. He became morose again, and looked silently at his feet for a few moments, as if he were debating something in his own mind. He was, in truth, perplexed; for, while he was extremely anxious to bring his hated comrades to justice, he was by no means so anxious to let the lieutenant into the secret of the treasures contained in the caverns of the Isle of Palms, all of which he knew would be at once swept hopelessly beyond his grasp if they should be discovered. He also reflected that if he could only manage to get his late companions comfortably hanged, and himself set free for having turned King's evidence against them, he could return to the island and abstract the wealth it contained by degrees. The brilliant prospect thus opened up to him was somewhat marred, however, by the consideration that some of the pirates might make a confession and let this secret be known, in which case his golden dreams would vanish. The difficulty of making up his mind was so great that he continued for some time to twist his fingers and move his feet uneasily in silence.

Mulroy observed the pirate's indecision, and, although he knew not its cause to the full extent, he was sufficiently acquainted with human nature to know that now was the moment to overcome the man, if he was to be overcome at all.

"Well, well," he said, carelessly; "I'm sorry to see you throw away your only chance. As for the information you refuse to give. I can do without it. Perhaps I may find some of your late comrades when we make the island, who will stand witness against you. That will do, my man; you may go. Mr. Geoffrey" (turning to a midshipman), "will you accompany that pirate forward, and see that he is put in irons?"

"But you don't know where the island is," said Surly Dick, anxiously, as the lieutenant was turning away.

Mulroy turned back: "No," said he; "but you ought to know that when a seaman is aware of the existence of an island, and knows that he is near it, a short time will suffice to enable him to find it."

Again he was about to turn away, when Dick cried out, "Stay, sir; will you stand by me if I show you the way?"

"I will not deceive you," said Mulroy bluntly. "If you show me how to steer for this island, and assist me in every way that you can to catch these villains, I

will report what you have done, and the judges at your trial will give what weight they please to the facts; but if you suppose that I will plead for such a rascal as you are, you very much mistake me."

A look of deep hatred settled on the pirate's countenance as he said, briefly, "Well, I'll show you how to steer."

Accordingly, Surly Dick, after being shown a chart, and being made aware of the exact position of the ship, ordered the course to be altered to "north-half-east." As this was almost dead in the eye of the light breeze that was blowing the Talisman had to proceed on her course by the slow process of tacking.

While she was in the act of putting about on one of these tacks, the look-out reported "a boat on the lee bow."

"Boat on the lee bow!" was passed from mouth to mouth, and the order was immediately given to let the frigate fall off. In another moment, instead of ploughing her way slowly and doggedly to windward, the Talisman ran swiftly before the breeze toward a dark object which at a distance resembled a boat with a mast and a small flag flying from it.

"It is a raft, I think," observed the second lieutenant, as he adjusted the telescope more perfectly.

"You are right; and I think there is some one on it," said Mulroy. "I see something like a man lying on it; but whether he is dead or alive I cannot say. There is a flag, undoubtedly; but no one waves a handkerchief or a rag of any kind. Surely, if a living being occupied the raft, he would have seen the ship by this time. Stay; he moves! No; it must have been imagination. I fear that he is dead, poor fellow. Stand by to lower a boat."

The lieutenant spoke in a sad voice; for he felt convinced that he had come too late to the aid of some unfortunate who had died in perhaps the most miserable manner in which man can perish.

Henry Stuart did indeed lie on the raft a dead man to all appearance. Towards the evening of his third day, he had suffered very severely from the pangs of hunger. Long and earnestly had he gazed round the horizon, but no sail appeared. He felt that his end was approaching, and, in a fit of despair and increasing weakness, he fell on his face in a state of half-consciousness. Then he began to pray, and gradually he fell into a troubled slumber.

It was while he was in this condition that the Talisman hove in sight. Henry had frequently fallen into this species of sleep during the last few hours, but he never continued in it long; for the pains of thirst, as well as hunger, now

racked his frame. Nevertheless, he was not much reduced in strength or vigor. A long, slow process of dying would have still lain before the poor youth, had it been his lot to perish on that raft.

A delightful dream came over him as he lay. A rich banquet was spread before him. With wolfish desire he grasped the food, and ate as he never ate before. Oh! it was a rare feast, that! Each morsel was delicious; each draught nectar. But he could not devour enough. There was a strange feeling in him that he could by no means eat to satisfaction.

While he was thus feasting in dreams, the Talisman drew near. Her bulwarks were crowded with faces gazing earnestly at the bit of red rag that fluttered in the breeze, and the pile of loose spars on which the man's form lay extended and motionless.

Suddenly Henry awoke, with a start, to find that his rich banquet was a terrible delusion; that he was starving to death; and that a large ship was hove to within a few yards of him!

Starting up on his knees, he uttered a wild shriek. Then, as the truth entered his soul, he raised his hand and gave a faint cheer.

The revulsion of feeling in the crew of the Talisman was overpowering. A long, loud, tremendous cheer burst from every heart!

"Lower away!" was shouted to the men who stood at the fall-tackles of the boat.

As the familiar sounds broke on Henry's ears, he leaped to his feet, and, waving his hand above his head, again attempted to cheer; but his voice failed him. Staggering backwards, he fell fainting into the sea.

Almost at the same instant, a man leaped from the bulwark of the frigate, and swam vigorously towards the raft. It was Richard Price, the boatswain of the frigate. He reached Henry before the boat did, and, grasping his inanimate form, supported him until it came up and rescued them both. A few minutes later Henry Stuart was restored to consciousness, and the surgeon of the frigate was administering to him such restoratives as his condition seemed to require.

CHAPTER XXVI.
THE CAPTURE AND THE FIRE.

Eight days after the rescue of Henry Stuart from a horrible death, as related in the last chapter, the Talisman found herself, late in the afternoon, within about

forty hours' sail of Sandy Cove.

Mulroy had visited the Isle of Palms, and found that the pirates had flown. The mate of the Avenger and his companions had taken advantage of the opportunity of escape afforded them by Gascoyne, and had hastily quitted their rendezvous, with as much of the most valuable portion of their booty as the boat could carry. As this is their last appearance in these pages, it may be as well to say that they were never again heard of. Whether they perished in a storm, or gained some distant land, and followed their former leader's advice,to repent of their sins,or again took to piracy, and continued the practise of their terrible trade under a more bloody-minded captain, we cannot tell. They disappeared as many a band of wicked men has disappeared before, and never turned up again. With these remarks, we dismiss them from our tale.

Surly Dick now began to entertain sanguine hopes that he would be pardoned, and that he would yet live to enjoy the undivided booty which he alone knew lay concealed in the Isle of Palms; for, now that he had heard Henry's account of the landing of Gascoyne on the island, he never doubted that the pirates would fly in haste from a spot that was no longer unknown to others, and that they would be too much afraid of being captured to venture to return to it.

It was, then, with a feeling of no small concern, that the pirate heard the lookout shout on the afternoon referred to, "Sail ho!"

"Where away?"

"On the lea beam."

The course of the frigate was at once changed, and she ran down towards the strange sail.

"A schooner, sir," observed the second lieutenant to Mr. Mulroy.

"It looks marvelously like the Foam, alias the Avenger," observed the latter. "Beat to quarters. If this rascally pirate has indeed been thrown in our way again, we will give him a warm reception. Why, the villain has actually altered his course, and is standing towards us."

"Don't you think it is just possible," suggested Henry Stuart, "that Gascoyne may have captured the vessel from his mate, and now comes to meet us as a friend?"

"I don't know that," said Mulroy, in an excited tone; for he could not easily forget the rough usage his vessel had received at the hands of the bold pirate. "I don't know that. No doubt Gascoyne's mate was against him; but the greater

part of the crew were evidently in his favor, else why the secret manner in which he was deprived of his command? No, no. Depend upon it, the villain has got hold of his schooner and will keep it. By a fortunate chance we have again met; I will see to it that we do not part without a close acquaintance. Yet why he should throw himself into my very arms in this way, puzzles me. Ha! I see his big gun amidships. It is uncovered. No doubt he counts on his superior sailing powers, and means to give us a shot and show us his heels. Well, we shall see."

"There goes his flag," observed the second lieutenant.

"What! eh! It's the Union Jack!" exclaimed Mulroy.

"I doubt not that your own captain commands the schooner," said Henry, who had, of course, long before this time, made the first lieutenant of the Talisman acquainted with Montague's capture by the pirate, along with Alice and her companions. "You naturally mistrust Gascoyne; but I have reason to believe that, on this occasion at least, he is a true man."

Mulroy returned no answer; for the two vessels were now almost near enough to enable those on board to distinguish faces with the telescope. A very few minutes sufficed to remove all doubts; and a quarter of an hour later, Montague stood on his own quarter-deck, receiving the congratulations of his officers, while Henry Stuart was seized upon and surrounded by his friends Corrie, Alice, Poopy, the missionary, and Ole Thorwald.

In the midst of a volley of excited conversation, Henry suddenly exclaimed, "But what of Gascoyne? Where is the pirate captain?"

"Why, we've forgotten him" exclaimed Thorwald, whose pipe was doing duty like a factory chimney. "I shouldn't wonder if he took advantage of us just now to give us the slip!"

"No fear of that," said Mr. Mason. "Poor fellow, he has felt your loss terribly, Henry; for we all believed that you were lost; but I am bound to confess that none of us have shown a depth of sorrow equal to that of Gascoyne. It seems unaccountable to me. He has not shown his face on deck since the day he gave up all hope of rescuing you, and has eaten nothing but a biscuit now and then, which he would suffer no one but Corrie to take to him."

"Poor Gascoyne! I will go and relieve his mind," said Henry, turning to quit the quarter-deck.

Now, the noise created by the meeting of the two vessels had aroused Gascoyne from the lethargic state of mind and body to which he had given

way. Coming on deck, he was amazed to find himself close to the Talisman. A boat lay alongside the Foam, into which he jumped, and, sculling towards the frigate, he stepped over the bulwarks just as Henry turned to go in search of him.

The pirate captain's face wore a haggard, careworn, humbled look, that was very different from its usual bold, lion-like expression. No one can tell what a storm had passed through the strong man's breast while he lay alone on the floor of his cabin,the deep, deep sorrow; the remorse for sin; the bitterness of soul, when he reflected that his present misery was chargeable only to himself. A few nights had given him the aspect of a much older man.

For a few seconds he stood glancing round the quarter-deck of the Talisman with a look of mingled curiosity and sadness. But when his eye fell on the form of Henry he turned deadly pale, and trembled like an aspen leaf.

"Well, Gascoyne, mymyfriend," said the youth, with some hesitation, as he advanced.

The shout that Gascoyne uttered on hearing the young man's voice was almost superhuman. It was something like a mingled cheer and cry of agony. In another moment he sprang forward, and, seizing Henry in his arms, pressed him to his breast with a grasp that rendered the youth utterly powerless.

Almost instantly he released him from his embrace, and, seizing his hand, said, in a wild, gay, almost fierce manner:

"Come, Henry, lad; I have somewhat to say to you. Come with me."

He forced rather than led the amazed youth into the boat, sculled to the schooner, hurried him into the cabin, and shut and locked the door.

We need scarcely say that all this was a matter of the deepest curiosity and interest to those who witnessed it; but they were destined to remain with their curiosity unsatisfied for some time after that.

When Henry Stuart issued from the cabin of the Avenger after that mysterious interview, his countenance wore a surprised and troubled expression. Gascoyne's on the contrary, was grave and calm, yet cheerful. He was more like his former self.

The young man was, of course eagerly questioned as to what had been said to him, and why the pirate had shown such fondness for him; but the only reply that could be got from him was, "I must not tell. It is a private matter. You shall know time enough."

With this answer they were fain to be content. Even Corrie failed to extract anything more definite from his friend.

A prize crew was put on board the Foam, and the two vessels proceeded towards the harbor of Sandy Cove in company.

Henry and his friends went in the Foam; but Gascoyne was detained a prisoner on board the Talisman. Montague felt that it was his duty to put him in irons; but he could not prevail on himself to heap unneccessary indignity on the head of one who had rendered him such good service; so he left him at large, intending to put him in irons only when duty compelled him to do so.

During the night a stiff breeze, amounting almost to a gale, of fair wind sprang up, and the two vessels flew towards their destination; but the Foam left her bulky companion far behind.

That night a dark and savage mind was engaged on board the Talisman in working out a black and desperate plot. Surly Dick saw, in the capture of Gascoyne and the Foam, the end of all his cherished hopes, and in a fit of despair and rage he resolved to be avenged.

This man, when he first came on board the frigate, had not been known as a pirate, and afterwards, as we have seen, he had been treated with leniency on account of his offer to turn informant against his former associates. In the stirring events that followed, he had been overlooked, and, on the night of which we are writing, he found himself free to retire to his hammock with the rest of the watch.

In the night, when the wind was howling mournfully through the rigging, and the greater part of the crew were buried in repose, this man rose stealthily from his hammock, and, with noiseless tread, found his way to a dark corner of the ship where the eyes of the sentries were not likely to observe him. Here he had made preparations for his diabolical purpose. Drawing a flint and steel from his pocket, he proceeded to strike a light. This was procured in a few seconds; and as the match flared up in his face, it revealed the workings of a countenance in which all the strongest and worst passions of human nature had stamped deep and terrible lines.

