



Willis came to his assistance, and his precious burden was soon on board."

Willis the Pilot | Page 150

WILLIS, THE PILOT

A SEQUEL TO

"THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON!

Translated, from the best Original Editions.

BY

HENRY FRITH.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

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WILLIS THE PILOT.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.



EADERS of the "Swiss Family Robinson" and they number thousands—will doubtless welcome the adventure of Master Willis in continuation of the story of the pastor's family.

It may be remembered that the family were agreeably surprised by the appearance of the *Unicorn* corvette, commanded by Captain Littlestone, who, with some of his officers, and accompanied by Willis, the boatswain and pilot,

paid a visit to Felsenheim, the residence of the "Family Robinson." An engineer named Woolston, his wife and daughters, had come out as passengers in the *Unicorn*. The engineer was an invalid, and desirous to recruit his health in the little colony which its founders called New Switzerland. The pastor was desirous of sending two of his sons to Europe. "Miss Jenny," who had also become a member of the party under the circumstances so fully described in the volume, intended to return to Europe also; so three persons remained, and three persons wished to quit the island in their stead. Those who wished to remain were Mr. and Mrs. Woolston and one daughter; those who wanted to quit the island were the pastor's sons, Fritz and Frank, with Miss Jenny Montrose, who had been wrecked in the *Dorcas*, and picked up by Fritz.

But Captain Littlestone had on board four sailors, who had

also sailed in the ill-fated *Dorcas*. These men had been picked up at Sydney, and had induced Captain Littlestone to proceed in search of the remainder of the *Dorcas* crew. In so doing the *Unicorn* had met with the "Family Robinson." Willis came ashore to superintend the embarkation of the boys, and the disembarkation of the engineer and his family. Many stores were exchanged, and the *Unicorn* gave a great many useful articles to the pastor, who in turn bestowed fresh vegetables, etc., on the crew of the corvette.

The day of departure at length arrived. The captain and officers of the *Unicorn* were invited to supper at Felsenheim. Then the journal which the Swiss pastor had written was produced and handed his son Fritz with instructions to have it printed. The diary was the account of the life on the island. After the banquet Miss Jenny was conducted on board by Captain Littlestone and his officers, while Willis the "Pilot" remained on shore with the view of assisting Fritz and Frank on the morrow. The captain had consented to this arrangement, and after farewells had been exchanged and "good-nights" said, the boat containing Miss Jenny and her escort quitted the island, leaving Willis on shore.

At this point—or rather, the next morning—the narrative of "Willis the Pilot" commences. The Swiss pastor's tale of the Family Robinson closes with the description of the incidents of Miss Jenny's departure and the farewell supper. Thenceforth the story of the company on the island is continued by another hand, yet with the same attention to detail, and with much of the same fascination. Willis, the sturdy boatswain, or pilot, as they called him, is a central figure in the little group, now augmented, at Felsenheim. We will not anticipate the adventures, but merely content ourselves with reminding our readers that the following story is a continuation of the "Family Robinson's" narrative, and commences on the morning after the farewell supper given to the captain and officers of the *Unicorn*. So let it proceed.



CHAPTER I.

The Tempest. Master Willis's Opinions.—Miss Sophie Woolston.

TELDING to Mr. Woolston's solicitations, the captain had permitted the Pilot Willis to remain on shore after Miss Jenny had gone on board with the officers, and it was arranged that the gig was to return at break of day for Fritz and Frank and the pilot.

It was three o'clock in the morning; Master Willis had entirely completed his preparations, and the boys were already taking a last farewell of their parents, when a fierce whirlwind shook the gallery at Felsenheim, and actually uprooted one of the bamboo supports.

"Here comes a squall," said Willis, quietly.

"A squall!" said Mr. Muller.* "Well, I should like to know your ideas of a hurricane."

"By a hurricane I mean a regular out-and-out tempest; but faith, I think this is something like one, after all."

In fact, a succession of gusts, each one more terrible than the last, burst upon us. Thick clouds obscured the atmosphere, and loud peals of thunder were accompanied with torrents of rain: not the fall of water which we generally understand by

[.] This was the name of the Swiss pastor.

rain, but regular torrents, which are to our European showers what the falls of the Rhine are to the Staubbach, or the falls of Niagara compared to a gutter. In a few moments the Jackal river had transformed the valley into a lake, in which stood up the plantations and the arbutus trees.

However much of a word-painter Willis might have been, he never could have depicted the tempest with the eloquence of the elements which had cut short his observations.

- "I should hope you are never going to embark in this storm," said Mr. Muller.
 - "My place is on board ship," said the pilot.
 - "No boat could live in such a sea," replied Mr. Muller.
- "The worst of it is," continued Willis, "that the wind is in the west, and brings up the rain with it. Now, if some of these water-spouts strike the ship without warning, it will play havoc with the sails, and perhaps break the masts, or perhaps carry them off bodily, sails and all; in either case, the consequences are disagreeable."
- "All the more reason to be thankful that you were not there," said Mrs. Woolston.
- "It is all very well for you ladies to talk like that, you only look at things from a mother's point of view; but do you know what the Lords of the Admiralty would say if they knew that the *Unicorn* was shipwrecked while the pilot was amusing himself on shore?"
- "Well," replied Fritz, "I suppose they would say that there was one victim the less, and one brave man the more."
- "No, Master Fritz; they would say that Willis was a coward and a traitor, and would hang me to the yardarm when they got the chance; however, I do not want to risk anybody's life. Lend me the canoe."
- "What are you thinking of? A wretched sealskin thing like that!"
- "Is it not tempting Providence, Willis," said Miss Woolston, imidly, "to expose yourself to almost certain death?"



"True courage," said Mrs. Woolston, "consists in facing danger coolly when it is necessary to do so. But there is a point where courage ceases and rashness begins."

"In your case it is neither folly nor pride. We do not mean that," added Mr. Woolston, hastily. "I know that you are as frank a man as ever lived, and that all your impulse proceeds from the heart."

"A very pretty speech," replied Willis; "but I must be off. I must have the canoe, if you please."

"Having lived for the last ten years cut off from the world," said Mr. Muller, "I may have merely a vague idea of its laws; but I declare, upon my honour——"

"Give me the cajack, or I will throw myself into the sea," said Willis.

"I declare," continued Mr. Muller, "that Willis exaggerates the importance of his duties. This is a case to which human strength must give way. It is one thing to desert his post and another to come on board with his captain's leave, when there was no prospect of a storm."

"If there is a shipwreck," continued the obstinate pilot, whom the combined strength of the four brothers could scarcely restrain, "I ought to be there to do my duty."

"But," insisted Mr. Woolston, "all the pilots in the world can do nothing against water-spouts and storms; their business is to steer clear of rocks, and to guide the ship."

"There is one thing more that you forget, Mr. Woolston!"

"What is that, Willis?"

"It is to die with the captain; and shall my brave commander take up his quarters in the belly of a shark without my being of the party? Yes, if the *Unicorn* is lost, I shall not survive. Some fine day, when the sky and sea are calm, Willis will go along the rocks quietly whistling. Next evening some one will say Willis is late; and if you go to look for him you will only find his corpse."

At this moment Jack, who had vanished without any one

perceiving him, returned wet to the skin; like the boots of Panurge, the water had entered his shoes by dripping from his shirt.

"You imprudent boy!" cried Mrs. Muller. "Where have you come from?"

"From the bay. Oh, have you seen the sea? it is furious! The waves are mountains high, and it is quite impossible to say where the sky begins and the ocean ends. It is most awfully magnificent."

"And the corvette?" asked Willis.

"She is no longer at anchor at Safety Bay."

"She must have put out to sea for safety," observed Mr. Woolston. "You may depend upon it that Captain Littlestone will leave nothing undone that ought to be done."

"And you must not forget," added Mr. Muller, "that if he were in any danger he would fire a cannon, and then we all, though we are not pilots, would have hastened to his assistance."

"You see, Willis," said Mr. Woolston, "that Providence has come to the assistance of your troubled conscience. It is now impossible for you to regain the ship!"

"I have my own opinion on the subject," replied Willis, as he beat a tattoo on the window-pane.

Then a pretty rosy-checked child, Sophie Woolston by name, gently approached the pilot, and, slipping her little white hand into his, said:

"Sweetheart" (for thus she had been accustomed to call him), "do you not remember that on the voyage you followed all my movements with great interest, and that when you spoke to me there was always something in your voice different from your tone when you spoke to other people. You remember that I came boldly to you at the wheel, and asked why you showed this preference for me."

"Yes, Miss Sophie."

"And you remember your answer?"

"Do I remember my answer? I do not think that death

will ever make me forget it. I told you that I had left behind in Scotland with her mother a pretty little girl, who is now about your age, and that I never could see the breeze playing in your curly hair, nor hear the sound of your voice, without thinking of her, and my heart used to swell like the mizen topsail in a breeze."

"Yes, and how I promised to keep out of your way as much as possible so as not to grieve you; but you told me that it was a grief which was better than joy, and that you would be all the happier."

"Exactly so," replied the sailor, whose determination was giving way before the child's words like frost beneath the rays of the sun.

"And I promised to come to talk to you about Susan and Scotland, and I have kept my word, have I not?"

"Yes, Miss Sophie; and it is only fair to say that you have given in with charming grace to all my paternal fancies; even so far as preferring a brown dress, because I told you Susan wore one the last time I saw her."

"Would you tell all our secrets, you wicked man?"

"Yes, I am going to do so, Miss Sophie,—how you went and learnt her favourite song to sing to me, so that I might believe myself home again in Glasgow, with my wife and child beside me, smoking my pipe and drinking my whisky toddy; and do you know, Miss Sophie, that I could have wished for a shipwreck, if it were only for the sake of saving you, and hearing you say, 'I owe my life to Willis.'"

He was so impressed by what he said that, although the remark was an odd one, the bystanders did not dare to smile.

"Well then," continued Sophie, "if you are so obstinate about throwing away your life, I will never put my hand into yours again. I will not love you any more, nor call you Sweetheart; and I will find some means of letting Susan know that you wished to kill yourself and leave her an orphan."

Men can only appeal to reason; Logic is their stalking horse. It is reserved to women to make use of those simple words that go straight to the heart, and for which reason, no doubt, God

has endowed them with those sweet and gentle voices whose melody shakes our firmest resolutions like those massive stone gates in some old German castles, which resist the greatest pressure, but which by gently touching a spring would revolve on their heavy hinges.

Willis was silent, but no spoken submission could be more eloquent.

Meantime the tempest's fury had increased. At every gust it seemed as if the fiercest must have come. The sea, as the poet said, tossed its arms to heaven; but soon a whirlwind, more terrible than any which had preceded it, burst forth as if to show that the All-powerful has no limits but the Infinite.

"If it is not in our power to succour the crew of the *Unicorn*," said Mrs. Muller, as she knelt down, "there are other means more efficacious, perhaps, which we are wrong not to have thought of sooner."

Every one followed her example; and it was very touching to see Willis humbly yielding to the gentle violence of the child, and kneel down with his weather-beaten face beside the angelic head and countenance of little Sophie Woolston.





CHAPTER II.

Willis's Ideas .- The Knights of the Sea.

and it was quite impossible to launch any boat during that time, or even to venture out of doors, so completely had the storm broken up the ground, the wants of which the great Disposer has proportioned to the rain which He destines for it.

Every one yielded to bodily and mental fatigue, for those three nights and days had been passed in prayer and in speculation concerning the *Unicorn*.

Nothing yet announced that there was any chance of the storm abating, for the thunder still roared, and the wind and waves continued to roar fearfully.

Towards evening the ladies retired into the invalid's chamber in the hope of getting some rest, while Mr. Muller, Willis, and the young men lay down in the common room upon some bearskins and mattresses, while they kept watch in turn.

But scarcely had Ernest relieved Fritz about two o'clock in the morning than fatigue overcame him, and the poor boy fell fast asleep upon his post.

It was broad day when Mr. Muller awoke.

"Where is Willis?" he exclaimed, as he jumped up.

"Good gracious!" said Frank, as he hurried down to the magazine; "the cajack has disappeared!"

In an instant every one was on the alert.

"Which of you went to sleep on his watch?" asked Mr. Muller; "for while the pilot watched I watched too, and never lost sight of him for an instant."

"It was I," replied Ernest; "and if anything has happened to him I shall never forgive myself. But who would have believed that he would have been so foolish as to go to the assistance of a ship in such a cockle-shell as that?"

"I only hope, my boy, that your laziness may not have caused man's death. You see, lad, there is no duty, however light in appearance, that can be neglected with impunity. It is on the share of responsibility borne by each, and upon the reciprocity of sacrifices, that the general security depends. Society, whether on a large or small scale, is a chain of which every individual is a link. If one is wanting, the whole is disconnected."

"I will rush after him."

"Fritz and I will accompany you."

"No, father, I alone am to blame, and alone I wish to remedy my fault as far as I can."

"I was not able to hide the cajack," said Fritz; "but I mid the paddles, and I found them where I had put them."

"Perhaps the want of them would have prevented his embarkation," said Frank.

"To a man like Willis," replied Mr. Muller, "an obstacle such as that would not prove insurmountable; but let us go."

"What, father, do you not wish that I alone should bear the burden of my folly?"

"No, Ernest; that would be to inflict two anxieties upon us instead of one. It is enough for me that you have shown such goodwill; besides, we must all be there to convince Willis, if it is not already too late."

"And the ladies?" asked Fritz

"Frank and Jack will watch over them; it will be quite time enough to inform them of the new idea of the pilot later on."

"This time it is more than an idea," said Jack.

Just as the party was setting out they distinctly heard the report of a cannon. The sound of it awoke Mrs. Muller and Mrs. Woolston, but the young ladies continued asleep.

"The corvette must be close in shore," cried Frank; "the sound was too distinct to be far off."

"Perhaps Willis may have reached Shark Island," said Fritz, as he hurried out with the telescope. "Yes, there he is; I can see him quite plainly. He is re-loading our four-pound gun."

"Thank goodness! You have taken a great weight off my mind," said Ernest.

"He is going to fire again," said Fritz Boom! and a second explosion rent the air.

"If Captain Littlestone hears that signal, he will not hesitate to reply," said Mr. Muller. "Let us listen."

And every one listened intently, holding their breath as if they were anxious to hear the buzzing of a fly and not the report of a cannon.

"There is nothing," said Mr. Muller, sadly after a pause, and the others successively agreed.

"I should very much like to know how Willis managed to reach Shark Island," said Mrs. Muller.

"Well, my dear, by watching when asleep, while one of our friends here slept while he ought to have watched."

"Yes, mother," replied Ernest; "and if you would not make me blush before Mrs. Woolston, I beg you will not insist upon an explanation."

"Mrs. Woolston," replied that lady, "is not such a terrible personage as you think, Mr. Ernest; and the only difference you ought to make in her presence is that you have two mothers then instead of one; that is," she added, with a smile, "if Mrs. Muller has no objection."

"I can avenge myself on your daughter," said the latter, as she pressed her friend's hands.

"All the same," said Fritz, "I cannot understand how Willis managed to get to Shark Island in a canoe without paddles, and through such a surf."

"Bah!" said Jack; "what does a pilot want with paddles?"

"That is just the point. Now, you who call yourself modestly the best rider in the colony, how would you ride if you had nothing to ride upon."

"I could always fall back on a broomstick; besides, in the present case the steed is the canoe, the paddles are only the bridle."

"We need not wait long to find out the puzzle," said Mr. Muller, "for the tempest seems to be abating; and in proportion as it was unreasonable to go out without any possibility of success in the midst of a storm to look for a shipwreck, it is more incumbent on us to go in search of the *Unicorn* now."

"The sea is still very rough, though," said Mrs. Muller.

"If all danger were over, my dear, it would not be more than a pleasant expedition on the water; and we must devote ourselves to it in proportion to our resources and strength. Boys, go and put on your swimming jackets; we will take up Willis as we pass."

"I do not venture to interfere," sighed Mrs. Muller; "sacrifice would be no longer a sacrifice if there were nothing to give up; but nevertheless—"

"Do you remember the time when I was obliged, in order to recover things from the wreck, to risk myself and my sons in our boat of tubs, leaving you with a child of seven years old exposed to the possibility of complete isolation?"

"That is true," she replied; "and I am unjust to Providence who has never ceased to bless us; but I am but a weak woman, and my feelings frequently overcome my better reason."

"I will leave Frank with you w-day; but instead of your being his protector, as you were ten years ago, he will be yours

now. Go, and then Mrs. Woolston, her husband, and children will be quite a new world of sympathy for you."

"Go, then, my dear husband, and may God bring back the boat and the *Unicorn* in safety."

"By the way, Mrs. Woolston, how is our invalid? We are living in such a turmoil that I quite forgot to ask how he was, and I must beg your pardon for my neglect."

"He has been sleeping quietly, and, notwithstanding all the anxiety of these few days, I hope to see an improvement when he wakes."

"You will come back before night, of course?" said Mrs. Muller.

"You may depend I will not prolong your anxiety unnecessarily," replied her husband.

"Who on earth are these people?" replied Mrs. Woolston, as the three boys came in in their swimming jackets and sealskin garments.

"These are the Knights of the Sea," replied Jack, gravely, "who, like Don Quixote, are going forth to redress the wrongs of the tempest, and to break a lance—their paddles, I should say—in favour of persecuted vessels."

Even Mrs. Muller could not repress a smile.

Such is the power of a smile on the human race that it often asserts itself whether it will or no on pale lips in the midst of the most distressing grief. It seems always listening at the door, as it were, ready to come in as soon as opportunity offers. This is so far an advantage that it mixes a little honey, so to speak, with the bitterness of parting.

Mr. Muller concealed his sorrow effectually. The three boys were clasped in their mother's arms, and then kissed with affectionate respect the hand which Mrs. Woolston extended to them.

Then between those who went away and those who remained there was only the thread of remembrance remaining, the community of regret, and a mutual sorrow.



CHAPTER III.

In which Willis the Pilot proves that Things Ephemeral Die of Consumption.
—The Cajack and Its Little Ones.—The Sword Fish.—Search for the Corvette.—Admiral Socrates.



HEN they got within a short distance of the water, Jack distinguished a certain black thing moving about in the bushes on the shore.

"A sea monster!" he exclaimed, as he shouldered his gun. "I have found it out, and I must shoot at it."

"By no means," said Fritz, whose keen sight had discovered what the object was. "I must prevent that, for I do not wish you to kill or

wound my canoe."

"It can't be your canoe, because it is moving."

"If it moves we shall soon find that out; but do not you see its young ones gambolling about by their mother?"

"That is all the more in my favour, unless you imagine that your canoe has been having young ones," and Jack again levelled his rifle.

"Don't fire!" cried Fritz. "There is the jacket and hat of Willis the pilot."

"Willis must be a Triton then," said Ernest, "to have dispensed with a canoe. At any rate, the canoe could not have

come back by itself; that would make it a too intelligent a thing. The pilot must simply have gained the island by swimming, notwithstanding the breakers and the surf—a most extraordinary feat to accomplish."

"Bah!" said Ernest, parodying Jack's remark about the paddles. "What are breakers and surf to a pilot?"

Safely anchored in a creek of the Jackal river, and protected by a rocky breakwater, the pinnace had ridden out the storm with safety.

The swell was still so violent that they had great difficulty in steering to the island, whence Willis shouted between his hands, "Larboard and starboard!" as if these directions were not like so much Hebrew to the amateur crew.

"Wait a moment," he cried, "I will show you a quicker way;" and he threw himself into the sea and swam as easily as if his arms had been moved by steam.

When he came on board he gave the tiller a vigorous push, slackened off a rope here, gave a pull there, cleared away the ropes from the deck, and, running through the waves which sent the boat almost gunwale under, he soon doubled the cape from which Mr. Muller and Fritz had at first perceived the *Unicorn*.

The same cape had been called Cape Deliverance just before, and now might be called Cape Deception. Leaping on the poop, Willis looked round him in every direction, and, not seeing anything, he dashed his hat down in a rage, which under other circumstances would have had something comical about it. He relinquished the tiller to the first comer, sat down and covered his face with his hands in an attitude of profound dejection.

"Willis, Willis!" said Jack, "I will tell Sophie!"

But Jack had neither the caressing voice nor the innocent grace of the child, and Willis did not move.

Mr. Muller saw that out of Miss Sophie's influence the pilot was one of those natures which the more you exhort them the less calm they become, and his temper ought to be allowed to

wear itself out; so he signed to his sons to leave him alone, and taking the glass he examined the horizon in his turn.

The sun was clearing away the clouds, but there was still wind enough to blow the horns off a cow.

"I don't see anything," said Mr. Muller; "and yet the corvette must have been blown in this direction."

"The sea is so uncertain," said Fritz.

"But not to the extent of forcing a ship against the wind."

"Unfortunately," said Jack, "it is so different at sea to what it is on land—there the least trace of something dropped on the way, or a word heard by a passer-by, would put you on the scent. There you could ask any one, 'Have you seen the Unicorn?'"

"Fire a gun," said Ernest; "perhaps they will hear it now the atmosphere is less damp." The guns were discharged accordingly.

Willis looked up and listened intently; he then resumed his former attitude of despondency.

"It may be," said Ernest, "that the *Unicorn* hears our gun, but we cannot hear hers."

"How can that be?" asked Jack.

"Because the sound is increased or diminished in proportion as the wind carries it or opposes it."

"And what is sound then, my dear professor?"

"It is the result of the compression of the air which is dilated according to its elasticity, and occasions a sort of trembling or undulation which extends in concentric circles, just as water does when you throw a stone into a pond."

"And you may add," said Mr. Muller, "that bodies which strike the air also excite loud vibrations in the fluid; thus we hear the crack of a whip, and the 'swish' of a cane. It resounds also when it strikes any solid body with violence; for instance, when the wind blows against houses or trees."

"I understand," replied Jack, "that the undulating movement of which Ernest spoke takes place in the particles of air which

are immediately compressed by the sonorous body, but that it propagates itself."

"Yes, my boy; it propagates itself in a circle particle by particle, and moves at the rate of three hundred and forty metres in a second."

"Three hundred and forty metres!" said Willis, who had by degrees roused himself; "that is something like a breeze!"

"And how do they manage to measure its velocity, Master Ernest?"

"The first exact measure, Master Jack, was taken in 1738. There are two hills near Paris, Montmartre and Monthery, the distance of which, measured in a straight line, was found to be fourteen thousand six hundred and thirty-six fathoms. Cannon fired at Monthery were heard at Montmartre in eighty-six seconds and a half after the flash was seen."

"It is that half-second that tickles me," said Jack, laughing.
"If there had been only eighty or eighty-six seconds exactly one might not have doubted the calculation; but when you come to eighty-six and a half, why not three-quarters or seven-eighths?"

"You must calculate fractions when you wish to obtain precise results. Don't you count six months in your life? Has not thirty minutes more or less on the dial of your watch some meaning for you?"

"Your brother is right, my poor Jack. Your little jokes do not always succeed."

"Other experiments have been made since," continued Ernest, "and have all confirmed preceding results with such slight differences, which can be accounted for by the variation of temperature."

"Then I suppose it is equally necessary to calculate the speed of light?"

"Light travels so quickly that the shortest period we can think of scarcely expresses the time between the actual explosion of a gun and the perception of the flash."

"At whatever distance it might be?"

"Yes, at whatever distance."

"Do you not recollect that the sunlight takes about eight minutes to traverse the thirty-four millions of leagues which separate it from the earth, so the light must pass across the earth in an infinitesimal portion of time."

"What a pace!" cried Willis. "But I tell you fairly that I should not like to repeat that to our people, Master Ernest."

"It is all right; that's nothing, my good Willis. The sun is, so to speak, at our door in comparison to the stars which you can see quite clearly; and though their light travels at the same speed it takes many years to reach the earth."

Willis said nothing, but got up and walked away whistling "God save the King," and went to rejoin Fritz, who was steering the boat.

At this naive protest of the pilot Mr. Muller, Ernest, and Jack burst into a roar of laughter.

"Oh, laugh away!" cried the sailor. "I certainly can't swallow your crammers."

Meanwhile the sky had assumed a more favourable appearance, the wind had lulled to a gentle breeze, and the sea had gone down. Never had day commenced in such a storm and closed with such radiant smiles. It was like the fairies of Perrault's stories, who, first clothed in rags, suddenly come out from their chrysalis state young and beautiful, their wallets turned into baskets of flowers and their crutches into magic wands.

"Need we go any farther, papa?" asked Fritz.

Now that the sea had gone down and there was nothing to contend against, the expedition had lost its charm for the impetuous young man.

"I do not think it is any use; what's your opinion, Willis?"

"Ah!" replied the pilot, as he pressed Mr. Muller's hands, "in the name of our eight days' friendship, which binds you to Captain Littlestone more than the affection of twenty years, keep a few miles more to the east."

"If, as I think, the corvette has been driven out to sea, and

is now making for us again, I do not see what good we shall do. If, on the contrary, it is keeping its course, we shall never reach it."

"Suppose she is dismasted or leaking?"

"That's true, too; but still the ladies will be very anxious."

"But they are half prepared."

"Jack is right," replied Fritz, whose heart beat loudly at the thought of the *Unicorn* in distress, "let us go ahead."

"Besides, on the word of a pilot, the sea will be calm for a long time now, and there is no danger."

"And suppose there were?" said Fritz.

"Go on then, Willis; I give you command till sunset. We shall return at night, so as to arrive at Felsenheim early in the morning."

"Three cheers for the captain," said Willis, throwing his cap in the air. This habit of throwing his hat about to express joy or grief was a very usual one with the pilot.

Having paid this token of respect to Mr. Muller, the pilot shook out a reef of the mainsail, and the pinnace re-doubled its speed.

"This cockle-shell sails well," said Willis; "but she wants two things."

"What are they?"

"A caboose and a cook."

"A caboose and a cook?"

"Yes, I mean a kitchen and a cook. A fresh breeze for breakfast is very well when you are accustomed to it, it is light and easy of digestion; but to dine off the same thing——"

"I think I saw our good mother hang a game bag round Ernest's neck as we started. It seemed pretty well filled. Where is it?"

"Here it is, father," said Jack, as he came up the hatchway.

"Now let us see; here is a ham, some Dutch cheese, some maize bread, two calabashes full of malaga from Felsenheim, and fresh water in gourds. We have quite enough to live on till to-morrow."

"Bravo!" cried Willis.

This time he did not throw his hat in the air, as he had not picked it up since his last little demonstration.

"Let us set out the table," said Jack. "Well, Willis, you see there is nothing wanting in our boat, not even a—what do you call it?"

"Caboose, Master Jack."

"Yes, not even a caboose."

"That's true; and if the *Unicorn* were in the offing, I would not change my pilot's stripe for a commodore's button. But she is not there, worse luck."

"Well, go ahead, Willis; one must be a man or not."

"I am a man, Master Muller; but it is hard at my age to be hanged first in effigy, and afterwards—— Here's your health, sir!"

"That would be hard at your age, Willis, I must say; but you haven't come to that yet."

"And when I have, Master Fritz, there will not be time to talk about it."

"Did you not say, Ernest, that the *Unicorn* might have heard our signals without our hearing hers?"

"Certainly, Jack, because the wind is blowing from us, and would carry the sound; while, on the contrary, it would prevent her guns reaching us."

"Is sound affected by any other influence except wind?"

"Its intensity varies according to the density of the atmosphere. If, for instance, you strike a bell in a closed vessel filled with air, you will find that as you withdraw the air the sound gets less and less."

"And if you pump all the air out?"

"Then there will be no sound at all."

"So, then," said Willis, "suppose two men were to talk in what you call a vacuum, they would not hear each other?"

"I should never recommend you to try to talk in a vacuum."

"Why not?"

"Because you would die."

"Oh, Lord!" exclaimed Willis.

"If, on the contrary, you pump in a greater quantity of air than is usually necessary, the sound of the bell would become much louder."

"So to talk in whispers would be the same as shouting?"

"You seem inclined to joke, Willis; but on the top of high mountains, where the air is very rarefied, the human voice cannot be heard at two paces off."

"That would be very bad for deaf people."

"While in the Arctic regions, where the atmosphere is greatly condensed by cold, the voice can be heard half a league away."

"All the worse for those who want to talk secrets."

"And how is sound affected as regards solid bodies?" asked Jack.

"According to the elasticity of their fibres."

"Explain yourself."

"I mean that solid bodies, whose structure is such that the vibration of one of their molecules is communicated to the whole body, are susceptible of transmitting sound. For instance, if you apply your ear to the trunk of a tree, and some one taps the other end, you will hear the noise very loudly."

"That is to say, the sound follows the direction of the longitudinal fibres, which transmit the sound better than the transversal."

"Quite so."

"And in water?"

"You can hear the sound but very faintly."

All this time Fritz had been engaged very earnestly in one direction, and now cried out:

"There it is; I can see it perfectly now."

"The corvette?" asked Willis, jumping up and letting fall the glass which he held in his hand.

"What a curious way it sails! It bounds into the air one moment, falls upon the water, and then rebounds again like an india-rubber ball."

"Impossible, Master Fritz! The *Unicorn* is a respectable ship, which sails properly on the water, and does not go jumping about in the air."

"I say, though, it is no longer a question of the ship; it is an enormous fish, four or five yards long."

"How you startled me."

"Father, Ernest, get your guns ready! Jack, take your harpoon!"

Fritz, with his gun to his shoulder, followed the movements of the monster, and when he came within range he fired with such good aim the he hit him in the head.

The animal turned, leaving a long track of blood behind him.

Now, Willis, run after him quick."

The pilot put the helm up, and Jack launched his harpoon.

"I have hit him," Jack exclaimed, joyfully. But the hissing of the line as it ran out, and from the rapidity with which the boat was dragged along, it was evident that the wounded fish was stronger than all the crew put together.

Ernest and Mr. Muller fired at the same time. The bullet of the latter sank deep into the monster's flesh, while the other bounded off from the saw-like nose of the cetacean.

Fritz had re-loaded and fired again; the bullet lodged close to the first one, but the boat did not cease its headlong course.

Mr. Muller seized a hatchet to cut the line.

"Oh, father!" said Fritz, regretfully; "he will be such a splendid specimen for our museum."

"It is a 'sword' fish, my boys, a monster of the shark family, and of extreme voracity. If by any chance fish have established a museum of human specimens at the bottom of the sea, this creature must have presented them with several; perhaps he wishes to add us to the collection."

"Did you notice the enormous horn he carries?"

"It is from this horn, or saw, that he takes his name. He is continually fighting with a whale, whose only weapon is his cnormous tail; but the saw fish, or sword fish, is very active,



Sword Fish and Whale.

and escapes by jumping into the air as Fritz saw, and then, falling down upon his adversary's back, he pierces him with his sword."

"Talking of whales," said Jack, "all naturalists affirm that the throat is so narrow that it can only swallow very small fish. Now, how was it in Jonah's case?"

"It is rather unfortunate," said Mr. Muller, "that the whale has been so associated with Jonah, for now they can never be separated in the narrative; but in the Greek translation of the Chaldean text the word used is *ketos*, and in the Latin translation *cete*, which signifies an immense fish, but not necessarily a whale. A shark, for example, can swallow a man, or even a horse, without injuring it with its teeth."

"I have heard of sailors who have got on the back of a whale, and walked about thinking it was an island."

"Well, there is nothing impossible in that, Willis."

"It is a fact, however," said Fritz, "that here is a sea monster at this moment, who has carried off four bullets in his body without any inconvenience; on the contrary, he seems to go all the quicker for them."

"Ah," said Willis, "these fellows have a much better time of it than we have."

"It is much the same with all fish. A carp lives more than two hundred years. A whale is supposed to live a thousand years, if he is not killed first."

"He must have a jolly life," cried Willis.

"But what about ephemera, who die as soon as they are born? Who can tell, Master Jack?"

"The ephemera do not die as quickly as you imagine," said Mr. Muller. "One will live two or three years under water in the form of a worm. It passes then to an amphibious state, and carries tiny wings. Then, four or five months afterwards, generally in August, it comes out of its skin all of a sudden, as we take off a coat. By this process it gets rid of its teeth, lips, horns, gills, etc., and it is no sooner beautiful and lively than it dies."

- "I thought so," said Willis. "I was sure of it."
- "Sure of what?" said Fritz.

"That it is the worse for going ashore. When you are accustomed to the water you can never live anywhere else."

"This is merely an illustration of human nature," said Mr. Muller. "Men work hard for riches, and just as they have attained their object they die."

The sun had meantime disappeared behind the copper and purple-tinted clouds, leaving a streak of gold along the horizon, then a single golden thread, and at last only the reflection of his rays, slowly disappearing in a last adieu. With the exception of the sea-fowl, which clustered upon a fragment of rock, not a single black spot broke the continuity of the horizon.

The sky held high festival that evening, the firmament displayed one by one all the jewels in its crown, and a luminous track marked the boat's progress—a phenomenon partly due to electricity and partly to the insects in the water.

"The sea is on fire, Willis," said Mr. Muller. "I leave it to you to choose the hour for our return."

The pilot looked sadly at the deck and made no reply.

"It will be rather curious if we find the corvette at anchor in Safety Bay."

"I have a presentiment that we shall," said Jack; "as we shall see that we have had a game of hide-and-seek with her."

Willis shook his head.

"There are a thousand things to turn a vessel from her course," said Ernest.

"Yes, Master Ernest; there are hurricanes and water-spouts, as I said the other day. In such cases ships do turn from their course, but only to go to the bottom."

Willis wound up his sentence with a gesture indicating a turning "topsy-turvey" which defies description.

"Do you remember what Socrates says?" said Jack. "'When I think I am wise, I know nothing;' and do you not think that

Providence has other means besides storms and water-spouts to accomplish His decrees?"

"My brave young gentleman, I can see very well that you want to buoy me up with hope, just as people give a toy to a child to keep it quiet, and I thank you for your intentions. But you have had no rest to speak of for three days, and I hope you will take advantage of this evening; and you also, Mr. Muller; I shall be able to steer the boat alone."

"Very well; but suppose you play us a trick as you did before?"

"All's fair in war, Master Ernest. You had warning that I had an idea of getting away. But a prisoner has always a right to escape, unless he give his parole, when the case is altered."

"Well then, Willis, I only ask your word that you will go straight home, and that you will wake me in two hours to keep my watch."

"I promise, Mr. Muller."

The boys then descended to the little cabin, for tropical nights are sometimes as cold as the days are hot.

Mr. Muller, wrapped in a sail, slept on deck. In less than five minutes all were asleep except Willis, who stood on deck and gazed mechanically at a star which glittered in the water.

"So your light takes many years to reach us, and it travels at nearly seventy thousand leagues a second. That is pretty stiff, anyhow!"

He then leant against the tiller, his head bowed upon his chest, now and then gazing ahead and buried in deep thought, no doubt seeing amid the night-clouds the ghosts of the *Unicon* and of his little Susan in Scotland.



CHAPTER IV.

A Landscape.—Chinese Politeness.—Another Idea of Willis the Pilot—Susan and Sophie.

I was five o'clock in the morning. Everything was bustle at Felsenheim. Nothing now remained of the tempest but the beautiful freshness of the atmosphere, which communicated new vigour, not only to human beings, but to plants and animals. The citron trees, the aloes, and the jasmines perfumed the air. The palms, the lofty bananas, the broad-leaved mangoes waved in the gentle sea-breeze.

The Jackal river rolled its silvery current through its rose-clad banks, and amid bamboos and cacti. The sun—the sun always plays an important part in nature's fête days—poured down upon the saturated earth. In the calyx of flowers, and on the extremities of the leaves, glittered the diamond dewdrops. In the distance were the pines, cocoa-nut trees, and cedars. On the blue waters of the lake majestic swans were sailing. The neighbouring trees were alive with brilliantly feathered birds.

To this scene add Mrs. Muller returning from the meadow with a bowl of warm milk, fresh from the cow; Mrs. Woolston and her elder daughter engaged in their household duties, with their usual graceful appearance; Miss Sophie engaged in tying a blue ribbon round the neck of an antelope which she had

made a playmate of; Frank feeding the ostriches and the beasts of burden, and confess that the whole landscape was like Paradise on earth.

Compare this scene to that you would behold on awaking in London or Paris—your chambers for your farm, a pot of geranium for your garden, and smoky chimneys and crumbling roofs overhead; below, the hoarse cries of itinerant dealers, and no fresh air nor fresh milk, nor any perfume of the country, nor—but that is enough.

The new milk was brought to Mr. Woolston's bedside, for the engineer was still very feeble.

"You are wrong to worry yourself," said Mrs. Woolston to Mrs. Muller; "the sea has been as calm as a mill-pond since they went away."

"Yes, I know," replied Mrs. Muller; "but, my dear friend, when one has already experienced shipwreck the idea is always present, and one sees tempests in a glass of water."

"I am quite sure that they are only staying out to please Willis."

"He would not like to return," said Frank, "until he had done all he possibly could."

"Madame," said Miss Mary Woolston, "now that your family is increased by two great girls, I hope you will make them useful. We can sew and spin and knit."

"And make preserves," added Sophie.

"And cat them as well," said Mrs. Woolston.

"If you wish to spin, my dears, you can have plenty of work; we have plenty of Nankin cotton, and I am going to clothe the whole colony."

"That will be capital!" exclaimed Sophie, clapping her hands, "a dress of 'nankeen,' as we wore at school, with a straw hat and a green veil."

"We must weave it first, though; but we will see about it."

"You have quite forgotten the tapestry work, girls."

"Oh yes, mamma. we can do that too, of course. We can furnish the room."