The pirate had taken the utmost care, by arranging an old sail over the spot, to prevent the reflection of the light being seen. It revealed a large mass of oakum and tar. Into the heart of this he thrust the match, and instantly glided away, as he had come, stealthily and without noise.

For a few seconds the fire smoldered: for the sail that covered it kept it down, as well as hid it from view. But such combustible material could not be

smothered long. The smell of burning soon reached one of the marines stationed on the lower deck, who instantly gave the alarm; but almost before the words had passed his lips the flames burst forth.

"Fire! fire! fire!"

What a scene ensued! There was confusion at first; for no sound at sea rings so terribly in the ear as the shout of "Fire!"

But speedily the stern discipline on board a man-of-war prevailed. Men were stationed in rows; the usual appliances for the extinction of fire were brought into play; buckets of water were passed down below as fast as they could be drawn. No miscellaneous shouting took place; but the orders that were necessary, and the noise of action, together with the excitement and the dense smoke that rolled up the hatchway, produced a scene of the wildest and most stirring description.

In the midst of this, the pirate captain, as might have been expected, performed a prominent part. His great physical strength enabled him to act with a degree of vigor that rendered his aid most valuable. He wrought with the energy of a huge mechanical power, and with a quick promptitude of perception and a ready change of action which is denied to mere mechanism. He tore down the bulkheads that rendered it difficult to get at the place where the fire was; he hurled bucket after bucket of water on the glowing mass, and rushed, amid clouds of hot steam and suffocating smoke, with piles of wet blankets to smother it out.

Montague and he wrought together. The young captain issued his orders as calmly as if there were no danger, yet with a promptitude and vigor that inspired his men with confidence. Gascoyne's voice was never heard. He obeyed orders, and acted as circumstances required; but he did not presume, as men are apt to do on such occasions, to give orders and advice when there was a legitimate commander. Only once or twice were the deep tones of his bass voice heard, when he called for more water, or warned the more daring among the men when danger from falling timber threatened them.

But all this availed not to check the flames. The men were quickly driven upon deck, and it soon became evident that the vessel must perish. The fire burst through the hatchways, and in a short time began to leap up the rigging.

It now became necessary to make arrangements for the saving of the crew.

"Nothing more can be done, Mr. Mulroy," said Montague, in a calm voice, that accorded ill with the state of his mind. "Get the boats ready, and order the men to assemble on the quarter-deck."

"If we were only nearer the island," said Gascoyne, in a low tone, as if he were talking to himself, "we might run her on the reef, and the breakers would soon put out the fire."

"That would be little consolation to me," said Montague, with a bitter smile. "Lower the boats, Mr. Mulroy. The Foam has observed our condition, I see. Let them row to it. I will go in the gig."

The first lieutenant hastened to obey the order, and the men embarked in the boats, lighted by the flames, which were now roaring high up the masts.

Meanwhile the man who had been the cause of all this was rushing about the deck, a furious maniac. He had wrought at the fire almost as fiercely as Gascoyne himself, and now that all hope was past, he continued, despite the orders of Montague to the contrary, to draw water and rush with bucket after bucket into the midst of the roaring flames. At last he disappeared, no one knew where, and no one cared; for in such a scene he was soon forgotten.

The last man left the ship when the heat on the poop became so great that it was scarcely possible to stand there. Still Montague and Gascoyne stood side by side near the taffrail, and the gig with her crew floated just below them. The last boatful of men pulled away from the burning vessel and then Montague turned, with a deep sigh, and said:

"Now, Mr. Gascoyne, get into the boat. I must be the last man to quit the ship."

Without a word, Gascoyne swung himself over the stern, and, sliding down by a rope, dropped into the boat. Montague followed, and they rowed away.

Just at that moment Surly Dick sprang on the bulwarks, and, holding on by the mizzen-shrouds, took off his hat and cheered:

"Ha! ha!" he shrieked, with a fiendish laugh, "I've escaped you, have I? escaped youhurrah!" and with another wild shriek he leaped on the hot deck, and, seizing a bucket, resumed his self-imposed duty of deluging the fire with water.

"Pull, pull lads! We can't leave the miserable man to perish," cried Montague, starting up, while the men rowed after the frigate with their utmost might. But in vain. Already she was far from them, and ever increased the distance as she ran before the gale.

As long as the ship lasted the poor maniac was seen diligently pursuing his work; stopping now and then to spring on the bulwarks and give another cheer.

At last the blazing vessel left boats and schooner far behind, and the flames rose in great flakes and tongues above her top-masts, while the smoke rolled in dense black volumes away to leeward.

While the awe-stricken crew watched her, there came a sudden flash of bright white flame, as if a volcano had leaped out of the ocean. The powder-magazine had caught. It was followed by a roaring crash that seemed to rend the very heavens. A thick darkness settled over the scene; and the vessel that a few hours before had been a noble frigate was scattered on the ocean a mass of blackened ruins.

CHAPTER XXVII.
PLEADING FOR LIFE.

The Pacific is not always calm, but neither is it always stormy. We think it necessary to make this latter observation because the succession of short-lived gales and squalls which have been prominently and unavoidably brought forward in our tale might lead the reader to deem the name of this ocean inappropriate.

The gale blew itself out a few hours after the destruction of the Talisman, and left the Foam becalmed within sight of Sandy Cove island, almost on the same spot of ocean where she lay when we introduced her to the reader in the first chapter.

Although the sea was not quite so still now, owing to the swell caused by the recent gale, it was quite as glassy as it was then. The sun, too, was as hot, and the sky as brilliant; but the aspect of the Foam was much changed. The deep quiet was gone. Crowded on every part of the deck, and even down in her hold, were the crew of the man-of-war, lolling about listlessly and sadly, or conversing with grave looks about the catastrophe which had deprived them so suddenly of their floating home. Gascoyne and Henry leaned over the stern, to avoid being overheard by those around them, and conversed in low tones.

"But why not attempt to escape?" said the latter, in reply to some observation made by his companion.

"Because I am pledged to give myself up to justice."

"No; not to justice," replied the youth quickly. "You said you would give yourself up to me and Mr. Mason, I for one won't act the part of aa"

"Thief-catcher," suggested Gascoyne.

"Well, put it so if you will; and I am certain that the missionary will not have

anything to do with your capture. He will say that the officers of justice are bound to attend to such matters. It would be perfectly right in you to try to escape."

"Ah, Henry! your feelings have warped your judgment," said Gascoyne, shaking his head. "It is strange how men will prevaricate and deceive themselves when they want to reason themselves into a wrong course or out of a right one. But what you or Mr. Mason think or will do has nothing to do with my course of action."

"But the law holds, if I mistake not, that a man is not bound to criminate himself," said Henry.

"I know not and care not what the law of man holds," replied the other sadly. "I have forfeited my life to my country, and I am willing to lay it down."

"Nay, not your life," said Henry; "you have done no murder."

"Well, then, at least my liberty is forfeited. I shall leave it to those who judge me whether my life shall be taken or no. I sometimes wish that I could get away to some distant part of the world, and there, by living the life of an honest man, try to undo, if possible, a little of what I have done. But, woe's me, wishes and regrets come too late. No; I must be content to reap what I have sown."

"They will be certain to hang you," said the youth, bitterly.

"I think it likely they will," replied his companion.

"And would you call that justice?" asked Henry, sharply. "Whatever punishment you may deserve, you do not deserve to die. You know well enough that your word will go for nothing, and no one else can bear witness in your favor. You will be regarded simply as a notorious pirate. Even if some of the people whose lives you have spared while taking their goods should turn up, their testimony could not prove that you had not murdered others; so your fate is certain if you go to trial. Have you any right, then, to compass your own death by thus giving yourself up?"

"Ah, boy, your logic is not sound."

"But answer my question," said the youth, testily.

"Henry, plead with me no longer," said Gascoyne, in a deep, stern tone. "My mind is made up. I have spent many years in dishonesty and self-deception. It is perhaps possible that by a life devoted to doing good I might in the long run benefit men more than I have damaged them. This is just possible, I say,

though I doubt it; but I have promised to give myself up whenever this cruise is at an end, and I won't break the last promise I am likely to give in this world; so do not attempt to turn me, boy."

Henry made no reply, but his knitted brows and compressed lips showed that a struggle was going on within him. Suddenly he stood erect, and said, firmly:

"Be it so, Gascoyne. I will hold you to your promise. You shall not escape me!"

With this somewhat singular reply, Henry left his surprised companion, and mingled with the crowd of men who stood on the quarter-deck.

A light breeze had now sprung up, and the Foam was gliding rapidly towards the island. Gascoyne's deep voice was still heard at intervals issuing a word of command, for, as he knew the reefs better than any one else on board, Montague had intrusted him with the pilotage of the vessel into harbor.

When they had passed the barrier-reef, and were sailing over the calm waters of the enclosed lagoon in the direction of Sandy Cove, the young officer went up to the pirate captain with a perplexed air and a degree of hesitation that was very foreign to his character.

Gascoyne flushed deeply when he observed him. "I know what you would say to me," he said, quickly. "You have a duty to perform. I am ready."

"Gascoyne," said Montague, with deep earnestness of tone and manner, "I would willingly spare you this, but, as you say, I have a duty to perform. I would, with all my heart, that it had fallen to other hands. Believe me, I appreciate what you have done within the last few days, and I believe what you have said in regard to yourself and your career. All this, you may depend upon it, will operate powerfully with your judges. But you know I cannot permit you to quit this vessel a free man."

"I know it," said Gascoyne, calmly.

"Andand" (here Montague stammered and came to an abrupt pause).

"Say on, Captain Montague. I appreciate your generosity in feeling for me thus; but I am prepared to meet whatever awaits me."

"It is necessary," resumed Montague, "that you be manacled before I take you on shore."

Gascoyne started. He had not thought of this. He had not fully realized the fact that he was to be deprived of his liberty so soon. In the merited indignity

which was now to be put upon him, he recognized the opening act of the tragedy which was to terminate with his life.

"Be it so," he said, lowering his head, and sitting down on a carronade, in order to avoid the gaze of those who surrounded him.

While this was being done, the youthful Corrie was in the fore part of the schooner whispering eagerly to Alice and Poopy.

"O Alice! I've seen him!" exclaimed the lad.

"Seen who?" inquired Alice, raising her pretty little eyebrows just the smallest morsel.

"Why, the boatswain of the Talisman, Dick Price, you know, who jumped overboard to save Henry when he fell off the raft. Come, I'll point him out."

So saying, Corrie edged his way through the crowd until he could see the windlass. Here, seated on a mass of chain cable, sat a remarkably rugged specimen of the British boatswain. He was extremely short, excessively broad, uncommonly jovial, and remarkably hairy. He wore his round hat so far on the back of his head that it was a marvel how it managed to hang there, and smoked a pipe so black that the most powerful imagination could hardly conceive of its ever having been white, and so short that it seemed all head and no stem.

"That's him!" said Corrie, eagerly.

"Oh! is it?" replied Alice, with much interest.

"Hee! hee!" observed Poopy.

"Stand by to let go the anchor!" shouted Montague.

Instantly bustle and noise prevailed everywhere. The crew of the lost frigate had started up on hearing the order, but having no stations to run to, they expended the energy that had been awakened, in shuffling about and opening an animated conversation in undertones.

Soon the schooner swept round the point that had hitherto shut out the view of Sandy Cove, and a few minutes later the rattling of the chain announced that the voyage of the Foam had terminated.

Immediately after, a boat was lowered, and Gascoyne was conveyed by a party of marines to the shore, and lodged in the prison which had been but recently occupied by our friend John Bumpus.

Mrs. Stuart had purposely kept out of the way when she heard of the arrival of the Foam. She knew Gascoyne so well that she felt sure he would succeed in recapturing his schooner. But she also knew that in doing this he would necessarily release Montague from his captivity, in which case it was certain that the pirate captain, having promised to give himself up, would be led on shore a prisoner. She could not bear to witness this; but no sooner did she hear of his being lodged in jail than she prepared to visit him.

As she was about to issue from her cottage, Henry met her, and clasped her in his arms. The meeting would have doubtless been a warmer one had the mother known what a narrow escape her son had so recently had. But Mrs. Stuart was accustomed to part from Henry for weeks at a time, and regarded this return in much the same light as former home-comings, except in so far as he had news of their lost friends to give her. She welcomed him therefore with a kiss and a glad smile, and then hurried him into the house to inquire about the result of the voyage.

"I have already heard of your success in finding Alice and our friends. Come, tell me more."

"Have you heard how nearly I was lost, mother?"

"Lost!" exclaimed the widow, in surprise; "no, I have heard nothing of that."

Henry rapidly narrated his escape from the wreck of the Wasp, and then, looking earnestly in his mother's anxious face he said, slowly: "But you do not ask for Gascoyne, mother. Do you know that he is now in the jail?"

The widow looked perplexed. "I know it," said she, "I was just going to see him when you came in."

"Ah, mother," said Henry, reproachfully, "why did you not tell me sooner about Gascoyne?"