- "And the canvas?"
- "We shall find some."
- "And the furniture?"
- "That is the gentlemen's business."
- "And the room?"
- "We have the gallery."
- "And the wool for a carpet?"
- "There are plenty of sheep."
- "Very well, I see that there is furniture somewhere; we have only to sit down, it seems."
- "There is a piano still unprovided," said Mrs. Woolston, "unless there is an Erard in the colony."
- "Alas for our poor sonatas, which we have taken so much trouble to learn."
- "But there are a thousand things besides," said Mrs. Muller; "there are the vegetable garden, the fruit, the pantry, kitchen, dairy, fowlyard, and all my particular business, which we can share."
 - "Each one can have a portion."
 - "But you must not cat up all the profits, mind."
- "Ah, mamma, you must think us very greedy. That is very unfair."
- "These girls wish me to praise their talents; but their faults—"
 - "Mrs. Muller, we can prove that mamma is unjust to us."
- "I am persuaded," said Mrs. Muller, laughing, "that mothers are the greatest calumniators in the world."
- "So, mamma, to punish you we shall kiss you," and they suited the action to the word accordingly.
- "I was not an accomplice; but I have no objection to share the punishment," said Mrs. Muller. "These great boys," she added, extending her hand to Frank, "cannot hang round my neck as they used to do. You will replace them, I hope."
 - "Willingly," Mrs. Muller.
 - "Without dethroning them altogether, I trust."



"In that case, Master Frank," said Mrs. Woolston, "you must take refuge on my territory."

"Suppose we go down to the beach, and look for the Unicorn,"

said Mrs. Muller.

"And I will stay at home with papa," said Sophie.

"No, my dear; I am the eldest, and it is my right."

"Neither of you shall remain, dears," said Mr. Woolston. "I feel much better, and the walk will do me good. When I am tired Mr. Frank will give me an arm, I daresay."

"Better than that," said Frank; "I can put a saddle on Blinky

and I will lead him, so you will travel as in a chair."

"What is Blinky?"

"One of the donkeys."

"Very well; I was afraid it was an ostrich; and I confess I am not quite equal to riding such a steed."

"In that case," said Mrs. Muller, "so that his brother may not be jealous, we will load him with a basket of provisions. We can lay the cloth under the trees by the shore, so that our knights of the ocean may find some food on their arrival."

The little caravan was soon ready, and the dogs bounded in front, making inquisitive excursions into all the bushes, and returning to their master occasionally to know which way he was going. Miss Woolston walked beside Blinky, holding her father's hand in hers. Sophie gambolled along with her antelope, rivalling it in the grace and agility of her movements. The elderly ladies looked after the beasts of burden; and Frank, armed with his gun, was ready to take a shot at anything that might turn up.

After a long interval the pinnace came in sight, and Willis ran her ashore, not without first throwing up his hat, as usual, and scrutinizing the bay in every direction in search of the corvette.

"No trace?"

"None."

"I was sure of it," replied Mr. Woolston; "the wind has been blowing from the west for four days, which was favourable for the *Unicorn*. Now having lost fifteen days here, and being also the bearer of important despatches, I have no doubt that Captain Littlestone has continued his voyage to the Cape, intending to call again on his return."

"That must be the case."

"Yes," said the pilot. "I know how good you all are, and that you wish to console me as much as possible."

"Now would you not have done the very thing we think Captain Littlestone has done?"

"Perhaps; the thing is not impossible provided he thinks I am dead"

"Dead, Willis?"

"Yes, certainly. It is better to pass for a dead man than a deserter."

"It would be better for him to say nothing at all, and no one would know anything at all about your absence."

"So you think that British sailors can disappear without being missed; and when the port officer, with a list in his hand, calls the roll of the crew, don't you think he will perceive the absence of the boatswain, who was the life and soul of the ship when he knows every trifling detail?"

"Well, the captain will tell the truth."

"And do you think that discipline is so very complacent on board a man-of-war? Did the *Unicorn* want anything, water or provisions? Was she blown ashore by a tempest? No. Willis is a deserter, and he will be hanged, unless he happens to be already dead, in which case hanging would be superfluous."

"But, then, the captain would be as much to blame as you are."

"It is for that reason that I hope he will make some excuse, and report me as having died of fever and buried at sea."

"I cannot think," said Mr. Muller, "that discipline can be so very severe as you represent it to be."

"No; before setting sail the cabin-boys are asked if they have a headache; and the sailors who want to go ashore have only to



say so. The pilots go shooting, and the captains waste their time in all directions!"

"This is very delightful service!"

Once set off in this way Willis could not stop.

"Dead," he said; "that is to say, no longer with any name, position, or anything. My wife would have a right to marry again, Susan would have another father, and I should only be a pirate. Even supposing that that is the best that can happen to me, I confess that there are pleasures more fearful."

"In truth, Willis," interrupted Mrs. Woolston, "your jokes are distressing us all."

"That is true, my lady; but a pilot who only saves himself is a great scoundrel."

During this time, while, to use Willis's expression, they were putting poultices on his grief, the young ladies were laying the cloth under the shade of a rock, and garnishing the attractive-looking table with bouquets. It was not that things were better arranged on this occasion, but they were more inviting than usual.

Have you never noticed when passing some street some particularly cheerful-looking house decorated with fresh flowers, and nice white curtains at the windows? And perhaps you may have asked why it is that this house is not so dingy and neglected as its neighbours. The answer is that in this house is a happy and cheerful little girl, who sings like a lark and is as joyous as a butterfly going and coming about the house, caressing her father and mother, and leaving everywhere the imprint of her youth and purity. Now that is the reason why this particular dinner has all the attraction of a fête.

"We are not presentable," said Fritz, alluding to his dress.

"That is your armour, brave knights; and I prefer you in that costume than arrayed as the dandies of Hyde Park or Regent Street."

"In that case," said Ernest, "we will do as they do in China."

"And what is that?"

"The greatest mark of politeness there is to make your toilette after dinner."

"When they are going away?"

- "About that time, Mrs. Woolston."
- "That is Chinese all over."
- "And how is the art of cooking in that country?"
- "Very forward; the etiquette is to serve in fifty-two different saucers, fifty-two sorts of meat, so you may guess what the dinner is."
 - "There is dessert, I suppose?"
- "Eight kinds of soup exactly. If there were seven the guests would consider themselves insulted; the quantity of dishes is proportioned to the rank of the guests."
- "I hope, Mrs. Woolston," said Mrs. Muller, laughing, "that you will not think we esteem you according to the dinner we set before you."
- "You ought to have fifty-seven dishes, if you treat me according to my deserts," replied Mrs. Woolston, in the same tone; "so I have a great mind to be formal and dine at home. Patrick, my horses."

Everybody laughed, even Willis joined.

"Then," continued Ernest, "the tea and cakes come, all intermingled with sixty little pieces of silver paper to use as napkins. It is then that the guests depart and re-appear in beautiful dresses of silk and satin."

"Such people ought to die of indigestion."

"But they don't. Notice, in the first place, that they only use saucers, and not plates, so they have only a small quantity of each meat; the natives are accustomed to this manner of eating, of course; and as to Europeans, the want of spoons and forks—"

"What, have they no forks?"

"Nor knives either; but, on the other hand, they are very dexterous in the use of their fingers, and in the manipulation of ivory chop-sticks."

"I am beginning to understand," said Jack; "but I wonder the Europeans do not ever order their carriage, like Mrs. Woolston. It reminds me of the crane inviting the fox to dine from the long-necked vase." "We usually judge the Chinese by their porcelain," said Mr. Muller. "This is a great mistake. They are the vainest, the most stupid, and most credulous people in the world. They worship the moon, fire, and a thousand other things. Their quack doctors go about on tame tigers, and pretend to sell the wind which they have purchased. That is a branch of business which does not demand much capital."

Willis had been considering for some time a particular point of the sea with great anxiety. Suddenly he jumped up, and running towards the beach, plunged in.

"Stop!" cried Mr. Woolston and Mr. Muller to the boys, who immediately ran after him. "Stop! I have been watching him for the last ten minutes, and I know what he is about; let him go."

Meantime the pilot was swimming vigorously towards something floating on the surface of the water. And that something was a plank, with which he very soon returned to shore.

"Well," said he, as he landed, "was I wrong?"

"Wrong about what?"

"To be afraid of the water-spouts, and to maintain that the *Unicorn* had been wrecked."

"Where is your proof, Willis?"

"This plank."

"Well, what about the plank?"

"I recognise it."

"And how do you recognise it, may I ask?"

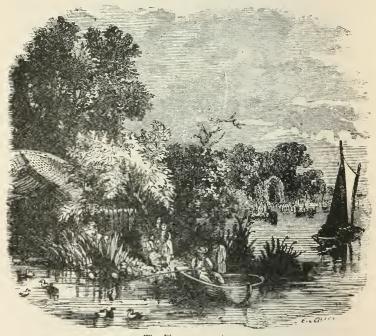
"How!" replied the obstinate man; "fish do not bring forth planks, I imagine; and I do not think that planks come out of a dockyard of their own accord on a cruise."

"So there are no storms except for the *Unicorn*, no shipwrecked vessels except the *Unicorn*, and no planks except from her hull? Willis, you are an idiot."

"Every one has a right to his own opinion, Mr. Woolston."

In the course of the evening, as they were returning to Felsenheim, little Sophie beckoned to the pilot in a confidential manner, and he hastened to join her.

- "Sweetheart," she said, "I have decided upon one thing."
- "What is that, Miss Sophie?"
- "In future, when we are alone together, you must call me Susan—not Miss Susan, do you understand?—but simply Susan, as you would up in Glasgow."
 - " I should not dare to do that."



The Pinnace came in.

- "But I insist upon it," said the child.
- "Well, then, I will try, Miss Sophie."
- "What did you say?"
- "Miss Su---"
- "Eh?"
- "Susan, I mean."
- "Ah! that's right."



CHAPTER V.

Distribution of Quarters.—A Horse Marine.—A Woman's Kingdom.—
A Secret.



FTER some days of waiting without result it became pretty certain that the *Unicorn* had done one of two things: either had sailed to the Cape, or, as Willis said, into eternity—to that unexplored land, from whose bourne no traveller returns. So it was necessary to set

about finding quarters, for some time at any rate, and perhaps for ever, for the latest arrivals.

At first nothing would appear to be more simple than to find space for the eleven people who actually composed the colony of New Switzerland. They could have even traced the frontiers and established themselves each one in a little kingdom of his own in a sort of republic in which only subjects were wanting.

But then you will ask over whom were they to reign. They would have to govern themselves, which is much more difficult than to govern others.

But if in one sense there was space enough, in another they were somewhat limited, for it was out of the question that they should all live together in the grotto at Felsenheim; even had there been accommodation, their propriety forbad it.

It was doubtful whether there was another grotto in the neighbourhood; or if there were, it had not yet been discovered. Chance would be no longer chance if its manner of operating was regular.

It would be somewhat inconvenient to give up Falcon's Nest, Waldeck, or Prospect Hill to the Woolston family, and to leave them there even under the protection of Willis, for they were unacquainted with the island, so it was necessary that they should always be within call of each other and near at hand so long as their comfort and individual liberty were not interfered with.

In the civilized world in such a case as this one could take a room near at hand, but in this island there were no apartments to let.

It was after dinner one day, and Willis, who had a mysterious habit of disappearing after meals without any one knowing where he went to, came back while they were discussing this question.

"As far as I am concerned," said the pilot, "I do not want to live anywhere. Since I am in your house, Mr. Muller, and that there are no means of getting out of it for a quarter of an hour, I must stay where I am; but as to being merely a dependant, and a trouble to you as I am, I will no longer permit that."

"I think what you say is not very complimentary to me."

"What is the difference, Mr. Woolston? you are ill, and you require looking after. I am quite well, thank goodness."

"You are not in my house," replied Mr. Muller. "You are in God's house. It appears to me that such a host can supply all our wants, and that the domain in which He receives you is as fertile as you can possibly require, so you may banish your scruples."

"Another sop for the conscience of the pilot; but I must look out for myself, it is my——"

"It is your idea, Willis, I suppose, eh?—very well. You are free to work for four people if you like; and even supposing you eat enough for two, I shall be the gainer."

"To work, and at what? To walk about with a gun upon

my shoulder, to take the fresh air in this gallery amongst the flowers and by the stream as we are doing now, and have only to open my mouth to let the food drop into it. I do not call that work."

- "Look a little to this side, Willis. What do you see?"
- "A bear's skin."
- "If I give you as a beginning a live bear with claws and teeth ready to rend you, and with as much right to your skin as you have to his, and tell you to make me a soft carpet like this, would you call that work?"
 - "Decidedly, Mr. Muller."
- "Well, then, that is the sort of work in which we pass our life. Before we could lie down in peace those formidable birds which you see in our museum were alive. This cup was clay, the canoe was nothing more than a sea-dog, our hats were running about the fields in the shape of Angora rabbits and beavers, and so on. For ten years, except on Sunday, when we said our prayers, and amused ourselves in innocent recreation, we have never ceased to work. You are quite at liberty to do the same thing."
- "If you do not like the refinery," said Jack, "you can try the tannery. I like spinning best, or rope making."
 - "At least, you can try porcelain if you prefer it."
 - "I have often broken it."
 - "That is not the same thing as making it."
 - "Well, but about the manufacture?"
- "The most needful thing just now," said Fritz, "is to acquire two or three acres of land, and double our crops."
 - "Is land dear?" asked Mrs. Woolston, with a smile
 - "It costs the trouble of choosing."
 - "It also costs the trouble of clearing," added Ernest
 - "But how about a conveyancer?"
- "I have advised Ernest to enter that grave profession." said Mrs. Muller; "the number of sales, conveyances, wills, and contracts that would have to be made would be just suited to his active disposition."

"But just now," interrupted Mr. Muller, "we must see about quarters. Mr. and Mrs. Woolston and their daughters can still occupy our rooms."

"We cannot permit that," said Mr. Woolston; "that would

be turning you out completely."

"Well, then, I must appeal to the notary, and ask his advice."

"Lawyer Ernest," said that personage, as he searched his pockets, "has forgotten his spectacles, and so it is impossible to examine the question with befitting gravity; but that does not prevent him from being of the same opinion as his father."

"But suppose we refuse?" said Mrs. Woolston.

"If you refuse we have only one course to adopt."

"What is that, Master Frank?"

Frank got up and shouted out, "Patrick, bring Mrs. Woolston's horses round!"

"That is a very formidable argument, and I see we must comply with your request."

"So there is one point decided," said Mr. Muller; "my wife and I will occupy the boys' apartment."

"And the boys," said Jack, "will occupy the open air. For my own part, I ask for nothing better. It is a room that suits me 'down to the ground."

"And very spacious," said Ernest.

"And well aired," added Fritz.

"With blue hangings sprinkled with gold stars," continued Frank.

"Is that all?" said their father.

"I believe that the appointments of the habitation do not extend further."

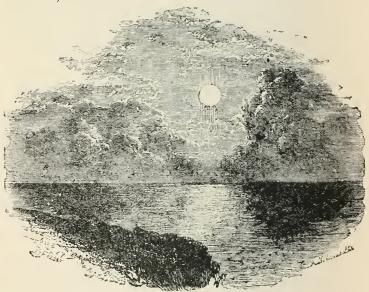
"So I have thought of giving you a smaller room. You can return every night to Falcon's Nest."

"On foot?"

"On horseback, if you like, under Willis's escort. I name him, commander of the cavalry."

- "Of the cavalry!" exclaimed the pilot. "Fancy a sailor on horseback."
 - "Make yourself quite easy," said Jack; "we have no horses."
 - "I am glad to hear it."
 - "But we have wild asses and ostriches."
 - "Ostriches! that is worse still."
- "Oh, don't say that, my brave Willis. Once you have tried the ostriches, you will never wish to travel any other way. You go so fast, that you leave the wind behind you and can scarcely breathe. It is delicious."
- "Thank you, but I should much prefer to navigate the canoe on land, if possible."
- "Ah, Willis," replied Fritz, "to accomplish that would render you immortal."
 - " May I ask---"
 - "Willis has an idea," cried Jack; "let him speak."
- May I ask permission to bivouac on Shark Island, and to build up a lighthouse for the guidance of the *Unicorn* in case she return?"
 - "Fancy the head-quarters of the cavalry on an island!"
- "Not of the cavalry, but the admiralty. I must ask Mr. Muller to change my commission to that of admiral, which will not cost him any more."
 - "With great pleasure, Willis."
- "In that case, and as I am an admiral, I will pardon myself the faults I committed when I was a pilot."
- "That is a good trait," said Ernest, "and reminds me of the saying of Louis XII. when he ascended the throne. 'It was not for the King of France to avenge the injuries of the Duke of Orleans.'"
- "And the young people!—I have counted on you to be their guide on land, of course."
- "The young people," cried the lads, "will enter the navy, and ask for nothing better! You will tell us stories, Willis, won't you?"
 - "To send you to sleep? I will promise that."

- "I think there will be some objection to that."
- "What objection, dear mother?"
- "The first place, one of those storms which lasts for days might suddenly arise some night, and you would be cut off from all communication with us."
 - "We could always be seen."
 - "How, Willis?"



Shark Island.

- "With the telescope, of course."
- "But you might die of starvation, and though the telescope might allow you to see our dinner from the distance, I very much doubt if that would satisfy your appetite."
- "At any rate we could guard against absolute starvation by taking some provisions over with us every night."
- "And could you also carry over my embraces, and distribute them every morning as you would rations?"

"For fear that the arrangement would make you anxious, Mrs. Muller, I will give it up," said Willis, as he rubbed his oilskin hat with his sleeve.

"Not at all," replied Mrs. Muller; "I will relinquish my objections. I see Miss Sophie is looking at me with wide open eyes, and she will never forgive me for annoying her Sweetheart."

"Since I have been making such eyes at you, madame, I must eat you up like the wolf did little Red Riding Hood;" and the little fairy rushed at Mrs. Muller and kissed her affectionately.

"Well, that is another point settled for the time being," said Mr. Muller.

"In Europe," said Mr. Woolston, "nothing lasts so well as a provisional arrangement."

"In Europe perhaps, but not here. To-morrow we will go and choose a tree at Falcon's Nest, and in less than eight days we shall have fitted you up a house like our own. We can then see each other, and talk from balcony to balcony."

"These little angels," said Mrs. Muller, alluding to the girls, will then be nearer their home—heaven."

"That castle of yours is somewhat more substantial than those I have built in Spain."

"Have you been in Spain, papa?"

"Everybody goes into the Spain I speak of more or less. It is the land of chimeras, Sophie."

"And of castanets," said Jack.

"So Sweetheart is to remain all by himself on the cape, like an exile."

"We are incapable of such ingratitude, Miss Sophie. After having experienced Willis's hospitality on Shark Island, he will surely accept ours at Falcon's Nest, so whether we live with him or he with us we will always love him and keep him company."

The pilot shook Fritz by the hand, and nearly dislocated his wrist.

"I should like to know," said Ernest, "why houses do not grow of themselves, like mushrooms."

"Ernest is very desirous that everything should be done for him."

"In the first place, my friend, no vegetable can spring without a seed to which it owes its existence. You must plant an acorr to have an oak. But there are, nevertheless, some uninhabited countries which are overrun with vegetation. This one, for example. The greater part of the seeds are not sown by man, nature has done the work. Some seeds have wings, so to speak, by means of which they are carried immense distances by the wind; others are enclosed in elastic coverings, from which they are projected with some force as soon as they touch the ground."

"Very good for them, father; but what about the seeds which have none of these advantages, and those which by their own weight are compelled to grow at the foot of the tree which produces them?"

"It is generally those which travel farthest"

"And by what means?"

"Considering you are a philosopher, my boy, you are very ignorant. Seeds that have no wings have to borrow them."

"Not from ants, I suppose?"

"No, but from the quail, the woodcock, the swallow, and a thousand other birds more generous, apparently, than the poor ant, to which the fable has given a reputation for avarice, which it will not easily lose. The birds carry the seeds, which are subsequently deposited by them on the cornices and openings of the rocks, in the trunks of trees, on the banks of rivers, and on the sea shore."

"I never thought of that before."

"There are a great many philosophers of your sort, who know a great deal more about the movement of the stars than about the productions of the earth."

"You are caught," said Jack.

"But there is still another sort. Those who understand nothing, and make game of the others."

"There, you are caught," said Ernest.

"It is by such means as we have indicated that a bird from the Moluccas has introduced nutmegs into these desert islands, notwithstanding the efforts of the Dutch, who destroyed the trees in every place where they could not keep the trade."

"I must return to my first idea. It ought to be sufficient to sow a brick to grow a wall."

"Or a wall to produce a house."

"Or a room to grow a castle."

"Or a drawing-room to get a palace."

"Those are four wishes worthy of the four stupid heads which gave them utterance. What do you think of those four great boys, Mr. Woolston?"

"I say, madame, that while they are about it they might as well wish that the martens and chinchillas would carry their furs in the shape of boas and muffs, and that turkeys would be born all ready stuffed, and that fish would come out of the river fried or au gratin."

"In this way," said Willis, "oxen would be nothing more than perambulating roast beef."

"Now, young ladies, what would you wish for?"

Miss Mary, having got over the age of dolls, was somewhat more reserved than her sister, so she very seldom joined in the conversation unless she was spoken to; she stopped her spinningwheel for a moment, and replied, smiling:

"I wish we could preserve our health as they preserve fruit, so that it might be always at the disposal of those who want it, then instead of being ill now my dear papa might be well and strong."

"Thank you for the intention, my dear child."

"And you, Miss Sophie?"

"I should like that all little girls could meet together, so that every papa and mamma who were away from their children might pick them out again." The pilot took out his handkerchief and pretended to blow his nose, for it was a principle with him that a sailor should never weep except when he was alone.

"Now, Willis, let us hear your wishes."

"I should like three things: that the canoes might grow up into three-masted vessels, that there be no storm to drive the *Unicorn* away, and that Miss Sophie was Queen of England."

"Agreed," cried Jack; and laying hold of a wreath of violets which the young lady had been making, he placed it on her head.

"You will make her conceited," said Mrs. Woolston.

"Do not scold me," said Sophie, as she took the wreath from her fair curls and placed it on her mother's grey head; "I abdicate in your favour, and I thank you very much, Sweetheart, for putting our family on the throne. Mary, you are now a princess."

"Thanks to you, though. Here is my sceptre," said Mary, as she brandished her spindle.

"A good reply, my dear. That is a woman's true sceptre, and her kingdom is her house."

"Our conversation," replied Mr. Muller, "may be likened to those tiny streams of water which issue from a small crevice in a rock, and become by degrees brooks and then rivers, and finally lose themselves in the ocean."

"It was Ernest who set us going."

"Well, it is time now to go out. It has been decreed that by the sweat of his brow man shall eat bread, and that each of his pleasures shall be the result of his industry. That is why sheep never become anything but legs of mutton and cutlets, and why palaces are nothing but earth until the industry and ability of man have transformed them."

"The cooked fish," continued Mr. Woolston, "recalls to me a reminiscence of my youthful days, by relating which I will ask permission to bring the meeting to a close."

"Yes, oh yes, papa, a story!"

"There was at Cambridge University at the time I was there

a young madcap fellow who, instead of studying and taking his natural rest, passed his days and nights in amusing himself, and blowing a horn, by which a most respectable old lady with whom he lodged was very much annoyed. That is one of the disagreeables which one has not to dread here."

"The police are too active."

"And the young men too well brought up," added Mrs. Woolston.

"Added to these," continued Mr. Woolston, "our student, who never studied, possessed an immense hound, while the old lady had a fat little dog; and every time these two animals met upon the stairs they gambolled and jumped about to their hearts' content, and very often the unfortunate pug was knocked bodily downstairs."

"Neither of our dogs would have done that."

"I believe that the dog possessed every virtue, and amongst others that of not ill-treating a weaker animal than himself; but he put forth more strength than in his character of dog he calculated upon."

"Perhaps, after all, he was very sorry for what he had done."

"At any rate, that view of the case was never clearly explained; however, the old lady complained so often that her ill-disposed lodger was invited by the landlord to go elsewhere. He cudgelled his brain to go out with a dash, and to leave behind a recollection worthy of him, when underneath his window he happened to catch sight of a bowl in which some inoffensive gold fish were swimming. To catch them, roll them in bread-crumbs, fry them, and put them back again was easy."

"I should like to have seen the old lady when she perceived the altered condition of the fish."

"One of them had escaped, and made the miracle still more startling."

"Poor little thing," said Miss Mary.

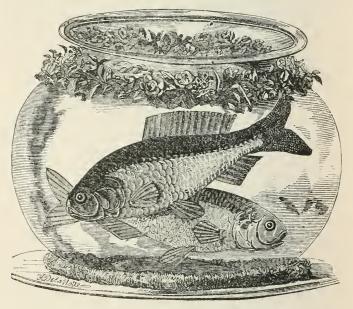
"There are elderly people unmarried who lavish on animals the affection which we all possess."

"That is a great mistake."

"Why so, Master Frank?"

"Are there not always plenty of poor people to look after and orphans to adopt?"

"Yes, but you must have means to do so; and you know fortune is very fickle, while you must be very poor indeed not to have a little bread to give away every day. However,



The Gold Fish.

admitting that is a mistake if carried to excess, the feeling must be respected." Frank nodded acquiescence, and Mr. Woolston continued: "The old lady of whom I am speaking was one of the latter class, and adored her gold fish. Her grief quite equalled her astonishment."

"But the loss could easily be repaired, surely!"

"You think so, Master Jack? Suppose you were to lose

Knips, could you replace him by the first monkey that came in your way?"

"That is very different, I have brought him up."

"It is exactly the same thing. She had had these fish for years, and watched them grow. She used to talk to them, had given each of them a name, and credited them with supernatural intelligence."

"Your student was a barbarian."

"By no means, my dear; he was the best-hearted fellow in the world, and quite upset by the old lady's misery he set about restoring her favourites to life."

"But by what fairy's wand could he do that?"

"Quite a crowd of people had assembled; but our student pushed them all aside, and taking the bowl gravely declared that the victims were not dead. 'No, madam,' he added, 'it is only a lethargy, a momentary transformation of which I have seen many examples. Air, repose, and diet, above all things diet, and they will be all right to-morrow.'"

"And did they believe it?"

'People willingly believe what they wish. Besides, they had only to wait four-and-twenty hours, and that was nothing. Add to that that the young man was studying medicine, and that he had cured the landlady's starling of a sore throat. He had only to procure a few live gold fish, scale the balcony at night, and to substitute them for the dead ones, and when next morning this doctor came to feel the pulses of his patients he found them all alive and the old lady in ecstasies."

"Did she not perceive any difference?"

"She remarked that one was paler, and another was thinner, but she was easily persuaded that was from their little attack. The issue of it was that the young man was praised up to the skies, and the old lady gave up half of her lodging to him rather than he should be disturbed. So he remained. From that time the best understanding existed between the lodgers. She never made any little delicacies without sending him a portion, and he

on his part kept perfectly quiet and never met the pug dog without feeding it with biscuits. That individual is now one of the most distinguished physicians in London, and always laughs when he thinks that his first patients were some gold fish and a starling."

It was now time to go to bed. After prayers Willis and the boys went away to pass their first night on Shark Island. They were worse off there than they would have been at Falcon's Nest



or Felsenheim; but novelty is to habit what cheerful youthfulness is to decrepit old age.

When the pinnace, furnished with mattresses and all necessaries for camping out pushed off, Jack cast a look of adieu to Sophie, and placed his finger on his lips as if to impose silence upon her.

- "Be quiet, Master Jack."
- ." What is it?" asked Mrs. Woolston.
- "A secret," she replied, skipping about. "I have a secret."
- "And with a young gentleman? It is very wrong, made-moiselle."

- "You shall know it to-morrow."
- 'But I wish to know it at once."
- "Well, mother, if you insist absolutely."
- "No, no, my dear, I will wait till to-morrow. Keep it till then, if you can."
- "Sophie," said Mary to her sister, when they were in bed, "you know that I have always shared with you the good things I have had."
 - "Yes, I know."
 - "Will you tell me your secret, then?"
 - "If you will promise to say nothing about it."
 - "I promise you."
 - "To nobody?"
 - "To nobody."
 - "Not even to the paroquet which Master Fritz has given you?"
 - "Not even to it."
 - "You are quite sure?"
 - "Certain."
- "Well, it is very possible that I may tell it to you in my sleep, so you must listen for it then."
 - "You selfish thing."
 - "You are too curious."

And like two delicate flowers which contract at the touch the sisters turned round to sleep, but they soon got over their little tiff and went to sleep as usual with their arms round each other, their lips united in a good-night kiss.





CHAPTER VI.

The Queen's Doll.—From Felsenheim to Falcon's Nest.—Troyes in Champagne.—Troy in Asia Minor.—An Unknown.

"HEAD-QUARTERS, SHARK ISLAND, "At daybreak.

"THE ADMIRAL COMMANDING THE FLEET IN SAFETY BAY TO
"HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND,
"AND IRELAND.

AY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,—The crews of the Canoe and the Pinnace are in good health, and at their full complement. The enemy is still at a distance, and we have had no engagement with him. Everybody behaved well. Mr. Midshipman Jack went to sleep on the carriage of a four-pound cannonade as Turenne did the

night before his first battle.

"The intention of the admiral is to take advantage of the daylight to push forward a reconnaisance eastward from Pearl Bay, which he has not yet explored. If your Majesty's privy council thinks this expedition ill-judged and of a nature to put an end to the good understanding which exists between your Majesty's Government and that of New Switzerland, a shot from the Felsenheim Battery

will recall him, otherwise the squadron will proceed to bring back a collar for your Majesty's doll."

"My doll!" exclaimed Sophie, feeling somewhat offended at this illusion in the mysterious despatch which she had read with all the gravity of a crowned head. "How did they know that I had a doll?"

"Is that your secret, then, my dear?"

"Yes, mamma. Master Jack took away a pigeon last night on purpose to play me this unkind trick."

"And what is worse than all, you entered into the conspiracy yourself. It is too bad, isn't it?"

"Yes, is it not?"

"Fancy speaking of a doll to a young lady of thirteen!"

"And a half, if you please, my dear."

"So just to punish the crew I shall fire a gun," said Mr. Muller, advancing as he spoke towards one of the six-pounders which flanked the domain by the Jackal river.

"Mercy is one of the most precious of the royal prerogatives," said Miss Sophie. "I shall pardon them, and I beg that you will in no way obstruct the proposed expedition."

"Very well, your majesty; but there is a reason of state which ought to have some weight. These gentlemen have overlooked our arrangement that we were to go and lay the first stone, or rather to cut the first branch of your majesty's aerial palace."

Admiral Willis and his officers, having obtained the signal agreed upon, started towards Falcon's Nest. They took with them a sledge laden with saws, hatchets, a bamboo ladder which had served them as a staircase to the first summer palace, and in fact, all necessaries for the projected operation.

Jack had already got some distance away, when Miss Sophie called him back; he hastened to her side.

"What are your majesty's wishes?" he said.

"If you should by chance meet my doll in company with your punchinello, I beg that you will give them my respects."

She curtsied low as she spoke, and turned her back upon them.

"I will not fail to do so, your majesty," replied Jack, as he ran away to join the others.

The ravages caused by the tempest were everywhere visible. Large chestnut trees had been torn down equally with the smaller shrubs.

"I wonder what the wind is?" said Frank.

"Any cause capable of destroying the equilibrium of the atmosphere," said Mr. Muller, "will produce wind."

"And what are its causes?"

"Oh, there are a thousand reasons—the influence of the sun, the inequality of the solar action according to the season and the climate, the formation and condensation of vapour, which absorbs caloric as it is formed, and disengages it as it passes into a liquid state."

"I never thought," said Willis, "that there was such a mystery underlying the wind. What sort of thing is it any way? That is the question."

"In a word, the different causes which can change the actual density of the air strata are sufficient to produce currents whose force and direction necessarily vary according to the impulse which is given them. Afterwards, the wind partakes of the nature of the region through which it passes."

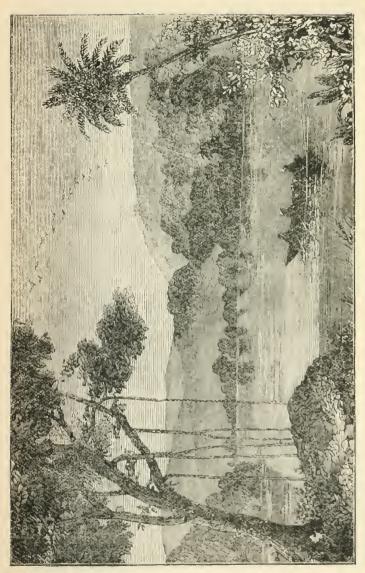
"It is like a person," said Frank, "who is judged by the places in which, and by the people amongst whom, he lives, without reference to his original extraction."

"There are warm winds and cold winds," said Mr. Muller, "dry winds and damp winds, the trade winds, for example."

"Ah! tell me something about them. But if you do not fall in with them from east to west it is dreadful. To get the full advantage of them, you ought to go from Peru to the Philippine Islands."

"Or from Mexico to China."

"Quite so. In that case one has nothing to do but allow



oneself to be blown along, there is no trimming of sails. The only manœuvres consist in going to sleep and smoking your pipe, and yet you can run four thousand leagues in two months.

"That is pretty quick."

"Ah! Master Ernest," said Willis, "that is nothing at all in comparison with one of your stars."

"The trade winds, as I was saying," continued Mr. Muller, "which blow over the west coast of Africa, carry with them a tremendous heat."

"That is only to be expected," said Frank, "since they come across the desert."

"Then can you tell me why this same current of air is so much cooler on the east coast of America?"

"Because it is cooled in crossing the ocean; so in Europe the north wind is cold because it comes from the icy regions. A similar effect is produced by the south wind from the other hemisphere."

'It is for this reason," said Ernest, "that the south, and above all, the south-west wind brings rain in France, because it carries with it the vapour from the Atlantic."

"But how can almanacs predict all these variations?"

"Almanacs do not prophesy, my friend. It is because there are and always will be people who wish to be deceived. There are, sometimes, meteorological phenomena which can be foreseen, but very seldom, and within very narrow limits."

"Nevertheless, predictions are frequently realized."

"It is all a chance, and naturally they must be right sometimes, but they are generally wrong. The rare instances of success are sufficient to inspire confidence in those weak minds who take no notice of failure, because they do not wish to remark them."

"What is the speed of the wind?"

"It varies very much. When it is scarcely felt, it travels about the rate of half a yard in a second; but a gale will travel nearly forty-five yards in a second, or about forty leagues an hour."

"I conclude from all that, that the wind is a plague which we could very well do without."

"That is a conclusion worthy of your head, my poor Jack. The wind re-establishes the equilibrium of temperature, and purifies the air. It sweeps away miasma, and the smoke from large towns. It waters certain countries by collecting clouds and rain. It condenses the sea vapour on the icy summits of mountains, and from thence causes rivers to flow and fertilize the land."

"And it is the cause of sailing ships and of pilots," added Willis.

"Also shipwrecks," said Jack.

"Besides all this, it transports the pollen from flower to flower, and carries seeds which sow themselves. It is useful to mankind in turning mills."

"It is also a simoon sometimes, and raises the sandstorm in the desert, and sometimes buries whole caravans. How can you defend it from that?"

"I am not here to plead its cause; but if we blame the wind sometimes for the ravages it causes, we must congratulate ourselves upon the blessings it brings with it. With regard to it, as with everything else in nature, the evil is felt comparatively seldom and in a limited area, while the benefits are universal and continuous."

At this moment Fritz as usual fired right and left; he sometimes succeeded in bringing down a bird, sometimes in hitting a plant, and frequently coming back with a new idea.

"Father," he said, "I chased the quail you saw into our cornfield; the ears are lying on the ground as if they had been rolled, but I am glad to say they are not destroyed or uprooted."

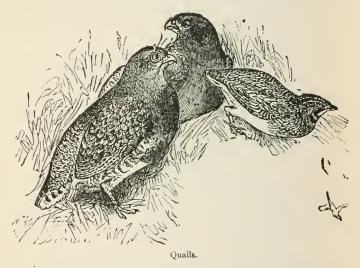
"There, Jack, do you not see how well the wind has behaved, and how courteously it conducts itself? If you had been charged with the safety of our crops, I bet you would have placed them on the tops of the highest trees."

"No doubt; but without experience every one would have done the same."

"Very likely; but in this, like everything else, we must admire the wisdom of Providence, and mistrust our own."

"Who would have thought of supporting the principal food of the human race to such a very slender support as a straw?"

"If our grain crops were produced as forests are, we should



have required centuries to have replaced them in the event of their being destroyed by war, hurricanes, or floods."

"That is quite true."

"The fruits of trees are also much more liable to decay than the seeds of grain; the latter carry their flowers in a spiky form, bristling with little spears which not only preserve them from marauders, but serve as shelter from the rain; besides, by the suppleness of their stalks, strengthened with knots at intervals and by the form of their leaves, these plants escape the violence of the wind."

"Like some wretched old tub, which will often escape when a good ship would go to the bottom."

"So," continued Mr. Muller, "their weakness is more useful to them than the strength of the trees; and they are re-sown and multiplied by the very gales which devastate the forest. If you add to that, in astonishing variety, their characteristics and flowers, you will see that they are better adapted than any other vegetable for universal sowing."

"It is, no doubt, for that reason that Homer, who characterises each country by the vegetable which is indigenous to it, only gives to the earth the title of 'Zeidoros,' or the 'Corn-bearer.'"

"There is another famous admiral for you, Willis."

"Was he really, Master Jack?"

"It was he who led the combined fleets of Agamemnon and Idomeneus and Diomedes, and others against Troy."

"That was not in my time, I suppose?" said Willis.

"How old are you?"

" Forty-seven."

"Ah! in that case it must have been before you entered the navy."

"I know very well that Troyes is in Champagne; but I did not know it was a seaport."

"The Troy of which I am speaking," said Willis, "is in Asia Minor."

"Capital of the Troad," added Ernest; "which is also known by the name of Ilium. The citadel was called Pergamos."

"Don't know it," said Willis.