He was interrupted here by Corrie and Alice rushing into the room, the latter of whom threw herself into the widow's arms and burst into tears, while Master Corrie indulged in some eccentric bounds and cheers by way of relieving his feelings. For some time Henry allowed them to talk eagerly to each other; then he told Corrie and Alice that he had something of importance to say to his mother, and led her into an adjoining room.

Corrie had overheard the words spoken by Henry just as he entered, and great was his curiosity to know what was the mystery connected with the pirate captain. This curiosity was intensified when he heard a half-suppressed shriek in the room where mother and son were closeted. For one moment he was

tempted to place his ear to the keyhole! But a blush covered his fat cheeks at the very thought of acting such a disgraceful part. Like a wise fellow, he did not give the tempter a second opportunity, but, seizing the hand of his companion, said:

"Come along, Alice; we'll go seek for Bumpus."

Half an hour afterwards the widow stood at the jail door. The jailer was an intimate friend, and considerately retired during the interview.

"O Gascoyne! has it come to this?" She sat down beside the pirate, and grasped one of his manacled hands in both of hers.

"Even so, Mary; my hour has come. I do not complain of my doom. I have brought it on myself."

"But why not try to escape?" said Mrs. Stuart, earnestly. "There are some here who could aid you in the matter."

Here the widow attempted to reason with Gascoyne, as her son had done before, but with similar want of success. Gascoyne remained immovable. He did indeed betray deep emotion while the woman reasoned with him, in tones of intense earnestness; but he would not change his mind. He said that if Montague, as the representative of the law, would set him free in consideration of what he had recently done, he would accept of liberty; but nothing could induce him to escape.

Leaving him in this mode, Mrs. Stuart hurried to the cottage where Montague had taken up his abode.

The young captain received her kindly. Having learned from Corrie all about the friendship that existed between the widow and Gascoyne, he listened with the utmost consideration to her.

"It is impossible," said he, shaking his head; "I cannot set him free."

"Do his late services weigh nothing with you?" pleaded the widow.

"My dear madam," replied Montague, sorrowfully, "you forget that I am not his judge. I have no right to weigh the circumstances of his case. He is a convicted and self-acknowledged pirate. My only duty is to convey him to England, and hand him over to the officers of justice. I sympathize with you, indeed I do; for you seem to take his case to heart very much; but I cannot help you. I must do my duty. The Foam will be ready for sea in a few days. In it I shall convey Gascoyne to England."

"O Mr. Montague! I do take his case to heart, as you say, and no one on this earth has more cause to do so. Will it interest you more in Gascoyne, and induce you to use your influence in his favor, if I tell you thatthathe is my husband?"

"Your husband!" cried Montague, springing up, and pacing the apartment with rapid strides.

"Aye," said Mrs. Stuart, mournfully, covering her face with her hands. "I had hoped that this secret would die with me and him; but in the hope that it may help, ever so little, to save his life, I have revealed it to you."

"Believe me, the secret shall be safe in my keeping," said Montague, tenderly, as he sat down again, and drew his chair near to that of Mrs. Stuart. "But, alas! I do not see how it is possible for me to help your husband. I will use my utmost influence to mitigate his sentence; but I cannot, I dare not set him free."

The poor woman sat pale and motionless while the captain said this. She began to perceive that all hope was gone, and felt despair settling down on her heart.

"What will be his doom," said she, in a husky voice, "if his life is spared?"

"I do not know. At least I am not certain. My knowledge of criminal law is very slight, but I should suppose it would be transportation for"

Montague hesitated, and could not find it in his heart to add the word "life."

Without uttering a word, Mrs. Stuart rose, and, staggering from the room, hastened with a quick, unsteady step toward her own cottage.

CHAPTER XXVIII.
A PECULIAR CONFIDANTMORE DIFFICULTIES, AND VARIOUS PLANS TO OVERCOME THEM.

When Alice Mason was a little child, there was a certain tree near her father's house to which, in her hours of sorrow, she was wont to run and tell it all the grief of her overflowing heart. She firmly believed that this tree heard and understood and sympathized with all that she said. There was a hole in the stem into which she was wont to pour her complaints; and when she had thus unburdened her heart to her silent confidant, she felt comforted, as one feels when a human friend has shared one's sorrows.

When the child became older, and her sorrows were heavier, and, perhaps, more real, her well-nurtured mind began to rise to a higher source for comfort. Habit and inclination led her indeed to the same tree; but when she kneeled upon its roots and leaned against its stem, she poured out her heart into the bosom of Him who is ever present, and who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities.

Almost immediately after landing on the island, Alice sought the umbrageous shelter of her old friend and favorite, and on her knees thanked God for restoring her to her father and her home.

To the same place the missionary directed his steps; for he knew it well, and doubtless expected to find his daughter there.

"Alice, dear, I have good news to tell you," said the missionary, sitting down beside her.

"I know what it is!" cried Alice, eagerly.

"What do you think it is, my pet?"

"Gascoyne is to be forgiven! Am I right?"

Mr. Mason shook his head sadly. "No, that is not what I have to tell you. Poor fellow, I would that I had some good news to give you about him; but I fear there is no hope for him,I mean as regards his being pardoned by man."

Alice sighed, and her face expressed the deepest tenderness and sympathy.

"Why do you take so great an interest in this man, dear?" said her father.

"Because Mary Stuart loves him, and I love Mary Stuart. And Corrie seems to like him, too, since he has come to know him better. Besides, has he not saved my life, and Captain Montague's, and Corrie's? Corrie tells me that he is very sorry for the wicked things he has done, and he thinks that if his life is spared he will become a good man. Has he been very wicked, papa?"

"Yes, very wicked. He has robbed many people of their goods, and has burnt and sunk their vessels."

Alice looked horrified.

"But," continued her father, "I am convinced of the truth of his statement,that he has never shed human blood. Nevertheless, he has been very wicked, and the fact that he has such a powerful will, such commanding and agreeable manners, only makes his guilt the greater; for there is less excuse for his

having devoted such powers and qualities to the service of Satan. I fear that his judges will not take into account his recent good deeds and his penitence. They will not pardon him."

"Father," said Alice, earnestly, "God pardons the chief of sinners; why will not man do so?"

The missionary was somewhat perplexed as to how he should reply to such a difficult question.

"My child," said he, "the law of God and the law of man must be obeyed, or the punishment must be inflicted on the disobedient: both laws are alike in this respect. In the case of God's law, Jesus Christ our Lord obeyed it, bore the punishment for us, and set our souls free. But in the case of man's law, who is to bear Gascoyne's punishment and set him free?"

As poor Alice could not answer this, she cast down her tearful eyes, sighed again and looked more miserable than ever.

"But come, my pet," resumed Mr. Mason, you must guess again. "It is really good news,try."

"I can't," said Alice, looking up in her father's face with animation and shaking her head. "I never could guess anything rightly."

"What would you think the best thing that could happen?" said her father.

The child looked intently at the ground for a few seconds, and pursed her rosy little mouth, while the smallest possible frownthe result of intellectual exertionknitted her fair brow.

"The best thing that could happen," said she, slowly, "would be that all the whole world should become good."

"Well done, Alice!" exclaimed her father, laughing; "you have certainly taken the widest possible view of the subject. But you have soared a little too high; yet you have not altogether missed the mark. What would you say if, the chiefs of the heathen village were to cast their idols into the fire, and ask me to come over and teach them how to become Christians?"

"Oh! have they really done this?" cried Alice, in eager surprise.

"Indeed they have. I have just seen and had! a talk with some of their chief men, and have promised to go over to their village to-morrow. I came up here just to tell you this, and to say that your friend the widow will take care of you while I am away."

"And shall we have no more wars,no more of these terrible deeds of blood?" inquired the child, while a shudder passed through her frame at the recollection of what she had heard and seen during her short life on that island.

"I trust not, my lamb. I believe that God has heard our prayers, and that the Prince of peace will henceforth rule in this place. But I must go and prepare for this work. Come, will you go with me?"

"Leave me here for a little, papa; I wish to think it over all alone."

Kissing her forehead, the missionary left her. When he was out of sight the little girl sat down, and, nestling between two great roots of her favorite tree, laid her head against the stem and shut her eyes.

But poor Alice was not left long to her solitary meditations. There was a peculiarly attractive power about her which drew other creatures around her, wherever she might chance to be.

The first individual who broke in upon her was that animated piece of ragged door-mat, Toozle. This imbecile little dog was not possessed of much delicacy of feeling. Having been absent on a private excursion of his own into the mountain when the schooner arrived, he only became aware of the return of his lost, loved, and deeply-regretted mistress, when he came back from his trip. The first thing that told him of her presence was his own nose, the black point of which protruded with difficulty a quarter of an inch beyond the mass of matting which totally extinguished his eyes, and, indeed, every other portion of his head.

Coming down the hill immediately behind Sandy Cove at a breakneck scramble, Toozle happened to cross the path by which his mistress had ascended to her tree. The instant he did so, he came to a halt so sudden that one might have fancied he had been shot. In another moment he was rushing up the hill in wild excitement, giving an occasional yelp of mingled surprise and joy as he went along. The footsteps led him a little beyond the tree, and then turned down towards it, so that he had the benefit of the descent in making the final onset.

The moment he came in sight of Alice he began to bark and yelp in such an eager way that the sounds produced might be described as an intermittent scream. He charged at once with characteristic want of consideration, and, plunging headlong into Alice's bosom, sought to cover her face with kisses; that is, with licks, that being the well-known canine method of doing the thing!

"O Toozle! how glad, glad, glad, I am to see you! my own darling Toozle!" cried Alice, actually shedding tears.

Toozle screamed with delight. It was almost too much for him. Again and again he attempted to lick her face, a familiarity which Alice gently declined to permit; so he was obliged to content himself with her hand.

It has often struck us as surprising, that little dogsusually so intelligent and apt to learn in other mattersshould be so dull of apprehension in this. Toozle had the experience of a lifetime to convince him that Alice objected to have her face licked, and would on no account permit it, although she was extremely liberal in regard to her hands; but Toozle ignored the authority of experience. He was at this time a dog of mature years; but his determination to kiss Alice was as strong as it had been when, in the tender years of his infancy, he had entertained the mistaken belief that she was his own mother.

He watched every unguarded moment to thrust forward his black, not to say impertinent, little snout; and although often reproved, he still remained unconvinced, resolutely returned to the charge, and was not a bit ashamed of himself.

On the present occasion, Toozle behaved like a canine lunatic, and Alice was beginning to think of exercising a little tender violence in order to restrain his superabundant glee, when another individual appeared on the scene, and for a time, at least, relieved her.

The second comer was our dark friend, Kekupoopi. She by some mischance had got separated from her young mistress, and immediately went in search of her. She found her at once, of course; for, as water finds its level, so love finds its object, without much loss of time.

"O Toozle!bee! hee!am dat you?" exclaimed Poopy, who was as much delighted in her way to see the dog as Alice had been.

Toozle was, in his way, as much delighted to see Poopy as he had been to see Alice;no, we are wrong, not quite so much as that, but still extremely glad to see her, and evinced his joy by extravagant sounds and actions. He also evinced his scorn for the opinion that some foolish persons hold, namely, that black people are not as good as white, by rushing into Poopy's arms and attempting to lick her black face as he had tried to do to Alice. As the dark-skinned girl had no objection (for tastes differ, you see), and received the caresses with a quiet "Hee! hee!" Toozle was extremely gratified.

Now, it happened that Jo Bumpus, oppressed with a feeling of concern for his former captain, and with a feeling of doubt as to the stirring events in which he

was an actor being waking realities, had wandered up the mountain-side in order to indulge in profound philosophical reflections.

Happening to hear the noise caused by the joyful meeting which we have just described, he turned aside to see what all the "row" could be about, and thus came unexpectedly on Alice and her friends.

About the same time it chanced (for things sometimes do happen by chance in a very remarkable way, it chanced that Will Corrie, being also much depressed about Gascoyne), resolved to take into his confidence Dick Price, the boatswain, with whom during their short voyage together he had become intimate.

He found that worthy seated on a cask at the end of the rude pile of coral rocks that formed the quay of Sandy Cove, surrounded by some of his shipmates, all of whom, as well as himself, were smoking their pipes and discussing things in general.

Corrie went forward and pulled Dick by the sleeve.

"Hallo, boy! what do you want with me?" said the boatswain.

"I want to speak to you."

"Well, lad, fire away."

"Yes, but I want you to come with me," said the boy, with an anxious and rather mysterious look.

"Very goodheave ahead," said the boatswain, getting up, and following Corrie with a peculiarly nautical roll.

After he had been led through the settlement and a considerable way up the mountain in silence, the boatswain suddenly stopped and said: "Hallo! hold on; my timbers won't stand much more o' this sort o' thing. I was built for navigatin' the seas,I was not for cruisin' on the land. We're far enough out of ear-shot, I s'pose in this here bit of a plantation. Come, what have ye got to say to me? You ain't a goin' to tell me the Freemason's word, are ye? For, if so, don't trouble yourself; I wouldn't listen to it on no account w'atever. It's too mysterious, that is, for me."