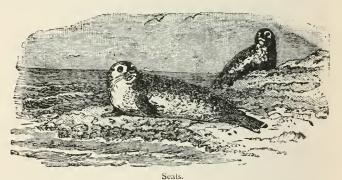
"Well, to return to our cereals," continued Mr. Muller, laughing; "nature has suited them for all climates. There is grain for hot climates and damp climates. For instance, the rice in Asia; and there is also, for cold and damp climates, a species of oats, which grows naturally, on the banks of the North American rivers, and from which many Indian tribes gather immense harvests."

"Providence has anticipated all our wants," said Frank.

"Other sorts of corn flourish best in very hot and dry climates, like the millet in Africa and the maize in Brazil. In Europe, wheat will accommodate itself in almost any soil, and you may remark that these cereals are sufficient for nearly all the wants of men."

"Yes," said Ernest; "with a straw he makes his coverlets, he warms himself, feeds his sheep and his cows and horses. With the grain he prepares some excellent beverages. Northern nations brew beer from it, and brandy."

"The Chinese also make a liquor from rice, as good as the best Spanish wine."



"Ah, they have not yet tasted our Felsenheim malaga."

"Then with the roasted outs one can make creams, and flavour

"Then with the roasted oats one can make creams, and flavour them with vanilla."

"We must make mamma try these," said Ernest; "that will please the young ladies."

"And perhaps you will condescend to eat a little of it,"

"And you also, Jack."

"Certainly; but that is no reason why I should put my greediness forward as an excuse to pay a compliment to the ladies."

"I know a vegetable," said the pilot,—"I mean an animal,—whose usefulness was much more universal than grain."

"Oh, nonsense."

"It is the seal, upon which the Esquimaux live, drink its blood—"

"I should not be very thirsty there," said Jack.

"The skin provides them with tents, boats, and clothing."

"Witness our cajack and swimming jackets," added Fritz.

"The fat gives them fuel and light, the muscles thread and cord, the entrails windows and curtains, the bones point their arrows and make harness for their sledges; in fact, it gives them all they require."

"Yes," said Ernest, "as far as they require; but they are not very civilized. They bury their sick alive, because they are afraid of dead bodies; and they are foolish enough to believe that the sun, moon, and stars were originally Greenlanders, who have gone to heaven."

Chatting in this manner they arrived at Falcon's Nest, where nobody had been for fifteen days.

Fritz was first up the tree; but scarcely had he reached our habitation when he rushed down again.

"Father," he said, in an agitated voice, "there is a freshly strewn litter of leaves up there. Some one must have been in our house; and besides, I cannot find a knife I left there when I was here before.'





CHAPTER VII.

The Search for the Unknown.—A Second Habitation in the Air.—Starboard and Larboard.—Vendetta.—Plot and Counterplot.

HICH of you has been here during the last few days?" asked Mr. Muller, when he had ascertained the correctness of Fritz's report.

"No one," replied the boys, unanimously.

"You must understand that this question is under the circumstances, a very serious one; so if there is any practical joke hidden under it speak out, and I will forgive you at once."

"No, really, father, we declare there is not."

Mr. Muller then recalled the mysterious occasional absences of Willis; but they were too short to admit of his travelling to Falcon's Nest and back; but he asked him in his turn if he could explain the riddle.

Willis knew no more than the others, and his word was as sacred as an oath.

"Unfortunately, there can be no mistake," continued Mr. Muller; "the traces are so very plain. This event is likely to cause us considerable alarm, only we must not be precipitate. Let us be calm."

"Had we not better search the island at once?" said Fritz.

"It is perhaps one of the shipwrecked crew of the Nelson."

"That is not probable, Willis. All the men knew the island was inhabited, so that any one of them, if wrecked, would have come to Felsenheim at once."

"Very likely the captain or Midshipman Dunsley would have come, Master Ernest; but the crew were always on board; and supposing a sailor had been cast ashore on the opposite side to that we inhabit, he would not have been able to find out his actual position in fifteen days."

"All the more reason why he would not expect to find a house in a fig tree."

"Without reckoning the light which was always burning on Shark Island."

"Nor the buildings all over the island, and the plantations he would meet with everywhere; for though my father has told us that a single seed, carried by a bird from one continent to another, will be sufficient to initiate a forest, plants do not fall from heaven in rows, and provided with props as ours are."

"Perhaps we have passed the man on the road; he may have spent the night here, and gone in the direction of Safety Bay."

"Perhaps it is a large monkey," said Jack, "who has come to play us a trick and to avenge a slaughter at Waldeck."

"No doubt," said Ernest, "that some big monkey has walked over here smoking his cigar, opened the door, went upstairs, and finding no bed prepared for him, made one for himself."

"He must have been greatly disappointed," added Fritz, "at not finding a night-cap or a pair of slippers."

"If that is the case," said Willis, "I know some Englishmen who are not so intelligent as the ape of New Switzerland."

"There is a large field for conjecture," said Mr. Muller; "but that need not prevent us acting vigorously. The first thing is to provide for the safety of the ladies. Mr. Woolston is an invalid, and his presence would not prevent them from being alarmed should a stranger appear."

"There are six of us here," said Willis. "The élite of the army.

We could divide ourselves into three parties, one of which could go to Felsenheim."

"That is right; let Fritz and Frank go back to the grotto."

"What shall we say, father?" asked the latter. "It will be no use to go back and frighten the ladies until something decisive is known."

"I agree with you, my son, and thank you for your idea. It is one of those that come from the heart and not from the head."

"We must find some excuse for their return," said Ernest.

"They must say it is too hot for work."

"As if it were not just as hot for them as for us. My dear Jack, that is a clever excuse, I must say."

"Might they not say they had forgotten something, an axe or handkerchief?"

"Or say that they had forgotten to shut the door when they came away, and have come back to do so. Better and better."

"We will say," said Fritz, "that when we got here we found that there were six pairs of arms to do on this occasion what my father did before with the assistance of three boys. That we were ashamed of ourselves, and as the storm had overturned some of the pillars of the gallery we had come back to make ourselves useful while you were here working at the new house."

"Very well; this, at any rate, will be a reasonable excuse."

"That is understood then. Fritz and Frank will return; Ernest and I will remain here to do the work, and to receive a friend or foe, whichever he may be; Willis and Jack can investigate the neighbourhood?"

"Shall we go by land or sea, Willis?"

"By land, Master Jack; for this time I will give you the lead, as I am not acquainted with these places."

"And there are sandbanks to be avoided."

"If, as I do not anticipate, anything has happened, or is likely to happen, at Felsenheim, you will fire a cannon, and we will immediately come to your assistance," said Mr. Muller. "In

case of alarm, Willis and Jack will fire a shot; Ernest and myself will do the same if we require assistance."

"We ought to have had two or three four-pounders amongst the provisions," said Jack.

"You are joking again, my boy; but it is as well to be prepared for any event, yet I hope that our precautions may prove superfluous. Take your guns, proceed with prudence, and keep together, and do not fire without taking good aim, and only when absolutely necessary, for this time it is not a question of game, but of our own safety."

The two parties then set off, one towards the Jackal bridge, the other towards Waldeck, and proceeded with great caution, examining the ground and bushes, seeking for any trace that might



The chosen tree.

corroborate their suspicions.

The army of observation then set to work.

The tree once chosen, about fifteen paces from the original habitation, Mr. Muller, as in the first instance, discharged an arrow to which a cord was fastened, and shot it so that the

twine fell over the strongest branches. The ladder was then attached to the cord and drawn up, it was then secured with nails.

That done, Ernest began to cut away the superfluous boughs, while Mr. Muller remained underneath, cutting an entrance into the trunk; but he did not forget little Frank's adventure, and assured himself first that there were no bees in the tree.

Now they remembered that the immense fig trees at Falcon's Nest were hollow, and supported chiefly by their bark, like the willows in Europe, at a certain stage of growth, so it was not difficult to construct a staircase in the trunk.

Nevertheless, it occupied some time, and Mr. Muller's idea was to hand over the old dwelling to the Woolstons, while he and his family occupied the new one until, at any rate, he had got it into such condition that it could be entered easily.

This work occupied a considerable portion of the day, and in the afternoon Willis's division returned.

- "We have met nobody," said the pilot.
- "But-we are on the track of Fritz's knife."
- "Will you have the kindness to explain?"
- "I mean, father, that we have found in the cocoa-nut wood two sugar canes which have been sucked completely dry."
 - "What does that prove?" said Ernest.
- "A philosopher," continued Jack, "would have passed these two poor canes by without taking the trouble to look at them a second time."
 - "While you-"
- "While I, the stupid and thoughtless one of the family,—for that is what I am usually called,—picked them up, examined them carefully, and I have discovered——"
 - "That they were sugar canes."
 - "In the first place, yes."
 - "That was certainly very clever."
 - "And afterwards that they had not been torn up, but cut."
 - "Is that all you discovered?"

- "Yes, my dear brother; and I leave it now to your learned head to make the deduction."
- "I may say," said the sailor, "that while we were going along, Master Jack on the larboard, and myself on the starboard——"
 - "What do you mean?"
 - "Master Jack on the left, and I on the right."
 - "Oh, very well."
- "And I had, so to speak, walked upon the canes without noticing them."
- "I quite believe it, Willis, that you are not a pilot for nothing, and that you are not at home on land. You amused yourself looking how the wind blew, to see if it was not necessary to strike top masts, or to take in a reef."
- "At any rate," said Mr. Muller, "this is a trace, and I declare that Jack has proved his wisdom."
 - "But the mystery is no less a mystery still."
 - "The solution of which may perhaps wait us at the grotto."

The two parties then started for Felsenheim, Jack peering into every place like a little dog.

- "If these bushes or plants could speak," said he, "we might get some information."
 - "Do you think plants have no sensibility?"
- "Well, I cannot say; perhaps they have some language of their own. You who know all living tongues, and perhaps others——"
 - "I wish I knew why you are always quizzing. It is not right."
- "Ernest is always chaffing me without reason, and I must reply. Fortunately our foils have buttons. So according to you, then, plants have nerves."
- "I do not see that they carry scent-bottles," said Willis, "as ladies do who are subject to 'nerves."
- "No," replied Ernest, "they have not nerves; but there are some plants, and a good many too, which, by their qualities, I ought almost to say by their intelligence, are deserving of a

higher place than others in the scale of creation. Do not sensitive plants contract when they are touched? The tulips open in fine weather, and shut up when the sun sets, or when it rains. Some plants, when placed on a table, will move of their own accord, particularly if they have been previously warmed by the hand. The heliotrope turns always towards the sun."

"The movements of a plant which has recently been discovered in the Carolina swamps, and which is called the 'flycatcher,' is still more curious; its round leaves, furnished with some sweet substance, are supplied with a multitude of extremely sensitive hairs, and as soon as the fly perches upon a leaf it contracts, seizes the unfortunate insect, squeezes it by degrees, and kills it."

"It must originally have come from Corsica, I should think," said Jack, "as it is so practised in the *Vendetta*."

"Nothing is so obstinate as a plant. Take one at its birth—that is to say, at the age when men and animals usually modify their instincts according to their education—and you will see that your will will give way to the plant."

"If you mean by that that the plant refuses to play the flute, or to learn trigonometry, when I wish it to do so, I am quite of

your opinion."

"No; but suppose you have planted the radicle, and the plantlet comes up topsy-turvy——"

"You are talking in riddles, my dear brother; please remember that you are addressing ordinary mortals."

"The root in the air, and the stem in the ground."

"That suits us better, does it not, Willis?"

"Yes, Master Jack."

"Well," continued Ernest, "the radicle will commence by pushing up the surface of the ground, while the plantlet will grow down."

"So far it does not conform to my revolutionary notions."

"It is all very well for you to find fault with my big words."

"I believe that a revolution consists in turning things upside down."

"But," continued Ernest, "you will see that nature will assert its rights. The radicle will turn back upon itself by degrees to regain its natural place in the ground, while the plant will grow upwards. Now is not that a proof of knowledge?"

"I see nothing more in it than obedience to the law of nature, and something analogous to the hand of a watch which goes round the dial mechanically."

"Well answered, Jack!" said Mr. Muller.

"Suppose now," continued Ernest, "that the earth which surrounds the plant is of two entirely different sorts, on one side damp, on the other dry. You will see that some of the roots which at first extended themselves indiscriminately will finish by returning to the damp rich soil."

"It is only a matter of going where they are best off," said Willis.

"And if the roots push forward to the point of causing you to think that they are extracting nourishment from the neighbouring plants, would you allow it?"

"I would dig a ditch to separate them."

"And you think that would be sufficient?"

"Unless your plants are provided with bridges and paths."

"Precisely, my dear fellow; they are; your plant laughs at you, upsets all your calculations, and drives its roots under the ditch. If you do one thing it will out-manœuvre you, and go on the other tack, and if it were a little better educated it would probably make a certain gesture——"

"Which consists in placing its thumb to its nose and spreading out its fingers," said Jack. "I understand."

"So you may remember it."

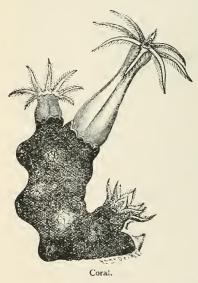
"Hold a wet sponge to one of these roots and it will immediately move towards it, and if you change the position of the sponge it will follow it."

"So," replied Mr. Muller, "you wish to prove from these

incontestable facts that plants have a certain sensibility. There is no doubt that at sunset they appear to die, and the next day they are as lively as ever, and we are thus obliged to credit them with a certain irritability similar to that which manifests itself in animals."

"For the future," said Jack, "I will take care not to tread upon a plant for fear of hurting it, and hearing it cry out."

"But, on the other hand, with that exception, all their func-



tions appear mechanical. We cause them to grow, and we destroy them without remarking anything analogous to those appearances which we observe in animals we bring up, wound, or kill."

"Nevertheless, the 'fly-catcher'—"

"Seizes in the same way every substance that touches its leaves, from which it is easy to conclude that the apparently spontaneous movements of the plant only result from this irritability."

"So," said Willis, "it is not a case of Vendetta as Master Jack believes."

"In fact, if plants possessed actual sensibility they would be animals."

"Equally, animals deprived of sensibility would only be plants."

"Quite so; and it is by almost insensible degrees that plants merge into animals. Take, for instance, the polyps, like the corals and sponges, for example, which live on the borderland between the two kingdoms and which for a long time were considered marine plants."

"And what else are they?" asked Willis.

"Insects which live in republic at the bottom of the sez, and build up an infinity of contiguous cells which they raise upon the foundations which they had previously laid."

"The rocks on the surface of the water which make navigation so dangerous, and which I have often cursed, are only insects then, after all."

"Just so, Willis."

"Oh! I say, Mr. Muller!"

"Believe it or not, as you like!"

"I really think we must put them with Master Ernest's stars, and Master Jack's admirals."

"Very well But to resume. There are many points of resemblance between plants and animals. The seed and the bud are to the latter what the egg and the embryo are to the former. The bud does not shoot out until it gets to a certain size, and is nourished by means of the fibres which unite it to the plant. The increase of plants is not only carried on by seed and graft, but also by cuttings. Animals are oviparous."

"Oviparous?" asked Willis.

"That is to say, they lay eggs; or viviparous, that is to say, their young are born alive. They also increase by budding, as in the case of the polyps."

"Confound those polyps," said Willis, laughing, "which capsize her Majesty's vessels."

"Also," continued Mr. Muller, "plants and animals are equally liable to disease, old age, and death."

"Nevertheless, father, if there are so many points of similarity, there must be as many differences."

"Well, you may mention them, Ernest."

"Without speaking of the faculty of feeling which we cannot deny to one, but which we cannot give to the others, the most remarkable difference consists in the power of locomotion, which plants do not possess."

"If we accept those which follow the track of sponges and make tunnels meither more nor less than Brunel."

"Besides, they are differently nourished. Plants are obliged to put up with whatever nourishment they can draw from the air or water. Animals, on the contrary, can choose their food."

"And the bill of fare is very varied."

"Considered with reference to their extent the two kingdoms also present great differences; from the whale to the mite the interval is much more considerable than that between the oak tree and the moss."

"Hullo! here is Miss Sophie running to meet us," said Willis.
"Perhaps there is something new at the grotto."

"Well," asked the child, "have you met them?"

"Ah!" said Mr. Muller, "those chatterers have not held their tongues. I am greatly surprised at Frank."

"We thought we should find them here," said Jack.

"Of whom are you speaking?"

"Well, of the shipwrecked sailors."

" What shipwrecked sailors?"

"The crew of the Unicorn."

"I hope the Unicorn is not wrecked."

"Well then, of whom are you speaking, Miss Sophie?"

"Of your punchinello and my doll, Mr. Jack."





CHAPTER VIII.

Inhabitants of the Moon.—Willis's Tête-à-tête with His Pipe—The Alarm.
—We have got Him.

OME days passed without anything remarkable occurring. Every morning the army divided itself into three brigades, one of which remained at Felsenheim under some pretext or other, while the other two went about exploring the country and finishing the house ir the tree.

The problematical guest, whether a savage, a demon, or a shipwrecked sailor, who thus put

all the inhabitants of New Switzerland in commotion, had returned to Falcon's Nest, where another bed of leaves had been mysteriously strewn upon the remains of the first. Besides this, and numerous cuts here and there with Fritz's knife, which had the appearance of being executed by an accomplice, there was nothing to found an opinion upon.

So improbable as the hypothesis had become, Willis, nevertheless, held to his opinion of the shipwreck. His only doubt was the quality of the sailor, a seaman, or an officer, and if the former, which of the crew. Ernest believed that it was an inhabitant of the moon who had fallen down to the earth. The brave Fritz grew very impatient, and wished to bring the thing

to a conclusion, even if it ended in blood. Frank looked up to heaven, and said, "Goodness only knows." Jack had given up the ape theory, and preferred the cannibal, and blamed this latter for not having come before when he and his brothers were more delicate eating. Mr. Muller, to use Madame de Sevigne's expression, had thrown his tongue to the dogs.

Every one as usual was seated in the kitchen in the evening, for it is as well to say, in passing, that Mrs. Muller, Mrs. Woolston, and her elder daughter undertook the cooking in turn. By these means the sameness of the cookery was done away with, and to the substantial Britannic cookery of Mrs. Woolston and her daughter would succeed Mrs. Muller's more cosmopolitan and picturesque style.

Miss Sophie also took her part in the domestic arrangements; but having displayed too great a partiality for tarts and puddings, they had obliged her to postpone further efforts until she was better acquainted with the principle *utile dulci*, which means that before dessert it is better to have something substantial.

One day, when Willis came back from his usual mysterious excursion, and Jack, who was always running hither and thither, came headlong in at full speed, and quite out of breath:

- "I have discovered him!" he cried.
- "What?"
- "The unknown."
- "Your punchinello."
- "The shipwreeked sailor."
- "The inhabitant of the moon."
- "No, I have found out Willis's secret."
- "You have been very wrong to play the spy."
- "I didn't do that, father; but I saw some smoke rising out of a bush, so I approached thinking it was on fire, but it was only a pipe."
 - "All by itself."
- "No, it was accompanied by Willis, who was so absorbed in his thoughts and pipe that he neither heard nor saw me."

"I can understand his not smoking here because of the ladies but why should he hide himself?"

"Ah!" said Mrs. Woolston, "you do not know the pilot yet; beneath his rough manner there is true delicacy of feeling; b is afraid to set your sons the example."

"What a good man he is."

"On board he was always smoking, and it is almost impossible for him to leave off, and he made a great sacrifice to give it up so much as he has done."

"Well, he need not sacrifice himself any longer; and as for the example——"

"Do not be afraid, father; it will not be necessary to establish a quarantine on our account."

"Besides," said Mrs. Muller, "the offender must give up kissing me."

"What a curious taste smoking is."

"So much the more strange, Mrs. Woolston, that it puts forth no attraction. As a rule, evil habits strew their paths with roses to hide the thorns; they take a great deal of trouble to hide their deformities, but in this case it is not so. It is necessary to conquer one's dislike to it at first, and to put up even with sickness."

"As a fact," said Mr. Woolston, "if, instead of being looked upon as a necessity for a man of the world, cigars and pipes are placed in the category with emetics and medicines, every one would bemoan his hard fate in having to submit to them."

"The only attraction that tobacco has for young people is that it is prohibited. Eve's apple remains for everlasting. It hangs on every tree. If I had the honour to be head master of a college I should no more think of preventing the boys from smoking than I should think of telling them not to inflict impositions upon themselves."

"Perhaps you would be right."

"But I would set up a great punishment pipe, at which each scholar should expiate his faults by a proportionate number of whiffs according to the gravity of his offence."

"Yes, indeed, it is only necessary to put things in a different light so as to change their value completely."

"I could tell you an anecdote of the youth of my 'Benjamin's.'"

"Well, in that case," said Miss Woolston, "I will go and feed the fowls."

"And I will go and water the flowers," said Sophie.

"I suppose there is some doll over there?" said Jack, laughing. "No, sir, there is no doll in the question," she replied, and then the two turtle-doves took their flight.

"Mary was about six years old," continued Mr. Woolston, "when for some slight illness or other I thought it necessary to apply a blister to her arm. Now the difficulty was for her to have it put on. After a moment's reflection, I called to her sister, and addressing the girls, I said: 'To-night I will put a blister upon whichever of you proves the wiser.' 'That will be I,' they both cried, as they flung their arms round my neck. 'Oh, mamma, how delightful! papa has promised us a blister this evening."

"That was refreshing innocence, indeed," said Mrs. Muller, laughing.

"The day passed in untiring efforts to be good. At intervals I heard them asking each other in a low voice, 'Have you ever seen a blister? How is it made? Is it good to cat?' And each of them looked at her arm as if to judge of the effect which this mysterious ornament would produce."

"How I should like to have seen them!"

"The evening came, and I naturally declared that the reward should be given to the elder. She jumped with joy. Sophie burst into tears. 'Don't cry,' said Mary; 'if we are good tomorrow, perhaps papa will give you one too. On which arm is it to go, papa?' said the happy invalid. I told her the ceremony could only take place when she was in bed. She laid down, the jewel was put on, she looked at it, found it charming, thanked me, and went to sleep as happy as a queen. Alas! like many queens her happiness was of short duration. Before long she

called her sister, and said, 'Sophie, would you like my blister?' 'Very much indeed; pray lend it to me! I will only keep it a moment.' I happened to hear her, and ran up, and as you may suppose prevented the transfer being made."

"Poor Sophie!"

"And then she began to sob, and cried out: 'Mary always gets everything, and I never get anything nice.'"

Next day as the pilot took up his hat to start away on his usual expedition Mr. Muller stopped him.

"Will you excuse my asking you, Willis, what important business takes you away from us every day about the same time?"

"I go for a walk," Mr. Muller.

"Ah!"

"My health requires that I should walk a few miles before dinner."

"No doubt it is a habit you contracted on board ship."

"On board—oh yes, that is to say—no, but——"

"Just so. By-the-by, Willis, I very often regret that you do not smoke," said Mrs. Woolston.

"Smoke!" exclaimed the sailor, pricking up his ears. "Why?"

"Because we are greatly troubled with mosquitoes here, and you might keep them away. But you used to smoke at sea, did you not?"

"Yes, madam; but my health-"

"Ah, bah!" said Mr. Woolston. "I thought you had a constitution of iron."

"I am pretty well; nothing to complain of at present."

"In that case, it is a precaution you ought to take for the future."

"That will not prevent my smoking, if the mosquitoes trouble the ladies. I am quite ready."

"Oh, but we must not incommode you, Willis."

"You need not be afraid of that."

"Well then, it only remains to see if there is a pipe in the colony."

"I rather think," said the pilot, as he felt in his pocket, "that there may be—yes, here is one."

"How things turn up when they are wanted. But you must understand that mosquitoes will not be stupefied unless you repeat the operation several times a day. So much the worse for your constitution."

"Sailors are like chimneys," said Willis; "they smoke when you wish, and very often when you do not."

As he turned round he saw Sophie, who in one hand was holding a light, and with the other offered him a supply of Maryland tobacco which had been formerly brought from the wreck.

Thenceforth the mosquitoes had no more determined enemy than Willis, and his constitution no longer required his daily walk before dinner.

For some time the pilot and the four boys passed the nights in a tent erected for the purpose, about half-way between the grotto and Jackal bridge.

The apparent motive for this arrangement was that they all had the opportunity to meet at daybreak for breakfast first, and afterwards to go to Falcon's Nest before the heat got too great. This meeting was difficult so long as they camped on Shark Island and the others at Felsenheim, for there was an arm of the sea to cross before they could join forces.

The real reason was, they wished to be within hail in case the stranger appeared and took a hostile attitude. We say the stranger because the traces did not positively indicate more than one, but there might have been several.

One night, when Fritz was half awake, he heard one of the dogs begin to growl. Black, as his name indicated, was a magnificent black dog of the Scotch breed, and the exclusive property of Miss Woolston. Fritz had made great friends with the animal, but the young lady was not at all jealous—on the contrary. Fritz seized his gun and hastened towards the bridge which they took care to lift every evening, and on the other

side of the stream he perceived a human figure running away on all fours.

He was joined by the pilot and his brothers, who ran up and questioned him closely. The dogs leaped about him. The



" He was joined by the Pilot and his Brothers."

poultry awoke and took part in the disturbance, and the alarm became general.

Fritz established order, imposed silence on all, and re-entered the tent.

"This time," he said, "I am determined to sift the matter to the bottom. Who will accompany me?"

"I will," exclaimed all four at once.

"These sudden expeditions do not require a large party. I will take Willis, so that if the stranger belongs to the *Unicorn* he will recognize him."

"You may as well take me," said Jack, "to serve as second course if he should turn out a cannibal."

"Very well, but no more. Ernest and Frank will remain here to explain matters to our parents if we do not return before they wake.'

"And what are we to say?"

"The truth. We are going directly to Falcon's Nest. If the stranger, trusting to our usual habit of sleeping all night, has taken up his abode there, we shall have the pleasure of waking him up again."

"That is, provided that he does not change his abode every night as Oliver Cromwell did, less for the purpose of deceiving his enemies than to quiet his uneasy feelings."

"We shall be no worse off; we shall have tried to preserve order, and the confidence and security of our colony, and if we do not succeed, we shall be able to say like Francis I. at Pavia, 'Everything is lost except honour.'"

A few minutes later their silent shadows glided stealthily along the road to Falcon's Nest. They heard nothing but the rustling of the leaves and the murmur of the seas, and those unknown tongues which the night and the wind speak. The trees were bathed in the moonlight, and appeared in the distance to mark out the route with giant forms. Their hearts beat loudly, not from fear, but that impatience and anxiety which precede decisive action.

When they reached the foot of their tree, Fritz opened the door carefully and resolutely mounted first. Jack and Willis followed him. They had already reached the top of the staircase, and had their hands upon the latch of the door which led into the sleeping apartment. We defy mice to have proceeded more stealthily than the party did on this occasion. They stopped and listened intently.

They could hear nothing. But Jack fired off a pistol. The report was quite sufficient to cause the unknown inhabitant of the room to leap to his feet.

Fritz sprang forward and, clasping him in his strong arms cried out, "This time, my friend, you do not escape us."





CHAPTER IX.

The Chimpanzee.—Nature's Harmonies.—Animalculæ.—A Groom.

telligent than the orang-outangs, to which they have been likened, but wrongly, and they resemble human beings more. They have much the same height, carriage, and strength; they always walk on their hind feet and carry their heads erect; they have no tails, they have calves to the legs, hair on

the nead, beard, and a face that the Duke of Roquelaine would have envied. Their hands and nails resemble the human pattern, and they are very quick to adopt the habits and manners of men."

M. Buffon mentions a chimpanzee which sat at table amongst the guests, and would behave exactly as they did: he helped himself to drink, wiped his lips with his napkin, to a cup of tea put in the sugar and milk, and let it get cool before he attempted to drink it. He offered his hand to the guests to be led away; and walked quite quietly with them. They were not a little surprised to see him lie down in a bed made for him, put his head on the pillow, tie his face up in a handkerchief, settle the bed clothes, and pretending to be ill, held out his pulse to the doctor to be felt.

He is very easily educated, and the chimpanzee may be made

an excellent servant, who would instantly obey sign or speech, while other apes would only obey the stick. He is clever and exact. He will wash glasses, wait at table, turn the spit, carry water, etc. To these qualities he adds the very rare ones of never gossiping about his master's affairs, and is very accommodating in the matter of wages, and never has a sweetheart.

It was a chimpanzee which in the darkness Fritz had addressed.

The illustrious stranger made no reply, and for very good reasons. Willis and Jack addressed him successively in English

and German, but with a like result.

But he did his best to free himself from Fritz's grasp, and they were at length obliged to bind him.

"If it had been one of our sailors," said Willis, "he would have recognized my voice before this."

They asked him who he was, whence he came, and begged him not to struggle so, for they meant him no harm. On the contrary, they assured him they were friends, and would give him all the assistance in their power.

"If all the inhabitants of his country are as talkative as he is, they must be an amusing set."

"Can't you walk, at least?" said Fritz, pushing the stranger before him.

The chimpanzee rolled over on the ground.

"It appears, my dear friend, that as you prefer to have your own way, we must wait till daylight."

An hour passed in exhortations as useless as polyglot. The stranger had condescended to empty a gourd full of grog; but that was all.

At length Willis, who now saw mosquitoes, even though they did not exist, attempted to smoke; but when he struck the tinder it did not clear, but only complicated, the situation. In effect, if this man was a beast, on the other hand the beast was a man, and M. Buffon was not present to assign the animal his proper place in the animal kingdom.

When they wished to tame the onagra they had bitten his

ear. In the case of the buffalo they had run a stick through his nostrils. Finally, to make the ostrich go, they had voked him between two animals, and whether he would or not, the victory remained with the lords of creation. But whether a low-class negro, or a high-class ape, there was too great an affinity between the hunters and their captive to admit of their treating him in a similar way. So they improvised a litter, and the chimpanzee made his entry into Felsenheim like a nabob in his palanquin.

Everybody was asleep, except Ernest and Frank.

As nature had not provided the new-comer with dress, they put him into a sailor's jacket and trousers. The result was he became a little tamer.

All the family had assembled for breakfast when the ape made his appearance under the gallery. Fritz and Jack, as masters of the ceremonics, led him solemnly forward. A cord was round his legs, so that he could not run away.

At his appearance the young ladies showed symptoms of flight. Mrs. Woolston, who was more accustomed to the society of drawing-rooms than that of savage life, exclaimed, "Great Heaven, what is this horrible creature?"

"That is the very question we have been asking for the last two hours," said Fritz, "and cannot get an answer."

"Does the thing talk?"

"Only to this extent," said Willis. "He has opened his mouth to admit my flask; since that he has not opened his lips."

The first astonishment over, Jack related in his usual original manner the various incidents of his expedition of which Fritz had been the instigator and hero. The ladies now learned for the first time all the doubts and fears which had hitherto been kept from them.

Mr. Muller, who had been attentively examining the new-comer, now pronounced him to be what we know already, an ape of the largest species, called by the Africans the wild man of the woods, and by naturalists, the jocks, or the chimpanzee.

"It is naturally very savage," added Mr. Muller; "but this one appears to me to have received some education."

In fact, the chimpanzee was seated very quietly, looking round, evidently in search of some absent face. Some nuts and fruit being given him, put him in excellent temper.

"I have no doubt" said Woolston, "that he has been on

board some ship that has been wrecked on these coasts, for I think I have read that this species is only found in West Africa, and in the islands adjacent."

"Do you recognize him, Willis, as having belonged to the Unicorn, as you did the plank the other day?"

" No. madam."

"That is very fortunate."

"We have not such birds as that on board British ships," said the pilot, drawing himself up.

Rather ashamed of their fears, the young



The Chimpanzee.

girls now approached slowly on tiptoe. Seeing that the animal had eaten nobody, they took refuge by their mother's side-a place of safety in all terrors and troubles for those under fifteen years of age.

"Look, papa," said Ernest, who was close to the chimpanzee,

and was feeling his head after having pretended to beg pardon for the liberty. "His head is exactly the same as ours. That is very humiliating."

"Yes, the tongue and all the organs of speech are exactly the same as in man, and yet these apes cannot speak. The head is exactly the same form and proportion as ours, and yet they have not intelligence. That is a very strong proof that material, however perfectly organized, cannot of itself produce speech or thought without the Divine assistance to give it life."

"Some authors have said that they have seen apes in America take advantage of the fires they had lighted to warm themselves. It is no doubt that apes like heat."

"That is nothing but instinct; but although a very simple thing to keep up a fire by throwing wood upon it none of the apes ever reach that degree of intelligence."

"But the grouse which we have frequently seen display his graces before the females, does he not give a proof of coquetry, and is not that coquetry something more than instinct?"

"You must allow me to believe, until the contrary is proved, that he does not display those graces to please the company, but because they would not remain if he did not do so."

"From the ape to the cock appears to me rather a sudden transition," said Jack.

"It is not so great as you think," said Mr. Woolston. "Those who take the trouble to study nature will soon perceive the admirable gradations between each species. There is no species which has not some characteristic of that which precedes or that which follows it."

"What analogy is there, for instance, between the oyster and the horse?"

"There is no very ostensible one, but they are not less links in a great chain. To give you only a few examples, take the polyp. This singular production which is sometimes taken for a plant, as one does not see it execute all the functions of life, is it not the connecting link between the animal and the vegetable kingdoms? Certain worms lead us up to insects. Those whose bodies are enclosed in shells lead us up to shell fish—shell fish lead us to fishes proper, besides which we find reptiles—reptiles touch the molluscs."

"Before you go any further," said Willis, "what is a molluse?"

"Naturalists designate by this name a class of animals without vertebræ, such as oysters, etc."

"All right, I can understand you, Mr. Woolston; but if I had asked Master Ernest or Master Jack they would have told me that molluscs were commodores or admirals."

"Reptiles, I was saying, touch the mollusc through the snail, and the fish by the eel and swimming serpents. The flying fish have an affinity with birds; the feet of the ostrich are something like those of the goat, and it runs rather than flies, thus linking the birds to the quadrupeds, which come back again to the fish through the whale family."

"Yes, but from them to man there is a tremendous distance."

"I confess that it would be difficult to trace, and I do not feel inclined to do so, but there is unity of design through creation. Each event is the result of a preceding cause, and in its turn becomes the cause of succeeding events, and this last but one of the class mammalia which end in man you have before you in the chimpanzee."

As if to bear witness to his affiliation to the human race, the ape took Mr. Woolston's straw hat and put it on his head.

"He is afraid of catching cold," said Jack, as he put a mat under the animal's feet.

"Now compare the manners of quadrupeds and those of birds," said Mr. Muller, "and you will find them harmonize at every step. The eagle is the counterpart of the lion; the vulture is the tiger; the kite, the buzzard, and the raven correspond to the hyænas, jackals, and wolves; the falcons and hawks are the dogs and foxes; the owl corresponds to the cat; cormorants and herons which live on fish are the beavers and exters. And

do not peacocks, fowls, and turkeys represent the oxen and other ruminating animals?"

Master Knips at this moment entered the gallery, and advanced with confidence towards the stranger; but the chimpanzee flew at him, and was only prevented by the cord from tearing his little brother to pieces. Knips jumped on Jack's back, and from that advantageous position he launched a series of grimaces at his enemy, for they were his only weapons. The enemy, whose ammunition did not fail, returned the fire with interest.

"It appears to me," said Mr. Woolston, "that apes are something like men; the great ones overpower the smaller."

"I will make them friends," said Jack; and taking Knip's paw, while Ernest seized that of the chimpanzee, the boys made the two antagonists shake hands, but would not vouch for the sincerity of the greeting.

"We ought to make them swear eternal friendship."

"Oh, chimpanzee," said Jack, speaking in the name of Knips, "I swear for the future to treat you with smiles and respect."

"Oh, Knips," replied Ernest, on behalf of the wild man of the woods, "I promise you, on my part, to be most kind, to share my nuts with you on every occasion—that is, to give you the shells and to keep the kernels; and I will promise not to kill you, unless I cannot help it."

"Now for the kiss of peace."

"I am afraid," said Ernest, "that, the friendship being so very new, they will bite each other instead of embracing."

"Do you wish any other proof," said Mr. Muller, when the incident was over, "that everything has been foreseen, weighed and calculated? It is necessary in desert countries, such as Arabia, to have an animal which can go without drinking for many days, and tread the burning sand; to this use Providence has assigned the camel; and to the Laplanders He has given an animal which answers all the purposes of the camel, and can cross the ice as rapidly as the latter can the sand. And so everywhere add to this the lovely colours, the furs, the goiden

plumage, the most capricious and diverse forms, but you will always find the primitive idea in each."

"Not to speak of an animal," said Ernest, "whose covering is a stone, which it rejects every year to take a new one; of an animal whose flesh is in its tail and feet, whose hair is in the interior of its chest, and whose stomach is in its head, and which every year receives a new one, the first use of which is to digest the old one."

The pilot began to whistle in his usual incredulous manner.

"But that is not all, Willis," continued Ernest. "The animal of which I speak carries its eggs in the interior of its body when they are not impregnated, and when they are it carries them under its tail. It has stones in its stomach; it cuts off its legs when they become inconvenient and replaces them with others; and its eyes are placed at the extremities of long mobile feelers."

"And do you expect me to believe there is such a thing as that?"

"Good gracious, Willis, do you mean to tell me you do not believe in crabs?"

"Crabs! is it true?"

"I will only refer to the six thousand three hundred and sixty-two eyes in a beetle, the sixteen thousand in a fly, and the thirty-four thousand six hundred and fifty in a butterfly."

"M. de Malezieu has seen, by means of a microscope, animals twenty-seven millions of times smaller than a midge. A single drop of water under this instrument looks like a lake inhabited by a multitude of human beings."

"So," continued Mr. Woolston, "it is not the great works of nature, or the most complex organization, that offers the greatest mystery to man. These atoms are, for him, problems which he would probably never be able to solve."

"I think we are getting a little out of our depth here," said Mrs. Muller. 'I beg that we may return to the chimpanzee by the shortest cut. What shall we do with him?"

"We must take care of him; to let him go would be to create

an everlasting source of defiance and uneasiness. To kill him would be almost homicide."

"Will you give me the animal?" said Willis. "I am alone, without—"

"Repeat that, if you please, Sweetheart!"

"No, Miss Sophie, I will not repeat it; it would be wrong."

"I thought so!"

"But I shall be very glad to have somebody to teach. When these gentlemen remain here, I will take him over to Shark Island to be my companion."

"He is yours, Willis; and what will you call him?"

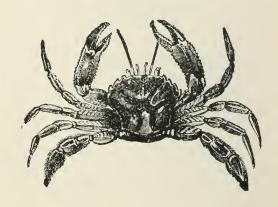
"Jocko."

"In a month from this time there will be no groom more intelligent than Mr. Jocko."

"That's a very good idea," said Mrs. Woolston; "for that is the one thing this island does not produce. But you will never make him complete."

"Why not?"

"Because you cannot get top boots!"





CHAPTER X

Excursion to Tranquebar, — Louis XI. and Cardinal Balue. — Seventeen Tigers for a Lady. — Emulation and Vanity.

S in a country when the enemy's retreat leaves the inhabitants in peace, so the colonists of New Switzerland breathed more freely after the capture of the chimpanzee.

The works at Falcon's Nest had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion, and the two families

like two flocks of swallows perched in opposite trees.

Mr. Woolston regained strength by degrees, and as neither he nor his family nor Willis had ever seen Prospect Hill or Waldeck a great excursion was planned to make them acquainted at the same time with the beauties of those places. The ladies prepared the provisions, and those enchanted sort of hampers in which men are so astonished to find so many indispensable things which they themselves would have forgotten to pack up.

Mr. Muller, Mr. Woolston, Ernest, and Frank directed all their faculties to the construction of a four-wheeled carriage. They could not pretend to supply an easy-going vehicle like an English carriage, but at least they could construct something better than a vegetable basket. That Ernest was quite at his wits' end may be understood when we say that Mr. Woolston, the engineer, had very great difficulty to succeed.

Fritz, Jack, and the pilot had gone away in advance to arrange the resting-places and overlook generally, so as to assure themselves that no apes or more ferocious animals had been committing any depredations. As they could not persuade Willis to ride he was obliged to go by water. Their return was to be the signal for a general departure, and the young ladies were specially delighted at the prospect.

At their age an excursion was always a pleasure. Frequently after a death in the family or the loss of means parents tear themselves away from their native land or from a house in which they have lived for years. They stifle their sighs, and unwillingly bid adieu to each tree and stone, landmarks mute enough yesterday, but eloquent to-day, of the associations they are about to sever, though the children may jump and laugh and sing in advance while the parents linger behind. The trunk would wish to multiply its roots, but the buds desire to expand, so for one party life is included in the words THE FUTURE, and for the others in the words THE PAST.

Now let us take advantage of our privileges as historians, and leave our guests at Falcon's Nest to go on board the pinnace.

"I wish very much," said Fritz, "that we could offer two beautiful bears' skins to Mr. and Mrs. Woolston, or a tiger and a leopard skin."

"I was thinking the same thing," said Jack.

"I wish you would think of something else," said Willis.

" Why so ?"

"Because you are in some degree under my charge, and I wish to restore you to your parents unharmed."

"Bah!" said Fritz. "So you think it is a very terrible thing to kill a tiger or two, because you have been accustomed to civilized life and shoot nothing but partridges or hares; but we are quite familiar with larger game."

"A pretty sort of game, indeed."

"I think that Willis is a bit of a coward after all."

"Gently, there, Master Jack; besides, I am already half-

hanged, and in that case, like everything else, it is the first step that counts."

"As a rule, yes; but in this case the first step is too equivocal for you to trouble your head about a second."

"I really do not mind it, and I would willingly do my part of the killing of a panther or a lion if——"

"If what?"

"If I knew in the first place how to kill, and in the second place, if I were not sure that your good mother would never forgive me if I permitted you to get into mischief."

"We need not tell her anything about it."

"Then where are you going to get the skins? From the furrier? No; we must think of some other fancy."

"This is not a fancy, Willis. It is really a necessity. What will happen during our camping



Leopard.

out on this excursion? Our parents will naturally offer our furs to the Woolstons, who will refuse; father will insist——"

"And, as all these discussions do end, Mrs. Woolston will finish by calling to Patrick to bring round her carriage."

"So," continued Fritz, "my mother will be deprived of a covering which is very necessary these cold nights."

"There is something in that," said the pilot.

"Now, Willis, you see it is impossible to give up our hunting."

"You think so; but, I imagine, before the skins can be prepared and tanned—"

"I know very well they will not be ready before our people

start, and that this time my mother anust put up with the loss. But this will not be the last expedition, and we should at least take care that she should not be deprived of it in future."

"Well, suppose I were to consent," said Willis, "there is another thing to think of."

"What is that?"

"Why, the leopards and the—what do you call them?—whose skins you are going to give away. That would be what I call selling the skins before you see the animals."

"Yes, you might look at it in that way; and you would be right if we had not a magnificent preserve of wild beasts all ready to kill us or to be killed."

"Will you kindly steer a point to the east, Willis, along Pearl Bay—that will do capitally. Picture to yourself a magnificent bay, bordered by a beautiful meadow interspersed with small clusters of trees. On the left a chain of rocks running from side to side, and separating the bay from the open sea; on the right a broad river, which we have called Saint John, because it is something like a river of that name in Florida. Beyond the river is an immense marsh or swamp."

"And beyond the swamp," said Jack, "is a forest of cedars, where, ornamented with some splendid teeth and claws, are all the skins you can possibly want."

"I did not expect such very agreeable neighbours."

"Thanks to our passage, which we have fortified, it is impossible for them to return our visits."

"That is all very well; but---"

"Now look here, Willis; you are hunting from morning till night for yourself, so for once let us do what we like."

"I hunt !-- I?"

"Most decidedly; there, you are going to charge your gun now!"

"And I am going to fire it," said the pilot, as he lighted his pipe; "there is a great difference, though. Mosquitoes bite people, but do not devour them."

"And you may add that their skins do not provide carpets; besides, Willis, if in consequence of your obstinacy my mother gets rheumatism, we shall blame you, of course."

"I would rather meet all the tigers in Bengal and all the lions of the Atlas than run such a risk. Besides, should anything happen to either of you I will remain in the forest until nothing remains of me but my hat, my cape, and my bones. By so doing I shall escape reproach in this world, and that will be as good a way as any other to rejoin Captain Littlestone."

When they arrived at Waldeck they found the farm in a very satisfactory condition. The apes had not forgotten their former punishment.

The fowls and sheep had increased tremendously. The marsh which had been sown with rice promised an abundant crop. The cotton trees, with their wool-like blossoms like the side-locks of our ancestors, and which Frank had once taken for snow, were in capital condition.

After a light lunch they returned by sea towards Prospect Hill.

"It is a great pity," said Willis, "that we have not Sir Edwards' cage here."

"To shut up the game in so that we might shoot it with more certainty?"

"On the contrary, to shut the hunter up in."

"Do you wish, then, to follow Louis XI.'s example, and treat us to the fate of Cardinal Balue?"

"I know nothing about Louis XI. or Cardinal Balue," said the pilot; "but the cage of which I speak is a no less excellent invention."

"We think you ought to give us the opportunity to judge for ourselves, Willis."

"Well, Sir Edwards was an Englishman who lived at Tranquebar, on the Coromandel coast; no one knew why."

"For the fun of the thing," said Jack; "like all Englishmen."

"At the same time a young widow was living there, and my countryman wished to marry her, but she subjected him every

day to some new caprice. Sometimes she would compel him to let his beard grow, sometimes to cut it off, to worship Brahma, to adopt the Indian manners, to wear the English dress coat, and a thousand other odd things."

"That is to say, the lady, not having a pet monkey, made the Englishman take its place."

"Very likely, Master Jack; nevertheless, he was a well educated man, and a gentleman."

"I very much doubt that."

"You are wrong. You are being brought up in a corner of the world, my young friends, and are naturally ignorant of such things. But when once a person has permitted himself to be overcome by a passion, it cannot be stifled at will, unless one is very energetic indeed; so it grows and increases like a spot of oil, and makes the man its most obedient slave, instead of his being its master."

"I cannot admit," said Fritz, "that any man of sense would condescend to play such a part."

"It has happened to the best of men, when their armour has not been forged by Heaven. Now this widow one day expressed a desire that Sir Edwards should kill two tigers with his own hand, and he found himself in a very embarrassing position."

"I believe so, unless he were used to them."

"However, as the hand of the young lady was to be the reward, and as he hoped to wed her in this world, and not in another, he wrote to a friend of his to ask his assistance."

"And his friend no doubt sent him two dead tigers."

"No, he did better than that; he caused an iron cage about fifteen feet square to be constructed, and put it on board a cutter, of which I was pilot. It was landed a short distance from Tranquebar, whence it was sent express to Sir Edwards."

"I am beginning to understand."

"He then attired himself in the red tunic and the buckskin breeches, without which no gentlemen ever went out shooting. He bade his friends a solemn adicu, took leave of the lady, who carelessly shook hands with him and bade him good luck, and set out on horseback to go forth to conquer a woman whose first proof of tenderness was to devote him to the mercies of a wild beast."

"In truth," said Jack, "he was doomed."

"When Sir Edwards arrived at the rendezvous in a valley surrounded by mountains, the caves in which were reported to be full of tigers, he found the crew of the cutter putting up the cage. The exterior was protected by a stout *chevau de frise*; inside it was a regular boudoir. The friend had done things well."

"He was something like a friend."

"On a round table were refreshments, iced water, lemons, and rum; the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Times* newspaper; some havannah eigars. There was a carpet, a sofa, a dressing-gown all ready; a piano, some new music; with an arm-rack on which were twenty-five rifles and twenty-five blunderbusses loaded to the muzzle. Nothing was wanting."

"But what is the Times ?"

"It is a newspaper about an acre in extent folded in four, containing advertisements and news. Well, what was I saying? Oh! At the time the moon rose, we left Sir Edwards in his room, and returned to the cutter, having thrown some pieces of raw meat in various directions."

"I should have expected quite an incursion of tigers."

"And you would have been right. At nightfall, attracted by the smell of blood, they descended into the plain, and then commenced one of those feasts which make you shudder to think of. As I am only a pilot eloquence is not my forte, else I would give you a thrilling description."

"Go ahead, Willis."

"At the first shot, the tigers all rushed at the cage, where they hoped to finish a meal so well begun. This was the signal, not for a chase, but for slaughter. Those who were not sla h by

the bullets impaled themselves on the *chevau de frise*, the slaughter did not cease till morning, when the band retired, leaving the dead behind them, and making the valley echo with their roaring."

"I suppose," said Fritz, "that all this time the amiable Hindoo widow was thinking whether mourning would suit her complexion, and whether she ought to wear it out of respect to the deceased."

"I do not know, but an hour afterwards the 'deceased' returned to Tranquebar perfectly well, while the cutter weighed anchor, and removed all traces of his visit, except the tigers. At midday a carriage drawn by four horses stopped before the widow's house, and a letter couched in the following terms was handed to her:

"'MADAME,—Herewith are seventeen tigers, which I have the honour to present to you, with my kind regards.

"'S. Edwards."

"What a surprise for a feeble and timid woman."

"Well, if in her country, as in London, fashionable ladies have tables whereon they place the little presents they receive she would have no want of ornaments for her rooms."

"You will easily understand," said Willis, "that the hunter became the lion and demi-god of Tranquebar. People disputed for his society, they followed him in his walks, they applauded him when he went to the theatre, and the more enthusiastic inhabitants wanted to raise a statue in his honour."

"In Rome or Sparta," said Fritz, "to obtain such an honour, you must have saved the country."

"It is the same nowadays. If you do a great thing, they cast you in bronze, disguised as Achilles about six yards high, on a pedestal of granite which is about twelve yards in height."

"Making a total of eighteen yards of celebrity," said Jack.

"The Hindoo widow," continued Willis, "was in the seventh heaven of delight. She was very anxious to exhibit to her

friends this slayer of tigers whom she expected to come blushing to her feet like any schoolboy. But the hero, not coming so quickly as she hoped to claim the reward of his victory, she decided to write him the most gracious and encouraging of scented notes."

- "He had then reached the summit of his hopes."
- "Man," said Willis, "is never sure that his wishes will be the same two days running. That tiger hunt, so easy as it appears to you, with all its horrible surroundings, those staring eyes, fierce muzzles, and horrible claws, within a few paces of him for a whole night, and all undergone to see a mouth smile upon him, and two black eyes regard him with favour, all this, I say, had somewhat changed the current of his love. He asked himself what was likely to happen after marriage, and what her wishes would then be if she had made such demands on him before. So he replied thus:
- "'I am happy, Madame, to receive your gracious expressions of sympathy. They are sufficient for me. I desire no more."
 - "Short and sweet," said Jack; "I agree with him."
- "Now, was I not right in regretting that we had not a cage like Sir Edwards'?"
- "Yes, my good Willis; but we have not got it, and as we know nobody who is likely to send us newspapers, music, and a supply of blunderbusses we must make up for it by our own skill and courage."

Fritz and Jack were quite right in depending on their own courage; in fact, they had become rather rash since the Woolstons had arrived; before that they had been content to meet any danger that presented itself: they never sought it. Now if we can apply to their chests the glass that Sterne speaks of, we shall see what passes within, and we shall find that an extravagant desire to make themselves remarked had taken possession of them, that they posed, to use the artist's term, before the new

audience which had come to them, and found that their praises were more to their liking than the approbation of their parents.

This was bad, but so it was. But although emulation and vanity are somewhat alike, they must not be mistaken one for the other. The former consists in making generous efforts to equal or surpass some one in a praiseworthy manner; the second is a sort of self-love which is induced by the wish to put one-self forward, and to purchase either respect, flattery, or admiration, no matter at what cost. The latter is a vice, the former a virtue.

But we must understand that Fritz and Jack were giving way to an impulse which they did not analyse, and they were very far from thinking that they were more anxious for success and glory than before.

As for Ernest and Frank, being of more quiet temperaments, the increase of the colony had no effect upon them. All four of them were a curious mixture of childishness and manliness; knowing what European youths were ignorant of, and ignorant of what they knew; of a frankness and naïveté which in Parisian society would have branded them as idiots, but possessed of a presence of mind in danger, and a promptness of action in overcoming obstacles, that would have astonished the young men of that city, whose principal merits consist in talking nonsense and tying their cravats correctly.

At Prospect Hill, as at Waldeck, everything was in perfect order. The rosy flowers of the capers, and the white blossoms of the tea plant, perfumed the air, and promised new riches. This was a charming halting place, at which nothing was wanting to welcome its illustrious visitors.

This point settled, the three conspirators at Willis's suggestion carried away a sheep and set sail towards the west.

None of the magnificent objects of nature, neither Nautilus Bay nor Pearl Bay, nor the attractive banks of the Saint John river had any power to turn our travellers aside.

As wise men who indulge in foolishness often become more

A PLAN.

foolish than other men, Willis appeared now to display even more ardour than his young companions. He was not contented to procure furs for Mr. and Mrs. Woolston, but he must also have them for the young ladies; and the seventeen tigers presented to the Hindoo lady were nothing to him.



They disembarked before nightfall at the spot where the boys and their father had once fought with the lions, and close to the grave of their brave dog.

"Now this is my plan," said Willis. "Let us cut up this

sheep, and place its limbs along the seacoast, as they strew oats to catch chickens."

"A reminiscence of Sir Edwards," said Jack.

"We will light a fire of vine shoots when the sun goes down, and retire to the pinnace, and he ready to slay any wild animals that make their appearance."

After some little opposition on the part of the brothers, who wished to conduct the war in a more open manner, the suggestion made by the pilot was adopted.





CHAPTER XL

On the Watch.—News of the Moon.—Narcotics.—Electric Clouds.—
Lightning Conductors.—The Return.



S is usually the case in tropical countries, a dark night followed the day. The watchfire lighted up the woods with its ruddy glare, and every bush looked like a monstrous beast approaching the strand. But no doubt there was some attraction elsewhere, for, as matter of fact, not

a single beast made its appearance.

The young people were watching steadily from the pinnace, while the dogs kept wagging their tails impatiently. Willis was at the prow, only distinguishable by a fiery eye which opened, or closed, as he smoked his pipe. The waves rippled alongside his boat, and rocked it like a cradle.

"This is always the way," said Jack; "if we wished to avoid wild beasts they would come in crowds. Now we want them they won't appear."

"Perhaps there are none."

"Say rather that they ought to be in thousands, since they breed very quickly and nobody has shot any. Just think of the few oxen the Spaniards left in San Domingo, and the whole island would not have supported their descendants if numbers had not been slaughtered."

"And still," added Fritz, "the bovine species is the slowest to breed; according to Vaubin's calculation the posterity of a single sow at the end of eleven years would be more than six millions of pigs."

"What a lot of hams there would be!"

"Just look at fish. In a single carp there are more than one hundred and sixty thousand eggs. In a sturgeon there are no less than one million four hundred and sixty-seven thousand eight hundred and fifty-six; while in codfish there have been found nine millions of eggs."

"You need not whistle so incredulously, Willis; my brother is perfectly right."

"And how do all those creatures live?"

"As a rule, the large ones eat the smaller. Animals always devour each other."

"Touching harmony," said Jack.

"Then to go further, plants are, as a general rule, more prolific than animals. Some trees can produce as many new trees as it has branches, roots, or even leaves."

"Thus, Willis, to encourage you in the war which you wage against the mosquitoes, I may tell you that there are stalks of tobacco which will produce forty thousand seeds. An elm twelve years old has sometimes five hundred thousand seeds."

"The wonderful proportion in the propagation of the two kingdoms," said Fritz, "demonstrates the supreme wisdom that rules the world. If the multiplication of vegetables was less considerable, fields, meadows, and gardens would be vast deserts, when only a few solitary plants would be seen. On the other hand, had Providence permitted animals to multiply as quickly as plants, the vegetable kingdom would not have sufficed for their wants, and many species would have disappeared from the earth."

"There is another thing I want to know," said Willis, "and that is how the earth continues to be large enough for the inhabitants, for each year there are more people,"

"Why, if death takes away ten people annually and twelve and thirteen are born; but it is just for that reason that the increase of the world is very great."

"That appears to me very curious, Master Fritz."

"Not at all, Willis. If the human race did not multiply continually, if the number of deaths exceeded the number of births, a country would be depopulated in a few centuries."

"That is right enough; but it seems to me that the contrary is nearer the mark."

"It would be so under ordinary circumstances—that is to say, if man only died of weakness or old age; but there are shipwrecks, epidemics, wars, and a number of other circumstances which reduce the annual disproportion between those that die and those that are born."

"Yes, that is right."

"I do not see any game yet," said the restless Jack.

Fritz continued without heeding him:

"So you may banish the fear of one of these days finding yourself too many in the world. Life will fail us before space. Three thousand millions of people, at least, could live on the earth at the same time, and do you know how many there are?"

"I never had the occasion to count them, Master Fritz."

"There are only eight hundred millions at most."

"A mere nothing," said Jack.

"Four hundred millions in Asia, sixty millions in Africa, forty in America, two hundred and thirty in Europe, and even in Oceania——"

"To which you may add the eleven inhabitants of New Switzerland."

"Well, after this approximate calculation, and the estimate we may make of the course of human life, in thirty-three years about a thousand millions of men would die; that is to say, thirty millions a year, or eighty-two thousand a day, three thousand four hundred every hour, sixty a minute, or one per second."

"Ne must look out for ourselves."

"Suppose the population increase to three thousand millions, the productions of the earth would increase in proportion, and we should still be in a perfect equilibrium."

"But you do not say anything about the inhabitants of the planets."

"What planets, Willis?"

"Well, I do not know; the moon, for instance."

"In the first place, the moon does not possess any atmosphere, so there cannot be on it either men, animals, nor vegetables such as exist on the earth, for they could not live without atmospheric air."

"That appears to me self-evident."

"It may perhaps be said that these pretended inhabitants of the moon live in different conditions from what we do. But that is merely a hypothesis, a fiction without any foundation whatever. You might just as well suppose inhabitants in a stone."

"This is an agreeable and productive sort of hunting," interrupted Jack, yawning from ear to ear, "the planets are as

empty as our game bag."

"As for the other planets," continued Fritz, "the great heat by which they are surrounded renders them incompatible with our organization. Mercury, for example, is so surrounded with solar fire, that lead would be melted, and water would be nothing but steam, or so hot as to scald those who drank it. Uranus, on the contrary, at the other extremity receives four hundred times less heat and light than we do, so there can be no water nor any liquid. I see my brother has gone to sleep."

"That is, nevertheless, very, very interesting," said Willis endeavouring to stifle a yawn which belied his words.

"There is the same difficulty about the comets, and one's imagination must be very great to people them. When they pass the perihelion——"

I do not understand that."

"That means, when they are nearest to the sun. When they pass the perihelion, as I said, they would undergo tremendous

heat, and in their greatest distance from this planet they would be frozen. The comet of 1680 only passed five thousand myriametres from the sun."

"Just near enough to say good-morning," said the pilot.

"So Newton calculated that it underwent a heat two thousand times greater than a fire, and that, under our atmospherical conditions, it would have taken fifty thousand years to cool."

"Fifty thousand years," said Willis, yawning again.

"So the position of the earth is the most convenient, if not the most absolutely convenient, for the human organization, from which I conclude——"

At this moment the miniature Vesuvius which Willis was holding in his mouth, and which for some time had given out sparks at rare intervals, was completely extinguished, and his heavy breathing gave evidence that he was fast asleep.

"From which I conclude," continued Fritz to himself, "that my speech has the properties of the poppy."

Then, overcome by fatigue, he also fell asleep.

* * * *

All of a sudden they were awakened by the loud barking of the dogs. They jumped up, and seized their weapons.

But it was too late. Day was breaking, and they could see enough to see that there was nothing to be seen. On the other hand, their mutton bait had entirely disappeared, and they had the satisfaction to feel they had given the inhabitants of the forest a free supper.

"They shall pay me out for that," said Jack.

"A few more chases like this," said Fritz, "and there will be a famine in the colony."

"This time it is the hunters who have been caught."

"Poor sheep! If Ernest were here he would write us an epitaph, as he did for the donkey and the dog. That would console him."

"I very much doubt it. Epitaphs are generally for the satisfaction of the living and not for the dead."

"Willis, I will relieve you from your functions of chief huntsman; and I declare that I will go on foot into the forest to revenge this insult."

"I accept my dismissal from the post of huntsman, Master Fritz; but I cannot give up that of admiral, and in this capacity I inform you that we are going to have a storm, and we shall scarcely have time to get back to Falcon's Nest before it bursts."

- "All the more reason why we should remain on land."
- "We have come for skins, and we must get skins."
- "Besides, we are two against one, and the majority ought to carry the vote, as in constitutional governments."
 - "Then you are quite decided?" asked Willis.
 - "Entirely, sir."
- "Then there is nothing that will make you alter your mind."
 - "Absolutely nothing."
 - "In that case let us hoist the sail and be off."
 - "Be off? how do you mean? We have decided to remain."
- "I know better than you," said the pilot. "You are brave boys; but I am sure you would not wish to let your mother think you were at sea in a storm."

"Let us go," said Fritz and Jack together.

Then he added, shaking his fist at the forest, which took no notice of him, by the way, "It will be all the same, we shall come back again, and lose nothing by waiting."

The sailor was not mistaken in his prophecy. Before they had gone very far they heard the grumbling of distant thunder.

At the first flash of lightning that he saw, Jack placed his finger on his pulse and began to count.

"Do you feel feverish?" asked Willis.

"No; I am feeling the pulse of the storm, twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-six. It is five miles away."

"Will you explain this to me?" said Willis.

"It is very simple. You remember that light travels so fast

that it is practically no time going from one side of the earth to the other."

"I thought Mr. Ernest was joking when we were looking for the flash from the *Unicorn*."

"He also told us that sound travels three hundred and forty yards in a second or thereabouts."

"I do not see what that has to do with your pulse."

"Wait a minute. When lightning flashes there is an electric spark, is there not?"

"To tell the truth, I never went up to see."

"Well, Newton, Franklin and other people have been up for you. Now, if the thunder reach us one second after the lightning, we know it has travelled three hundred and forty yards; if it reach us in twelve or thirteen seconds after, the distance travelled must have been twelve or thirteen times more. So it follows——"

"All that does not tell me why you felt your pulse."

"In the first place, am I not in good health? Well, then, when one is quite well the pulse beats about once a second, leaving out fractions, so that if one has not got a watch he has always got his pulse to replace it."

"I understand, Master Jack."

"You may congratulate yourself on having understood all that at once."

"But the phenomenon itself remains, and that I do not understand."

"You must first know, Willis, that the different layers of the atmosphere are always more or less electric."

" Ask him why, Willis?" said Fritz, laughing.

"Yeu think you will puzzle me," said Jack, "but you will not.

Mr. Woolston told me all about it the other day, so I am going to be a philosopher in my turn."

"We are all attention."

"The air, in consequence of the vapour which it contains, absorbs electricity from terrestrial bodies, and holds it; besides,

all chemical combinations produce electricity. The air, which is always more or less damp, absorbs it, and deposits it in the clouds. Now, my illustrious brother, your question is answered."

"You are going on so well, it would be a pity to stop you."

"So I will proceed. You must know that the clouds are such good friends that they like to share what they possess; so when a cloud charged with an excess of positive electricity meets another cloud in its natural condition it decomposes by the influence of the neutral fluid in the one it meets, attracts its negative electricity, and offers its own in exchange."

"But it only gives away what it does not want," said the pilot.
"I do not think that is very generous."

"It is unfortunately seldom that philanthropy goes any farther," said Fritz.

"Everybody is not like Willis," said Jack, "who in a princely way gives hyænas and tigers sheep for dinner. However, it is at that moment when this exchange takes place that a spark passes between the clouds, and this spark is the flash of lightning; the noise accompanying it is the thunder, which must not be confounded with the electric fluid."

"And when the thunder falls?"

"Thunder never falls; lightning strikes down, for it sometimes happens that instead of passing between two clouds it is exchanged between a cloud and the ground. In that case all objects in the way of the spark are struck."

"Not altogether, my dear brother. Lightning is often very capricious. The electric spark jumps from one object to another, passing by some, and attracted by others, attacking hard substances and disdaining the weaker bodies."

"I could reply that that only shows the grandeur of its mind; but I have other reasons to give you."

"So much the better, for I am only half satisfied with the first."

"Lightning has its preferences."

"Like everybody else," said Willis.

- "It is fond of metal."
- "Ah, ah! which does not like it, I expect."
- "If it enter a room it would follow the bell wires, go to see what time it was by your clock, and be impertinent enough to touch your money in your purse. So you see it does not care much for laws or policemen."
 - "I should call it a red republican," said Willis.
- "I do not know about that," said Jack; "but I have heard it said that a sword has been entirely melted by it, while the seabbard has not been damaged."
- "That the arm was submitted to effusion at its point or hilt, I can understand," said Fritz; "but you do not reflect upon one thing, and that is, supposing the lightning capable of such partiality, the scabbard could not have held the molten sword without being destroyed itself."
- "That is true; one believes a great many foolish things without giving themselves the trouble to investigate them. But according to this, men run no risk."
- "Excuse me," said Jack, "if you get between two conducting bodies the lightning will not ask you politely to step on one side; it will simply go through you, that's all."
- "How many ways there are of leaving the world," said the pilot, in a melancholy tone.
- "Besides," continued Jack, "everything that approaches the storm-clouds runs the risk of attracting the spark,—the larger objects more than small ones; that is why there always appear to be a deadly struggle between lightning and steeples."
 - "Like me and the mosquitoes," said Willis.
- "A German professor, one of my set," added the youth, laughing, "made a calculation in 1783, that in the space of thirty-three years she had known three hundred and eighty-six steeples struck by lightning, and one hundred and twenty-one ringers killed, without counting a considerable number hurt."
 - "There are now in England companies who insure against

these accidents. I should advise the ringers to profit by them: it would not cost much."

"People can insure themselves everywhere for a very trifling expense in every village on the Continent."

"And you say it costs nothing, Master Fritz?"

"Nothing but a little goodwill."

"After the steeples," said Jack, "big trees, such as poplars and pines, are struck. If you are ever caught in a storm in the country never go under a tree for shelter, and avoid even bushes if they are isolated. A whole forest is less dangerous than a single tree, or even a shrub."

"But," said Fritz, "man himself is high enough to attract the lightning, if he be in an open space by himself."

"Certainly; so it is a good thing in a thunderstorm to lie down on the ground."

"Suppose a whole company of soldiers were suddenly to lie down like that?"

"And why not?" said Fritz; "they kneel down quickly enough before the great ones of the earth."

"You must also guard against running away," said Jack, because the agitation of the air produced by your movements might draw the electricity into the current."

"But there are lightning conductors."

"But do you think every man can carry one on his hat? Lightning conductors can only be used on buildings, and then they only protect an extent calculated to twice their own length; that is why you see more than one on large buildings."

"And they keep the lightning away then?"

"On the contrary, they attract it."

"Then it is a sort of trap they set?"

"And into which, or rather on to which, it always falls. Franklin, of whom I have already spoken, was the first to suggest that a pointed bar of iron would act the same way as metallic points held to the electric machine, and would discharge the clouds."

"Good; your precautions would draw it down, it falls into the



A Lightning Storm.

snare you hold it on the point of your wire, and then what do you do with it?"

"Then, Willis, as I know its partiality for bell wires, I should attach a wire which would lead along the rod into some pit. The lightning glides down, down——"

"Like a cabin-boy descending the mast."

"Until it falls into the well, where I leave it in company with Truth."

With this theoretical storm a practical one now began to mingle just as the pinnace reached Falcon's Nest, where they were awaited with the greatest anxiety.

Sophie was the first to come bounding towards Willis, who came up talking with Jack.

"Ah, Sweetheart," she said, "Susan has been very anxious. Good-day, Master Jack."

"Good-day, Miss—Susan."

"If you did but know how frightened we have been."

"Have you been afraid?" said Jack.

"Certainly, when it is not about oneself. By-the-by, the chimpanzee---"

"Well?"

"But no, you shall hear later on. Mamma will say that I do not know how to hold my tongue."

Miss Mary, on her side, was petting Black, the dog, which received her with every demonstration of attachment. Black then returned towards Fritz, his second adopted master, who caressed it in his turn. Then the dog returned to his mistress, and so on.

This was the usual ceremony when the boys returned after any lengthened absence. The intelligent beast had taken on himself the functions of a dragoman.

"Ah, Mr. Muller," said Willis, "your sons are regular magazines of science, while I am only—"

"A brave and excellent man," said Mr. Muller, as he shook the pilot by the hand.



CHAPTER XII.

Man Proposes, but God Disposes.—Astronomy.—Painting.—Poetry.—The Kaffirs.—Woman's Employment.

REMENDOUS rain succeeded the storm. The rain being only the result of evaporation from the earth to the clouds, it will be readily understood that the former must perspire furiously to cause such tremendous storms.

This is the way of the world. People make up their minds to a journey for pleasure, for sunlight, open air; everything is ready for a picnic, every-

thing has been counted on but nature, and that is the very thing that intervenes.

I cannot tell what vague sadness, which is always the accompaniment of a sombre sky, had settled down upon the colony. The remembrance of the *Unicorn*, which had disappeared under happier circumstances, now returned with greater intensity than ever, and Willis had already twice given way to strong language.

The ladies of the family employed their time in mending stockings, the young people sewed most industriously, Jack sketched, and his brothers sought a sedative in that pharmacy of the soul which is called a library.

Mr. Woolston, who well understood the art of making the best of everything, undertook to disperse the general depression.

"Now, boys," he said, "you are growing up. Have none of you thought of choosing a profession?"

"To be an architect, engineer, superintendent, inspector, or commissioner of-what?" asked Fritz.

"To be the judge, the lawyer, for whom?" asked Jack. "For thieving apes, old parrots, or orphan jackals?"

"Well, not exactly; but to be of some use,—each one to have his own special end or aim, so as not to be a useless wheel in the domestic machine, so as not to enter life, as it were, by chance, and adrift; and not to 'peck about' or browse at the first place you come to, as a sparrow or a donkey."
"But we want a teacher."

"I confess that it may be impossible for you to follow up science very closely, so as to become a bachelor of arts or a doctor of divinity; but before you sow seed what do you do?"

"Turn up and prepare the ground."

"And if one has only a very small amount of seed to sow, we should say, 'Sow it all,' and take care of the harvest that we might sow the whole produce next season, and so on; by cconomising we should end by arriving at a full crop."

"Very well, Ernest; and what do you conclude from that?"

"I gather that we should also prepare ourselves for some profession by turning up the earth of our intelligence, as it were; that the doctor (in anticipation) should study botany and make such dissections as he was able; that the future barrister should, for want of better opportunity, compare the customs of the different peoples whose histories he can obtain. So that these first notions might facilitate the intelligence we should reflect upon social or human mysteries which escape us to-day because we do not possess the key; and so climbing from discovery to discovery, we should eventually, if not actually, reach the end-at any rate, arrive very near it-and no more would be necessary, so to speak, than academical sanction or the university degree to render it complete."

"And when you can reason this out so well, why do you go on as you do?"

"Because, as we have made up our minds to live and die here, we shall never see the fruit of our labour."

"I can answer by saying that science carries in itself sufficient enjoyment to indemnify you for all the trouble you have taken to acquire it. But, admitting that you never will return to Europe, do you forget that your determination was to colonize this country?

"You see that Providence did not will it."

"That which Providence does not will in one way He may in another. How do you know that the *Unicorn* will not take you away one of these days?"

"If so, it will be into the other world," said the pilot.

"In fact, Willis," said Jack, "that will be going into the other world, but not as you understand it."

"And, putting the *Unicorn* aside, how can you say that some unexpected accident will not give you to-morrow the very opportunity you lost some months ago; or, accepting the colonization view of the matter will there not soon be roads to mark out, farms to plan, illnesses to cure, disputes to settle?"

"Yes, quite so, Mr. Woolston"

"Well, then, let us admit the case. What are your wishes? Let us commence with Fritz."

The young man replied, after a few moments' hesitation, "I should like to be a successful general"

"Ah, that is a profession I did not think of."

"Alexander, Scipio, Pyrrhus, Timour, Gengis-Khan," continued Fritz, "they are men who have figured well in the world, and I should have no objection to follow in their footsteps."

"You forget that their footsteps are marked with tears, disasters, and slaughter."

"That is indispensable."

"Why so?"

"When one reproached a great captain with that he replied,

good naturedly, that 'You cannot make omelets without breaking eggs.'"

"So be it," replied Mr. Muller; "but if you had read the anecdote to the end, you would have seen that the officer's opponent replied, 'What is the use of so many omelets?'"

"Besides," continued Mr. Woolston, "that is not a regular career; it is a sort of excitement, a state of sharp fever of which one dies, or recovers from in a given time. Circumstances, war, ambition, the demon of glory may push a man into such a position; but he is not originally destined for it."

"But there are military schools."

"Military schools are not established, so far as I am aware, to form conquerors in the abstract. They are intended to educate men for the defence of their country."

"My poor Fritz," said Mrs. Muller, laughing, "I think when you have conquered a portion of the earth——"

"Or the whole earth," said Jack.

"You will place me in a position worthy your rank, and appoint me to mend your stockings!"

"But," continued Mr. Woolston, "one does not make war by oneself."

"You must have enemies," said Willis.

"There is no difficulty about that. When you have not got them you can make them. But you must have means—eggs, as the captain would say."

"All professions are in the same condition. There are no advocates without suitors, no doctors without patients."

"You must confess that the doctors and the suitors are less rare than millions of money and armies."

"Fritz, I am afraid your cavalry is disorganized and your foot soldiers dispersed," said Jack.

"If you wish absolutely to conquer, Master Fritz, I will engage to make an attempt to gain victories by speech. It is not so easy perhaps, but it is no less expensive. One need not call oneself Hannibal nor Cæsar, but Demosthenes, and be more formidable to Philip of Macedon than a whole army."

"Or Cicero," said Mr. Muller, "who preserved his country from the fury of Cataline."

"Or Peter the Hermit," added Frank, "who drew the whole of Europe through the Crusades."

"Or Bousset, Flechier, Massillon," added Mr. Woolston; "and one might dare to declare before the kings of the earth that God alone is great, even if they had, like Louis XIV., the sun for their crest with the presumptuous motto Nec pluribus impar."

"All those people," said Mr. Woolston, "seem to afford you a very good choice, and I advise you to be contented, Master Fritz."

"Without mentioning," said Jack, "that your tongue is well placed, and you will not have to suck pebbles to soften your palate as the Athenian orator did."

"It seems to me," retorted Fritz, "that you possess the same advantage. However, I will think about it."

He then kissed his mother on the forehead, and added, "Conqueror or conquered, giant or pigmy, Alexander or Little John, I will be a good son first of all."

His mother was happier for this kiss and this conclusion than if her son had placed at her feet the four thousand pairs of gold spurs which had been left on the battle-field of Courtrai in the year 1302.

"Now, Ernest, what is your ambition?"

"Mr. Woolston, I do not care for artillery, battalions, nor colours, nor brilliant chargers, nor all the other pleasures of war. Do you know when I am most happy?"

"Tell us now."

"It is when I am lying down in the evening beside the Jackal river."

"I was sure of it," cried Jack. "Ernest can only be thoroughly happy in a horizontal position."