"Dick Price," said Corrie, looking up in the face of the seaman, with a serious expression that was not often seen on his round countenance, "you're a man."

The boatswain looked down at the youthful visage in some surprise.

"Well, I s'pose I am," said he, stroking his beard complacently.

"And you know what it is to be misunderstood, misjudged, don't you?"

"Well, now I come to think on it, I believe I have had that misfortune'specially w'en I've ordered the powder-monkeys to make less noise; for them younkers never do seem to understand me. As for misjudgin', I've often an' over again heard 'em say I was the crossest feller they ever did meet with; but they never was more out in their reckoning."

Corrie did not smile; he did not betray the smallest symptom of power either to appreciate or to indulge in jocularity at that moment. But feeling that it was useless to appeal to the former experience of the boatswain, he changed his plan of attack.

"Dick Price," said he, "it's a hard case for an innocent man to be hanged."

"So it is, boy,oncommon hard. I once know'd a poor feller as was hanged for murderin' his old grandmother. It was afterwards found out that he never done the deed; but he was the most incorrigible thief and poacher in the whole place; so it wasn't such a mistake, after all."

"Dick Price," said Corrie, gravely, at the same time laying his hand impressively on his companion's arm, "I'm a tremendous jokerawful fond o' fun and skylarkin'."

"'Pon my word, lad, if you hadn't said so yourself, I'd scarce have believed it. You don't look like it just now, by no manner o' means."

"But I am, though," continued Corrie; "and I tell you that in order to show you that I am very, very much in earnest at this moment, and that you must give your mind to what I've got to say."

The boatswain was impressed by the fervor of the boy. He looked at him in surprise for a few seconds, then nodded his head, and said, "Fire away!"

"You know that Gascoyne is in prison!" said Corrie.

"In course I does. That's one rascally pirate less on the seas, anyhow."

"He is not so bad as you think, Dick."

"Whew!" whistled the boatswain. "You're a friend of his, are ye?"

"No, not a friend; but neither am I an enemy. You know he saved my life, and the lives of two of my friends, and of your own captain, too."

"Well, there's no denying that; but he must have been the means of takin' away more lives than what he has saved."

"No, he hasn't," cried Corrie, eagerly. "That's it, that's just the point; he has saved more than ever he took away, and he's sorry for what he has done; yet they're going to hang him. Now, I say, that's sinfulit's not just. It shan't be done, if I can prevent it; and you must help me to get him out of this scrape,you must, indeed, Dick Price."

The boatswain was quite taken aback. He opened his eyes wide with surprise, and putting his head to one side, gazed earnestly and long at the boy, as if he had been a rare old painting.

Before he could reply, the furious barking of a dog attracted Corrie's attention. He knew it to be the voice of Toozle. Being well acquainted with the locality of Alice's tree, he at once concluded that she was there; and knowing that she would certainly side with him, and that the side she took must necessarily be the winning side, he resolved to bring Dick Price within the fascination of her influence.

"Come, follow me," said he; "we'll talk it over with a friend of mine."

The seaman followed the boy obediently, and in a few minutes stood beside Alice.

Corrie had expected to find her there, but he had not counted on meeting with Poopy and Jo Bumpus.

"Hallo, Grampus! is that you?"

"Wot! Corrie, my boy, is it yourself? Give us your flipper, small though it be. I didn't think I'd niver see ye agin, lad."

"No more did I, Grampus; it was very nearly all up with us."

"Ah, my boy!" said Bumpus, becoming suddenly very grave, "you've no notion, how near it was all up with me. Why, you won't believe it, I was all but scragged."

"Dear me! what is scragged?" inquired Alice.

"You don't mean to say you don't know!" exclaimed Bumpus.

"No, indeed, I don't."

"Why, it means being hanged. I was so near hanged, just a day or two back, that I've had an 'orrible pain in my neck ever since at the bare thought of it!

But who's your friend?" said Bumpus, turning to the boatswain.

"Oh! I forgot him,he's the boatswain of the Talisman. Dick Price, this is my friend John Bumpus."

"Glad to know you, Dick Price."

"Same to you, and luck, John Bumpus."

The two sea-dogs joined their enormous palms, and shook hands cordially.

After these two had indulged in a little desultory conversation, Will Corrie, who, meanwhile, consulted with Alice in an undertone, brought them back to the point that was uppermost in his mind.

"Now," said he, "it comes to this,we must not let Gascoyne be hanged."

"Why, Corrie!" cried Bumpus, in surprise, "that's the very thing I was a-thinkin' of w'en I comed up here and found Miss Alice under the tree."

"I'm glad to hear that, Jo; it's what has been on my own mind all the morning. But Dick Price, he is not convinced that he deserves to escape. Now you tell him all you know about Gascoyne, and I'll tell him all I know; and if he don't believe us, Alice and Poopy will tell him all they know; and if that won't do, you and I will take him up by the legs and pitch him into the sea!"

"That bein' how the case stands, fire away," said Dick Price, with a grin, sitting down on the grass and busily filling his pipe.

Dick was not so hard to be convinced as Corrie had feared. The glowing eulogiums of Bumpus, and the earnest pleadings of Alice, won him over very soon. He finally agreed to become one of the conspirators.

"But how is the thing to be done?" asked Corrie, in some perplexity.

"Ah! that's the p'int," observed Dick, looking profoundly wise.

"Nothing easier," said Bumpus, whose pipe was by this time keeping pace with that of his new friend. "The case is as clear as mud. Here's how it is. Gascoyne is in limbo; well, we are out of limbo. Good. Then, all we've got for to do is to break into limbo and shove Gascoyne out of limbo, and help him to escape. It's all square, you see, lads."

"Not so square as you seem to think," said Henry Stuart, who at that moment stepped from behind the stem of the tree, which had prevented the party from observing his approach.

"Why not?" said Bumpus, making room for the young man to sit beside Alice on the grass.

"Because," said Henry, "Gascoyne won't agree to escape."

"Not agree for to escape!"

"No. If the prison doors were opened at this moment, he would not walk out."

Bumpus became very grave, and shook his head. "Are ye sartin sure o' this?" said he.

"Quite sure," replied Henry, who now detailed part of his recent conversation with the pirate captain.

"Then it's all up with him!" said Bumpus; "and the pirate will meet his doom, as I once heard a feller say in a playthough I little thought to see it acted in reality."

"So he will," added Dick Price.

Corrie's countenance fell, and Alice grew pale, Even Poopy and Toozle looked a little depressed.

"No; it is not all up with him," cried Henry Stuart, energetically. "I have a plan in my head which I think will succeed, but I must have assistance. It won't do, however, to discuss this before our young friends. I must beg of Alice and Poopy to leave us. I do not mean to say I could not trust you, Alice, but the plan must be made known only to those who have to act in this matter. Rest assured, dear child, that I shall do my best to make it successful."

Alice sprang up at once. "My father told me to follow him some time ago," said she. "I have been too long of doing so already. I do hope you will succeed."

So saying, and with a cheerful "Good-by!" the little girl ran down the mountain-side, closely followed by Toozle and Poopy.

As soon as she was gone, Henry turned to his companions and unfolded to them his plan,the details and carrying out of which, however, we must reserve for another chapter.

CHAPTER XXIX.
BUMPUS IS PERPLEXEDMYSTERIOUS COMMUNINGS, AND A CURIOUS LEAVE-TAKING.

"It's a puzzler," said Jo Bumpus to himself,for Jo was much in the habit of conversing with himself; and a very good habit it is, one that is often attended with much profit to the individual, when the conversation is held upon right topics and in a proper spirit,"it's a puzzler, it is; that's a fact."

Having relieved his mind of this observation, the seaman proceeded to cut down some tobacco, and looked remarkably grave and solemn as if "it" were not only a puzzler, but an alarmingly serious puzzler.

"Yes, it's the biggest puzzler as ever I comed across," said he, filling his pipe; for John, when not roused, got on both mentally and physically by slow stages.

"Niver know'd its equal," he continued, beginning to smoke, which operation, as the pipe did not "draw" well at first, prevented him from saying anything more.

It was early morning when Bumpus said all this, and the mariner was enjoying his morning pipe in a reclining attitude on the grass beneath Alice Mason's favorite tree, from which commanding position he gazed approvingly on the magnificent prospect of land and sea which lay before him, bathed in the light of the rising sun.

"It is wery koorious," continued John, taking his pipe out of his mouth and addressing himself to it with much gravity"wery koorious. Things always seems wot they isn't, and turns out to be wot they didn't appear as if they wasn't; werry odd indeed, it is! Only to think that this here sandal-wood trader should turn out for to be Henry's father and the widow's mother,or, I mean, the widow's husband,an' a pirate an' a deliverer o' little boys and girls out o' pirate's hands,his own hands, so to speak,not to mention captings in the Royal Navy, an' not sich a bad feller after all, as won't have his liberty on no account wotiver, even if it was gived to him for nothin', and yet wot can't get it if he wanted it iver so much; and to think that Jo Bumpus should come for to lend hisself toHallo! Jo, back yer tops'ls! Didn't Henry tell ye that ye wasn't to convarse upon that there last matter even with yerself, for fear o' bein' overheard and sp'ilin' the whole affair? Come, I'll refresh myself."

The refreshment in which Jo proposed to indulge was of a peculiar kind which never failed him,it was the perusal of Susan's love-letter.

He now sat up, drew forth the precious and much-soiled epistle, unfolded and spread it out carefully on his knees, placed his pipe very much on one side of his mouth, in order that the smoke might not interfere with his vision, and began to read.

"'Peeler's Farm,'ah! Susan, darlin', it's Jo Bumpus as would give all he has in

the world, includin' his Sunday clo's, to be anchored alongside o' ye at that same farm!'Sanfransko.' I misdoubt the spellin' o' that word, Susan, dear; it seems to me raither short, as if ye'd docked off its tail. Howsomdever'For John bumpuss'O Susan, Susan! if ye'd only remember the big B, and there ain't two esses. I'm sure it's not for want o'tellin' ye, but ye was never great in the way ov memry or spellin'. Pr'aps it's as well. Ye'd ha' bin too perfect, an' that's not desirable by no means,'my darlin' Jo,'ay, them's the words. It's that as sets my 'art a b'ilin' over like."

Here Jo raised his eyes from the letter, and revelled silently in the thought for at least two minutes, during which his pipe did double duty in half its usual time. Then he recurred to his theme; but some parts he read in silence, and without audible comment.

"Aye," said he, "'sandle-wood skooners, the Haf ov thems pirits'so they is, Susan. It's yer powers o' prophesy as amazes me; 'an' The other hafs no beter;' a deal wus, Susan, if ye only know'd it. Ah! my sweet gal, if ye knew wot a grief that word 'beter' was to me before I diskivered wot it wos, ye'd try to improve yer hand o' write, an' make fewer blots!"

At this point Jo was arrested by the sound of footsteps behind him. He folded up his letter precipitately, thrust it into his left breast-pocket, and jumped up with a guilty air about him.

"Why, Bumpus! we have startled you out of a morning nap, I fear," said Henry Stuart, who, accompanied by his mother, came up at that moment. "We are on our way to say good-by to Mr. Mason. As we passed this knoll I caught sight of you, and came up to ask about the boat."

"It's all right," said Bumpus, who quickly recovered his composure,indeed, he had never lost much of it. "I've bin down to Saunder's store and got the ropes for your"

"Hush, man I there is no need of telling what they are for," said Henry, with a mysterious look at his mother.

"Why not tell me all, Henry?" said Mrs. Stuart; "surely, you can trust me?"

"Trust you, mother!" replied the youth, with a smile. "I should think so; but there are reasons for my not telling you everything just now. Surely, you can trust me? I have told you as much as I think advisable in the meantime. Ere long I will tell you all."

The widow sighed, and was fain to rest content. She sat down beside the tree, while her companions talked together, apart, in low tones.

"Now Jo, my man," continued Henry, "one of our friends must be got out of the way."

"Wery good; I'm the man as'll do it."

"Of course I don't mean that he's to be killed!"

"In coorse not. Who is he?"

"Ole Thorwald."

"Wot! the descendant o' the Sea Kings, as he calls himself?"

"The same," said Henry, laughing at the look of surprise with which Bumpus received this information.

"What has he bin an' done?"

"He has done nothing as yet," said Henry; "but he will certainly thwart our schemes if he hears of them. He has an inveterate ill-will to my poor father (Henry lowered his voice as he proceeded), and I know has suspicions that we are concocting some plan to enable him to escape, and watches us accordingly. I find him constantly hanging about the jail. Alas! if he knew how thoroughly determined Gascoyne is to refuse deliverance unless it comes from the proper source, he would keep his mind more at ease."

"Don't you think if you wos to tell him that Gascoyne is yer father he would side with us?" suggested Bumpus.

"Perhaps he would. I think he would; but I dare not risk it. The easier method will be to outwit him."

"Not an easy thing for to do, I'm afraid; for he's a cute old feller. How is it to be done?" asked Bumpus.

"By telling him the truth," said Henry; "and you must tell it to him."

"Well, that is a koorious way," said Bumpus, with a broad grin.