"The sun," continued Ernest, without noticing the interruption, "sinks by degrees behind the forest in the horizon. Nature makes herself heard in a thousand harmonious voices; the breeze murmurs in the foliage, joyous bands of birds pursue each other from one thicket to another, sometimes skimming the crystal stream; here and there a fish rises, throwing up the water which falls again in pearly drops; the sea is murmuring in the distance. Then my thoughts rise from the earth to the pure blue of the firmament. It appears to me that I seek something I know not what, but what I will find; and I would not exchange the moss on which I am seated for the most beautiful throne in the world."

"Now, have you the assurance to call that a profession?" said Mr. Muller.

"I must say," added Mr. Woolston, "that the trees and the sun have their merits in their proper places; but I do not see very plainly from a social point of view of what use this negative profession would be."

"Do you think," said Ernest, "that Newton and Kepler ransacked the sky before the former discovered the laws of universal gravitation, and the other had determined the movement of the celestial bodies? Have you thought that Parmentier investigated a grey ball without any value in people's eyes, and which, nevertheless, one day received the name of this potatoe and nourished two generations of Europeans? Finally, what do you think of Jenner, seeking, with his head buried in his hands, the means to preserve the human race from the ravages of small-pox?"

"But the men you mention had a definite end in view."

"Jenner, yes; the others, no. They sought, they studied, they made calculations, compared notes, foreseeing surely that something would result, some new light would be revealed, some landmark the more between man and nature to indicate their persistence and labours; but very much embarrassed surely they would have been, if they had been obliged to give in advance a name to their future discoveries and to determine the issue."

"At that rate," said Jack, "one would not require any more serious occupation than frightening birds; and any lazy dreamer might give himself the airs of a benefactor in perspective of the human race."

"So long as my arm is ready to take my share of the work, and that I am ready to share your dangers, can it matter to you that in my leisure moments I prefer to think instead of going shooting?"

"When you have outdone Cassini, Descartes, or Huyghens, or some of those gentlemen, I hope that you will condescend to give us some information."

"I will not fail to do so."

"And that rash man, Herschel, who was permitted to invent the telescope, and deprived you of the glory of it."

"If I have not yet discovered a new star, I may, in charity, inform you that I have found out you will never be one."

"I hope not, their temperature is too unequal, they are always in extremes. Fritz explained that to us when we were — Where were we, Willis?"

"We were out hunting.

"Just so."

"Now, Master Jack, are you going to choose a profession?"

"You understand, Mr. Woolston, that with such illustrious brothers I ought not to degrade myself. Noblesse oblige. I wish to be a simple mortal, a man like every one else, as I have right. So I resolved to be perhaps a great composer, like Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven. Perhaps a painter, like Titian or Veronese. Perhaps a poet, like Homer, Virgil, Dante, Milton, or Racine.

"That is to say," said Mrs. Woolston, "that you intend to be a great something or another."

"I am determined, nevertheless, on reflection, as I wish to keep my eyes, I will except Homer and Milton, who were blind."

"And do you not know which Muse you will select?"

"I first thought of music, which must be a beautiful thing, I imagined, because it can make you cry, or groan, your heart beat,

or inspire you with courage, devotion, energy, and patriotism, and all by means of little black or white spots, ornamented with tails, crotchets and quavers, sharps and flats."

"And have you composed anything?"

"Not yet. I was going to do so, when it occurred to me that if I finished it, I should want an orchestra to play it."

"And not having that, you gave it up."

"Precisely so."

"Then I fell back upon poetry. Talk of poetry, Mrs. Woolston, you at once are on a level with kings; you survive them in history; you mount the Capitol; then you are crowned with laurels like a conqueror."

"What is the subject of the masterpiece you propose to write?"

"I wrote the first line, but I could not find a rhyme to finish the second."

"So you did no more and broke your lyre to pieces."

"I wished to prevent you," said Mr. Woolston, "from undertaking too many things at a time; but I see that things are clearing of themselves."

"If one were constantly repeating oneself, one would end by

being very tiresome."

"It is sometimes even more inspired the first time," added Mrs. Woolston.

"We now come to the painting, and I went into this headlong. Painting is far above music and poetry. In the first place it requires no intermediary nor interpreter between oneself and the public. What remains of the songs after a concert? Nothing but the memory. Which of your verses provokes admiration in the silence of your study? There is no incense there, and it is almost as if you have never known praise. But once you have given life to a canvas it is eternal."

"Eternal is not the term. The famous Last Supper of Leonardo da Vinci, frescoed in the Dominican refectory at Milan, is nothing but a mixed mass of colouring." "I reply that it is only a fresco; and, beside, when I use the word eternal it is relatively. A picture passes from one generation to another, which returns to dust before it has lost its freshness. No artist in his studio can gaze around without finding many memories, emotions, or friends. When the painter finds a spot that pleases him he can carry it with him, as it were, and have it always before him. Nature or man may alter the original, but his picture is imperishable, nothing changes there, the same butterfly rests upon the same flower, the same bee drinks honey from the blossoms."

"I really think," said Mrs. Woolston, "that you were wrong to stop writing poetry."

"Still," said Jack, "that is only a copy; what is that when you consider the painter as a creator? There it is in the past, as in the present, a picture of heroism, a glorious death, a touching incident; he has it there in his intimate life, in a more favoured hour than usual; he can give it life like Pygmalion and his statue. Who in the course of centuries would give a thought to Fritz's victories if I were not to paint them?"

"I agree with you," said Mr. Woolston, "that the arts which you have spoken are the sources of beautiful and legitimate emotions, but it will be prudent to cultivate them as auxiliaries only. They should come in as dessert to a more substantial education. For two or three works which go down to posterity there are thousands which die almost as soon as they are born."

"You will never guess what determined my decision. It was the discovery of the gum of a certain tree——"

"The myrica cerifera," said Ernest.

"The gum of this tree, from which varnish can be extracted. So I thought that I could use it, and it would be very foolish to let such an opportunity escape. I therefore set to work;" and he added, producing the sketch he had made, "Here it is, and it seems to me, that the eyes and nose want neither expression nor grace."

"Very good, Master Jack; your pictures will have an excellent effect with the tapestry which my daughters have promised your mother."

"How the colony is getting on. It possesses a general, a member of the Royal Academy, an astronomer—"

"And you, Frank, what will you do?"

"I," replied the young man, in his sympathetic voice,— I must play the part of the violet."

"It is hidden," said Mrs. Woolston; "but it scents the air."

"When I begin to dream I appear to inhabit a little village, a small white house, covered with trellis work. I wear an old cassock."

"Why old?" asked Sophie.

"Because I do not wish to renew it in the presence of so many poor people around me."

"After morning service, I go into my garden for a walk. I take two or three turns and look at my flowers. I then gather a few; then, if nobody calls on me for advice and assistance I go out to their assistance."

Mrs. Muller held out her hand to Frank, who raised it affectionately to his lips.

"Sometimes I mix with the labourers, and speak to them about the weather; sometimes I go to the artisan's house, and inquire about his family, speaking to them on religious topics, and while talking to the children convey instructions to the parents, and perhaps leave some little present behind me. I then visit a sick person, and heal the wounds which passion has left, giving him hope of heaven, and of pardon, and dispose him to submit with resignation to the decrees of Providence. If it should be a poor widow, who dies leaving a family, I appeal to my parishioners, and say they are afflicted in not having children, or in having lost those they had, here are some orphans for them to take care of. I say to another, you have only one child, and you could easily support a dozen, now you can have one more. I try to procure work for those who have none, I reconcile disputants, I

bring back the wanderers, and support the weak. Afterwards I go home, and have a friendly dispute with my old housekeeper who scolds me for being late for a frugal meal which I had forgotten. I think of the Bread of Life, which I must distribute on Sunday to my numerous flock. I have read all the great models, but I know that it is necessary to be brief, simple, and to the point. That it is not, after all, what one says, but what one hears that does the good, and to be short in the pulpit, I am a long time in the study. At ten o'clock I have prayers, and think over what I have done during the day,—not to congratulate myself on the good I have done, but to find out what I have omitted. I trust to be better the next day, and then go to sleep as quickly as possible, for I may be called up any time to attend the sick, or to pray with the despairing."

"But what is the matter with Mrs. Muller? Am I the cause of those tears?"

"You have unconsciously recalled my poor dear Richard, who we were about to join at the Cape."

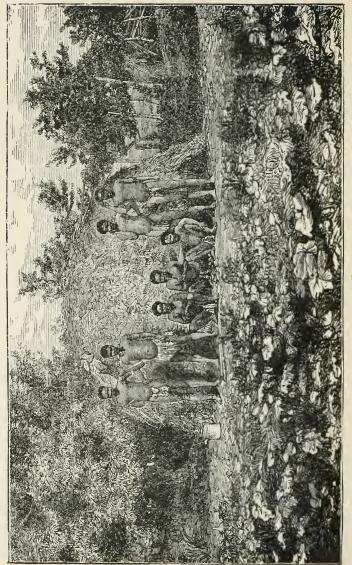
"If we have never spoken of him," said Mrs. Muller, "it is not from indifference, but from fear of awakening your grief."

"Mr. Richard is in orders then?"

"Yes, Master Frank; when he was very young he went out as missionary to Oregon; but, being wrecked at the Cape, he considered it a manifestation of Providence, and so he remained to convert the Kaffirs."

"Ah," said Willis, "those Kassirs! I was at the Cape a dozen years ago, and I went as far as Fort Wiltshire on the Krieskamma, the limit of the English colony. Those Kassirs are fine, strong fellows, hard as nails. The chiefs of the kraals or villages wear robes of leopard or panther skins, and pretend to have the power of producing rain. Eight oxen is the price of an ordinary female; those of the higher class cost twenty. When a Kassir is suspected of a crime, his tongue is touched seven times with a hot iron, and if it be not burnt he is declared innocent."

"I admire that 'if it be not burnt,'" said Jack. "But since



Kaffirs.

we are to choose our destinies, shall not these young ladies do the same?"

"There is only one destiny for a woman," said Mrs. Muller, "and she is too much occupied to think of adding anything to it, as it is too important to deviate from."

"Explain yourself, good mother."

"You are carried on her bosom, you are nourished by her, you are warmed by her, you are cradled on her knees, she guides your childish footsteps and educates you; she sacrifices herself that you may enjoy life; she shares your sorrows, watches over your sick pillow, soothes your infirmities, is the support of your old age, and renders up to your very last hour a care which certainly no other courage, devotion, or love could render. That is a woman's vocation, gentlemen."

"And confess," continued Mrs. Woolston, "that if we do not command armies, nor discover new planets, nor write poetry like the *Iliad* or *Paradise Lost*, nor an oratorio like the Creation, nor paint like Raphael, that we have, nevertheless, our own more modest scale of usefulness."

"I believe," said Fritz, "that men must be very useful indeed to do as much as the apparently least occupied woman."

"Not one of you," said Willis, "has thought of being a sailor.

That is the best profession of all on earth."

"On the sea, you mean," said Jack; "and as it is the only one you can exercise on that mad element, I willingly allow that it is the first—and the last."

"A profession," continued the pilot, "rendered illustrious by Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, by Captain Cook; and to which we owe the discovery of a new world."

"But," said Jack, "if it had never been discovered we should not be here."

"That is a conclusion which appears to me rather faulty. Do you mean to say, then, if it had not been discovered it would not exist?"

"It would have existed, no doubt, but only in conjecture; and

as we should never have embarked for it, we should not have been wrecked on the way."

"Quite so, but if we were not here we should be somewhere else, and might not be gainers by the change."

"Is there any one here who complains of his destiny?" added Fritz, as he looked around.

Willis was about to reply, but he found that the knot of his tie had come undone without his knowledge, and that Miss Sophie was about to replace it with a new bow, so he held his tongue.

It was now nearly bed time, and Miss Woolston was kneeling down to say the evening prayer when a thought struck her, and she bent towards her mother and said something in a low voice.

"Yes, my dear," replied Mrs. Woolston; then she added, "Will you put on your old cassock that you dream of, and undertake to repeat the prayers for us this evening? I am sure we shall gain by the exchange."

While conducting the Woolston family to the foot of their tree, Jack said to Miss Sophie, "I believe that Jocko has played some trick."

"Certainly; but has any one spoken to you about it?"

"Oh dear, no."

"You understand, then, that I wish you not to say anything about it either."

"Good-bye till to-morrow, Master Jack."





CHAPTER XIII.

Julian and Cecile.—A Catastrophe.—Martiage of the Doge with the Adriatic.—

Dante and Beatrice.—Laura and Petrarch.—Julian in a Balloon.—

Adventure of the Chimpanzee.

HE next day the sky was covered with thick leaden clouds and great black masses of vapour. Mr. Woolston without any preface began to tell them a story as follows:

"There were at Plymouth two families, who were very intimate. Mr. Forster had a daughter, and Mr. Philipson a son, whom their parents destined for each other from an early age. As

the children were equal in age, fortune, and other respects, all appeared to favour the intention of their parents. Up to the age of twelve Julian and Cecile had grown up together in their studies and in their games. They united their little savings, and in the country, in the summer, where the families had adjoining estates, they might have been seen together all day, and they were known in the whole district as the two little angels."

"What a pity there were no poor people there," said Miss Sophie, in a low voice.

- "Ah! yes," said Jack, with enthusiasm.
- "Why so?" said Mr. Woolston.
- "Because they might have relieved their wants," said Sophie.

"It is very consoling, my daughter, to think that there were not, for the children could only have given them very incomplete relief, and far below their needs."

Sophie pouted, and set her spinning wheel going at the rate of a hundred miles an hour.

"When Julian was twelve years old," continued Mr. Woolston, "he was sent to school, and Cecile was confided to the care of a governess who, with the assistance of Mrs. Forster, was intended to complete her education. But neither Greek nor Latin, nor impositions, nor games on the one part, nor music, needlework, and household employments on the other, in any way undermined the young people's affections. Absence, which will often weaken the strongest friendships, had no effect on the children's hearts. The holidays were looked forward to by both with the greatest impatience, and then how joyful they were, and what long talks they had! Cecile would tell her young associate gravely all that had passed, not of her new dress and jewellery, but of the pleasure she had had, and the tears which she had subdued, the little boys and girls she had played with, of the cold damp cottages she had cheered, of the good old people whose hearts she had rejoiced, and whose healths she had improved by means of those well-filled baskets covered with a white napkin.

"The children then resumed their morning excursions; and as Cecile had done her good deeds in the name of Julian, he reaped the results of the graceful actions of which he had only sown half. Then he grumbled and scolded her, but in that sort of way which is sweeter to hear than even approval, and the day before his departure he did not fail to avenge himself."

"How was that?"

"By distributing in his turn in Cecile's name all that he could possibly dispose of.

"Some years passed in this manner, and they promised to be the best assorted couple that Heaven had ever blessed. After his university career, Julian was turned out a man. She was a grown-up young lady. Just as their affection was about to be blessed by eternal bonds, a bankruptcy and the loss of a ship completely ruined Mr. Philipson."

"Oh," cried Fritz, "how unfortunate!"

"I do not see anything so very bad," said Miss Woolston.

"What do you mean, dear?"

"I mean, papa, that Cecile was still rich, and that fortune would not be such a secondary consideration if, by its caprices, it could ruin happiness as well as patrimonies."

"And you, Fritz?"

"Well, Mr. Woolston, while admitting that exception proves the rule, I think that it is always unfortunate that a man should owe his position to his wife, and to become, in a sense, her trotégé when he ought to be her protector."

"Very well said, my boy."

"If you take it thus, Mr. Fritz," said Miss Woolston, joining a thread which she had broken, on purpose to permit her to bend her head down so as to hide her blushes, "I will agree with you that it was a great pity."

"And if Cecile had been ruined instead of Julian?" asked Jack.

"It appears to me," said Sophie, "that we have quite as much right to be proud as you have."

"The most simple plan," said Willis, "would be to ruin both of them."

"Julian," continued Mr. Woolston, "was a young man of spirit; he was of the same opinion as Fritz, and without losing time in vain regrets he set out on a venture and embarked for India, having obtained a promise from Mr. Forster that his daughter should wait for him for two years."

"Two years!" exclaimed Miss Woolston; "that is very long, and yet it is very short."

"Two years passed, then a third, then a fourth, and nothing was heard of the absentee. Cecile was rich and had numerous suitors, but she refused them all."

"I do love that Cecile," said Sophie.

"Up to this time the family had rather approved than blamed her; but there is a medium in all things, and there are bounds, even to affections. They could not allow her to sacrifice her whole life for a shadow, and her parents insisted she should make a choice. She asked for one more year, and it was granted."

"Make haste back, make haste, Master Julian!" said Sophie.

"That is what you expose yourself to with your new world," said Jack to Willis. "You go there, but you do not come back again."

"Make him come back again, father, please."

"Well, if it were only a question of a story, my dear," said Mr. Woolston, "I should ask nothing better than to make a magnificent three-masted ship arrive at Plymouth, full of all kinds of riches, and commanded by Julian Philipson; but as I am relating facts, I am bound to them. Julian did not return."

"I should have gone into a convent," said Miss Woolston, timidly.

"Exaggeration, my dear, is the enemy of truth. It is all very well to say I will take the veil; sometimes it is a good thing, when the inclination is in that direction, but it is terrible to have to regret one hasty act all your life long."

"The hatchet sometimes flies off the handle," said Willis; but it is folly to throw away the handle too."

"But all Cecile's hopes and prayers were unavailing, and she accepted her destiny. She was soon affianced to the son of a very rich ship-owner."

"Very rich," repeated Fritz, disdainfully; "that is everything, I suppose?"

"Now one day, when the engaged couple were walking by the seaside——"

"Here he is," said Jack, "he is coming."

"The young man," said Mr. Woolston, "asked Cecile how she had got a certain ring she was wearing. Cecile said honestly that she had received it from an old friend, Mr. Julian Philipson, who had given it to her before leaving England.

"'Cecile,' said her fiance, 'far from blaming your constancy to Mr. Philipson, I honour you for it. I confess that it was one reason why I determined to ask for your hand, for I thought if you were so faithful to a simple promise you would be incapable of breaking your marriage vow.' 'And you are quite right,' said Cecile. 'But now that an eternal barrier separates the past from the future, it appears to me better that you should break off every tie that binds you to Julian.' As he spoke the young man gently drew the ring from her finger and threw it into the sea."

Miss Woolston furtively lifted the corner of the table-cloth to her eyes, and as there was no dust in the room we may take it for granted she wiped away a tear.

"Wherever you are," said Fritz, "poor Julian, I hope you will not think of coming back now. Wreck your vessel, like Ferdinand Cortez in Mexico; or if you have already embarked, pray that you may be shipwrecked on the way, which will be less terrible than the shipwreck of your hopes on shore."

"I am only a little girl," said Sophie; "but I know very well what I should have told that gentleman."

"What should you have said, dear?"

"I should have told him that I was not the Doge of Venice, and had no intention to marry the Adriatic."

" How do you know that?"

"I read about it yesterday. It must have been a beautiful sight."

"Little girl," said Mr. Woolston, laughing, "you may tell us about it."

"After your story is finished, papa."

"Oh, I have plenty of time for that."

"But then, Master Jack, who laughs at everybody, is sure to laugh at me."

"Master Jack," replied that worthy, "is scarcely well dressed in silken tights and buckled shoes, with powdered hair, like a young dandy. It is even true that his attire is very much neglected; but that is no reason why he should be rude to ladies, and above all, princesses."

- "There, you see he is beginning already."
- "Let him say what he likes. Go on."
- "Well," began Sophie, "you know that for a long time there had been disputes between the States of Ancona, Bologna, and Venice on the subject of the sovereignty of the Adriatic, which each of them claimed."
 - "As if water did not belong to everybody," said Ernest.
- "Some day you will see some potentate or other claim the sovereignty of the air."
- "Venice being the conqueror," continued Sophie, "I think about 1275 or 1276 the Venetians resolved to celebrate the anniversary of their victory by a grand ceremony. For this purpose they constructed a splendid galley, covered with precious stones, which they named the *Bucentaria*. The patriarch, the doge, and all the senators went on board this ship and sailed some distance out to sea. There, amid the chanting of hymns and before all the ambassadors, who, by their presence, recognized this act of appropriation, the doge advanced in state to the poop and married the sea."
 - "What an idea," said Willis.
- "And married the sea by casting a gold ring into it and saying, 'We marry you our sea to mark the perpetual and veritable rule which we bear over you.'"
 - "Well, now about Cecile."
- "The marriage took place next morning," continued Mr. Woolston; "the bride and bridegroom were at table with their friends when a stranger was announced, who wished to speak to Mr. Forster immediately. This was Julian, who had only just disembarked, and who had at once come to assure himself whether in exchange for the fortune he had acquired he had not lost his happiness."
- "Why did he remain away five years without writing?" said Mrs. Woolston.
- "He had written frequently, but somehow or other the letters never reached their destination."

"There are some people who think that it is more merciful to kill a patient with needles than with a hatchet. Such people will lead you in and out by all sorts of devious channels, and make you die a thousand deaths instead of one. But Mr. Forster was not one of these. He drew Julian aside, and told him at once that Cecile had been married that morning."

"I would rather a chimney-pot had fallen on my head," said Willis.

"That Julian was a man his previous conduct had already shown. He hid his face in his hands to collect his scattered thoughts; then extending his hand to Mr. Forster he said, 'I will be her brother.'"

"Now, that is what I call a brave fellow!"

"'But,' he added, 'since we shall probably live in the same world; also considering the ceremony has only taken place to-day, I beg to be admitted amongst your guests.'

"Would it be necessary to refuse this boon to any unhappy man, all whose hopes had been wrecked? Mr. Forster did not think so. He took Julian by the hand, and as nobody knew him because of his altered appearance he introduced him as Mr. Julian Philipson, who has just arrived from Sumatra, and who, instead of a wife, has courageously made up his mind to meet a sister."

"I am quite sure," said Miss Woolston, "that Cecile did not require to hear his name to recognize him."

"Julian advanced towards the newly married couple, and congratulated them in a modest and firm tone. He then sat down next to the bride."

"I should have wished to have been a thousand feet under ground," said Miss Woolston.

"Why so? She had done nothing to be ashamed of. She had waited more than the prescribed period."

"It is unfortunate," said Mr. Muller, "that young people carry in their heads very apocryphal instances of extreme fidelity which are met with here and there in history. Dante and Beatrice, Petrarch and Laura, Eleanor and Tasso, appear to them models of sentiment, and upon whose footsteps they think it fine to walk. These young people do not understand that such men desired the prestige of originality; that they wrapped themselves up in a passion as they would in a cloak; that they have not submitted to the law of heart, but their heart has submitted to the law of their imagination, and that almost every one of them have expiated by the unhappiness of their whole life for the eccentricity of their imagination."

"Mr. Muller does not wish to under-rate that fidelity which is consecrated by the law of God," said Mrs. Woolston.

" Of course not," he replied.

"They were about to serve a magnificent turbot," continued Mr. Woolston; "and the butler was just cutting it when he found——"

"I know," cried all the young people.

"I doubt it!"

"The ring! the ring!"

"He found merely a bone extending from head to tail."

"Ah, Mr. Woolston!"

"If the ring had been found there," said he, laughing, "I should have no reason to hide it from you. All went well till dessert, and Mr. Forster was congratulating himself on everything having passed off so well, when Julian, taking advantage of a moment when no one was looking at him, drew a dagger from his pocket—"

"I shall go away," said Sophie, rising.

"Stay where you are, you little goose."

"Well, then, I shall stop my ears."

"It was an extremely elegant poignard, more of a toy than a weapon; and as they had forgotten to give him a knife he began to peel a pear with it."

"Is it over?" asked Sophie, unstopping one ear.

"Alas! yes," said Jack; "he cut it into quarters."

"The monster!"

"After the dinner came the ball."

"The ball! How was that? Was he not arrested, condemned, and executed?"

"Pooh!" said Jack, "this action was perhaps not so atrocious as it appeared."

"How do you mean?"

"It ought to be stated that he had arrived from a somewhat savage country, so he is excusable to a certain point in having contracted its habits. Besides, for a long time these crimes which appear so horrible to us to-day were looked upon as simple peccadilloes. In France, even that supreme country for police, they had a law in virtue of which all crime was valued and could be atoned for by money: so much for a murder, so much for arson. The great point was to consult the tariff in advance, so as not to go beyond your means. A rich man could commit murder as often as he chose."

"Ah! Master Jack, I can never believe that."

"At length," continued Mr. Woolston, "the day began to dawn. Every one went home, and Julian walked down towards the sea and threw himself in."

"So much the better," cried Sophie. "He did himsel justice."

"It was a beautiful sunny morning, the sea was perfectly calm. He took a bath, went home, laid down, and slept peacefully."

"The wretch! to sleep quietly after having cut the friend of his infancy into quarters. I will not deny that I was interested in him at first, but now I hate him. I hope Providence will punish him."

"It is almost certain," continued Mr. Woolston, "that if Julian had been left to himself he would never have behaved with so much moderation."

"That's good. Moderation, indeed!"

"But he had a number of friends who persuaded him he had been hadly treated, and, his self-love coming to his aid, he thought it good taste to affect a disgust for all things, and a ridiculous prostration which he manifested in a most extravagant manner."

"Bad advice," said Willis, "will overturn the best resolutions, as a squall may upset a good ship."

"The first absurd idea which he conceived was to buy an unseaworthy boat, and when a storm came on to go out in it. If any one now introduced to him a hazardous speculation he immediately took part in it. If a tamer of wild beasts, or an aëronaut, arrived at Plymouth he went into the tiger's cage, or up in a balloon."

"Talking of aëronauts," said Willis, "I have often seen balloons, but never understood them."

"A balloon is an artificial cloud, whose ascending force depends on the fact that the volume of air it displaces is heavier than itself."

"Very good, Master Ernest; but how can the aëronaut, the machine, and the air, which the balloon contains, weigh less than the air itself?"

"Because they substitute hydrogen gas for atmospheric air, and the gas is forty and a half times the lighter!"

"So it ascends like an empty bottle in the water?"

"Something of that kind. As it is necessary that the gas should not escape, an envelope of taffeta covered with indiarubber is used. In proportion as the balloon ascends the gas inside expands, because as it rises the outside air being lighter presses less on it; so the balloon is never quite filled when it starts, and fills itself as it ascends."

"But where does it stop?"

"When it arrives in air whose weight is equal to its own it stops of its own accord."

"That sometimes might take it too high."

"So, for this reason, the balloon is always fitted with a safety valve, by means of which a certain quantity of gas may be replaced by an equal volume of air. The balloon gets heavier and descends."

"Then if they fall on a housetop or something of that kind, the balloonists are killed?"

"If not careful; but when the aëronaut is nearing earth he looks out for a convenient landing-place, and comes down slowly."

"The first experimenter must have been very curious."



The Montgolfier Balloon,

"That was Montgolfier, in 1782, then Pilatre de Rozier, and D'Arlendes, made the first attempts."

"My dear father," said Ernest, "I must claim priority for Icarus, Dædalus, and Phaeton."

"I agree."

"M. Gay Lussac, a French philosopher," continued Mr

Woolston, "in 1804 went up to a height of nearly seven thousand mètres."

"And was he not taken ill?" said Willis.

"He determined that the influence of the earth upon the magnetic needle diminished with the distance, and that the extreme dryness of the air crumpled up parchments as if they had been scorched; he was quite deaf, and could feel no air."

"Quite so," added Ernest; "since he was going with the wind."

"Let us resume," said Jack. "The ladies have silk dresses which they will no doubt give us—there is plenty of indiarubber about; hydrogen gas is only inflammable air. What is there to prevent us from taking Ernest's carte-de-visite to the stars of his acquaintance?"

"Unfortunately," replied Ernest, "no means of directing the course of a balloon have been discovered, and you are very likely to land at *Sirius*, with which I am not on good terms, instead of going to *Cassiopæa*, my very good friend."

"And did Julian escape unhurt, after all?"

"Not only was he invulnerable, but all his rash speculations succeeded. It is enough that he took part in anything to make it pay."

"His victim watched over him, no doubt," said Sophie.

"The cholera at that time was devastating Europe, and he put himself in its way with such persistence that it was not at all unusual to read in the papers that Mr. Philipson and the Asiatic plague had arrived in the town together."

"The lunatic."

"If Cecile had been as wonderful as some people are, fond of smoking, a good swimmer, a bold rider, having her box at all the theatres, she would without doubt have plumed herself on thus pervading Julian's life."

"She was not dead, then?" said Sophie.

"It appears the wound was not mortal," said Mr. Woolston.

"The wound! you call being cut into quarters a wound!"

"There are some people," said Jack, "so wonderfully made that they can come together again after they are cut. Take the polyp. If you cut it its whole length, the right side will cross and over, and make the left side which is wanting. The left side will re-produce a right side, and there will thus become two polyps. If you cut it across the head portion will take a tail, and the tail portion will produce a head."

"You may add," said Ernest, "as we are upon the subject, that when two polyps fight, and one swallows the other, the one in the antagonist's stomach lives just as if nothing had happened."

"And does that last?"

"Until the swallowed feels himself uncomfortable, and then he tries to get out the way he got in. If he be too lazy to go that way he simply bores a hole in the swallower and gets out the shortest way, and what is more curious still is, that he is not the least incommoded by the operation."

"I do not understand all this," said Sophie.

"That will teach you, my dear, not to stop your ears again," Mr. Woolston continued.

"But Cecile was a modest, pious woman; her most important business was her domestic duties. She did not disdain, though she was rich, to mend her husband's stockings, and she prayed each day that some stop might be put to the extravagances of Julian Philipson, and finished by congratulating herself that she was not his wife."

"I can quite believe it," said Mrs. Muller.

"But the crowning folly of all was, as reported in Plymouth, that some young person was making her family very miserable by her bad conduct. She beat her servants, so that none would stay with her without double wages, ill-using the unfortunate aspirants to the heart she did not possess, without reference to her parents whom she had made her slaves."

"An amiable creature, indeed."

"Julian discovered that she had a large fortune; he offered

his hand, was accepted, and married as others do for better or worse,"

"He ought to have been shut up in a mad house," said Willis.

"But by an extraordinary chance the young lady immediately displayed all those virtues she had hitherto lacked, and she conquered her husband, whose reason returned by degrees, and who at length returned to the same state as he had enjoyed before his disappointment."

"From which I conclude," said Mrs. Muller, "that it is good to have angels for friends."

"They are better than stars," said Jack.

"One may also conclude," said Mrs. Woolston, "that when a sudden blow upsets the happiness we have laboriously constructed for future enjoyment, nothing should prevent us from trying to re-build with better materials on a more lasting foundation."

The Mullers and Woolstons, like two flocks of swallows, regained their nests in the trees when Sophie, approaching Jack, said:

"Will you tell me what happened when I stopped my ears?"

"Willingly; but on condition that you tell me first what the chimpanzee did during our absence."

"Well, he got into our house unperceived, took one of papa's razors, and began to shave. Very fortunately some one arrived in time to stop him."

"Is that all? What I have to tell you is much more important."

"Make haste then."

"I am afraid of alarming you."

"Is it so very terrible?"

"Beyond all imagination. Just picture to yourself—if you dream of it to-night you must not blame me"

"No, I will be courageous. I have made up my mind to brave everything."

- "Where was Mr. Woolston when you stopped your ears?"
- "Julian was just drawing his poignard."
- "And when you unstopped your ears?"
- "Well, I do not know. It seemed to me that Julian had cut somebody or something into quarters."
- "Well, since I must tell you, it was a pear!" and the jester ran away screaming with laughter.

But in a very short time he came back again. This time he was almost sad. All traces of gaiety had disappeared from his face as breath from a steel blade.

- "Miss Sophie," he asked, "are you very rich?"
- "I do not know, Master Jack, are you?"
- "I know no more about it than you do."





CHAPTER XIV.

Children's Tears and Tropical Rain.—David's Chariot.—The Same Breath for Two Beings.—How Fritz bore Grief.

S soon as it was day all eyes were turned to the sky, which this time responded smilingly. The heavy clouds of the day before had dispersed, and the blue heaven, flecked with white, was visible.

Only children can dry their tears as quickly as nature in the tropics.

The whole party were quickly ready to start. Mrs. Muller, Mr. Woolston, Ernest, and Sophie got into the conveyance drawn by the cow and the buffalo, and seated themselves under an old-fashioned awning like a carrier's cart. Ernest and Jack rode alongside them. Mr. Muller, Mrs. Woolston, Miss Woolston, and Fritz went down to the boat. As for Willis, they knew what would please him best.

Those who went by land were to come back by water and vice versâ, so that one expedition would suffice to explore both land and sea.

As they approached Falcon's Nest Mr. Muller perceived a placard on one of the most prominent trees.

"What can that be?" he said. "Can paper which is so difficult to make in Europe grow here alone on a tree?"

Fritz went on in advance, and laughing loudly as he was rejoined by the rest of the party, read as follows:

"Notice.

"The celebrated Professor Ernest Muller announces that he will descend one day from the sky, of which he is one of the brightest ornaments, to open a course of astronomy. The uncertainty in which that science is wrapped with regard to certain stars is due to the fact that they can only be observed at night. The illustrious professor proposes to make them visible in daytime, which is a bright idea, if there ever were one. He will put Charles's Wain at the disposal of any one who wishes to make the tour of the Milky Way. So as to proportion the payment of the importance of his instruction, the reserve places shall be nothing, the second gratis, and the third still cheaper. A horizontal position is considered the correct thing. People addicted to snoring are requested to stay at home."

"Well," said Willis, "that is a style I can understand."

"It is a pity that Ernest is not with us; but he will lose nothing by not waiting."

"Here is another placard!" cried Fritz.

"Voluntary and Involuntary Enlistment,

"By which the world and other adjacent places can be conquered.

"All the inhabitants of the island who are desirous of glory and fit to carry arms are invited to enrol themselves at once under Mr. Fritz Muller, a conqueror, who lives at Falcon's Nest under a fig tree. No one is forced to come; but those who decline will be considered as deserters. There is no reason why those who enlist should not return, if they ever do return, with a marshal's baton, which is more honourable and more easy to carry than a rifle. The Commander-in-chief will take care to keep all the fruits of any victory that may be gained. Amputations will be practised at his expense. He will erect a column to the

memory of the dead, a delicate attention which it is hoped they will appreciate."

"You were regretting just now that Ernest was not here," said Mr. Muller to Fritz; "fortunately you were here yourself."

"Here is a third bill," said Willis.

"It has been reserved for this epoch of ours and to this fruitful island to produce a glorious artist, who leaves Michael Angelo and Rubens far behind. Not that these men were devoid of a certain talent, but because, following in a regular groove, they could do nothing without their brushes and palette. By a system as ingenious as it is expeditious, and which possessors of rare advantages have not patented, a clever painter, Mr. Jack Muller, can dispense with such auxiliaries. The system consists in placing the model before a looking-glass, where he is invited to return if his occupations permit. By these means the original and the copy will be able to defy the ravages of time, and one will not be liable to make a mistake and take an old man for a young one. The likeness is guaranteed. All payments to be made in advance."

"I am glad to say," said Mr. Muller, "that Jack has not been spared more than the others."

"I hope there are no more of them," said Mrs. Woolston.

"No, there are but three."

"Very well, I see that Frank's choice has not been turned into ridicule."

They then continued their course towards the Jackal river, where the pinnace was moored, Miss Woolston and Frank being in advance.

"And have you quite decided, Mr. Fritz, to go through the world and turn it upside down?"

"The first thing will be to get my army, and beyond that I have no plans."

"That is a very strange idea of yours."

"Does it displease you?"

"I have not the right to approve or disapprove of your resolutions."

"And if I were to give you the right?"

"I should find the responsibility too great; and besides, one cannot appreciate an idea unless one puts oneself in the place of the person from whom it originates. You would find happiness in war and perilous expeditions. My idea of happiness is a quiet life in one's own family circle. You see we differ considerably."

"Not so much as you think, Miss Woolston. My victories are reduced to nothing. I have not broken with my allies. I have only to give leave to myself, and to disband the troops, and I do so."

"It takes very little to overturn your projects."

"Very little, Miss Woolston. An objection made or a preference expressed by you is not a little thing."

"Why we have arrived."

"Already; the way seems to me much shorter than yesterday."

"What makes you so cheerful?" said Mrs. Woolston to her daughter.

"I have very good reason, dear mamma; I have given peace to the world."

They soon reached the Cape near Waldeck, and the sea was still sufficiently rough to oblige them to keep near the coast.

The light boat rolled a good deal, and on one occasion when poor Miss Woolston was not very attentive she slipped on a coil of tarred rope and fell into the sea.

"Oh! my daughter!" cried Mrs. Woolston, in an agonized tone.

"I will save her," said Fritz, as he jumped into the water.

Willis did the same, while Mr. Muller laid the boat to, and Mrs. Woolston, kneeling down, uttered a prayer for the safety of her child.

After a short time the men reappeared to take breath, and again dived. The moments appeared like centuries. Mrs.

Woolston could not utter a word, but her eyes spoke volumes—she expected each wave to bring the dead body of her daughter. After a few moments, and in exchange for the graceful living form which it had received, the sea gave up a senseless body that Fritz bore to the boat on one arm. He would not have exchanged this victory for all the triumphs of Alexandria.

Willis came to his assistance, and his precious burden was soon on board. But Miss Woolston gave no signs of life. Help



"The sea gave up a senseless body."

to be of any use must be instantaneous, and Mrs. Woolston, half distracted, could do nothing but embrace her daughter.

"We must rub her limbs," said Mr. Muller, "and also particularly the chest and back."

Mrs. Muller immediately did as she was directed.

"We ought also to warm her feet," said Mr. Muller; "but there is nothing to make a fire of."

Mrs. Woolston in her anxiety began to breathe upon them.

"I have heard," said Willis, "that it is a good thing to hold drowning people by the heels to let the water they had swallowed run out."

"That would only kill them outright. It is not water that is dangerous, it is the want of air; the power of breathing and respiration ought to re-animate them before anything."

The pilot meanwhile endeavoured to force a few drops of brandy down the girl's throat. Fritz stood by trembling as if his own life were in the balance.