"But not the whole truth," continued Henry. "You must just tell him as much as it is good for him to know, and nothing more; and as the thing must be done at once, I'll tell you what you have got to say."

Here the young man explained to the attentive Bumpus the course that he was to follow, and, having got him thoroughly to understand his part, he sent him away to execute it. Meanwhile he and his mother went in search of Mr.

Mason, who at the time was holding a consultation with the chiefs of the native village, near the site of his burnt cottage. The consultation had just been concluded when they reached the spot, and the missionary was conversing with the native carpenter who superintended the erection of his new home.

After the morning greeting, and a few words of general conversation, Mrs. Stuart said: "We have come to talk with you in private; will you walk to Alice's tree with us?"

"Certainly, my friend; I hope no new evils are about to befall us," said the missionary, who was startled by the serious countenances of the mother and son; for he was ignorant of the close relation in which they stood to Gascoyne, as, indeed, was every one else in the settlement, excepting Montague and his boatswain and Corrie, all of whom were enjoined to maintain the strictest secrecy on the point.

"No; I thank God, all is well," replied Mrs. Stuart; "but we have come to say that we are going away."

"Going away!" echoed the missionary, in surprise. "When?where to?why? You amaze me, Mary."

"Henry will explain."

"The fact is, Mr. Mason?" said Henry, "circumstances require my absence from Sandy Cove on a longer trip than usual, and I mean to take my mother with me. Indeed, to be plain with you, I do not think it likely that we shall return for a long time, perhaps not at all; and it is absolutely necessary that we should go secretly. But we could not go without saying good-by to you."

"We owe much to you, dear Mr. Mason," cried the widow, grasping the missionary's hand and kissing it. "We can never, never forget you; and will always pray for God's best blessings to descend on you and yours."

"This is overwhelming news!" exclaimed Mr. Mason, who had stood hitherto gazing from the one to the other in mute astonishment. "But, tell me, Mary" (here he spoke in earnest tones), "is not Gascoyne at the bottom of this?"

"Mr. Mason," said Henry, "we never did, and never will deceive you. There is a good reason for neither asking nor answering questions on this subject just now. I am sure you know us too well to believe that we think of doing what is wrong, and you can trust usat least my motherthat we will not do what is foolish."

"I have perfect confidence in your hearts, my dear friends," replied Mr.

Mason; "but you will forgive me if I express some doubt as to your ability to judge between right and wrong when your feelings are deeply moved, as they evidently are, from some cause or other, just now. Can you not put confidence in me? I can keep a secret, and may, perhaps, give you good counsel."

"No, no," said Henry, emphatically; "it will not do to involve you in our affairs. It would not be right in us just now to confide even in you. I cannot explain whyyou must accept the simple assurance in the meantime. Wherever we go, we can communicate by letter, and I promise, ere long, to reveal all."

"Well, I will not press you further; but I will commend you in prayer to God. I do not like to part thus hurriedly, however. Can we not meet again before you go?"

"We shall be in the cottage at four this afternoon, and will be very glad if you will come to us for a short time," said the widow.

"That is settled, then; I will go and explain to the natives that I cannot accompany them to the village till to-morrow. When do you leave?"

"To-night."

"So soon! Surely it is notBut I forbear to say more on a subject which is forbidden. God bless you, my friends; we shall meet at four. Good-by!"

The missionary turned from them with a sad countenance, and went in search of the native chiefs; while Henry and his mother separated from each other, the former taking the path that led to the little quay of Sandy Cove, the latter that which conducted to her own cottage.

CHAPTER XXX.
MORE LEAVINGDEEP DESIGNSBUMPUS IN A NEW CAPACITY.

On the particular day of which we are writing, Alice Mason felt an unusual depression of spirits. She had been told by her father of the intended departure of the widow and her son, and had been warned not to mention it to any one. In consequence of this, the poor child was debarred her usual consolation of pouring her grief into the black bosom of Poopy. It naturally followed, therefore, that she sought her next favorite,the tree.

Here, to her surprise and comfort, she found Corrie, seated on one of its roots, with his head resting on the stem, and his hands clasped before him. His general appearance was that of a human being in the depths of woe. On observing Alice, he started up, and assuming a cheerful look, ran to meet her.

"Oh! I'm so glad to find you here, Corrie," cried Alice, hastening forward; "I'm in such distress! Do you know thatOh! I forgot papa said I was to tell nobody about it!"

"Don't let that trouble you, Alice," said Corrie, as they sat down together under the tree. "I know what you were about to say,Henry and his mother are going away."

"How do you know that? I thought it was a great secret!"

"So it is, a tremendous secret," rejoined Corrie, with a look that was intended to be very mysterious; "and I know it, because I've been let into the secret for reasons which I cannot tell even to you. But there is another secret which you don't know yet, and which will surprise you perhaps, I am going away, too."

"You!" exclaimed the little girl, her eyes dilating to their full size.

"Ayeme!"

"You're jesting, Corrie."

"Am I? I wish I was; but it's a fact."

"But where are you going to?" said Alice, her eyes filling with tears.

"I don't know."

"Corrie!"

"I tell you, I don't know; and if I did know, I couldn't tell. Listen, Alice; I will tell you as much as I am permitted to let out."

The boy became extremely solemn at this point, took the little girl's hand, and gazed into her face as he spoke.

"You must know," he began, "that Henry and his mother and I go away to-night"

"To-night?" cried Alice, quickly.

"To-night," repeated the boy. "Bumpus and Jakolu go with us. I have said that I don't know where we are going to, but I am pretty safe in assuring you that we are going somewhere. Why we are going I am forbidden to tell,divulge, I think Henry called it; but what that means I don't know. I can only guess it's another word for tell; and yet it can't be that either, for you can speak of telling lies, but you can't speak of divulging them. However, that don't matter. But I'm not forbidden to tell you why I'm going away. In the first place, then, I'm

going to seek my fortune! Where I'm to find it remains to be seen. The only thing I know is, that I mean to find it somewhere or other, and then" (here Corrie because very impressive) "come back and live beside you and your father,not to speak of Poopy and Toozle."

Alice smiled sadly at this. Corrie looked graver than ever, and went on:

"Meanwhile, during my absence I will write letters to you, and you'll write ditto to me. I am going away because I ought to go and be doing something for myself. You know quite well that I would rather stop beside you than go anywhere in this wide world, Alice; but that would be stupid. I'm getting to be a man now, and mustn't go on showin' the weaknesses of a boy. In the second, or third place,I forget which, but no matter,I am going with Henry, because I could not go with a better man; and in the fourthif it's not the fifthplace, I'm going because Uncle Ole Thorwald has long wished me to go to sea; and, to tell you the truth, I would have gone long ago had it not been for you, Alice. There's only one thing that bothers me." Here Corrie looked at his fair companion with a perplexed air.

"What is that?" asked Alice, sympathetically.

"It is that I must go without saying good-by to Uncle Ole. I am very sorry about it. It will look so ungrateful to him; but it can't be helped."

"Why not?" inquired Alice. "If he has often said he wished you to go sea, would he not be delighted to hear that you are going?"

"Yes; but he must not know that I am going to-night, and with Henry Stuart."

"Why not?"

"Ah! that's the point. Mystery! Alicemystery! What a world of mystery this is!" observed the precocious Corrie, shaking his head with profound solemnity. "I've been involved (I think that's the word), rolled up, drowned, and buried in mystery for more than three weeks, and I'm beginning to fear that I'll never again git into the unmysteriously happy state in which I lived before this abominable man-of-war came to the island. No, Alice: I dare not say anything more on that point, even to you just now. But won't I give it you all in my first letter? and won't you open your eyes until they look like two blue saucers?"

Further conversation between the friends was interrupted at this point by the inrushing of Toozle, followed up by Poopy, and a short time after, by Mr. Mason, who took Alice away with him, and left poor Corrie disconsolate.

While this was going on, John Bumpus was fulfilling his mission to Ole Thorwald.

He found that obstinate individual in his own parlor, deep in the investigation of the state of his books of business, which had been allowed to fall into arrears during his absence.

"Come in, Bumpus. So I hear you were half-hanged when we were away."

Ole wheeled round on his stool, and hooked his thumbs into the armholes of his vest, as he said this, leaned his back against his desk, and regarded the seaman with a facetious look.

"Half-hanged, indeed!" said Bumpus, indignantly. "I was more than halfthree-quarters, at least. Why, the worst of it's over w'en the rope's round your neck."

"That is a matter which you can't speak to, John Bumpus, seeing that you've never gone beyond the putting of the rope round your neck."

"Well, I'm content with wot I does happen to know about it," remarked Jo, making a wry face; "an' I hope that I'll never git the chance of knowin' more. But I comed here on business, Mr. Thorwald" (here John became mysterious, and put his finger to his lips.) "I've comed here, Mr. Thorwald, tosplit."

As Ole did not quite understand the meaning of this word, and did not believe that the seaman actually meant to rend himself from head to foot, he said, "Why, Bumpus! what d'ye mean?"

"I mean as how that I've comed to split on my comrades; w'ich means, I'm goin' to tell upon 'em."

"Oh!" exclaimed Ole, eying the man with a look of distrust.

"Yes," pursued Bumpus; "I'm willin' to tell ye all about it, and prevent his escape, if you'll only promise, on your word as a gin'lmun, that ye won't tell nobody else but six niggers, who are more than enough to sarve your turn."

"Prevent whose escape?" said Thorwald, with an excited look.

"Gascoyne's."

Ole jumped off his stool, and hit his left palm a sounding blow with his right fist.

"I knew it!" he exclaimed, staring into the face of the seaman. "I was sure of it! I said it! But how d'ye know, my man?"

"Ah! I'll not say another word if ye don't promise to let me go free, and only take six niggers with ye."

"Well, Bumpus, I do promise, on the word of a true Norseman, which is much better than that of a gentleman, that no harm shall come to you if you tell me all you know of this matter. But I will promise nothing more; because if you won't tell me, you have told me enough to enable me to take such measures as will prevent Gascoyne from escaping."

"No, ye can't prevent it," said Bumpus, with an air of indifference. "If you don't choose to come to my way o' thinkin', ye can take yer own coorse. But, let me tell you, there's more people on the island that will take Gascoyne's part than ye think of. There's the whole crew of the Talisman, whose cap'n he saved, and a lot besides; an' if ye do come to a fight about it, ye'll have a pretty tough scrimmage. There'll be blood spilt, Mr. Thorwald, an' it was partly to prevent that as I comed here for. But you know best. You better take yer own way, an' I'll take mine."

The cool impudence of manner with which John Bumpus said this had its effect on Ole, who, although fond enough of fighting against enemies, had no sort of desire to fight against friends, especially for the sake of a pirate.

"Come, Bumpus," said he, "you and I understand each other. Let us talk the thing over calmly. I've quite as much objection to see unnecessary bloodshed as you have. We have had enough of that lately. Tell me what you know, and I promise to do what you recommend as far as I can in reason."

"Do you promise to let no one else know wot I tell ye?"

"I do."

"An' d'ye promise to take no more than six niggers to prewent this escape?"

"Will six be enough?"

"Plenty; but, if that bothers ye, say twelve,I'm not partic'lar,say twelve. That's more than enough; for they'll only have four to fight with."

"Well, I promise that too."

"Good. Now I'll tell ye all about it," said Bumpus. "You see, although I'm splittin', I don't want to get my friends into trouble, and so I got you to promise; an' I trust to yer word, Mr. Thorwaldyou being a gen'lmun. This is how it is: Young Henry Stuart thinks that although Gascoyne is a pirate, or rather was a pirate, he don't deserve to be hanged. Cause why? Firstly, he never committed no murder; secondly, he saved the lives o' some of your

peopleAlice Mason among the rest; and, thirdly, he is an old friend o' the family as has done 'em good sarvice long ago. So Henry's made up his mind that, as Gascoyne's sure to be hanged if he's tried, it's his duty to prewent that there from happenin' of. Now, ye see, Gascoyne is quite willin' to escape"

"Ha! the villain!" exclaimed Ole; "I was sure of that. I knew well enough that all his smooth-tongued humility was hypocrisy. I'm sorry for Henry, and don't wish to thwart him; but it's clearly my duty to prevent this escape if I can."

"So I think, sir," said Bumpus; "so I think. That's just w'at I said to meself w'en I made up my mind for to split. Gascoyne bein' willin', then, Henry has bribed the jailer, and he intends to open the jail door for him at twelve o'clock this night, and he'll know w'at to do with his legs w'en he's got 'em free."

"But how am I to prevent his escape if I do not set a strong guard over the prison?" exclaimed Ole, in an excited manner. "If he once gets into the mountains, I might as well try to catch a hare."

"All fair and softly, Mr. Thorwald. Don't take on so. It ain't two o'clock yet; we've lots o' time. Henry has arranged to get a boat ready for him. At twelve o'clock to-night the doors will be opened, and he'll start for the boat. It will lie concealed among the rocks off the Long Point. There's no mistakin' the spot, just west of the village; an' if you place your niggers there, you'll have as good chance as need be to nab 'em. Indeed, there's two boats to be in waitin' for the pirate captain and his friendsset 'em up!"

"And where is the second boat to be hidden?" asked Ole.