"There is only one way," said Muller; "we must breathe into her lungs. You must give your breath, Mrs. Woolston, to re-animate her."

"I will give every drop of my blood to recover her," said the poor lady. She then applied her mouth to that of the patient, and breathed into her lungs, so as to imitate the natural respiration as much as possible.

This almost superhuman task would have tried the strongest lungs; but the mother's feelings came to her aid, and she accomplished her purpose.

Meantime, Willis had turned the boat for home, where he rightly considered more conveniences could be obtained.

"Look!" cried Mrs. Woolston, "that time it was not my breathing—it was her own."

"The heart beats," said Mr. Muller.

At these words the pilot threw his hat high in the air.

In a quarter of an hour, though it appeared a century, Miss Woolston opened her eyes. Her head was supported on her mother's breast, that first pillow which we all, rich or poor, find on the threshold of our lives. At first her gaze was turned vaguely from one object to another. A shiver passed through her limbs. She extended her hands as if to thank her deliverers, and moved her head slowly up and down, as if to say: "I know, I understand, you have saved me. I am grateful." Then, like one of those sparks which seem to be lighted only to go out, she relapsed into insensibility.

The moment they disembarked Fritz ran up to Falcon's Nest for some coverings and a mattress, which were made into a sort of litter, in which Miss Woolston was laid. They carried her home as carefully and as quickly as possible, so when a few hours afterwards animation returned she found herself on a dry, warm bed, surrounded by all the comforts that affection could suggest.

Fritz was unremitting in his exertions. He could not keep still. When nothing else could be done he hurried off to Waldeck on the ostrich.

"Three cheers!" he cried, as he jumped off. "Miss Woolston is safe."

- "Safe from what?" asked her father.
- "From drowning," he replied.
- "By whom was she saved?"
- "By Willis, by me, all of us."

In the course of the evening they were all again assembled at Falcon's Nest, and the expedition came to an untimely conclusion.

"We must remain where we are," said Willis, "a little longer. Yesterday it was the fault of the sky, to-day it is the water, to-morrow it will be land. We are not in luck; the wind is against us."

How often does it happen in life that the wind is against us? We wish to do something, and we begin. Ten, twenty, a hundred times, but without any result. Why, nobody knows. No one can say what the obstacles are. Perhaps a visit from a friend, a blind man singing under your window, a memory, even a fly, something less than nothing, and it is more often serious questions that are frustrated; for we must confess that we do not attempt to overcome obstacles which interfere with our duty with the same pertinacity with which we try to conquer those which oppose themselves to our pleasures. In the former case we are going against the stream, in the latter against the current.

In the presence of certain unexpected catastrophes, loss of

fortune, etc., one feels tempted to believe that something insurmountable has arisen across our path—some Himalayan mountain, or a barrier like the wall of China. Now trace this to its source, and what will you find? A grain of sand which God has placed there.

Though she was quite safe now from drowning, Miss Woolston was in a high fever, either sickness or health at her age goes to extremes. One is attached to a person by benefits; so apart from the brotherly affection with which he regarded the two young ladies, Fritz looked upon Miss Woolston's life as belonging to him, and death could not approach her without affecting him, for he would not fail to attribute her death to his own tardiness in saving her. He made no distinction between the fact and the intention, and to have saved her too late meant, with him, not to save her at all.

Then, is it not a good thing to have the thought in your mind, like a holy balm for all wounds, that but for your exertions a fellow-creature would have died? Oh, if those who do evil only knew what happiness they store up for the future by doing good!

The first day of the fever Fritz was cheerful; the second he went with his father and worked hard at pulling up a fence, and nailed his fingers instead of the stakes tightly to the planks; the third day he whistled to Black, took his rifle, and went out at daybreak.

- "Where are you going to?" Jack asked, as he joined him.
- "I do not know. Anywhere-nowhere."
- "Anywhere—nowhere," said Jack; "that is the place that will suit me. I will go with you."
 - "I must move about. There may be danger though—"
 - "Very well, then, we will look for it together."

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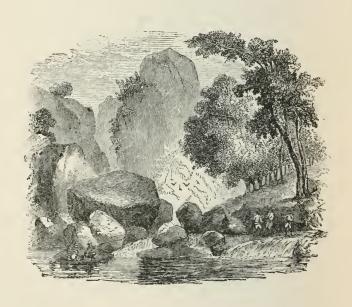
So each day they went out together in the norning, and did not return till night.

As those who have had a leg amputated experience sensation

after the limb has been cut off, so Mrs. Muller felt all the agony which Fritz experienced. She watched anxiously for her boys' return, and went sadly to meet them.

"She does not run towards us," said Fritz; "that is a bad sign."

"Yes," replied Jack; "but if she had any fatal news to communicate she would not come at all."





CHAPTER XV.

Recovery.— Mr. Julius Cæsar and Pope Gregory XIII. — Olympiads
— The Hegira.— Jack's Dream.

N the ninth day, as Fritz and Jack were returning from some secret expedition which had been very successful, if we may judge from the number of bullets they fired, they saw their mother coming towards them. This time she was running. She opened her arms; there was no need for speech.

Her face told more eloquently of Miss Woolston's safety than all the conversation in the world.

"Thank Heaven," said Fritz; "I feel as if a great load was taken off my heart."

Mrs. Muller embraced her son, and they proceeded affectionately together to Falcon's Nest, while Jack ran in advance.

Happiness is more effusive than grief.

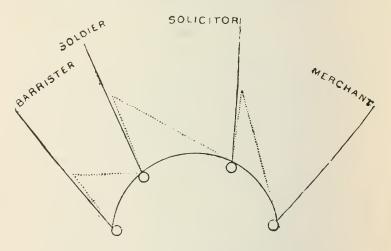
At a bend of the path they met Ernest and Mr. Woolston, who had also come to tell the sportsmen the good news.

But when Ernest, the philosopher, and Mr. Woolston, the engineer, went out together, which was very rarely, they were easily diverted from their object by any unknown object, however small. So going one day from Falcon's Nest to obtain some provisions at Felsenheim, they came back empty-handed, being only intent upon the solution of a geometrical conclusion, no

doubt very interesting, but which at dinner-time did not compensate for the want of the salt and butter which they had gone out to procure. So they quite lost their character as purveyors.

Instead of running up as Mrs. Muller had done, they were quietly seated on the trunk of a tree. Before them traced on the sand was a geometrical figure. It was not a mathematical problem, as you may suppose, but it was a plan of the surest road to follow across the rough defiles of life.

"In all cases," said Mr. Woolston, "in morals as in physics, the shortest way between two points is the straight line."



"At least," replied Ernest, "the straight line must not be obstructed by any obstacles. It would take more time to get over them than to go a longer way round. So two places would be less distant actually by a well-made circuitous route than by a direct path invested with wild beasts and morasses."

"Pooh!" said Jack, who, as usual, arrived out of breath; "you can kill one and jump over the other."

"That is a true savage's reason who sees wild beasts and ravines everywhere. The real obstacles of life are within our

own hearts: it is versatility, weariness, the thirst for the unknown, the love of change, which makes us lose and weaken ourselves in long detours when we ought to concentrate our energies on a single point. It is the choice of so many amphibious vocations and so many dissimilar studies that lead us to no definite conclusions. Look at this figure."

"Is all that in that diagram?" said Jack.

"All that is there; so, at the age of twelve or thirteen, we all start from the point o, I suppose to arrive one day at a predetermined spot, and for which we study special subjects, either as a lawyer, an officer, a barrister, or anything else. Let us grant that Peter wishes to be a lawyer."

"Really," interrupted Jack, laughing, "I do not see why he should not."

"But he has no sooner made up his mind than he wishes to alter it, and longs for the sound of the drum while he dreams of glory."

"Like Fritz," said Jack.

"So he goes to a military school instead of reading for the bar. So long as the uniform is new and his duties do not pall upon him, everything goes well. Suddenly one day he throws away his sword, and as he does not like to be behind several of his old associates, who have gained the two or three years which he has lost, he goes in for a notary, for which a little experience and study is required."

"Well, he has tried a little of everything; and if he wish to be a notary instead of a lawyer, where is the harm?"

"The harm is that he is neither one nor the other, and also that he soon gets tired of that line of life, as he did of the army and the bar."

"Is this Peter difficult to amuse?" asked Jack.

"And he ends by going 'into business'—a vague definition for a vague employment, which allows him to do nothing with all the appearance of working very hard, and he arrives at the end of his life just where he started from."

Jack began in his turn to trace a figure on the sand.

"It is no doubt true," said he. "Here is this poor Peter, who stops half-way in each profession to descend to the starting point of another. He passes his life in making zigzags; he starts from one zero and arrives at another."

"While those who are persistent in their profession," said Mr. Woolston, "have reached a satisfactory ending by following the straight line."

Fritz and his mother now arrived, arm in arm.

"Hullo!" said Ernest, "we were going to meet you."

"So I see," said Fritz.

"Do you call this going to meet people?" said Mrs. Muller.

"Certainly," said Jack, "the same way that milestones go to meet travellers."

* * * * * *

As a flower which a storm has bent down, and which at the first rays of the sun lifts its head fresher and more beautiful than before, so Miss Woolston in a short time made her appearance in better health than ever.

Some months had now passed without anything of importance occurring. They had only to sow in one place and reap in another. After the corn harvest came the annual herring fishery, the salmon, the sea dogs, the capture of the ortolans, the search for a second grotto near Felsenheim which the two families might inhabit together. And they often went away on distant excursions for some days.

Like a noise that travels from rock to rock and finishes with a faint echo, so their hope of ever beholding the *Unicorn* and Captain Littlestone had gradually died away.

Willis, nevertheless, kept up the beacon on Shark Island, but more as a lamp to commemorate the dead than as a guide for the living.

However, one morning the dawn was announced by the report of a cannon. In an instant every one was on the alert, and a field of conjecture was open to view. In fact, the dawn did not generally behave in this way. As a rule, it came noiselessly and by degrees, as true merit comes without any flourish of trumpets.

"Good," said Mr. Muller, "Fritz and Jack are not here, so this is their doing."

"That is the more likely," added Mr. Woolston, "as to-day is the 1st of January. Yesterday I noticed much movement to and fro, and heard much whispering going on, which made me think some mystery was in preparation."

"I am sorry to hear that," said the pilot. "These days are very long away from one's family. One is always recalling the smiles of one's wife and the kisses of one's children."

These words were scarcely spoken when the two absentees arrived at full gallop.

"Mr. Woolston," said Fritz, unfolding a leopard's skin, "deign to accept this rug."

"Mr. Woolston," said Jack, "here is the skin which a panther that was overcome by the heat begged me to take from him for your use."

"This is magnificent," cried Mrs. Woolston.

"It is at least useful, for in the absence of jujubes or cough mixture there is nothing to keep away cold."

"Then you went back to those hunting grounds?" said Willis.

"Yes, and with bait more attractive than yours, as you may see by the result."

These presents gave the signal for congratulations and good wishes all round.

Sophie offered Willis a tobacco pouch, embroidered with the words, "Susan, to her Sweetheart." Just then Miss Woolston came running up much alarmed.

"Has anything happened?" asked her mother, as she hurried towards her.

"Nothing wrong, dear mother, but a miracle!"

"What was that?"

"You know that my pet parrot could not talk a word."

"Well?"

"Well, he has begun to talk to-day."

"And what did he say?"

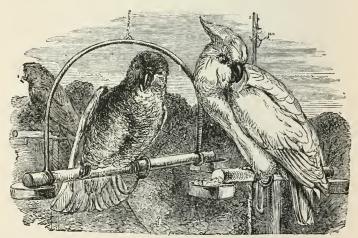
"Mary, Mary; he quite frightened me."

"Somebody must have changed the bird."

Mrs. Muller looked at Fritz, who nodded and put his finger on his lips to hint that she should say nothing.

"Who do you think would have changed it? And even so, it is not likely a strange parrot could have learnt my name."

Mrs. Woolston shook her head.



Parrots.

"I do not see anything extraordinary in that," said Jack; "the bird has really got some self-respect. He has only learnt that name syllable by syllable, and has essayed to pronounce it aloud when he thought he had mastered it."

"Why do you not say that the bird has known it a long time, but has waited till the first of the year to speak it? Parrots of spirit are capable of anything, even of having an almanac in their pockets."

"Who invented the almanac?" asked Willis.

"As the beginning of a fruit is a pip, as an admiral begins by being a midshipman, as a child babbles before talking, so the calendar only arrived at perfection by degrees."

"No doubt, Mr. Woolston; but still somebody must have had the idea first."

"The apparent movement of the sun and the revolution of the moon have marked duration of time amongst all nations, as was no doubt intended by Providence. You understand, of course, that the day and the night were never invented, and that the motion of the earth round the sun presented to man's observation the first simple and most natural division of time."

"As far as the days are concerned I can understand that, but afterwards?"

"Afterwards the return of the moon, in conjunction with the sun, marked an interval of twenty-nine days, twelve hours, and some minutes. This term is called the lunar month, and has long been the measure of time."

"And the years?"

"Well, later on the sun was substituted for the moon as the limit of measurement amongst civilized people. The earth periodically arrived at the same point in its orbit at the expiration of three hundred and sixty-five days, five hours, forty-eight minutes, and forty-five seconds."

"Can that be absolutely depended on?"

"Yes. The interval comprised in these two passages is called the solar year."

"What patience the earth must have," said Jack, "to go round and round five or six thousand times successively on the same road, without turning to the right or left."

"There is one difficulty. The year cannot accommodate itself to fractions, and it being necessary to include an even number of days, the hours, minutes, and seconds were left out, and only three hundred and sixty-five days were originally noted. The sun took no notice of it, and went its own way."

"It knew very well it could always pick them up again."

"The civil year was thus always about a quarter of a day behind the solar year. At first the difference was not noticed; but at the end of about a hundred and twenty years they were a whole month behind, so the first winter month was in autumn and the first spring month in winter."

"That was a muddle," said Willis.

"So that could not continue, for they would have ended by reckoning fourteen hundred and sixty-one civil years, while the sun had only marked fourteen hundred and sixty."

"What difference would it have made?"

"Why the dates would not have agreed with the seasons, and the almanac would have been quite useless."

"What would you have done in that case, Willis? You are a man of resource."

"I? Well, I should have left things as they were."

"That remedy would be short, no doubt; but Julius Cæsar found another, and that was to make every fourth civil year one day longer, and as that supplementary day was placed in February——"

"Why in February rather than in December?"

"Because February then was the last month of the year, which did not begin to date from the 1st of January till Charles IX.'s time, in the second half of the sixteenth century. As this day was placed in the month of February, five days before the first or the kalends of March, they call it bissexto (ante) calendas martii, from which the fourth year is now called leap year."

"That is very simple, and I should not have thought of it, but it is not perfectly accurate. We get before the sun five hours, forty-eight minutes, fifty seconds a year; and now that we have given a quarter of a day—that is to say, six hours—it appears to me that we shall get behind."

"Yes, about ten or eleven minutes a year."

"That was unfortunate, and in the long run-"

"In 1582, in fact, by the accumulation, the solar year had got ten days behind, and then Pope Gregory XIII. cancelled

these ten days, so in that year the 5th of October became the 15th."

"What an idea! as if life were already too long. Why not ten years? Had any one, Pope or not, said to me, 'Willis, you are only forty-seven to-day, but make up your mind that to-morrow you will be fifty-seven,' I would rather have been excused. I do not like short rations."

"It would make no difference as regards the length of your life."

"Besides, Mr. Woolston, this Pope does not appear to me to have been any better than Mr. Julius Cæsar. What are you laughing at?"

"Why, because you call Julius Cæsar Mister."

"Well, I do not know any better. Perhaps it was a woman."

"He was a man, and a very big one; but still he is generally called Julius Cæsar for shortness."

"It was he," said Ernest, "who conquered the Gauls, and beat Mr. Pompey at the battle of Pharsalia."

"However, I am of the same opinion, that when a person sets about caulking a hole in a ship he ought to do it completely."

"That was left to Pope Gregory XIII. He decreed that three leap years should be expunged in four hundred years, so that the years 1700, 1800, and 1900, which ought to have been leap years, are not, and so the year 2000 will be, then 2400, 2800, 3200, etc."

"I shall be completely confused with these leap years."

"There is a very simple mode of reckoning them. The only leap years are those which can be divided by four."

"And did Pope Gregory settle the question completely?"

"Not exactly; but the error only mounted up to one day in more than four thousand years, which is not much; and now, Willis, you know the days follow the night, the months the moon, and the years the sun."

"But there are some other larger divisions," said Ernest, which were adopted by the ancients. The Greeks reckoned by

Olympiads, of years each; the first began seventeen hundred and seventy six years before Christ. The Romans computed by lustres of five years; the first corresponds to the one hundred and seventh year from the foundation of Rome."

" How old is the world after all this?"

"Ah! Willis, the world is old; but it is just as good, and does its work the same as ever."

"When things are well made and of good quality they last a long time."

"We now reckon eighteen hundred and thirteen years since the birth of our Saviour, add to that the four thousand and four years the world existed before."

"Total, five thousand eight hundred and seventeen. What a

long voyage!"

- "This chronology is very simple," said Jack. "It is to be regretted that the Romans and Mahometans complicated matters by new dates. The year of Rome, the year of the Hegira, the year of the World, and the Greek Olympiad; there is no end to them."
 - "Rome was founded--"

"By Mr. Romulus and Mr. Remus," interrupted Jack.

"Seven hundred and fifty-three years before Christ; while the Mahometan era was six hundred and twenty-two years after that."

"Once get into your head," said Mr. Muller, "that the Christian era began four thousand and four years after the creation of the world, seven hundred and fifty-three years after the building of Rome, the fourth year of the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad, and six hundred and twenty-two years before the Mahometan Hegira,—these four dates give all that is necessary, and like a torch would illuminate the study of ancient and modern history."

"Oh, good gracious!" said Mrs. Muller, "look how smart Black is."

The intelligent animal was decorated with an ornamented

collar, and appeared conscious of it. He jumped and frisked about round and round Miss Woolston, then, suddenly stopping, looked at her affectionately, gave a little bark, and showed his happiness in every possible way.

Miss Woolston with a sign bade the dog go to Fritz, and he, while admiring the collar, read the following sentence embroidered upon it: "Henceforth I belong to Mr. Fritz, who rescued my mistress."

"Oh, Miss Woolston," said Fritz, "how kind you are !"

"Here is another animal talking," said Mrs. Woolston.

At these words something appeared to strike Sophie, who jumped and ran away.

"It is like the time of Æsop," said Mrs. Muller.

"What are you thinking of, Master Jack?" asked Mrs. Woolston.

"Do you think Black has learnt to embroider as the parrot learnt grammar?"

"Automata have been seen to play chess, to talk Greek and Latin and Hebrew, so why should not a dog, the most intelligent of animals, learn to embroider?"

"No doubt," replied Mr. Woolston, laughing, "to beasts have been given in all ages, courage, and address, gratitude and sagacity, some have even held positions of state. Caligula's horse was a consul."

"Talking of gratitude and sagacity," said Ernest, "I can tell you a story related by Aulus Gellius, about a dolphin which conceived a great affection for a poor little child. This child had to go to school from Baiæ to Puzzoli, and used to stop on 'be bank of the Lucrine Lake at noon every day. He got accustomed to seeing the dolphin, and called it Simon as he threw it some pieces of bread. The animal would always come when it was called, even from the bottom of the lake——"

"There is nothing astonishing in that," said Jack, "for carp will do the same."

"Wait. After having received the bread, the dolphin presented

his back to the boy, put down all the prickles on his back; the boy then mounted upon him and was carried across the water. This lasted for many years, when the child died. The dolphin continued to come to the rendezvous, but at length died of grief. He was taken out of the water, and buried by the side of his friend."

"If animals love us," said Jack, "we love them no less. That reminds me that Crassus went into mourning for a dead ferret, and lamented it as much as if it had been his daughter. Augustus crucified one of his slaves for daring to roast and eat a quail, which had come off victorious in a conquest."

"If you call that sagacity-"

"Antonio, the daughter-in-law of Tiberius, made ear-rings out of lampreys, to which she was much attached."

"All that does not prove to me that Black--"

"Well, Mrs. Woolston, if the nautilus wishes to take a sail, he cleverly capsizes his shell, which then becomes a little gondola. A thin membrane is then outspread to the wind for a sail, two feelers become oars and his tail acts as a rudder. There are some insects clever enough to make their home in leaves as thir as paper, and keep themselves sheltered from the weather; some spiders, at the approach of a storm, shorten their webs; beavers build houses, walls, and barricades more skilfully than our best architects and engineers; chimpanzees have been known to shave; and can you now deny to this noble dog the faculty of using his paws?"

"I yield to this flood of argument on condition that you will allow me to order my lace and embroidery from him, for I am not quite sure how he will do it."

At that moment Sophie returned.

- "She does not talk," said Sophie, with a disappointed air.
- "What is that?"
- "My gazelle."
- "How absurd you are."
- "Not at all, mamma. You said just now that all the animals were talking to-day, so I thought that my gazelle might. I tried

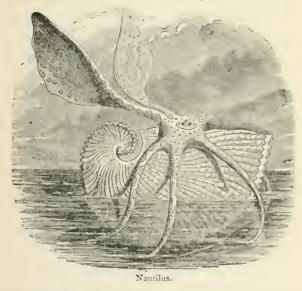
all 1 could, and gave her plenty of manioc cake, but she did not say a word."

"That is very bad. Perhaps you can teach her on Master Jack's system."

"Do you think so?"

"I will not guarantee it; but according to what we have seen you may hope so."

"I have a plan which will suit Miss Sophie."



"What is that, Master Jack?"

"That is to feed her with adverbs and participles for a day or two, instead of grass!"

"I will try, Mr. Joker, when you show me where they grow."

All this time Fritz was leaning on the back of Mary's chair, and now he said:

"You have always told me that you have had Black since he was a puppy, that you educated him yourself, and are much attached to him."

- "Yes, Master Fritz."
- "Then I cannot allow you to make such a sacrifice."
- "But where would be the merit of my gift, if it cost me nothing? I thought you liked him too."
 - "Certainly."
 - "Then you do not wish to be indebted to me?"
 - " Oh, miss, but——"
 - "I owe you my life."
 - "Oh! I did nothing-"
 - "Oh, you call my life nothing, then!"
 - "I did not mean that; please pardon me."
 - "On condition that you accept my gift."
 - "Well, if you really wish it."
- "Besides, he will not lose me, and I shall not love him less. He will belong to both of us."

Here Mrs. Muller came to join in the conversation.

- "Mary," she said, as she passed her hand over her son's brown curls, "What have you got to tell this great boy?"
- "Just fancy, he actually refuses my gift! I am quite angry."
- "I am sure you are very terrible when you are angry. Is not Fritz afraid?"
- "I do not know, but he has obeyed me, and that is the great point."
 - "Yes, mother, Black is now to be divided between us."
 - "Divided eh! then he will die, surely."
- "You and father," said Fritz, "enjoy our affection in common, and you nevertheless have each of us entirely; in that sense we have divided Black. Is it not so, Miss Mary?"
 - "Yes, Fritz."

Jack had approached Miss Sophie meanwhile.

- "If you had saved my life," said she, "I should have had the right to offer you something, as my sister has to Mr. Fritz, but it is not my fault."
 - "Still less is it mine, Miss Sophie."

- "It is providential that it is so."
- "If only a bear or a wild boar should have rushed at you while we were going to Waldeck."
 - "I am much obliged."
 - "Look here—here is the tableau. You would have fainted."
 - "Well, very likely."
 - "I should have rushed between you and the monster."
 - "Supposing you arrived in time."
- "I will answer for that. He would have been on his hind legs, glaring at you with furious eyes."
 - "Is it decided whether it is a bear or a wild boar?"
 - "Which ever you please. He opens his immense mouth."
 - "Like the wolf at little Red Riding Hood."
- "I plunge my arm as high as the shoulder resolutely down his throat and choke him."
 - "That is very clever, but are you not wounded?"
 - "I beg pardon, but I only think of you."
 - "I am insensible all this time, am I not?"
- "Yes, fainting more than ever. They all collect round you to bring you to life again."
 - "Do I come to life?"
 - "Wait a moment."
 - "But it is a bore to have to faint so long."
- "My mother fortunately possesses a bottle of salts, at which you smell. I run to a neighbouring stream and bring back water to bathe your temples."
- "For that attention, Master Jack, I ought to open at least one eye. Which is the proper eye to open first after fainting?"
 - "I know nothing about that."
 - "Well, for fear of mistake I will open both."
- "It is only now that, assured as to your safety, I perceive that my arm is terribly mutilated."
 - "It is now my turn to attend to you."
- "You lavish such sweet thanks upon me that I forget my wounds."

- "Sweet words can do no harm, particularly if accompanied with ointment."
 - "The result is that I carry my arm in a sling for three months."
 - "That is a very long time."
- "It is really very short, for all that time you render me a thousand little services, and your arm in a measure replaces my own."
 - "Is it the right arm?"
 - "Oh dear, yes."
- "What a pity I do not know how to sketch! And what becomes of your picture?"
 - "They remain where they were."
 - "In the clouds?"
 - "Exactly."
- "Then a new year arrives, and you give me a beautiful embroidered scarf, as ladies did in former days to gallant knights."
 - "What a pity this is only a dream."
- "It is, nevertheless, not very extravagant. Some people dream of fortune, glory, and honour."
 - "While you ask only a wild boar, a bite, and a scarf."
 - "So you see that only the opportunity is wanting."
 - " And the foresight."
 - "The foresight?"
- "If you had made arrangements with some great wild Least, no matter what, all that might have happened."
 - "You are joking, while I am speaking seriously."
 - "It seems, then, that we have changed characters."
- "At any rate, I hope you are persuaded that if the occurrence had taken place I should have delivered you from all possible danger."
 - "I, and every one else, I should imagine."

And she disappeared with a peal of merry laughter.



CHAPTER XVI.

Separation.—Guelphs and Ghibellines.—Montagues and Capulets.—
Jocko's Education.—Hercules and Job.—Willis's Method.

INTER was now approaching, with its usual accompaniment of storms and rain. Mr. Muller thought it well to separate the two families, as, indeed, their domestic arrangements rendered this separation indispensable. It would deprive them of many amusements and enjoyments, and create a desert in a desert, but it was, nevertheless, necessary.

The Woolstons went to live at the grotto at Felsenheim, while the Mullers remained at Falcon's Nest, where the good mother supported, without complaint, all the inconveniences which they had experienced during their first winter on the island.

The rains came and submerged the country between their habitations, and never were Guelphs and Ghibellines, Montagues and Capulets, Yorkists and Lancastrians, more widely separated than were the two families.

Whenever the sun came out or the rain stopped a little, every one ran to the window to gaze upon the melancholy road which formerly led them from Falcon's Nest to Felsenheim; but they must have been doves out of the ark to make the attempt just now. So sadness reigned on the island, which the inhabitants had lately named Fortunate. If they laughed now it was very little, they looked melancholy, and all the happiness of former days had departed.

"I wonder what they are doing now at Falcon's Nest?" the inhabitants of Felsenheim would say; while those at Falcon's Nest would make the same remark about Felsenheim.

"They must be very tired of all this."

"No more reading, no more pleasant conversation."

"Horrible winter, disgusting rain."

"Fortunately summer will come soon."

"Yes, in six weeks."

"Or perhaps a month."

This time Ernest kept them alive, and occupied himself in astronomy, in the hope of being able to learn some of the secrets of the weather. But the sky remained impenetrable, and said nothing, and everybody followed its example.

One day, however, the deluge became only a heavy downpour, the next day the downpour was reduced to a moderate shower, and the day after that there was only a heavy rushing rain, so slight that Fritz, Jack, and Willis, impatient of restraint, resolved to make the journey to the Woolstons.

They returned, wet to the skin, but delighted, for the Woolstons had received them with open arms. Fritz brought back the following invitation:

"Mrs. Woolston requests the pleasure of Mr. and Mrs. Muller and family's company at dinner at Felsenheim next Sunday, weather permitting."

The weather did permit, and, in truth, it could not well do otherwise without being unnecessarily unkind.

If you have a garden—and who has not, if it is only in the window?—it often happens, no doubt, that in consequence of absence or forgetfulness, you find your plants faded, so you water them at once, and you watch anxiously for their return to life,

for they revive most palpably. So both the families looked forward to the first tidings of summer.

The Woolstons were awaiting their guests at the Jackal bridge, where the good Willis had improvised a sort of triumphal arch. They were received as effusively as if they had come from Siberia, or had met after a separation of ten years. The dinner was a regular series of surprises. Every one found his favourite dish.

Mrs. Muller had often expressed the intention of knitting herself a pair of mittens to wear while occupied in household duties, but she had not hitherto time to work them. She now found two most beautiful pairs in her dinner napkin, for neither sister would yield to the other the privilege of knitting them.

"I was afraid I had lost my daughters," said Mrs. Muller, as she embraced them, "but I have found them again."

"Look at all the cotton we have spun!"

"It is a great quantity."

"Mary has done more than I," said Sophie; "but she is the biggest."

"So people spin, then, according to their size?" said Jack.

"Ah! I was just thinking that Master Jack must be ill as he had not begun to quiz any one."

"I have never been better in my life, Miss Sophie."

"Ah! we must take care of ourselves, then."

"Willis has brought in the chimpanzee of which he told very marvellous anecdotes."

"You will see, Mr. Woolston, what progress my pupil has made."

"Let us see, Willis.

"I scarcely believed that education could do so much. Jocko bring me a plate."

Jocko took hold of a bottle of wine and filled his muster's glass.

"He did not understand me."

"So it seems."

"He has erred on the safe side, at any rate."

"I confess it."

"Jocko," said the pilot, with a stern air, "I asked you for a plate."

The chimpanzee looked at its master, hesitated an instant, then seizing the glass he emptied it at a gulp.

"That was quite unexpected."

"A precious servant he makes," added Mrs. Woolston; "he will finish by sparing you the trouble of eating and drinking yourself."

"I will make him obey me," said Willis, rising.

But Jocko sprung up into the branch of a tree, making horrible grimaces at the pilot.

"It must be the number of new faces that frightens him."

" Apparently so."

"When we are alone his docility is wonderful: he does everything he is told. It is true that I usually help myself."

"And that you do not tell him to do anything extraordinary," added Mrs. Woolston.

It was now the parrot's turn, which kept repeating, "I love Sophie! I love Mary!"

"This parrot seems to love everybody at present," said Fritz.

"The fact is," said Sophie, "that I got tired of hearing him all day say he loved my sister, and I wished to be loved a little, too; so, after a little patience and a good deal of sugar, I managed it."

The flamingo, the cranes, and other inhabitants of the poultry yard came out to welcome their former master and mistress.

"We are like the court of Francis in the fourteenth century."

"How, Mr. Woolston?"

"Because they were then obliged to put trellis work over the windows of the hotel St. Paul, which was built and then inhabited by Charles V., to prevent the fowls from coming into the rooms."

"Very primitive manners."

"In those days they sat on stools. There was only an arm-

chair, covered with red leather and fringed with silk, for the king."

"So," said Mrs. Woolston, "the most humble merchants of to-day exceed the luxury of former kings."

"Historians say that Alphonso V. of Portugal came to Paris in 1476 to solicit the assistance of Louis XI. against the King of Aragon. The French monarch did him great honour, and endeavoured to render his stay as agreeable as possible."

"Reviews, feasts, and tournaments, I suppose?"

"In the first place he was lodged in the Rue de Prouveirs, in the house of a grocer named Herbelot."

"Really?"

"Quite true."

"They were afterwards brought to the palace, where he pleaded his cause. Next day they went to the bishop's palace where a doctor of theology was given his degree, and the following day a procession of students passed beneath his windows."

"That was a most amusing sort of king."

"Those were the amusements of the period."

"I am only a castaway," said Jack, "and have no crown in perspective, but I can amuse myself better than that, particularly to-day."

"It is only right to add that Louis XI. was rather a miser; but it was nevertheless the fashion to live in a frugal and simple manner. The sumptuary laws of Philip le Bel (1285) fixed supper at two meats and soup. The king's dinner was limited to three courses."

"Three good dishes," said Jack, "would be much better than the eight soups and the fifty-two saucers of the Chinese."

"In those days one must have had six thousand pounds' income to be able to give his wife four dresses a year."

"Why should the laws interfere in that respect?" said Mr. Woolston.

"Those having below two thousand pounds could only have one dress of material ten to twenty sous a-yard, but ladies of rank could go up to thirty sous. No citizen could have a companied by torches."

"So they had the privilege of breaking their necks."

"But," said Ernest, "then ancient traditions had lost their effect."

"Lucullus never supped for less than thirty thousand francs, and could offer hospitality to twenty thousand men. Six citizens of Rome owned the greater part of Africa. L. Domitius had forty-eight thousand acres in Gaul."

"Poor man."

"Nero came to Baiæ accompanied by a thousand carriages, and two thousand mules with silver harness. Cicero bought a dining-table for a thousand sesterces, that is to say for more than two hundred thousand francs. I understand that civilization progresses; but what a difference there is when the King of France is more shabby than a simple citizen of ancient Rome, who could lodge twenty-five thousand men, while the other was obliged to tolerate fowls in his apartments."

"If civilization had no other touchstone than luxury and riches, you would be right to be astonished; but between the old world and the new Christianity intervenes, which has quite upset former theories. It has taken the poor out of the dust to set them amongst princes. For Hercules, Achilles, Cæsar, Serenus, and Cleopatra it has substituted Peter, Paul, Job, and the Marys; it has dethroned pride in favour of humility, and corruption instead of virtue."

"Nevertheless," said Ernest, "antiquity had its wise men, Socrates, Pythagoras——"

"There were many men of virtue," said Mr. Muller, "but it was exaggerated; they were ostentatious, but false, and the Stoics despised suffering, while the Christians endured it. That is the difference between ancient philosophy and Christianity."

"But there are other differences besides."

"No doubt, but the former virtues were more or less false. Great pride, obstinate courage, unyielding resentment for injuries.

Ambition was honoured in Alexander, suicide in Cato, political assassination in Brutus."

"And Plato?"

"The immolation of ill-formed children, or those born unlawfully, proscription of strangers, slavery, all these were the bases of his vaunted republic, and the gospel of his philosophy."

"But why do you quote these as examples?"

"Because they are far away and dead, and also because they were really great and wise considering the paganism in which they live. You talk of civilization, Ernest; you have heard how Augustus treated one who killed a quail. One law of the Emperor Claudius prevented the killing of slaves when they were old and infirm."

"Which gives us to understand that there was no difficulty about killing them when they were young and strong?"

"The constitution of Constantine provided for very frequent cases in which masters suspended their slaves to a beam, and had them torn in pieces by wild beasts, or grilled over a slow fire."

"That is quite enough," said Mrs. Woolston; "you make me shudder."

Time passed quickly, no one had looked at the clock, for there was not one to look at, but the dread of parting began to oppress them.

The check which Willis had administered to his favourite seemed to have put him out; seeing that, Fritz discreetly put a plate into Jocko's paw and thrust him towards his master, at the same time pointing to him with his finger.

This time the chimpanzee obeyed.

"Ah," said Willis, triumphantly, "I knew he understood me, and that he would come sooner or later. Look, Mrs. Woolston."

"He has taken his time," she replied, laughing; "but do you not think that it would be well in future to ask for things half an hour in advance, so that you might get them at the proper time?"

"Jocko," said Jack, "I am dying of thirst, will you please bring

me a glass of water in the morning, if in the meantime you do not drink it yourself?"

"What means have you employed, Willis, to make him obey you so far as he does?"

"Is it by some complicated method, or by mutual understanding?"

"I merely use the means whereby midshipmen are taught to go aloft."

"How is that?"

"By a rope's end."

"I am afraid it is time to go now," said Mr. Muller, rising already.

"I see some very suspicious clouds over there."

"Bah! a little rain more or less."

"And your mother, Jack, we will carry her."

"Your expedient is not a very good one, and reminds me of the person who got into the river to keep out of the rain."

"What curious animals men are? We ask for water to make the green peas grow, and when it comes we get out of its way."

"That is because we can grow without it."

"You had better stir yourself, Ernest; the clouds are you business. You can treat them to a little pagan civilization, and make them understand that if they break they will not live long after."

"Faith, when it rains I leave it to you to stop it."

"What indifference, instead of profiting, as you ought, by your elevated relations to compel weather to obey you."

"The task is done."

"By whom?"

"By Matthew Lænsberg."

"Where have you seen the weather obey him?"

"Some one's education has yet got to be completed," said Mr. Woolston, "and on one of the most useful subjects."

"We will ask Willis to undertake it when he has finished with Jocko,"

- "That will not be long at the rate he is going."
- "And with the assistance of the rope's end."

Fritz now approached his mother, and whispered something in her ear.

- "Do you think so," said Mrs. Muller, with an affectionate smile.
- "I think it could be easily arranged."
- "Very well, then, give the invitation yourself."
- "Mrs. Woolston," said Fritz, "my mother hopes that you will all come to Falcon's Nest next Sunday."
 - "Very willingly, unless my daughters object."
 - "Oh, mamma!"
- "They take such great care of themselves, and are so afraid of wetting their feet, so I cannot press them to go."
 - "Mamma is teasing us," said Mary to her sister.
- "We are afraid of nothing," replied Sophie, "except of displeasing you," she added.
 - "In that case, if the road is not absolutely under water—"
- "If it be," said Jack, "we will organize a service of boats between this and Falcon's Nest."

As the hope of a prize at the examination will carry a schoolboy over the troubles of his exercises and lessons, as the oasis which the traveller sees in the desert makes him forget in an instant both hunger and thirst, as the thought of future remuneration makes obstacles appear as nothing to the Cenobite, as all the hopes which the wisdom of God has given to us amidst the struggles and sacrifices of life, so the prospect of a speedy re-union sweetens the bitterness of parting.





CHAPTER XVII.

Man Proposes, God Disposes.—What is to be Done.—Polynesia.—White Skins.—Hanged and Swimming.—Forebodings.

UT man who proposes, and does not dispose, marches blindfold through life; he never knows quite where he is going, and when discontented on one day he wishes for the morrow, when it arrives, it brings him nothing but disappointment. The sky is sometimes clear, some flowers have no thorns, some diamonds no flaws. But it is not

the same in life: when the sun is up on one side, the tempest is gathering on the other. It is a game of perpetual see-saw between happiness and misery, in which the latter is always tenacious and generally wins. In like manner for a long time Mrs. Muller had been a prey to unhappiness, which she endeavoured to hide from the others. Having for ten years borne up against the numerous troubles and worries of a life of exile her health had given way by degrees, but so slowly that those around her did not perceive the change. Affection is sometimes as blind as indifference.

There are bounds to human energy, as well as to everything else, and one day Mr. Muller was surprised to notice his wife in great pain. Since that time he had revolved one of those terrible projects in which the pros. and cons. seemed equally balanced, until in a moment almost of inspiration the right path is revealed.

One morning Mr. Muller accosted the pilot thus:

"Willis, take up a rifle for appearance' sake and come with me, I wish to speak to you."

For more than a quarter of an hour they proceeded without speaking—the one waiting, the other not knowing how to begin. The sailor at length broke the silence.

- "You have something on your mind, Mr. Muller."
- "My heart is dead within me, Willis."
- "Cannot I help you at all?"
- "It is impossible."
- " Why?"
- "Because the moment for the sacrifice has come, because I cannot avoid it, because I must cut off two members on the chance of saving one."
- "Two members!" exclaimed the pilot, staring at his companion; "you are more sturdy than ever and ready for anything."
 - "Do you not see what is going on?"
 - "Where?"
 - " Here, under your eyes."
 - "Here?" said Willis, looking round him.
 - "My wife is dying, my friend."
 - "Mrs. Muller?"
 - "Alas! yes."
 - "But, nevertheless---"
- "There is unfortunately no room for doubt. What do you say?"
 - "I confess that --- But what is the matter with her?"
- "There is where the trouble is greatest. We do not know what to call her disease, or how to assign a remedy."
- "We need not care about the name: it is the remedy we want. What a fool I was not to have seen it," said the pilot, punching his unfortunate hat with his fist.
- "Good gracious! nobody has seen it. She has superhuman courage, and hides her pain as if it were a crime to suffer."

- "Noble woman," said Willis.
- "She would hold her hand in a furnace, like Scævola."
- "Like whom did you say?"
- "Like Scævola."
- "Scævola?"
- "And I, who for so many years have enjoyed the happiness which she has imparted, why even I have only noticed her self-denial within the last few days."
- "Good heavens! I wish I were a doctor instead of a pilot."
- "I cannot leave her to die thus, without making some attempt to save her."
- "Of course not, Mr. Muller; we must never lose a ship until all hope of saving her is gone."
 - "But what are we to do?
 - "Ah, there it is, if only one knew."
- "I know too well, Willis. In ordinary maladies care and precaution, with simple diet, time, and, above all, with nature's assistance, a cure can be made."
- "I can quite believe it. Nature has no diploma, but she accomplishes more cures than those who have."
 - "Unfortunately this is not such a case, for I fear cancer."
 - "Good heavens!"
- "Which has hitherto been unnoticed, but its ravages are increasing every day. She may languish for a long time; but if the cause be not removed, sooner or later death will supervene. Now to remove it an operator is necessary."
 - "Oh dear, dear."
 - "There is no hope of the Unicorn is there, Willis?"
 - "I am afraid not."
 - "Can one hope that any ship would touch here, I wonder?"
 - "That is very doubtful; we are not in any direct track."
- "Unfortunate father that I am. Brutus, Manlius Torquatus, and Peter the Great all condemned their sons to death; but they were guilty."

"Who are all those people?" asked the sailor, who had not forgotten Seævola, mentioned just before.

"While my own-"

"I do not understand you, Mr. Muller."

"Willis, they will come. I told them to meet us on Shark Island. I have need of all my courage, and so have you."

"I am afraid he is mad," said the pilot to himself; "and such a good man too."

Just then they arrived at the spot where the pinnace was moored

"Willis, whereabouts do you think we are?"

That is a good sign, thought the pilot; he changes the subject.

"In Polynesia, is it not so?"

"We are in the midst of Oceana and those islands which Dampier, Bougainville, Vancouver, Cook, and so many others penetrated and named about a century ago; the Archipelagos, Mendana, Pomoton, Sandwich, Mulgrave, Pellew, for each navigator having given the groups different names, the place has become an inextricable labyrinth."

"How are all these islands inhabited?"

"Some are not inhabited at all, and some only by savages, but of excellent dispositions; while not many miles further on the natives would be delighted to feast on a white skin, as they call us."

"It would be dying twenty deaths to die so," said Mr. Muller, shuddering.

"And may I ask you what this has to do with the cancer?"

"Is the coast easy to land on, Willis?"

"The greater part of the islands are low, and surrounded by reefs, which are the terrors of sailors," said Willis.

Then he thought, "If I only could disarm him. One never knows, in a paroxysm of fever—"

"And how could one reach Europe?"

"I beg your pardon for a moment," said the pilot, aiming at an ordinary hird.

"What did you fire for, Willis?"

"Because, because—do you see that yonder?"

"The fellow is a long way off. You are speaking about Europe, I think."

"What is the shortest way there, do you think?"

Willis and Mr. Muller were at that moment sitting on a rock, and Muller had placed his gun beside him. The sailor immediately seized it, and exclaimed, "This time he will not escape."

"I assure you, Willis, there is nothing at all. You will only fire into the air."

"I see him perfectly. It is a quail or a grebe. There, I have missed him again."

"You are like Fritz, who only thinks of burning powder, poor boy; he does not wait to take aim."

"By-the-by," continued the sailor, "you are asking me something. To go to Europe one must gain the Mariannes Islands, across the whole length of the Pacific Ocean, then the Philippines, Java——"

"Oh, once there!"

"Once there one has only fifteen hundred leagues to go to the Cape of Good Hope."

"So much?"

"Oh yes. Then you must cross the line, which usually takes twelve days after leaving the Cape with a fair wind. Five or six weeks later you will reach St. Helena, then Ascension, and then Gibraltar; and then if you have a daughter who expects you, as I have, she will begin to roast the potatoes ready for your arrival."

"Now what do you think of this boat, Willis?"

"The boat."

"Ah! there are Fritz and Jack on Shark Island. They are very punctual."

The pilot whistled loudly, and waved his hand most energetically.

"What do you want?"

" I wish them to come back. You are not quite yourself just now."

"Now or later it must come to that some day. To-day I am

firm and stoical; perhaps to-morrow strength may fail me. But I was speaking of the pinnace."

"She is a very good boat, Mr. Muller, but not fit for a rough sea."

"Not quite the sort of boat you would wish to put to sea in."

"There would be every chance of being lost."

"You see very well, then, that I cannot force them to go unless I would doom them to certain death," exclaimed Mr. Muller, passionately, "and I was right to say that I must cut off two members in the hope of saving one."

"Force them to go. Why?"

"To reach Europe, my friend, if God will."

"And after?"

"But do you not understand, when they come back they will bring, at any cost, the operator who is so greatly needed; so, if they succeed, they will save their mother's life; if they fail, they will have died for her."

"I understand now," said the pilot. "When one's mind is once made up there is nothing like going ahead. When shall we start?"

"It is not a question of your going."

"And of whom, then, if you please?"

"Of Jack and Fritz. The latter knows something of navigation."

"What! Do you want to insult the pilot?"

"But, Willis."

"Do you not see that I am longing for the ocean with its reefs and waves and fresh air."

"I am ashamed of myself for not having been more frank," said Mr Muller, "for I quite expected you to volunteer."

"Do you not see that I am getting thin and pining away. Some ducks get accustomed to dry land, but I cannot."

"You would, then, risk your life in the hope to save the lives of my sons and my wife, and you do not even wish to be thanked for it."

"A man condemned to be hanged who runs the chance of being drowned does not do himself any harm."

"Willis," said Mr. Muller, "such men as you are rare. I thank you in my wife's name, and trust God will recompense your devotion."

"You forget," said the pilot, as he rubbed what he called a grain of sand out of his eye,—"you forget that I wished to throw myself into the sea after my captain; besides, there is work to be done, I must confess, but it is not impossible to do. Perhaps when we get out to sea we may meet some ship."

"Alas, Willis, when one goes on such a doubtful road as the ocean in such a boat as that, it is very difficult to foresee the consequences. You will do your best?"

"As I would for myself," said the pilot, as he removed the pinnace.

"Where are you going to now?"

"Those brave boys are waiting for us. Must we not tell them they must go? We can scarcely act without them."

"My heart begins to fail me."

"You must strike the iron while it is hot. Shall I break the matter to them gently?"

"Thanks, Willis; but can I expect courage from them if I give way to weakness? Yet, before you, my friend, I can weep."

"A man should never weep," said the sailor, in whose eyes the grains of sand were rapidly increasing.

"I have never left those boys yet. I have watched them grow up from infancy to manhood. We have prayed together every night and morning, and now——"

"There are some misfortunes which lead to happiness, Mr. Muller, even through the Straits of Magellan, and round the Cape of Good Hope."

They then pulled over to Shark Island where Fritz and Jack, seated on the battery, had been waiting for them a long time.

"How sad father looks," said Fritz.

"Willis does not look very cheerful."

- "What can they have to say to us? Why this mystery?"
- "Do you believe in presentiments?"
- "Well, I do, and I do not."
- "Well, then I say there is something going to happen unless I am very much mistaken."





CHAPTER XVIII.

The Departure.—Let Sleeping Dogs Lie.—A Last Adieu.—Willis's Postscript.—Mrs. Muller Plucks Stockings and Knits Ortolans.— Bodies Part, but Souls Remain.

N their return from Shark Island, Fritz and Jack were much affected, not from fear of the perils they were destined to undergo, but from the knowledge that their beloved mother was a prey to a devouring disease.

Willis, on the contrary, appeared delighted to go to sea again, or at any rate affected to be so, so as to keep up Mr. Muller's courage.

It had been arranged that no one was to know anything about their departure, so that Mr. Muller should not have to overcome opposition, supplication, and tears, and then Ernest and Frank would not have to dispute with Fritz and Jack their right to undertake that service for their mother.

A really strong man knows his weakness, and does not expose himself to attack on the weak point.

Once the pinnace had departed they would not expect it to come back soon, and time would do the rest.

As all their preparations had to be made secretly they did not progress rapidly. Willis under the pretence of amusing himself refitted the boat most carefully. He recollected that when

Captain Cook reached Batavia after the first voyage he found that a considerable portion of the keel of the *Endeavour* was no thicker than the sole of a shoe.

They collected day by day some of the most valuable productions of the island, for, while gold was held in contempt in New Switzerland, it was not the same everywhere, and his sons would require plenty of money to overcome the obstacles which would present themselves to their return. In fact, the task was double. Not only had they to go, but they had to come back again, and bring with them a scientific man; and to do this they must have supplies.

All this time the two families, who had met again during the summer at Falcon's Nest, had no suspicion. Their happiness was apparently unruffled; but the worm was in the bud.

Fritz and Jack were somewhat less lively than before, but more tender, more affectionate, particularly towards their mother, their kisses more frequent, and it appeared as if they were laying up a store for the future. Not a domestic animal, scarcely an inanimate thing about the house which did not possess greater charms for them than ever. Sometimes, also, Mr. Muller would fix his sad eyes upon them; he knew their features by heart, so to speak, but he wished to engrave their faces on his mind. The boys had impatiently counted the winter days, but now they would have stopped the time if they could. And it is a very happy thing that time moves so regularly, for if it could be tampered with all happiness would thy away. The suffering would reproach it for being so slow, the idle would not know how to get rid of it, busy men would wish it prolonged.

At length, only one day intervened before the boys' departure. Nothing was wanted but courage and the travellers. The final day arrived, the pinnace was victualled, and everything was ready, and Willis declared that the day was most favourable for the start. It was on Sunday. Instead of playing at some game, as usual, on those afternoons they went for a walk.

"Mother," said Fritz, seizing Mrs. Muller's arm, "I want you all to yourself."

"To ourselves, if you please!" said Jack, taking the other arm.

"You seem very much attached to your mother to-day," said Mrs. Woolston.

"What an idea!" said Jack; "at any rate, we have the right to one occasionally. Willis has one at least every week."

"So long as they are like your present one, I do not complain," said Mrs. Muller.

"Are you content with our behaviour?" asked Fritz.

"Certainly."

"Quite content, and have no cause for unhappiness?" asked Jack.

"We have never intentionally hurt your feelings," said Fritz.

"You have never done it intentionally, my dear boys!"

"Ah! yes, once!" said Fritz.

"I do not remember."

"Frank and I were going away. The *Unicorn* had weighed anchor, and was only waiting for us. You were very sorrowful then, mother, were you not?"

"Can you ask such a question?"

"I can still feel the tears hot on my cheeks."

"Nevertheless," said Jack, "I am sure that you said to yourself, 'It is necessary, and for the future happiness of the colony;' and that helps you to bear the trial."

"But what is that à propos of?"

"À propos of nothing, mother, except that I love you; and I recollect all the tokens of love you showered upon me. Misers count their gold, I count your kisses."

"I count mine," said Jack; "you owe us a good many, though."

"How do you make that out?"

"Who has kissed us for you, I should like to know, all these days, when we went out to mow the new field?"

- "You went away before I was up."
- "And you hope to get off like that?"
- "I am very honest, and wish to pay up debts."
- "I should like to give you credit till evening," said Jack, but I must have my kisses. I want them."
- "You may be quite easy. I am in funds, if you even want an advance."
- "Oh yes, mother, in advance—a large advance!" cried Fritz.
 "We will repay you punctually."

Frequently, during this conversation, the boys' voices trembled, and they were on the point of betraying themselves; and at length they were obliged to rush off suddenly to hide their emotion.

Evening came at last, calm and beautiful, not a breath was stirring. It was difficult to stifle their sobs.

- "I am going to sea to-morrow," said Willis. "Who will accompany me?"
 - "I will!" exclaimed all four brothers.
- "I want Frank and Ernest," said Mr. Muller; "so this time, boys, you two must give up the excursion."
 - "We are at your orders, father."
 - "Where are you going, Willis?" asked Mr. Woolston.
 - "To make a tour."
 - "Of the world?"
 - "No, of the island."
- "How would it interest Willis to make a tour of the world?" aid Mrs. Woolston. "He has already made it, I am sure."
 - "I have already made several."
 - "Really?"
- "And will take advantage of the circumstance," said the pilot, to renew my acquaintance with the neighbouring coasts. If we to not return in the evening do not be alarmed."
 - "What is the good of this excursion?" asked Mrs. Muller.
- "To see if we have any neighbours. If so, it is as well we could know them."

"If we have, we had better leave them quiet, as they are. If the cat is asleep, it is best not to wake her."

"It is not a question of waking any one, my dear," said Mr. Muller; "but only to ascertain as nearly as possible our geographical position, which one day it will be useful to know."

"If you should meet a vessel?"

"We will say all that is kind for you, Mrs. Woolston," interrupted Jack, who vainly tried to recover his spirits.

"Very well; but bring it in here with you."

"Do you wish to leave us, then?"

"I do not say that, but I should like to obtain your mother's permission to send one of you to look for my son; first, because he is my son——"

"And then?"

"And then, because he is our brother," said both the girls.

"Also ours," said all the young men together.

The two mothers shook hands, which act with them meant a great deal more than words. The moment was a very solemn one. It was all that Fritz, Jack, and Mr. Muller could do to keep back their tears. A single word would have upset them. Willis assumed a rough manner to hide his emotion.

"Look here," he said, "if you two young gentlemen wish to be off early in the morning you had better say good-bye now, and get a little sleep."

Fritz and Jack clasped their mother in their arms, and after exchanging a thousand kisses they tore themselves away, as ivy is torn from the trunk.

"I will see you down to the beach," said Mr. Muller.

They were about fifty paces from Falcon's Nest when the travellers turned round to wave a last adieu to their friends.

"You have behaved very well all through," said Mr. Muller. "I am much pleased with you."

It was just that hour when the country wears its most saddening aspect. The day was declining, and surrounding objects were

becoming indistinct, leaving the imagination to fill in all sorts of resemblances. Here and there a bird fluttered in the trees, and still Mr. Muller and the three fugitives marched on in silence.

In ordinary life children are separated from their home by degrees, school friends, and then the world, all make the heart a sort of hotel, in which various affections find a lodging. Each affection weakens the others, and the result is that by loving so many no one is loved warmly except oneself. It could not be thus with Fritz and Jack; the world for them was New Switzerland, so like the rays of the sun concentrated by the mirror of Archimedes all their power of loving was collected at one place.

"If Heaven spares you," said Mr. Muller, "to reach the end of your journey, you will find yourself launched on a still more stormy sea of politics and finesse, where results are supposed to justify the means, however violent. Where people generally sacrifice everything to personal interest and ambition, where fortune is honoured as a virtue which can dispense with all others, and where the most odious things appear in the most attractive colours, it is impossible for me to foresee all the circumstances in which you may be placed; but there are some fundamental rules which apply to all. I have no need to enjoin loyalty or courage upon you, you possess both; but pursue none but honest ends and persevere; be deceived if you must, but never be deceivers. Trust in Providence, invoke Him in all difficulties, and light will come upon you. Do not forget this remote quarter of the world, where we shall pray for you and think of you every day; do your work quickly and well, recollect every moment saved relieves your mother from a century of suffering, and that her life will hang on a thread till you return."

They had now reached the shore. Willis and the boys were sobbing loudly. They all knelt down.

"I invoke the blessing and mercy of Heaven upon your devoted heads," said Mr. Muller, in a broken voice.

"They shall not go!" exclaimed Mrs. Muller, rushing from the shade of the beechwood which had hitherto concealed her.

Fritz and Jack threw themselves upon her neck.

"Ah!" she said, as she affectionately put aside their hair on their forehead, "you thought you could deceive your mother as you would a stranger."

"Pardon, mother, pardon."

Mr. Muller felt that the moment had arrived when he should need courage and decision for all.

"And why should they not go away?" he said, with assumed calmness. "Is this the first excursion they have taken?"

'No, it is not the first excursion; but it is the first time that they have bade me an eternal farewell. It is the first time that I have felt my heart freeze at their departure. It is the first time that you have told them at the moment of their departure what you have said to them to-night."

Mr. Muller was not a hypocrite; his eyes fell under the penetrating gaze of his wife. Taken in the very act of devotion and heroism Willis did not know where to hide himself; he felt like a schoolboy, detected by a fault. Fritz and Jack clung around their mother's knees.

"I see it all now," she said, as she raised up her children; "the bandage has fallen from my eyes. A thousand things hitherto unexplained are now apparent to my mind. You are sending them, amid all the chances and terrors of a voyage, to endeavour to secure their mother's safety, and you do not think that with the object of prolonging my poor existence for a few years, perhaps for a few months, you may kill me at once almost with grief. By what right do you impose upon me such a remedy a thousand times worse than the disease? Do I complain? And if I am content to suffer, why should I not? Is not suffering our lot from the cradle to the grave? Besides, I am not ill; I was never better in my life!"

At this point she was seized with such a nervous fit of trembling that she quite gave way. "Oh, Heaven, give me courage," exclaimed Mr. Muller, raising his tearful eyes. "Boys," he added, "go where duty calls you. Do not prolong this distressing scene which undermines the strength of which we have so much need. One last embrace, and then farewell!"

One long kiss, then another, and yet another, but no words were spoken—their hearts were too full for speech.

Mr. Muller then led his wife away, who was weeping as if her heart would break.

"I cannot let them go, I cannot let them go!"

It was terrible to hear her.

When the boys reached Shark Island, while the others were making some necessary preparations for departure, Fritz took a pen and wrote:

"Dear Brothers, Kind Friends,—We are parted. When you read this letter, the sea will have already separated us. We shall live elsewhere, but our hearts will always be with you. We hope that Ernest and Frank will erect a flagstaff on the beach where we parted—the place is already hallowed by our tears. We shall return to carry back life, health, and happiness."

"Let me finish," said Jack, as he took the pen.

"The sea is calm, the sky is blue, and the stars are shining. Our hearts are pure, our expedition is a sacrifice to duty. Never was voyage undertaken under more brilliant auspices. Adieu—once more farewell—All our thoughts and best wishes are for you all.

"FRITZ, JACK.

"P.S.—Willis was going to write, but his tears fell so fast upon the paper. 'What can I write,' he said, 'that will tell them more than that?'"

"How can we convey it home?" asked Fritz.

"I have brought over a couple of pigeons," said Jack; "but I do not know whether we should use them. If they expect a

letter, and anything happened to the pigeon, they would think we were lost!"

"Let us go and place it where we parted," said Willis; "the first thing they will do to-morrow will be to go down to the spot where they last saw you."

All was ready. They had already stepped into the pinnace, when Fritz exclaimed:

"I must go back to Falcon's Nest."

"What for?" exclaimed Willis. "To go all over the farewells again to revive their grief!"

"Not so, Willis. I intend to go unheard, and take a last look around the dear old place."

"But the dogs!"

"The dogs know me too well to give the alarm. I will go alone, if you like; but I must go: the desire is too strong to be repressed."

"I will accompany you," said Jack.

Willis shook his head.

"Blame us if you like, but it must be so."

"I do not blame you," replied the sailor, "because I wish to do the very same thing myself."

So they all set out.

"It is a long time," said Fritz, "since we passed this way at such an hour. Then there was some danger to be encountered, and we were happy."

"The chimpanzee," said Jack.

"Now we have to overcome sorrow, and we have not strength to do it."

"There are the trees on which I fixed those bills," said Jack. "Oh, would those happy days had come again!"

As they approached the house the dogs came gambolling round them and licked their hands.

Fritz would have liked to take Black with him, but he was afraid that Miss Woolston would not like him to do sc.

All was perfectly quiet at Falcon's Nest.

"Everybody is asleep there," said Jack, indicating the Woolstons' tree; "but here," he added, pointing to the Mullers' habitation, "they are all awake and weeping."

"If they only knew we were so close!"

The party seated themselves on a rustic seat shaded with honeysuckle and jasmine.

"How often," said Fritz, "when we have been returning from hunting, have we seen our mother working here!"

"One day," said Jack, "she was asleep. I approached on tiptoe, and held my breath. I gently took away her knitting, and replaced it by some ortolans I had killed. I plucked one of them first, and scattered the feathers about, and then hid to watch the result. She woke, extended her hand to take her work, and caught the ortolan. She looked at it, rubbed her eyes, stared around, and found nothing. I then came up as if I had just returned, and kissed her. 'This is very odd,' she said; 'I could have declared that I was knitting, and I find I was plucking ortolans—not only that, but I have no idea where I got them.' Nevertheless, she got them ready for dinner, and when I thought they must be nearly roasted, I went in and put the knitting on the spit in their stead. You may imagine her astonishment,-knitting cooking on the spit, and that to feed hungry hunters as we were! So seeing that she was ready to imagine she was in some measure out of her mind. I kissed her, and told her the whole story, and we laughed over it very heartily."

"We could laugh then," said Fritz, sadly.

"Poor, dear mother, no wonder she was put out. Another day, Miss Woolston and Sophie were working here some very mysterious things, which they always concealed as we approached."

"My Black's collar," said Fritz.

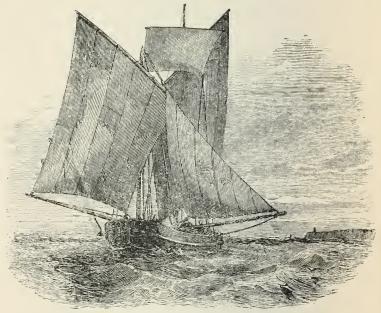
"My tobacco pouch," said the pilot.

"Well, I came up stealthily, and was nearly discovering the secret, when Knips, who was playing at their feet, came bouncing

in my direction, pulling a ball of cotton after him, and they looked round and surprised mc, when I hoped to surprise them. They began to scold me, but it was so nice to be scolded."

"Ah," said Fritz, "we shall not be scolded again very soon."

As chickens come one after the other to eat the corn thrown to them, so one remembrance after another came into the minds of the boys as they sat there.



The Pinnace set sail, and bowled away meirily to the northward.

Day was beginning to break, and the cock crowed.

"Let us be off," said Willis. "We must put an end to this."

Jack hurriedly gathered two bouquets, and suspended them
to the two trees in which the families slept.

"By these," he said, "they will know we came back for a last look."

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They knelt down for a moment, then arose and disappeared amid the trees.

"I declare," said Willis, "that whichever of you stops again I shall look upon as a milksop."

Half an hour later, on March 8th, 1812, the pinnace set sail, and bowled away merrily to the northward.





CHAPTER XIX.

The Mary.—Largest Rivers Commence by a Drop of Water.—The First Ship.—Steam.—A Calm.—Leather Trousers.—When Wine is Poured out One must Drink It.

HE Mary—for that was the name which Fritz had given to the pinnace—had been at sea for ten days in most beautiful weather, but without a breath of wind. On this account they thought it would have been prudent to have started younger, so that they might be less likely to arrive at their destination with grey beards.

The ocean is rarely so calm, particularly in books, and the reason is very simple, namely, because everything then is insipid, the sails flap lazily against the masts, the sailors sleep, and the reader does the same. But a tempest, on the contrary, offers a thousand incidents to the reader. The boat may be swamped, somebody may cry the water gains upon the pumps, the crew throw the cargo into the sea, and at length there is nothing left to throw away but themselves, and they accordingly embark on a raft. They are then tossed about by the waves for days, and suffer all the pangs of hunger and thirst. They pine away, good nature and affection give way to insensibility and selfishness. The brother and the friend are nothing more than so much flesh. If they were less honest they would assassinate each

other, but as they are well brought up they endure their fate. It would be first Jack, and then Fritz, and at length Willis, who would be obliged to eat himself so as not to die of hunger, which would be like the unfortunate Count Ugolin devouring his own children so that they might save their father's life. Unfortunately for sensation, but fortunately for our travellers, nothing of the kind happened. They had plenty to eat and drink, and were not likely to become cannibals. The fresh water they had brought with them had become bad, but they endeavoured to approach the coast so as to find a spring.

"I understand the sea," said Jack, "as I understand the heaven and the earth, that is to say, that I know that God created it; but whence can a river like the Danube come from, for instance? where are the immense reservoirs which can supply the Rhone or the Ganges?"

"The river at first is nothing but a tiny spring," said Fritz, "trickling from the sand or from the glacier, a tiny stone is sufficient to turn its course; but it will disengage itself, hurry down to the plain, ever increasing as it goes, receives tributaries, flows in a larger bed, is called by some name or another, and that is all."

"That is all very well," said Jack; "but I want to know the source of sources; you talk of hills, but water, because of its weight and fluidity, ought to occupy the lowest spots of earth."

"Rain, snow, fog, and vapour," said Fritz, "furnish the enormous masses of water which flow over all the globe. The vapours which rise from the sea are more than sufficient to supply all the rivers. Now there are some mountains which arrest vapour which collect in caverns or holes in the rocks, or filter down to feed the rivers, or fertilize the meadows. If you cut away the Alps you will suppress at one stroke the Rhone and the Po."

"We will not do so," said Jack, "it will be a pity."

"Let us talk of the sea," said Willis. "What was the first ship?"

"The ark, I think," said Fritz.

"From which we may conclude," said Jack, "that Noah was the first admiral."

"We know from Scripture," said Fritz, "that the first navigators were Noah's descendants, which prove that it was in some measure due to the deluge and the ark that navigation was instituted, and that its first progress was manifested in those countries adjacent to which the ark rested."

"In that case the navy must be of very ancient date."

"About two thousand three hundred and forty-eight years before Christ. But the human race soon degenerated, the old traditions were lost, people went about on planks and rafts, and in canoes hollowed out by fire."

"That is what the natives do in the Indian Archipelago to this day."

"There is, however, mention made in the book of Job of pirates who attacked merchants' vessels, and David and Solomon sent fleets to sea."

"I maintain that one must have had firmness and courage to launch a heavy machine like a ship into the water, and to trust oneself and one's goods to it."

"Once the equilibrium of floating bodies is known," said Fritz, "once it is ascertained that a solid body can only displace its own weight in water——"

"By Jove," said Jack, "once the properties of the loadstone is discovered, when one is familiar with astronomy and all the other arts and sciences, things will go on smoothly enough. But before that. The atoms of water are without coherence. A line of battleship weighs two million pounds, and when one does not happen to know all about it one may be astonished that the sea does not open and swallow it up."

"That is what would happen if it was heavier than its own volume of water. Wood is generally lighter than water."

"Oh, wood is all very well; but how about men, iron, and the cargo i"

"And the empty space, which you forget, which weighs nothing! Making every allowance, a ship is lighter than an equal volume of water, so it floats, and its specific gravity is lost from the moment that the weight displaced is equal to its own. One can imagine the resistance of such a mass to a slight breeze."

"But when there is a wind," said Jack.

"And sails," said the pilot.

"Sails," replied Fritz, "were first used by the Egyptians, when Isis went in search of Osiris, who had been killed by his brother Typhon, and whose limbs had been thrown into the Nile, she took off the sheet which covered her head, and placed it on a pole stuck in the boat, which suddenly communicated great speed to the vessel."

"There was a female pilot, if you like," said Willis; "but nowadays the wind is more exacting. It is not content with such a spread as that, it must have regular canvas."

"The Venetians," said Fritz, "were the hardiest and most skilful sailors. They made the tour of Africa, down the Red Sea, and returned by the Straits of Gibraltar."

"Without a compass?"

"Apparently so, since it was not till the fourteenth century that it was invented, either by H. de Berez or by Jean Goya, for authorities differ."

"You do not say that the Chinese and Hindoos also claim the glory of this invention?"

"I do not wish to pass over any one; as with the compass so with printing—"

"Gutenberg," interrupted Jack.

"Gunpowder."

"Berthold Schwartz."

"And like the seven or eight towns which dispute the honour of Homer's birth, like everything else that is great, useful, or glorious. That is to say, that the vanity of nations induces them to claim the greatest share possible. The wisest thing to do in

such a case is to conform to the best authorities, and that is what I do."

"That may be," said Willis; "but it appears to me rather a stretch to say the navigators went round Africa without a compass."

"Because you judge the navigation then by what it is now."

"The ancients went from cape to cape without ever losing sight of land. If they ventured into the open sea, and could not see the sun or stars they would have been lost, or, at any rate, steered a wrong course."

"It is really a wonderful thing," said Jack, "that a little piece of iron should be a guide in the trackless waters, and replace those thousand stars which sometimes fail a sailor on cloudy nights."

"It is an emblem of faith," said Willis, "which ought to make up for the uncertainties of reason."

"As for the fleets of old time," said Fritz, "without even excepting those which fought at Actium and at Salamis, one of our men-of-war would have been sufficient to crush them all."

"In those days they also had a great advantage over us. The winds were then well-known individuals, and called themselves Œolus and Boreas, and so on. People could go and call on them in their caverns, and for those who addressed them politely they were very obliging, so Dido obtained the contrary winds she wished to prevent Æneas from going away."

"One could do better than that nowadays," said Willis. "You can go ahead of the wind."

"One goes ahead, perhaps; but you are also becalmed."

"On the contrary, one advances with great rapidity, and in whatever direction you please."

"Well," said Willis, "where did such a thing ever happen?"

"It was not more than five years ago that an American engineer, Fulton, passed down the Hudson river in a steamboat without sails or oars."

"Without water, perhaps," said Jack.

"No, not without water; but he breasted the currents and the biggest waves without any trouble and without any assistance from the wind, so that I did not trouble myself to notice whether the smoke from my pipe went to the north or to the east."

"Willis is taking his revenge," said Jack, "and giving us a little of the marvellous."

"I am too foolish to tell stories," replied the pilot. "You may believe me, upon my word, you may."

"Perhaps in that case you will tell us how the thing moved?"

"By steam."

"But how?"

"That is the question," said Willis. "You may well understand that every one was much excited about it. Some said one thing, some another; but it seemed," said the sailor, "that the vapour from water developed by boiling occupies a space seventeen or eighteen hundred times greater than the same water in the liquid state, and this force of expansion increases so rapidly by the aid of fire that the steam will eventually reach a volume forty thousand times greater than that of the water from which it arose."

"Say a hundred thousand times greater, if you wish; once the steam has evaporated, what are you to do with it if it becomes clouds first and rain afterwards?"

"The vapour," said Willis, "arises from boiling water, which, when imprisoned in some vessel, assumes all the strength and elasticity which it would possess in volume. Fancy an impetuous young man restrained for a long time by the presence and advice of his parents, and who when left to himself suddenly throws off all the restraint."

"Well, Willis, now we have your impetuous young man, your steam, I mean, shut up in a vessel and as elastic as possible. What next?"

"Ah!" replied the pilot, "I am not an engineer, nor a mechanic. Suppose a huge boiler, full of compressed steam which expands indefinitely a cylinder, pistons, safety valves, two great

wheels placed outside the ship beating the water with their paddles, and perhaps you may have an idea of the steamboat."

"Pooh!" said Jack. "We have done the same thing with the roasting-jack some years ago. Don't you remember, Fritz?"

"Yes, but we went very slowly," said Fritz.

"You were speaking just now of nations that claimed inventions from each other. Well, the Spaniards pretend that their countryman, Blas de Garay, discovered a means of applying steam to machinery in the sixteenth century."

"I do not believe it," said Jack.

"Why not?"

"Because any Spaniard who has not about thirty-six names, such as Don Pedrillo y Alvarez y Toledo y Concha y Alonzo y Martinez y Xacarilla, or something like that, cannot be a real Spaniard."

"The Italians claim Branca as the inventor; the Germans, Solomon de Causs; the French, Denis Papin; the Americans, Fulton; the Scotch, Henry Bell; the English, Jonathan Hulls——"

"And the Swiss?" said Jack.

"They had nothing to do with it."

"The Swiss," said Fritz, proudly, "invented liberty in 1307. I mean wise and moderate freedom, and the inventors were Melchthal, Fürst, and William Tell."

"You have no idea of the excitement this steam causes," said Willis. "The incredulous laugh at it, enthusiasts pretend that it can be applied to everything. According to them the greatest distances can be traversed in almost no time, and that they can go from place to place like an arrow."

"In that case one could not breathe," said Jack.

"A Parisian can say to his wife, 'I am going to Bordeaux, but I will return by dinner-time.' A cigar lighted in Berlin will last till you get to Vienna!"

"Willis, Willis, I begin to think that you are romancing!"

"I do not say that such things exist now, but they will exist

very shortly; so, instead of hiring a carriage, we shall have a locomotive; stokers will replace coachmen."

"And, instead of saying, 'Put the horses on,' we shall say, 'Light the fire,' I suppose?"

"Journeys will be organized at a certain price. Everything will be settled in advance—the sights to see, the walks to take, the dinner hour, bedtime——"

"And what is to become of the surprises, the adventures, which give such a charm to travel?"

"All put an end to."

"So they will drive people in flocks from one country to another. They might as well get a few shepherds' dogs to keep them in hand."

"Probably those trains will be pleasure trains."

"The only advantage that I see in this mode of locomotion is that the machine cannot be upset."

"No; but you may be thrown out."

"Is it very dangerous?"

"That entirely depends upon the way you fall."

"However, all this does not make our present progress any quicker," said Jack, as he opened the 'log'; "let me see:

"'9th March.—Bore N.E. before a good breeze—too sorrowful to eat—saw a seal.

"'roth.—Saw some islands, which we called "Willis's Archipelago."

"'11th.—Chopping sea—ill—no appetite.

"'12th.—Dead calm—shot a gull—obliged to pass the night amidst reefs—talked of home.

"'13th.—Like yesterday—without the gull.

"'14th.—Ditto.

" '15th.—Ditto.'"

"Cheerful vanity. Now I know why this is called the Pacific."

"Alas," said Willis, thinking of the *Unicorn*, "it does not always act up to its name."

"'15th,' continued Jack—'doubled the point of a low island which we called "Isle Sophia."'"

"But all these islands have been named many times before," said Willis,



Bread-fruit Tree.

"Therefore a name more or less cannot hurt; they will never te found out."

"'16th.—Crossed a rapid eurrent—sounded to sixty fathoms.

"'17th.—Plucked a fowl—very melancholy."

"Make your mind easy," said Willis, as he levelled his glass;

"I can see land about three miles away which it seems we can gain easily, and we may find a spring."

"And no savages!"

"But," said Fritz, "savages are not everywhere in the world."

"All very well, but if we cannot obtain water to drink without running the risk of being caten ourselves——"

"I have rarely seen a country which is more beautiful to look at," said Willis; "the shore is low and wooded, with occasional meadows; there is a beautiful bay just made for our reception. By Jove, it is inhabited. I can see cottages, bread-fruit trees, and natives too. Bread-trees! can savages obtain what we have to make with much trouble from corn by mills and baking, etc. We are the savages, I think."

The bread-fruit tree is something like our European apple tree. The fruit is round and covered with a thick rind, and is about as large as a pine-apple. It is yellow when ripe, and of an agreeable taste. It is gathered before it is quite ripe and cooked, the rind wastes, and the interior is found a white powdered substance in the shell, like a crumbled white loaf.

"Lend me the telescope, if you please," said Friz; "let me have a look at those people yonder. They seem to me to be clothed in scale armour."

"Perhaps they are descendants of the Crusaders."

"Some have red pantaloons."

"That is to say, they are tattooed, and what you think armour is nothing but their skin."

"Do you think so, Willis?"

"I am sure of it."

"It is a very cheap sort of clothing," said Jack, "and will wear well, but is not waterproof."