"I'm not sure of the exact spot; but it can't be very far off from the tother, cer'nly not a hundred miles," said Bumpus, with a grin. "Now, wot I want is, that if ye get hold of the pirate ye'll be content, an' not go an' peach on Henry an' his comrades. They'll be so ashamed o' themselves at bein' nabbed in the wery act that they'll give it up as a bad job. Besides, ye can then go an' give him in charge of Capting Montague. But if ye try to prewent the escape bein' attempted, Henry will take the bloody way of it; for I tell you, his birse is up, an' no mistake."

"How many men are to be with Gascoyne?" asked Thorwald, who, had he not been naturally a stupid man, must have easily seen through this clumsy attempt to blind him.

"Just four," answered Bumpus; "an' I'm to be one of 'em."

"Well, Bumpus, I'll take your advice. I shall be at the Long Point before twelve, with a dozen niggers, and I'll count on you lending us a hand."

"No, ye mustn't count on that, Mr. Thorwald. Surely, it's enough if I run away and leave the others to fight."

"Very well; do as you please," said Thorwald, with a look of contempt.

"Good day, Mr. Thorwald. You'll be sure to be there?"

"Trust me."

"An' you'll not a word about it to nobody?"

"Not a syllable."

"That's all square. You'll see the boat w'en ye git there, and as long as ye see that boat yer all right. Good day, sir."

John Bumpus left Thorwald's house chuckling, and wended his way to the widow's cottage, whistling the "Groves of Blarney."

CHAPTER XXXI.
THE AMBUSHTHE ESCAPERETRIBUTIVE JUSTICEAND CONCLUSION.

An hour before the appointed time, Ole Thorwald, under cover of a dark night, stole out of his own dwelling, with slow and wary step, and crossed the little plot of ground that lay in front of it, with the sly and mysterious air of a burglar rather than that of an honest man.

Outside his gate he was met in the same cautious manner by a dark-skinned human being, the character of whose garments was something between those of a sailor and a West India planter. This was Sambo, Thorwald's major-domo, clerk, overseer, and right-hand man. Sambo was not his proper name; but his master, regarding him as being the embodiment of all the excellent qualities that could by any possibility exist in the person of a South Sea islander, had bestowed upon him the generic name of the dark race, in addition to that wherewith Mr. Mason had gifted him on the day of his baptism.

Sambo and his master exchanged a few words in low whispers, and then gliding down the path that led from the stout merchant's house to the south side of the village, they entered the woods that lined the shore, like two men bent on a purpose which might or might not be of the blackest possible kind.

"I don't half like this sort of work, Sambo," observed Thorwald, speaking and treading with less caution as they left the settlement behind them. "Ambushments, surprises, and night forages, especially when they include

Goat's Passes, don't suit me at all. I have a strong antipathy to everything in the way of warfare, save a fair field and no favor, under the satisfactory light of the sun."

"Ho!" said Sambo, quietly; as much as to say, "I hear and appreciate, but having no observation to make in reply, I wait for more from your honored lips."

"Now, you see," pursued Thorwald, "if I were to follow my own tastes, which, it seems to me, I am destined not to be allowed to do any more in the affairs of this world, if I may judge by the events of the past month,if I were to follow my own tastes, I say, I would go boldly to the prison where this pestiferous pirate captain lies, put double irons on him, and place a strong guard round the building. In this case I would be ready to defend it against any odds, and would have the satisfaction of standing up for the rights of the settlement like a man, and of hurling defiance at the entire British navy, at least such portions of it as happens to be on the island at this time, if they were to attempt a rescueas this Bumpus hints they are likely to do. Yet it seems to me strange and unaccountable that they should thus interest themselves in a vile pirate. I verily believe that I have been deceived; but it is too late now to alter my plans, or to hesitate. Truly, it seemeth to me that I might style myself an ass, without impropriety."

"Ho!" remarked Sambo; and the grin with which the remark was accompanied seemed to imply that he not only appreciated his master's sentiment, but agreed with it entirely.

"You've got eleven men, I trust. Sambo?"

"Yes, mass'r."

"All good and true, I hopemen who can be trusted both in regard to their fighting qualities and their ability to hold their tongues."

"Dumb as owls, ebery von," returned Sambo.

"Good! You see, my man, I must not permit that fellow to escape; at the same time I do not wish to blazon abroad, that it is my friend Henry Stuart who is helping him. Neither do I wish to run the risk of killing my friends in a scrimmage, if they are so foolish as to resist me; therefore I am particular about the men you have told off for this duty. Where did you say they are to meet us?"

"Close by de point, mass'r."

A few minutes' walk brought them to the point, where the men were awaiting them. As far as Ole could judge, by the dim light of a few stars that struggled through the cloudy sky, they were eleven as stout fellows as any warrior could desire to have at his back in a hand-to-hand conflict. They were all natives, clothed much in the same manner as Sambo, and armed with heavy clubs; for, as we have seen, Thorwald was resolved that this should be a bloodless victory.

"Whereabouts is the boat?" whispered Ole to his henchman, as he groped his way down the rocky slopes toward the shore.

"'Bout two hondr'd yards more farder in front," said Sambo.

"Then I'll place the men here," said Ole, turning to the natives, who were following close at his heels. "Now, boys, remain under cover of this rock till I lead you on to the attack; and, mind what I say to you,no killing! Some of the party are my friends; d'ye understand? I don't want to do them a damage; but I do want to prevent their letting off as great a villain, I believe, as ever sailed the ocean under a black flagonly his was a red one, because of his extreme bloody-mindedness, no doubt, which led him to adopt the color of blood. We will attack them in the rear; which means, of course, by surprise; though I must confess that style of warfare goes much against the grain with me. There are just four men, I am told, besides the pirate. Our first onset will secure the fall of at least two of the party by my own cudgel; and, mark me, lads, I don't say this in a spirit of boasting. He would indeed be but a poor warrior who could not fell two men when he took them unawares and in the dark. No; I feel half ashamed o' the work; but I suppose it is my duty. So you see there will be just two men and the pirate left for us to deal with. Four of you ought to be able to overcome the two men without drawing blood, except, it may be, a little surface fluid. The remaining nine of us will fall on the pirate captain in a body. You will easily know him by his great size; and I have no manner of doubt but that he will make himself further known by the weight of his blows. If I happen to fall, don't look after me till you have overcome and bound the pirate. The ropes are all ready, and my man Sambo will carry them."

Having delivered this address to his followers, who by their "Ho's" and grins indicated their perfect readiness to do as they were bid, Ole Thorwald left them in ambush, and groped his way down to the beach, accompanied by Sambo.

"Did you bring the chain and padlock. Sambo?"

"Yis, mass'r. But you no tink it am berer to take boat awaypull him out ob sight?"

"No, Sambo; I have thought on that subject already, and have come to the conclusion that it is better to let the boat remain. You see they have placed it in such a way that as long as daylight lasted it could be seen from the settlement, and even now it is visible at some distance, as you see. If we were to remove it, they would at once observe that it was gone, and thus be put on their guard. No, no, Sambo. I may not be fond of ambushments, but I flatter myself that I have some talent for such matters."

The master and servant had reached the beach by this time, where they found the boat in the exact position that had been indicated by John Bumpus. It lay behind a low piece of coral rock, fastened to an iron ring by means of a rope, while the oars lay in readiness on the thwarts.

Sambo now produced a heavy iron chain, with which the boat was speedily fastened to the ring. It was secured with a large padlock, the key of which Ole placed in his pocket.

This being satisfactorily accomplished, they returned to the place of ambush.

"Now, Mister Gascoyne," observed Thorwald, with a grim smile, as he sat down beside his men and pulled out his watch, "I will await your pleasure. It is just half-past eleven; if you are a punctual man, as Jo Bumpus led me to believe, I will try your metal in half an hour, and have you back in your cage before one o'clock! What say you to that, Sambo?"

The faithful native opened his huge mouth wide, and shut his eyes, thereby indicating that he laughed; but he said nothing, bad, good, or indifferent, to his master's facetious observation. The other natives also grinned, in a quiet but particularly knowing manner, after which the whole party relapsed into profound silence, and kept their midnight watch with exemplary patience and eager expectation.

At this same hour the pirate captain was seated in his cell on the edge of the low bedstead, with his elbows resting on his knees and his face buried in his hands.

The cell was profoundly dark,so dark that the figure of the prisoner could scarcely be distinguished.

Gascoyne did not move for many minutes; but once or twice a deep sigh escaped him, showing that, although his body was at rest, his thoughts were busy. At last he moved, and clasped his hands together violently, as if under a strong impulse. In doing so, the clank of his chains echoed harshly through the cell. This seemed to change the current of his thoughts; for he again covered his face with both hands, and began to mutter to himself.

"Aye," said he, "it has come at last. How often I have dreamed of this when I was free and roaming over the wide ocean! I would say that I have been a fool did I not feel that I have more cause to bow my head and confess that I am a sinner. Ah, what a thing pride is! How little do men know what it has cost me to humble myself before them as I have done! yet I feel no shame in confessing it here, where I am all alone. Alone?am I alone?"

For a long time Gascoyne sat in deep silence, as if he were following out the train of thought which had been suggested by the last words. Presently his ideas again found vent in muttered speech.

"In my pride I have said that there is no God. I don't think I ever believed that; but I tried to believe it, for I knew that my deeds were evil. Surely my own words will condemn me; for I have said that I think myself a fool, and does not the Bible say that 'the fool hath said in his heart there is no God?' Aye, I remember it well. The words were printed in my brain when I learned the Psalms of David at my mother's knee, long, long ago. My mother! what bitter years have passed since that day! How little did ye dream, mother, that your child would come to this! God help me!"

The pirate relapsed into silence, and a low groan escaped him. But his thoughts seemed too powerful to be restrained within his breast; for they soon broke forth again in words.

"Your two texts have come true, Pastor Mason. You did not mean them for me; but they were sent to me. 'There is no rest, saith my God, to the wicked.'No rest! I have not known rest since I was a boy.'Be sure your sin shall find you out.' I laughed at those words once; they laugh at me now. I have found them out to be true, and found it out too late. Too late! Is it too late? If these words be true, are not all the words of God equally true? 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' That was what you said, Pastor Mason, on that Sunday morning when the savages were stealing down on us. It gave me comfort then; but, ah me! it seems to give me no comfort now. Oh that I had resisted the tempter when he first came to me! Strange! I often heard this said long, long ago; but I laughed at it,not in scorn; no, it was an easy indifference. I did not believe it had anything to do with me. And now, I suppose, if I were to stand in the public streets and cry that I had been mistaken, with all the fervor of a bursting heart, men would laugh at me in an easy wayas I did then.

"I don't fear death. I have often faced it, and I don't remember ever feeling afraid of death. Yet I shrink from death now. Why is this? What a mystery my thoughts and feelings are to me! I know not what to think. But it will soon be over; for I feel certain that I shall be doomed to die. God help me!"

Gascoyne again became silent. When he had remained thus a few minutes, his attention was roused by the sound of footsteps and of whispering voices close under his window. Presently the key was put in the lock, the heavy bolt shot back, and the door creaked on its hinges as it opened slowly.

Gascoyne knew by the sound that several men entered the cell, but, as they carried no light, he could not tell how many there were. He was of course surprised at a visit at such an unusual hour, as well as at the stealthy manner in which his visitors entered; but, having made up his mind to submit quietly to whatever was in store for him, and knowing that he could not hope for much tenderness at the hands of the inhabitants of Sandy Cove, he was not greatly disturbed. Still, he would not have been human had not his pulse quickened under the influence of a strong desire to spring up and defend himself.

The door of the cell was shut and locked as quietly as it had been opened; then followed the sound of footsteps crossing the floor.

"Is that you, jailer?" demanded Gascoyne.

"Ye'll know that time enough," answered a gruff voice, that was not unfamiliar to the prisoner's ear.

The others who had entered along with this man did not move from the door,at least, if they did so, there was no sound of footsteps. The man who had spoken went to the window and spread a thick cloth over it. Gascoyne could see this, because there was sufficient light outside to make the arms of the man dimly visible as he raised them up to accomplish his object. The cell was thus rendered, if possible, more impenetrably dark than before.

"Now, pirate," said the man, turning round and suddenly flashing a dark lantern full on the stern face of the prisoner, "you and I will have a little convarse togetherby yer leave or without yer leave. In case there might be pryin' eyes about, I've closed the porthole, d'ye see."

Gascoyne listened to this familiar style of address in surprise, but did not suffer his features to betray any emotion whatever. The lantern which the seaman (for such he evidently was) carried in his hand threw a strong light wherever its front was turned, but left every other part of the cell in partial darkness. The reflected light was, however, quite sufficient to enable the prisoner to see that his visitor was a short, thick-set man, of great physical strength, and that three men of unusual size and strength stood against the wall, in the deep shadow of a recess, with their straw hats pulled very much over their eyes.

"Now, Mr. Gascoyne," began the seaman, sitting down on the edge of a small table beside the low pallet, and raising the lantern a little, while he gazed earnestly into the prisoner's face, "I've reason to believe"

"Ha! you are the boatswain of the Talisman!" exclaimed Gascoyne, as the light reflected from his own countenance irradiated that of Dick Price, whom, of course, he had seen while they were on board the frigate together.

"No, Mister Pirate," said Dick; "I am not the bo's'n of the Talisman, else I shouldn't be here this night. I wos the bo's'n of that unfortunate frigate, but I is so no longer."

Dick said this in a melancholy tone, and thereafter meditated for a few moments in silence.

"No," he resumed with a heavy sigh, "the Talisman's blow'd up, an' her bo's'n's out on the spree, so to speakthough it ain't a cheerful spree, by no means. But to come back to the p'int (w'ich was wot the clergyman said w'en he'd got so far away from the p'int that he never did get back to it), as I wos sayin', or was goin' to say w'en you prewented me, I've reason to b'lieve you're agoin' to try for to make yer escape."

"You are mistaken, my man," said Gascoyne, with a sad smile; "nothing is further from my thoughts."

"I don't know how far it's from yer thoughts," said Dick, sternly, "but it's pretty close to your intentions, so I'm told."

"Indeed you are mistaken," replied Gascoyne. "If Captain Montague has sent you here to mount guard, he has only deprived you of a night's rest needlessly. If I had intended to make my escape, I would not have given myself up."

"I don't know that,I'm not so sure o' that," rejoined the boatswain, stoutly. "You're said to be a obstinate feller, and there's no sayin' what obstinate fellers won't do or will do. But I didn't come here for to argify the question with you, Mister Gascoyne. Wot I com'd here for wos to do my duty; so, now, I'm agoin' to do it."

Gascoyne, who was amused in spite of himself by the manner of the man, merely smiled, and awaited in silence the pleasure of his eccentric visitor.

Dick now set down the lantern, went to the door, and returned with a coil of stout rope.

"You see," observed the boatswain, as he busied himself in uncoiling-and making a running noose on the rope, "I'm ordered to prewent you from

carrying out your intentionswotiver these may beby puttin' a coil or two o' this here rope round you. Now, wot I've got to ask of you is, Will ye submit peaceable like to have it done?"

"Surely, this is heaping unnecessary indignity upon me!" exclaimed Gascoyne, flushing crimson with anger.

"It may be unnecessary, but it's got to be done," returned Dick, with cool decision, as he placed the end of a knot between his powerful teeth, and drew it tight. "Besides, Mister Gascoyne, a pirate must expect indignities to be heaped upon him. However, I'll heap as few as possible on ye in the discharge of my duty."

Gascoyne had started to his feet; but he sat down, abashed on being thus reminded of his deserts.

"True," said he; "true. I will submit."

He added in his mind, "I deserve this;" but nothing more escaped his lips, while he stood up and permitted the boatswain to pass the cord round his arms, and lash them firmly to his sides.

Having bound him in a peculiarly tight and nautical manner, Dick once more went to his accomplices at the door, and returned with a hammer and chisel, and a large stone. The latter he placed on the table, and, directing Gascoyne to raise his armswhich were not secured below the elbowsand placed his manacles on the stone, he cut them asunder with a few powerful blows, and removed them.

"The darbies ain't o' no use, you see, as we've got you all safe with the ropes. Now, Mister Gascoyne, I'm agoin' to heap one more indignity on ye. I'm sorry to do it, d'ye see; but I'm bound for to obey orders. You'll be so good as to sit down on the bed,for I ain't quite so long as you, though I won't say that I'm not about as broad,and let me tie this napkin over yer mouth."

"Why!" exclaimed Gascoyne, again starting and looking fiercely at the boatswain; "this, at least, must be unnecessary. I have said that I am willing to submit quietly to whatever the law condemns me. You don't take me for a woman or a child, that will be apt to cry out when hurt?"

"Certainly not; but as I'm goin' to take ye away out o' this here limbo, it is needful that I should prewent you from lettin' people know that yer goin' on yer travels; for I've heerd say there's some o' yer friends as is plottin' to help you to escape."

"Have I not said already that I do not wish to escape, and therefore will not take advantage of any opportunity afforded me by my friends? Friends! I have no friends! Even those whom I thought were my friends have not been near my prison all this day."

Gascoyne said this bitterly, and in great anger.

"Hush!" exclaimed Dick; "not quite so loud, Mister Pirate. You see there is some reason in my puttin' this on your mouth. It'll be as well to let me do it quietly, else I'll have to get a little help."

He pointed to the three stout men who stood motionless and silent in the dark recess.

"Oh, it was cowardly of you to bind my arms before you told me this," said Gascoyne, with flashing eyes. "If my hands were free now"

He checked himself by a powerful effort, and crushed back the boastful defiance which rose to his lips.

"Now, I'll tell ye what it is, Mister Gascoyne," said Dick Price, "I do believe yer not such a bad feller as they say ye are, an' I'm disposed to be marciful to ye. If yell give me your word of honor that you'll not holler out, and that you'll go with us peaceably, and do wot yer bid, I'll not trouble you with the napkin, nor bind ye up more than I've done already. But" (here Dick spoke in tones that could not be misunderstood), "if ye won't give me that promise, I'll gag ye and bind ye neck and heels, and we'll carry ye out o' this, shoulder high. Now, wot say ye to that?"

Gascoyne had calmed his feelings while the boatswain was speaking. He even smiled when he replied, "How can you ask me to give my word of honor? What honor has a pirate to boast of, think you?"

"Not much, pr'aps," said Dick; "howsomdever, I'll be content with wot's left of it; and if there ain't none, why, then, give us yer word. It'll do as well."

"After all, it matters little what is done with me," said Gascoyne, in a resigned-voice. "I am a fool to resist thus. You need not fear that I will offer any further resistance, my man. Do your duty, whatever that may be."

"That won't do," said Dick, stoutly; "ye must promise not to holler out."

"I promise," said Gascoyne, sternly. "Pray cease this trifling; and, if it is not inconsistent with your duty, let me know where I am to be taken to."

"That's just wot I'm not allowed for to tell. But you'll find it out in the coorse

of time. Now, all that you've got to do is to walk by my side, and do wot I tell ye."

The prisoner made no answer. He was evidently weary of the conversation, and his thoughts were already wandering on other subjects.

The door was now unlocked by one of the three men who stood near it. As its hinges creaked, Dick shut the lantern, and threw the cell at once into total darkness. Taking hold of Gascoyne's wrist gently, as if to guide, not to force him away, he conducted him along the short passage that led to the outer door of the prison. This was opened, and the whole party stood in the open air.

Gascoyne looked with feelings of curiosity at the men who surrounded him; but the night was so intensely dark that their features were invisible. He could just discern the outlines of their figures, which were enveloped in large cloaks. He was on the point of speaking to them, when he remembered his promise to make no noise; so he restrained himself, and followed his guard in silence.

Dick and another man walked at his side, the rest followed in rear. Leading him round the outskirts of the village, towards its northern extremity, Gascoyne's conductors soon brought him to the beach, at a retired spot, where was a small bay. Here they were met by one whose stature proved him to be a boy. He glided up to Dick, who said, in a low whisper:

"Is all ready?"

"All right," replied the boy, in a whisper.

"The ooman aboard?"

"Aye."

"Now, Mr. Gascoyne," said Dick, pointing to a large boat floating beside the rocks on which they stood, "you'll be so good as to step into that 'ere boat, and sit down beside the individual you see a-sitting in the stern-sheets."

"Have you authority for what you do?" asked Gascoyne, hesitating.

"I have power to enforce wot I command," said Dick, quietly. "Remember yer promise, Mister Pirate, else"

Dick finished his sentence by pointing to the three men who stood nearstill maintaining a silence worthy of Eastern mutes; and Gascoyne, feeling that he was completely in their power, stepped quickly into the boat, and sat down beside the "individual" referred to by Dick, who was so completely enveloped in the folds of a large cloak as to defy recognition. But the pirate captain was

too much occupied with his own conflicting thoughts and feelings to bestow more than a passing glance on the person who sat at his side. Indeed, it was not surprising that Gascoyne was greatly perplexed by all that was going on at that time; for he could not satisfactorily account to himself for the mystery and secrecy which his guards chose to maintain. If they were legitimate agents of the law, why these muffled oars, with which they swept the boat across the lagoon, through the gap in the coral reef, and out to sea? And if they were not agents of the law, who were they, and where were they conveying him?

The boat was a large one, half-decked, and fitted to stand a heavy sea and rough weather. It would have moved sluggishly through the water had not the four men who pulled the oars been possessed of more than average strength. As soon as they passed the barrier reef, the sails were hoisted, and Dick took the helm. The breeze was blowing fresh off the land, and the water rushed past the boat as she cut swiftly out to sea, leaving a track of white foam behind her. For a few minutes the mass of the island was dimly seen rising like a huge shade on the dark sky, but soon it melted away, and nothing remained for the straining eyes to rest upon save the boat with its silent crew and the curling foam on the black sea.

"We've got him safe now, lads," said Dick Price, speaking for the first time that night in unguarded tones. "You'd better do the deed. The sooner it's done the better."

While he was speaking, one of the three men opened a large clasp-knife, and advanced towards Gascoyne.

"Father," said Henry, cutting the rope that bound him, "you are free at last!"

Gascoyne started; but before he had time to utter the exclamation of surprise that sprang to his lips, his hand was seized by the muffled figure that sat at his side.

"O, Gascoyne! forgive usforgive me!" said Mary Stuart, in a trembling voice. "I did, indeed, know something of what they meant to do, but I knew nothing of the cruel violence that these bonds"

"Violence!" cried Dick Price. "I put it to yourself, Mister Gascoyne, if I didn't treat ye as if ye wos a lamb?"

"Wot a blissin it is for a man to git his mouth open agin, and let his breath go free," cried Jo Bumpus, with a deep sigh. "Come, Corrie, give us a cheerhip! hip! hip!"

The cheer that followed was stirring, and wonderfully harmonious; for it was

given in a deep bass and a shrill treble, with an intermediate baritone "Ho!" from Jakolu.

"I know it, MaryI know it," said Gascoyne; and there was a slight tremor in his deep voice as he drew his wife towards him, and laid her head upon his breast.

"You have never done me an evil turnyou have done me nothing but goodsince you were a little child. Heaven bless you, Mary!"

"Now, father," said Henry, "I suppose you have no objection to make your escape?"

"No need to raise that question, lad," said Gascoyne, with a perplexed smile. "I am not quite clear as to what my duty is, now that I am free to go back again and give myself up."

"Go back!free!" exclaimed John Bumpus, in a tone of withering sarcasm. "So, Mister Gascoyne, ye've got sich an uncommon cargo o' conceit in ye yet, that you actually think ye could go back without so much as saying, By your leave!"

While Jo was speaking, he bared to the shoulder an arm that was the reverse of infantine, and, holding it up, said, slowly:

"I've often had a sort o' desire, d'ye see, to try whether this bit of a limb or the one that's round Mrs. Stuart's waist is the strongest. Now, if you have any desire to settle this question, just try to put, to shove, this boat's head up into the windthat's all!"

This was said so emphatically by the pugnacious Bumpus that his companions laughed, and Corrie cheered in admiration.

"You see," observed Henry, "you need not give yourself any concern as to this point; you have no option in the matter."

"No, not a bit o' poption in it wotiver; though wot that means I ain't rightly sure," said Dick Price.

"Perhaps I ought to exercise my parental authority over you, Henry," said Gascoyne, "and command you to steer back to Sandy Cove."

"But we wouldn't let him, Mister Pirate," said Dick Price, who, now that his difficult duties were over, was preparing to solace himself with a pipe; an example that was immediately followed by Bumpus, who backed his friend by adding:

"No more we would."

"Nay, then, if Henry joins me," said Gascoyne, "I think that we two will not have a bad chance against you three."

"Come, that's good: so I count for nothing!" exclaimed Corrie.

"Ha! stick up, lad," observed Bumpus. "The niggers wot you pitched into at the mouth o' yon cave didn't think thateh! didn't they not?"

"Well, well; if Corrie sides with you, I feel that my wisest course is to submit. And now, Henry," said Gascoyne, resuming his wonted gravity of tone and demeanor, "sit down here and let me know where we are going, and what you mean to do. It is natural that I should feel curious on these points, even although I have perfect confidence in you all."

Henry obeyed, and their voices sank into low tones as they mingled in earnest converse about their future plans.

Thus did Gascoyne, with his family and friends, leave Sandy Cove in the dead of that dark night, and sail away over the wide waste of the great Pacific Ocean.

Reader, our tale is nearly told. Like a picture it contains but a small portion of the career of those who have so long engaged your attention, and, I would fain hope, your sympathy. The life of man may be comprehensively epitomized almost to a point, or expanded out ad infinitum. He was born, he died, is its lowest term. Its highest is not definable.

Innumerable tomes, of encyclopedic dimensions, could not contain, much less exhaust, an account of all that was said and done, and all that might be said about what was said and done, by our ci-devant sandal-wood trader and his friends. Yet there are main points, amid the little details of their career, which it would be unpardonable to pass over in silence. To these we shall briefly refer before letting the curtain fall.

There is a distant isle of the sea, a beautiful spot, an oceanic gem, which has been reclaimed by the word of God from those regions that have been justly styled "the dark places of the earth." We will not mention its name; we will not even indicate its whereabouts, lest we should furnish a clue to the unromantic myrmidons of the law, whose inflexible justice is only equaled by their pertinacity in tracking the criminal to his lair!

On this beautiful isle, at the time of our tale, the churches and houses of Christian men had begun to rise. The natives had begun to cultivate the arts of

civilization, and to appreciate, in some degree, the inestimable blessings of Christianity. The plow had torn up the virgin soil, and the anchors of merchant-ships had begun to kiss the strand. The crimes peculiar to civilized men had not yet been developed. The place had all the romance and freshness of a flourishing infant colony.

Early one fine morning, a half-decked boat rowed into the harbor of this isle, and ran alongside the little quay, where the few natives who chanced to be lounging there were filled with admiration at the sight of five stalwart men who leaped upon the rocks, an active lad who held the boat steady, and a handsome middle-aged woman, who was assisted to land with much care by the tallest of her five companions.

There were a few small bales of merchandise in the boat. These being quickly tossed ashore, one of the natives was asked to show the way to the nearest store, where they might be placed in safekeeping.

This done, the largest man of the party, who was clad in the rough garments of a merchant captain, offered his arm to the female, who was evidently his wife, and went off in search of the chief magistrate of the settlement, leaving his companions to look after the boat and smoke their pipes.

The handsome stranger introduced himself to the magistrate as Mr. Stuart; stated that he intended to settle on the island as a general merchant, having brought a few bales of merchandise with him; that he had been bred an engineer and a shipwright, and meant also to work at his old trade, and concluded by asking for advice and general information in regard to the state of trade on the island.

After having obtained all the information on these subjects that the magistrate could give,insomuch that that functionary deemed him a perfect marvel of catechetical wisdom and agreeable address,the stalwart stranger proceeded to inquire minutely into the state of religion and education among the natives and settlers, and finally left the charmed magistrate rejoicing in the belief that he was a most intelligent philanthropist, and would be an inestimable acquisition to the settlement.

A small trading-store was soon built. The stranger was not a rich man. He began in a humble way, and sought to eke out his subsistence by doing the ordinary work of a wright. In this latter occupation he was ably assisted by his stout son, Henry; for the duties of the store were attended to chiefly by the lad Corrie, superintended by Mr. Stuart.

The mysterious strangers were a source of much gossip and great speculation, of course, to the good people of Green Isle, as we shall style this gem of the

Pacific, in order to thwart the myrmidons of the law! They found them so reserved and uncommunicative, however, on the subject of their personal affairs, that the most curious gossip in the settlement at last gave up speculating in despair.

In other respects, the new family were noted for kindliness and urbanity. Mrs. Stuart, especially, became an intimate friend of the missionary who dwelt there, and one of his hardest working parishioners. Mr. Stuart also became his friend; but the stern gravity of countenance, and reserved, though perfectly well-bred and even kindly manner of the stranger forbade close intimacy. He was a most regular attendant at church, not only on Sundays, but at the weekly-prayer meetings and occasional festivals, and the missionary noticed that his Bible looked as if it were a well-thumbed one.

At first the two seamen, whom people soon found out, were named respectively Jo and Dick, wrought in the wright's workshop, and at all kinds of miscellaneous jobs; besides making frequent and sometimes long voyages in their boat to the neighboring islands. As time flew by, things seemed to prosper with the merchant. The keel of a little schooner was laid. Father, and son, and seamen (as well as the native servant, who was called Jako) toiled at this vessel incessantly until she was finishedthen Henry was placed in command of her, Jo and Dick were appointed first and second mates, two or three natives completed the crew, and she went to sea under the somewhat peculiar name of the Avenger.

This seemed to be the first decided advance in the fortunes of the new family. Business increased in a wonderful way. The Avenger returned again and again to the Green Isle laden with rich and varied commodities for the successful merchant. In course of time the old store was taken down, and a new one built; the Avenger was sold, and a large brig purchased; the rather pretty name of which"Evening Star"was erased, and the mysterious word Avenger put in its place. Everything, in short, betokened that Mr. Stuart was on the high road to fortune.

But there were some mysteries connected with the merchant which sorely puzzled the wisest heads in the place, and which would have puzzled still wiser heads had they been there. Although it soon became quite evident to the meanest capacity that Mr. Stuart was the richest man on the island, yet he and his family continued to occupy the poor, shabby, little, ill-furnished cottage which they had erected with their own hands when they first landed; and although they sold the finest silks and brocades to the wives and daughters of the other wealthy settlers, they themselves wore only the plainest and most somber fabrics that consisted with respectability.

People would have called them a family of misers but for their goodness of character in other respects, and for the undeniable fact that they were by far the most liberal contributors to the church and to the poornot only in their own island, but in all the other islands around them.
Another thing that puzzled the mercantile men of the place extremely was the manner in which Mr. Stuart kept his books of business. They soon began to take note that he kept two ledgers and two distinct sets of booksthe one set small, the other set very bulky. Some of the more audacious among his customers ventured to peep over his shoulder, and discovered that the small set contained nothing but entries of boats made, and repairs to shipping executed, and work connected exclusively with the shipwright department of his businesswhile the large books contained entries of those silks, and sugars, and teas, and spices, etc., which turned so much gold into his coffers.

It thus became evident to these men of business that the merchant kept the two departments quite separate, in order to ascertain the distinct profits on each. They were the more amazed at this when they considered that the shipwright work must necessarily be a mere driblet, altogether unworthy the attention of one so wealthy. But that which amazed them most of all was, that such a man, in such circumstances, could waste his time in doing with his own hands the work of an ordinary mechanicthus (as they concluded) entailing on himself the necessity of devoting much of the night to his more lucrative concern.

These long-headed men of business little knew the man. They did not know that he was great in the highest sense of the term, and that, among other elements of his greatness, he possessed the power of seizing the little thingsthe little opportunitiesof life, and turning them to the best account; and that he not only knew what should be done; and how to do it, but was gifted with that inflexible determination of purpose to carry out a design, without which knowledge and talent can never accomplish great things. The merchant did not, as they supposed, work late at night. He measured his time, and measured his work. In this he was like many other men in this struggling world; but he stuck to his time and to his work, in which respect he resembled the great few whose names stand prominent on the page of history.

In consequence of this, Mr. Stuart wrought with success at both departments of his business, and while in the one he coined thousands, in the other he earned more than the average wages of a working-man.

The Avenger was erratic and uncertain in her voyages. She evidently sailed to the principal islands of the South Seas, and did business with them all. From one of these voyages, Henry, her captain, returned with a wife,a dark-haired, dark-eyed, lady-like girl,for whom he built a small cottage beside his father's, and left her there while he was away at sea.

It was observed by the clerks in Mr. Stuart's counting-room, that their chief accountant, Mr. Corrie, was a great letter-writer,that when one letter was finished, he invariably began another, and kept it by him, adding sheet after sheet to it until the Avenger returned and carried it off. Once Mr. Corrie was called hurriedly away while in the act of addressing one of these epistles. He left it lying on his desk, and a small, contemptible, little apprentice allowed his curiosity so far to get the better of him, that he looked at the address, and informed his companions that Mr. Corrie's correspondent was a certain Miss Alice Mason!

Of course, Mr. Corrie received voluminous replies from this mysterious Alice; and, if one might judge from his expression on reading these epistles (as that contemptible little apprentice did judge), the course of his love ran smoother than usual; thus, by its exceptionality, proving the truth of the rule.

Years passed away. The merchant's head became gray, but his gigantic frame was as straight and his step as firm as ever. His wife, strange to say, looked younger as she grew older! It seemed as if she were recovering from some terrible illness that had made her prematurely old, and were now renewing her youth. The business prospered to such an extent that, by becoming altogether too wonderful, it ceased to be a matter of wonder altogether to the merchants of the Green Isle. They regarded it as semi-miraculous,the most unprecedented case of "luck" that had ever been heard of in the annals of mercantile history.

But the rich merchant still dwelt in the humble, almost mean cottage, and still wrought as an engineer and shipwright with his own hands.

In the little cottage beside his own there were soon seen (and heard) three stout children, two boys and a girl, the former being named respectively Gascoyne and Henry, the latter Mary. It is needless to say that these were immense favorites with the eccentric merchant.

During all this time there was a firm in Liverpool which received periodical remittances of money from an unknown source. The cashier of that firm, a fat little man, with a face like a dumpling and a nose like a cherry, lived, as it were, in a state of perpetual amazement in regard to these remittances. They came regularly, from apparently nowhere, were acknowledged to nobody, and amounted, in the course of time, to many thousands. This firm had, some years previously, lost a fine vessel. She was named the Brilliant; had sailed for the South Sea Islands with a rich cargo, and was never more heard of. The fat cashier knew the loss sustained by this vessel to a penny. He had prepared and calculated all the papers and sent duplicates on board; and as he had a stake in the venture, he never forgot the amount of the loss sustained.

One day the firm received a remittance from the unknown, with a note to the following effect at the foot of it: "This is the last remittance on account of the Brilliant. The value of the cargo, including compound interest, and the estimated value of the vessel, have now been repaid to the owners."

The fat cashier was thunderstruck! He rushed to his ledger, examined the account, calculated the interest, summed up the whole, and found it correct. He went home to bed, and fell sound asleep in amazement; awoke in amazement; went back to the office in amazement; worked on day after day in amazement; lived, and eventually died, in a state of unrelieved amazement In regard to this incomprehensible transaction!

About the same time that this occurred, Mr. Stuart entered his poor cottage, and finding his wife there, said:
"Mary, I have sent off the last remittance to-day. I have made amends for that evil deed. It has cost me a long and hard struggle to realize the thousands of pounds that were requisite; for some of the goods had got damaged by damp in the cavern of the Isle of Palms; but the profits of my engineering and shipwright business have increased of late, and I have managed to square it all off, with interest. And now, Mary, I can do no more. If I knew of any others who have suffered at my hands. I would restore what I took tenfold; but I know of none. It therefore remains that I should work this business for the good of mankind. Of all the thousands that have passed through my hands, I have not used one penny. You know that I have always kept the business that has grown out of the labors of my own hands distinct from that which has been reared on the stolen goods. I have lived and supported you by it, and now, through God's blessing, it has increased to such an extent that I think we may afford to build a somewhat more commodious house, and furnish it a little better.
"As for the mercantile business, it must go on. It has prospered and still prospers. Many mouths are dependent on it for daily bread. I will continue to manage it, but every penny of profit shall go in charity as long as I live. After that, Henry may do with it as he pleases. He has contributed largely to make it what it is, and deserves to reap where he has sown so diligently. Do you think I am right in all this, Mary?"

We need scarcely remark that Mary did think it all right; for she and Gascoyne had no differences of opinion now.

Soon after this, Corrie went off on a long voyage in the Avenger. The vessel touched at San Francisco, and while there, some remarkable scenes took place between Jo Bumpus and a good-looking woman whom he called Susan. This female ultimately went on board the Avenger, and sailed in her for Green Isle.

On the way thither they touched at one of the first of the South Sea Islands that they came in sight of, where scenes of the most unprecedented description took place between Corrie and a bluff old gentleman named Ole Thorwald, and a sweet, blue-eyed, fair-haired maiden named Alice Mason!
Strange to say, this fair girl agreed to become a passenger in the Avenger; and, still more strange to say, her father and Ole Thorwald agreed to accompany her; also an ancient piece of animated door-matting called Toozle, and a black woman named Poopy, whose single observation in regard to every event in sublunary history was, "Hee! hee!"

On reaching Green Isle, Corrie and Alice were married, and on the same day Bumpus and Susan were also united. There was great rejoicing on the occasion. Ole Thorwald and Dick Price distinguished themselves by dancing an impromptu and maniacal pas de deux at the double wedding!

Of Captain Montague's future career we know nothing. He may have been killed in the wars of his country, or he may have become an admiral in the British navy, for all we know to the contrary. One thing only we are certain of, and that is, that he sailed for England, in the pirate schooner, and seemed by no means to regret the escape of the pirate captain!

Years rolled away. The head of Gascoyne became silvery white; but Time seemed impotent to subdue the vigor of his stalwart frame, or destroy the music of his deep bass voice. He was the idol of numerous grandchildren as well as of a large circle of juveniles, who, without regard to whether they had or had not a right to do so, styled him "Grandfather."

did these youngsters think, as they clambered over his huge frame, and listened with breathless attention to his wild stories of the sea, that "grandfather" had once been the celebrated and much-dreaded Durward, the pirate!
Nothing could induce Gascoyne to take a prominent part in the public affairs of his chosen home; but he did attempt to teach a class of the very smallest boys and girls in the missionary's Sunday-school, and he came in time to take special delight in this work.
He was never so happy as when telling to these little ones the story of redeeming love. In the choice of subjects for his class, he was somewhat peculiar as well as in his manner of treating them. He was particularly emphatic and earnest, used to fill his little hearers with awe, when he spoke of the danger of sin and the importance of resisting its beginnings. But his two favorite themes of alland those which dwelt most frequently on his lipswere, "God is love," and, "Love is the fulfilling of the law."