They were not much more than a gunshot distance from the land, when an old chief walked into the water to meet them. He made a sign for his companions to remain on shore. He was tall and well made, he held a green rod in one hand, and with the other he stroked his long white beard.

"According to all custom that is a sign of friendship," said Jack.

"Yes," said Willis; "particularly as the other fellows are pouring water on their heads, which is the greatest mark of amity that Polynesian savages can display."

"Gentlemen," said Jack, "we have the honour to salute you," and he raised his hat as he spoke.

"Be cautious," said Willis; "they often treat you to an arrow and a smile at the same time. They are very treacherous. We must be on our guard. I will go ashore in the canoe while you cruise about here ready to cover my retreat in case of need."

The boys were at first opposed to Willis's plan, and objected to his encountering danger alone; but as he was firm, they had to give way. They had taken with them the remaining glass beads which had been saved from the wreck, some of which had been employed by Mr. Muller in making porcelain.

Taking with him some of these trinkets, and a gun and ammunition, Willis threw some empty casks into the canoe and pulled ashore. When the natives saw a person approaching in a skin-boat, which appeared to be part of himself, they forgot the command of their chief, and advanced into the water as high as their waists to see this curious fish which came towards them. They uttered discordant yells, which Willis attributed to their astonishment and admiration.

But they were greatly agitated; they hurried to and fro in all directions. Something was being prepared; whether of a friendly character or not was a very important question. Fritz and Jack followed every movement of the crowd. It was quite impossible to abandon the boat, but it was equally impossible to abandon Willis to the savages, so they pulled in as close as possible, and Jack jumped ashore a few seconds after Willis.

The pilot advanced resolutely, and the crowd opened to allow to pass up to him a young chief, followed by half a dozen priests carrying idols. These images were made of wood, and were of colossal size, of repulsive and grotesque appearance,

covered with feathers; the eyes were mother-of-pearl, with a black nut in the centre; their teeth had formerly graced the mouth of a dog.

At the same time they deposited at Willis's feet a quantity of vegetables and fruit; the priests then came and knelt down with every sign of worship before the pilot.

Some of the natives also approached Jack, rubbing their noses against his in the most friendly manner, singing, dancing, and expressing their joy in numerous ways.

They were, as a rule, tall, well-made men, with flat faces and thick noses, prominent lips, and high cheek bones. They were necklaces and ornaments of shells, and were armed with bows and arrows, lances, and small maces of very hard wood weighted at the end and occasionally decorated with human teeth.

Their costume consisted chiefly of the tattooing before mentioned, which was executed with wonderful skill and exactness.

"Willis," said Jack, "is there anything curious about my nose?"

"No," replied the pilot, "it is the native way of saying 'How do you do?' in New Zealand, and I suppose it is the same here."

"Why do they not do the same to you ther?"

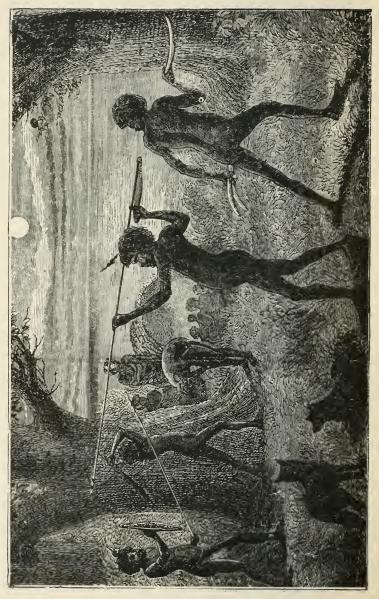
"I have no idea."

At length the priests got up, and the chief, whom they called Tarai-Opau, addressed a speech to Willis, in a sing-song manner, which lasted about half an hour.

"Illustrious chief," replied the sailor, "I am very sensible of all your kindness; but, to tell the truth, I have not an idea what you mean; but you have placed at my feet arguments whose eloquence is acknowledged in every country."

"We do not want food; but will you kindly point us out a spring?"

"Tell them that, if you like," said Jack; "but you might as well ask them what is the time by their cathedral clock."



"You like to joke, but they have a clock more to be depended on than any we possess."

"The sun?"

"Yes."

"And when the sun is not shining?"

"Then they are in the same plight as we are when we have forgotten to wind up our watches.—Gentlemen," continued Willis, as he distributed some glass beads, "do me the favour to accept these trifles."

The savages accepted them willingly, and showed their delight by all kinds of wild cries and dances, and poor Jack had to submit to about three hundred friendly noses.

In a few moments a solemn silence superseded this uproar. The oldest priest brought a red cloak like that covering the idol, and threw it over Willis's shoulders; they gave him a plumed headdress and a fan. He was then placed in the midst of the procession which set out for the interior of the island.

"Excuse me," said Willis, stopping suddenly, "but I would rather remain here."

They then took one of the idols from the pedestal and put Willis on it. The peculiarly devoted manner with which all this was done astonished our travellers not a little.

Jack suddenly remembered that the Romans used to dress up their sacrifices, and a horrible suspicion crossed his mind. "Willis," he cried to the pilot, who was now being carried away in triumph, "let us arm ourselves. Do you jump over the heads of your worshippers, and let us gain the shore. Fritz can clear the beach with the cannon, and we can shoot the first that attempts to follow us."

"We should be killed twenty times over," said Willis, "with their lances before we could quit the shore."

"Most likely; but Willis, do you think I have no feeling? We love you as a second father!"

"I think they mean well," said the pilot; "but as they seem

inclined to take me alone you had better take charge of the canoe."

"I will follow you wherever you go, even into their soup-kettle."

"In that case, Master Jack, let us trust to Providence. The wine is poured out, we must drink it."





CHAPTER XX.

Jupiter Tonans.—The Pilot's Thunder.—The Great Rono.—Manners and Customs.— Queen Tomio.—Rono Disgraced.—Pray for Us.



to the capital or to the gemonia. This state of uncertainty was all the more cruel as he was accompanied by crowds of insects which obscured the air, so that he was compelled to swallow some as he breathed. So he lighted his pipe, and at the first puff of smoke the procession halted, while the natives prostrated themselves in an attitude of the greatest fear

and veneration. The great Job himself never created a greater sensation than Willis's smoking did, and if he had wished to make his escape no one would have hindered him, nor have dared to follow a being who vomited fire and smoke.

Willis now began to play his part as divinity. It seemed to him that the terror he inspired would ensure his safety; and at the first hostile demonstration he would only have to light his pipe to awe them completely.

It certainly was a most curious sight to see the pilot seated on a litter with a helmet on, and covered with a cloak, looking round on the prostrate crowd like an eagle on so many seagulls, and puffing the smoke carelessly from the corners of his mouth.

A Native House.

Occasionally one native, bolder than the rest, would venture to raise his eyes to the divinity; but at the first puff he would resume his cringing posture. Some of the natives even thrust their heads into the sand as if to hide them.

At length the volcano was exhausted; Willis knocked out the ashes, put the pipe into his pocket, and the procession resumed its march.

In about half an hour they stopped at the door of a hut somewhat larger than the rest. This was the house of Rono. A female, in an elaborate toilette of flowers and shells, and who was of immense size, came out. She took the pilot by the hand and led him into the temple, and made him sit down beneath a hideous and gigantic figure with a headdress like the former one, but covered with a white cloak.

Then the priestess took from one of the twelve priests a sucking pig, and, having uttered a long prayer, she strangled the animal, which was prepared and cooked. The flesh was then offered to Willis with much solemnity, accompanied with cocoanuts and cups of kava, a sort of liquor. As a further mark of respect, one of the priests attempted to feed the pilot with the flesh, but he refused gently. The priestess then made the attempt, and Willis resisted no longer.

There is, after all, some inconvenience in being a deity.

The kava root is a species of pepper, which the natives mix with water in a large vase after they have chewed the root. They then pour this liquor into cups; and this was what the Hebe had presented to Willis.

Willis had courage enough to taste it, and some was offered to Jack, who refused it, saying he had breakfasted too late.

Meanwhile, another person has entered the temple, and having kneeled to the pilot, he moved backwards towards the place where young Muller was standing, as far as possible away from the nose-rubbing process and the kava. He was distinguished from the other natives by a waistbelt; he was perhaps a trifle less bronzed, but his tattooing was much the same as the others.

He was a Portuguese deserter, and had been twenty years in the island. He had married the chief's daughter, and become prime minister, which he could not have done in his own country, as European ministers are required to read and write—

Preparing the Kava.

accomplishments which are superfluous in Polynesia.

As amongst us savages can be civilized, this civilized man had become savage amongst the Polynesians, and had adopted their manners and customs, and scarcely thought of his native country, except to wonder how he ever could have submitted to the restraints of civilization.

Nevertheless,he recollected a few words of English, and informed Jack that the King Toubourai - Tamaïdi,

accompanied by the queen, intended to go on board the pinnace next day to pay their respects to the great Rono.

"His Majesty," the minister said, "would have been amongst the first to prostrate himself, but he unfortunately lives in a RONO. 219

distant part of the island; but he is running here as quick as he can."

"Who is the great Rono?" asked Jack.

"You cught to know better than I since you came with him."

Without exactly realizing the situation Jack replied diplomatically, "I know that, but I wish to see that our ideas were agreed upon this point."

He was then given to understand that Rono had lived there about a century before under one of the first kings of Hawaï. Being of a very jealous disposition, he had slain his wife in a



The Royal Canoe.

moment of anger, and then from grief and sorrow he lost his senses and ran about the island killing every one he met. At last, in despair, he embarked in a great canoe, and having promised to return in about twelve hundred moons, in a white face and on a floating island, he disappeared.

This tradition had been piously preserved. The natives of Hawaï, who are not more extravagant about idols than more civilized people, had added Rono to the number of their gods. Sacrifices had been slain in his honour, and every year, on the anniversary of his departure, there were public games, sports,

and combats. Just now the twelve hundredth moon had expired, and the pinnace had arrived. Kaon, the chief priest, and his daughter One-La, the priestess of the god Rono, had solemnly declared that this was he who had come to accomplish this prophecy. Henceforth Willis was Rono.

Jack was very much pleased to be the companion of a deity, and was quite reassured as to his being cooked. He was not oblivious, however, of the fact that if the illusion were broken the danger would be greater than ever. At Hawaï, as everywhere else, the greater the height you fall, the more readily men spurn you when you are down. So as soon as the ceremonies were drawing to a conclusion, Jack went and knelt down before Willis and said:

"Oh, mighty Rono, I now know why the noses of these natives have been rubbed against mine while you have escaped;" and then he told them the legend he had heard from the minister.

They soon afterwards retraced their steps to the shore, Willis receiving the absurd adoration of all those who pressed upon him. They strewed his path with fruit, sucking pigs, and cocoanuts, and were only too happy when Rono deigned to accept them.

The people appeared to be good-natured and sensible, living on from day to day and not troubling themselves at all about the future, and were they happier in consequence? Yes, if one admits that the child is happier than the man, and that one loses in happiness and repose what one gains in knowledge of the world. Yes, if happiness is not exclusively apportioned to certain people and to certain characters. Yes, if with content and peace of mind it can be found everywhere.

The native houses, if they can be so called, are composed of three rows of posts, one on each side and one in the middle, on which they suspend an inclined roof without any walls.

They do not bury their dead, but place them in a sort of hammock, called a *toupapau*, with provisions in plenty for the corpses, which shows that the natives have a very vague idea of

the existence of souls. When a child dies they place flowers on the bier.

They express their grief by the numerous wounds they inflict upon the face and head with sharks' teeth. When they think they are likely to die, they cut off two joints of the little finger to appease their god. Nearly one in every ten of the inhabitants were thus mutilated.

Although the worshippers of Rono appeared very good-natured, here and there were visible some human jaw-bones with the teeth entire suspended over certain huts, and at the sight of these Jack was very much put out, and Willis made up his mind to keep up the divinity delusion to the end.

It was now late, and they knew that Fritz would be anxious about them, so they postponed laying in a supply of water till next day and regained the pinnace, after Jack had informed the prime minister that the great Rono would receive their majesties.

"Heaven be praised," said Fritz, "you have returned safe and sound. I was very anxious about you."

"Allow me to introduce you to a god instead of a pilot," said Jack. "I hope you will pay him proper respect."

"How about the water?" said Fritz, when he had been told all the events of the day.

"There is plenty of water, and they offered us a beverage, which is enough to cure your thirst by thinking of it."

At night they conceived the idea of setting off some fireworks, and the natives, struck with terror and admiration, concluded that the god had only let off his small thunders in the morning and kept the great ones till night.

Very early next morning the royal canoe, surrounded by a flotilla of smaller boats, came out to the pinnace.

Toubourai-Tamaïdi had thought it right to come out in full state; he wore an old uniform coat, very probably recovered from a wreck, the sleeves of which were too short, and which showed his elbows. This European dress was made the more absurd by the tattoo on his skin, which served him for trousers.

Queen Tomio was regally wrapped in a large piece of cloth. The lobes of her cars were tremendously distended by quite a magazine of bone and tortoise-shell ornaments. Her nails were about three inches long; and if one might judge by the number of finger joints she had cut off, she must have been of a very delicate constitution.

The king and queen were accompanied by musicians, who remained in their canoe. The instruments consisted of a flute



Polynesian Idols.

with four holes, which they played with the nose, and a big drum made out of a hollow trunk of a tree, covered with some skin or other. The noise produced by these instruments made the travellers regret they were not deaf.

"Great Rono," said Jack, "pray tell these people we hate music."

"Shut up!" roared Willis.

The noise was re-doubled.

The pilot hoped to make himself better understood if he put his hand to his mouth and roared at them, but it had quite the contrary effect to what he expected. The noise again re-doubled.

"I give it up," he said. "You make them hold their tongues, if you can."

"I will try," said Jack, as he lighted a cracker. "If they do not understand English or German they may understand pyrotechnics."

The cracker gave forth but little smoke, but at length it bounded right into the midst of the musicians with a noise like musketry fire. The natives went as far off as they could, but at each explosion the cracker jumped towards them once again, and gave rise to many contortions and cries of terror.

Their majesties were humbly kissing Willis's feet when the explosion caused them to jump up, but instead of taking it as the musicians did, they laughed till they cried.

This over, they examined the pinnace, and were much astonished at what they saw. But they were more than ever surprised when Fritz offered the queen a looking-glass. She looked behind it and all round, and was quite unable to find out whose reflection it was; but when she saw it was no other than her royal self, whose features—the glass being curved—had somewhat lengthened, she went to her husband to measure her cheeks by his, as she could not understand their apparent disproportion.

At the luncheon, which was offered to the king, he wished to eat with a knife and fork as his host did, but habit was too strong for him, and although they put some meat on a fork and gave it to him to eat, he held it close to his ear instead of to his mouth, while he ate with the other hand.

At length, seeing that Willis took a pinch of fine powder from a box and thrust it up his nose, the king and queen wished to do the same. But they very soon began to sneeze, crying out

loudly, and making awful faces, and at length they leaped into the sea like frogs and disappeared.

"Sire," cried Jack, "where are you going to?"

Up to this point the whole thing had been nothing but a comedy; but the natives, having assembled in great numbers upon the beach, no sooner saw their king and queen leap into the water with a terrified expression, than they imagined that the travellers wished to kill them, and accordingly shot a cloud of arrows at the boat.

"Hullo! are they shooting at the great Rono?"

"This is just like the people everywhere," said Fritz. "He who is worshipped one day, is condemned the next."

"And all because we treated Mr. and Mrs. Toubourai-Tana—I do not know what they call themselves—to a pinch of snuff. It would serve those fellows right to give them a volley of grape shot."

"Perhaps they are fond of their sovereign," said Willis; "it is only natural."

"Natural or not" said Fritz, as he drew an arrow which had penetrated the capstan, "but if this dart had hit one of us it would have reduced our number considerably."

"Master Jack thought the expedition monotonous; he wanted something to stir it up, and has got it."

"I also want some water to drink," said Willis; "I wish you could say we had got that."

"It will be prudent to go elsewhere for it, Willis," as he loosened the sail. "Fortunately the wind is freshening, and we can get away."

A second flight of arrows was discharged as they started, but they did not reach the boat.

"Rono seems to have gone down in popular estimation," said Fritz.

"I should recommend that priestess to retire into private life."

"Impossible."

" Why?

"Because she is too fat to live in any ordinary hut. She must have a hut. But alas, for the changefulness of human nature," said Jack, as he wrapped himself up in a sail as in a Roman toga. "Behold the great Rono banished from his country, and obliged to lay his proscribed head on a strange pillow, like Marius at Minturne, like Coriolanus amongst the Volscians, like Aristides, whom people get tired of hearing called just, and many others."

"Who are all these people, I should like to know?" said Willis.

"Very respectable people indeed," said Fritz. "So, Willis, you need not mind being classed with them."

"Only yesterday," said Jack, "a whole tribe were on their knees before you. They made sacrifices in your honour, burned incense on your altars; the whole crowd bowed down before your tobacco smoke, shoals of fruit and sucking pigs rained upon your path. To-day we get but a shower of arrows, and not a drop of water."

"You can now quench your thirst by the recollection of that beverage you had yesterday," said Fritz. "I have no such resource."

"Yes, that was a nice thing, certainly. But no matter, I am not sorry for having seen those people. They have corrected some ideas I entertained. Thus, I ask you, what is air? You reply on the faith of our European knowledge that air is a fluid—the result of the mixture of two gaseous elements, oxygen and azote, which are in proportions of twenty-one to seventy-nine."

"Well."

"Well, that is not absolutely true."

"If you mean by that, that air contains accidentally a vapour of water, carbonic acid gas, and specks of dust——"

"I mean by that, that the air of the island of Hawaï is a threefold composition, namely, oxygen, azote, and insects."

"I agree with you."

"I shall communicate this interesting discovery to the first scientific society we meet."

"In the Pacific Ocean?"

"There or elsewhere."

"I have always thought," said Willis, "that air is simply air; that is to say, a vapour, a cloud, a nothing."

"Nothing? do you know what weight of air supports your body, Willis?"

"No; but it does not trouble me, whatever it is."

"It is nevertheless twelve to fifteen thousand kilograms."



Tahitan Nose Flute.

"When people wish you to believe such things as that they give you a reason."

"You have bathed sometimes, I suppose?"

"Of course."

"In the sea?"

" Yes."

"You know what water weighs."

"I know it is heavy."

"Water weighs seventy-seven times more than air; that is to say, that the weight of a cubic mètre of air is two pounds and a half, and a cubic mètre of water is about two thousand pounds.

What do you calculate is the pressure of water when you are swimming? I suppose you do not know enough of arithmetic to count?"

"I am afraid not."

"Nor do I. Well how is it that a wave does not carry you away as the wind does a blade of grass?"

"Because there are others all around me that keep me up, and one neutralizes the other, and I resist them."

"And how is it that these waves with which you battle do not overwhelm you?"

"I fancy it is because the solids, and the liquids, the gases, and I do not know what all we have in us, make equilibrium."

"And do you not wish that there were some better reason to give for the air?"

"But I do not feel the air, while on the other hand, when I go into the water it oppresses me, so if I wish to advance I must fight against it."

"That is because you are made to live in air and not in water. You ask the first fish you meet if water is any obstacle to its course."

"Do you think it would answer me, Master Fritz?"

"Why not," said Jack, "if it is properly educated?"

"Ever since you have existed you have been exposed to the pressure of the atmosphere."

"Do you ever remember having lived without breathing?" said Jack.

"No," replied the pilot, ingenuously.

"So," said Fritz, "if you felt it at a certain time it is because it produces an impression which it has not hitherto produced, all sensation is a matter of contrast."

"That is to say, that I would not find the Maryland tobacco so good if I had not smoked a commoner kind before?"

"Precisely. So in the Cordilleras of America there is a farm half-way up Antisana, where travellers arriving either from the topr from the plain meet; those who come down feel very hot, and those who go up feel very cold, nevertheless they are both in exactly the same temperature, so one cannot feel hot without having been cold, and cannot appreciate cold without having been hot."

"Our bodies," said Jack, "never mark more than thirty-five degrees above zero. In the winter the skin becomes a worse conductor of interior heat, and does not allow the vapour to escape. In the summer the pores are more open, and permit the perspiration to escape."

"One may deduce from this," said Fritz, "that supposing a man to breathe twenty times a minute, the amount of heat he will give forth by such respiration would boil forty kilograms of cold water."

"Some day they may invent a little stove to be fastened to every man, so by means of a tube from his mouth he can act like a steam engine."

"I can prove to you that a long time ago," said Fritz, "men were but machines."

"But they must have had some engineers amongst them?"

"One in a thousand perhaps."

Night had now fallen, and with it a thick fog which enveloped the pinnace entirely.

"Willis," said Jack, "what is the difference between a fog and the clouds?"

"None," said the sailor, "except that a fog is a cloud in which we are, and a cloud is a fog in which we are not."

During the day they had run about thirty miles without seeing any land except a very small island surrounded by reefs; nevertheless, it was absolutely necessary that they should get some fresh water somewhere.

For greater security Willis had made up his mind to choose some uninhabited island.

"Let us say our prayers," said Willis, to the brothers, "and then you two can go to bed. I will take the first watch."

Prayer is a beautiful thing everywhere, but nowhere is it more

beautiful than at sea, with the blue vault above and the rocking billows beneath. It is then a grand thing to hear the voice of a sailor saying, "Star of the Sea, pray for us." And it did so, for as they prayed the moon rose and disclosed a low line of reefs; had they continued their course five minutes they would have been lost.





CHAPTER XXI.

Cannibals.—Adventures of a Cherry-coloured Ribbon and a Silver Cross.

HIS glimpse of moonlight did not last more than half a moment, but it was sufficient to warn them. The moon, like a modest benefactress, retired out of sight.

The safest thing to do was to lie to till daylight, and that is what they did. Next morning they set about to free themselves from the labyrinth of rocks which they had penetrated;

and while Willis steered them with all his skill in the hope of seeing some land inhabited by savages, Jack began to write an account of their adventures for those at Falcon's Nest.

"There is so much to say," he said, "that I do not know where to begin."

"Begin by sending your love," said Fritz.

"That is usually done at the end."

"There is nothing to prevent you doing it at the beginning as well."

"In the navy," said the pilot, "I always saw letters beginning, 'I take my pen in my hand."

"What else would you take it in if not in your hand?"

"Sometimes," said Willis, "people begin by saying, 'It is with fear and trembling that I take up my pen——'"

"I do not see any reason to tremble," said Jack; "and as our good friends at home will imagine that I write with my hand, not with my foot or an oar, I do not think I will follow the sailor's plan"

"I hope that your pigeon will not make a mistake in the

address."

"Nothing is more simple," said Fritz; "he only goes back to his nest and his young. If you had wings, Willis, you would go back to Glasgow to Susan."

"Certainly," said Willis; "but I have a heart."

"So have the birds. When pigeons pick up the grain they disgorge it for the benefit of their little ones. When they line their nests with down and all sorts of soft things, it is to protect their eggs and their young. Do you not think there is heart in all this?"

"It is instinct."

"Heart or instinct, the name is nothing. The Abbé Spallanzani saw two swallows, which had been carried to Milan, return to Pavia in fifteen minutes—that is, twenty-one miles—to their young."

"And what devotion, intelligence, and skill," said Jack. "A swallow, taken in a noose at the College of Quatre Nations in Paris, was released by its companions, which divided the cord by

continually pecking it with their beaks."

"And I will bet that its liberators threw a cloak over it to hide it from the view of its captors."

"You may joke if you like, Willis; but you have often seen a little bird on a branch hopping to and fro, and twittering and pecking right and left. You thought, I suppose, that it cared for nothing?"

"Let us admit, then, for argument sake, that a sparrow is an individual."

"Yes, and an individual, too, which could eat half a bushel of corn."

"If it be of no more use than that—"

"I beg your pardon; it has been calculated that it destroys three thousand insects a week."

"But to return to the pigeons. When do you think they will reach Falcon's Nest?"

"Oh, in a very short time. These birds can fly about two hundred miles in six hours. Swallows have been seen in Senegal eight or nine days after they have left Europe."

"They pack their trunks quickly."

"Not so quickly as you think, Willis. When the time of departure approaches they first assemble in flocks on the roofs of houses and call to each other. At that cry all the families assemble. The young ones try their wings under their parents' supervision. They make their arrangements, and choose a chief."

"The drums beat," said Willis, "the trumpet sounds, the colours are uncased, and the army advances."

"Though you mean it for a joke you are not far from the truth. Geese, swans, and cranes always fly in order. Their phalanx is of triangular form, so as to diminish the resistance which the air would oppose to the rapidity of their flight."

"You are sure it is for that reason?"

"For what other could it be? If they appear likely to meet with birds of prey the leader alters their route by uttering a cry, which is taken up by the rest, and they follow their leader."

"And about provisions. I suppose they send pioneers on ahead to supply food and lodging?"

"If they think a storm is coming," continued Fritz, without noticing the quizzing of the pilot, "they descend to the earth."

"It appears that they forget their umbrellas."

"When they stop they establish sentries, which watch while the others sleep."

"And in case of alarm he fires his carbine, and hurries to headquarters."

"Most mighty Rono," said Jack, "you are becoming quite an adept at quizzing. My letter is finished," he added, as he passed

his pen to his brother. "It wants nothing now but you to send your love."

"That will be a heavy letter."

"Bah!" said Jack, "loves and kisses have no superficial weight. They make very little difference in the envelope." Then he wrote—

MONSIEUR MULLER.

AT FALCON'S NEST,

Prepaid.

IN OCEANIA

This note being fastened underneath the pigeon's wing, the bird flew away rapidly.

At length they came in sight of an island which showed no trace of inhabitants. A heavy surf was breaking; but the occasion was too important to wait for that, so Jack and Willis went ashore in the canoe.

They arranged to fire a shot in case of alarm, and to whistle when either of them discovered a spring. Then they separated.

Jack soon reached a palm wood some distance from the shore, but he had scarcely entered it when he was attacked by two savages, who neither gave him time to defend himself nor to fire. He whistled, but at the same moment he heard Willis whistle also, which deprived him of all hope of rescue. In fact, if he did whistle now the pilot would only think that he had heard his signal, and was coming to join him.

Here then was poor Jack, the life and soul of this history, at the prey of cannibals, and likely to suffer the most dreadful death.

Though we must die, there are different ways of dying. It is not so much the life which you leave as those whom you leave

behind you in life. But at twenty years of age, when we are in the flower of youth, and full of ardour and strength, when our sea is calm, and the rocks and shoals hidden, one wishes to continue the voyage. And then to die amidst our own friends is not to quit them altogether. They come to weep over our tomb, and renew the flowers on our grave. But this is a very different thing to being devoured by a cannibal.

Oh, how all the pleasant days of the past rushed into Jack's mind! He felt that he loved those he had parted from more than ever. What would he not have given to die on their breasts, to exchange one last grasp of the hand, one last kiss! What a sad glance he took around him, with what fervour he prayed for Divine assistance! But it was in vain that he resisted. What could he do against the iron muscles which held him? Already half stripped he threw himself on his knees, but they dragged him along. It appeared that nothing in the world could save him, but there was hope in store for him.

A cross suspended round his neck by a cherry-coloured ribbon attracted the attention of the savages. This trinket appeared to them more precious than anything else, but who should have it? They fought for it accordingly, and for a moment the captive was released.

Jack immediately jumped up, seized his gun, ran away for some paces, then turned suddenly round and fired at the more vigorous of his adversaries. The savage dropped from his opponent's arms, and lay apparently lifeless.

At the sight, and at the noise of the gun, the other savage took to flight, but carried with him the cross and the ribbon. Jack had now recovered his courage, and he pursued his flying enemy, somewhat rashly perhaps, and treated him to the second barrel. The savage was not hit; but believing himself in the presence of a supernatural power, he knelt down and clasped his hands supplicatingly. Jack stopped at a little distance, and with an imperious gesture desired the savage to put down the cross and ribbon. The man understood him.

"I pardon you in my mother's name," said the young man, and motioned him away. The savage did not wait a second bidding, but disappeared like an arrow.

The pilot, alarmed at the report of the gun, now hurried up. Jack and he met over the body of the wounded native.

You may imagine Fritz's anxiety all this time, who, hearing the shots, was unable to render any assistance.



lack and the Savage.

- "You are safe and sound, at least," said Willis, anxiously.
- "Except a few confusions and torn clothes."
- "We are unlucky."
- "Unlucky? Say rather we are special favourities of Heaven. So the country is inhabited after all."
 - "Very badly inhabited, if we may judge from the specimens"

"Look at this fellow," said Jack, raising the wounded man.
"He appears more frightened than hurt."

In fact, this fellow had only received a few shots in the shoulders; but judging by his grimaces he seemed to think himself dying.

"Fortunately my gun was not loaded with ball," said Jack.
"I should have been sorry to have killed a human being. I
do believe they wanted to eat me."

"I am not wicked, but I should have had no scruples about killing him like a dog."

"Oh! Willis," said Jack, as he gave a few drops of rum to the native, "we must have pity on him; he is a man, like ourselves."

"Like ourselves? Yes, in flesh and bones, but he has no soul."

"The soul is there, depend upon it, Willis; and if it were properly cultivated they would soon behave differently."

"Let us be off," said Willis.

"What, without water?"

"I have had time to fill our vessels."

"Fritz will be very anxious about us."

"All the more reason we should hurry away."

"My dear sir," said Jack, putting the savage with his back comfortably against a tree, "I trust I shall not see you again. I am very sorry for what has happened to you, but I cannot help it. I hope it will be a warning to you to treat strangers with more hospitality in future."

The savage raised his eyes for an instant to Jack's face as if to thank him for the care he had taken of him, and relapsed into his former listless state.

Twenty minutes later the canoe ran alongside the pinnace.

"Ah! brother," said Jack, as he threw himself into Fritz's arms, "I really thought I should never embrace you again."



CHAPTER XXII.

It is Sometimes Good to Suffer.—A Meeting.—The Essex.—William or Bob?

IIIS time they ran out to open sea in the direction of the Marian Islands; but how they were to accomplish the distance in their small boat they did not know. In vain day by day they searched the horizon for a ship.

"After all," said Jack, "it is good for us to suffer a little; one learns to appreciate happiness more; without sorrow one might think that

happiness was one's due. I have never been so glad to be alive as I have been since I thought I was about to die."

"And besides," said Fritz, "man has a great many blessings bestowed upon him. Light, the perfume of flowers, the songs of birds, music, the riches of art, domestic happiness, treasures of imagination and memory——"

"Also rheumatism," added Willis, rubbing his shoulder.

"Such a number of things," continued Fritz, "which give pleasure to the mind and heart. The impulses of the soul, when benevolence rules, the love of order, of the beautiful; justice, and honesty—"

"Grief and trouble," said Willis;—"but you are too young to know all these things—have a more real advantage in contrast

with joy. They give us new life, as it were. They develop the tenderest affections, excite our commiseration and pity, and make us share the troubles of our friends."

"So," said Fritz, "it happens that the misfortune of one is the happiness of another," and he aimed at a seagull as he spoke.

"Certainly," said Jack. "As you have missed your shot it is unfortunate for you, but a happiness for the gull."

"You never can help making joke of serious conversation."

"Do not put yourself out, brother; I was speaking seriously. How was the bird to know that he was to come quietly within reach of your gun?"

"What an idiot you are."

"Look there, there is a partridge or something looking at you under its nose with quite a provoking air."

"I see something else," said Willis, passing the telescope to Fritz, "look there."

"A sea bird?"

"I thought it was at first; but they do not increase in size in that manner."

"They must necessarily appear larger as they come nearer," said Fritz.

"Yes, but the increase has a limit, and I do not know any haleyon which has such topmasts as that."

"By Jove," said Fritz, "those wings are sails."

"Hurrah!" said the pilot, who had not given his hat a fling for a long time.

"Suppose it is the *Unicorn*," said Jack, "how curious it will be."

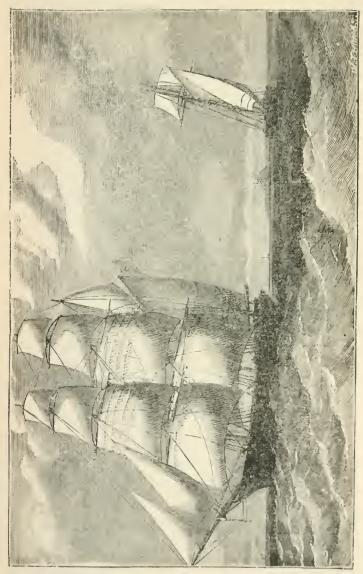
"Let us see if we can make her out. Ay, ay-"

"What is it, Willis?"

"Judging by the simplicity of her rig, I should say she was an English ship."

"Very well."

"How very well? What do you mean by very well? And



"Pinnacel, aboyl" cried the officer in charge.

the pilot a deserter? Do you know that a hempen cravat is waiting for me at the yardarm?"

"But if it be the Unicorn?"

"You will see that it is come expressly to oblige us; you may depend upon it."

"I have pretty good eyes," said Fritz, "but it is impossible

to distinguish anything yet."

- "I shall have the pleasure to see that good Captain Littlestone again. He might have been detained at the Cape for provisions."
- "Ah, Master Jack, do not open my wounds? Such meetings are very well in story books, but they do not happen in real life."
 - "Wait a minute," said Fritz, "she is approaching."
 - "What ensign does she carry?" asked the sailor.
 - "It appears to me—yes, that's it."
 - "The Unicorn?"
- "Who speaks of the *Unicorn?* The flag is a red ground with blue stripes on it."
- "The United States," said Willis, "as sure as I have a head on my shoulders. We will go to America; they have as good surgeons there as anywhere else. In that case," he added, hoisting the flag, "we must do things ship-shape."

An instant after the stranger went up "in the wind," fired a gun, and lowered a boat.

- "Pinnace ahoy!" cried the officer in charge. "Who are you?"
 - "Shipwrecked sailors," replied Fritz.
 - "What ship?"
 - "The Mary."
 - "What country?"
 - "Switzerland."
- "I do not think that Switzerland is a maritime nation," said
 - "Whence come you?" asked the midshipman again.
 - " From New Switzerland."

- "This officer is very inquisitive," said Jack.
- "Whither are you bound?" asked the officer, after a pause.
- "We cannot tell."
- "I hope these statements are true, if not satisfactory."
- "Hold your tongue, chatterbox!"

The impatient midshipman steered the boat alongside the pinnace, and then all was explained.

The *Essex* proved to be an American man-of-war; and Willis and the two young men were taken on board, and cared for with due regard to their condition.

Fritz and Jack had never been on board such a large vessel before; they were very much astonished, and soon went all over the ship, admiring and extolling everything they beheld. The pinnace, and the boats of which they had been so proud, were mere nothings in comparison to this trim vessel. Jack wanted to know whether this was not Europe itself, and whether it was necessary to go any further.

Unfortunately the *Essex* had something else to do, and for the time being she was obliged to cruise in the neighbourhood of the Antilles for some British vessels, or to be captured by them.

But that the crew did not anticipate; and the second day Jack went to the surgeon.

- "Sir," said he, "will you come with us to New Switzerland?"
- " Why?"
- "To perform an operation on our mother, who fears cancer."
- "Impossible, sir."
- "But it must be done, doctor."
- "What must be is this. I cannot leave here. I cannot abandon five hundred people for a single individual."
 - "But that individual is my mother."
- "And do you think, young man, that every one of this ship's company has not some relative who expects him, and to whom I am accountable for his life?"

Jack's eyes fell; he made no reply.

It was now daybreak. The sky was of a deep blue; the sea

as far as the eye could reach was covered with weeds and flowers. The ship glided lightly amongst them, and at length entered into the immense basin which extends along to the Bahamas. The cloud-tipped mountains of St. Domingo were on one side and the blue mountains of Cuba on the other. Immense masses of cloud rolled slowly along their base, and the higher peaks, peering above the clouds, looked like islands in the sky, or the heads of a race of giants.

- "We thought we should meet with the corvette, did not we?" said Willis.
 - "Yes; what of it?"
 - "Well, we have met with it for the last time."
 - "Is that all the news?"
 - "But we have one of the crew of the Unicorn on board."
 - "Really!"
 - "Ah, how my heart did beat when I met him!"
- "I should think so," said Jack; "mine is beating pretty fast now."
 - "I scarcely dare to question you," said Fritz.
- "I approached with open arms and tearful eyes and embraced him."
 - "What did he say to you?"
- "He said nothing at first, but then he gave me a regular shake of the hand—quite an English grip."
 - "Touching souvenir," said Jack. "Well, what then?"
- "When I called him by his name William, and asked for news of the corvette, he replied that his name was Bobby, and that he did not know what corvette I was talking of."
 - "We are getting on nicely."
 - "And you are sure it was he?"
 - "As sure as I am of myself."
- "But since his name is Bobby, and the other man's name is William ——"
- "He might have been obliged to change his name for some reason."

"How do you mean?"

"Oh, perhaps the crew mutinied, perhaps they abandoned poor Captain Littlestone on a desert island. Such things do happen you know. Perhaps—"

"Do you know, Willis, that you may carry your 'perhaps' too

"I must say, Master Fritz, that it puzzles me tremendously to be here in company with a man who knows all, who can set all our conjectures at rest, and not to be able to get anything out of him."

"Except a clasp of the hand," added Jack.

"Now, is not that bad luck?"

"There are sometimes most extraordinary resemblances."

"Do you know anything of this sailor?"

"I heard from the master that he was pressed in New York about six months ago."

"In what press?"

"Well, they call it pressing when a man is enlisted by force into the navy. It is an English term. I can tell you something about a pressgang if you like."

"We should like to hear it, Willis."

"It is nothing to boast of, but you may as well see both sides open; perhaps you will no longer call me your good and brave Willis after this."

"Have you done such terrible things then?"

"That depends how you look at it. Listen."





CHAPTER XXIII.

Willis's Story of the Press-Gang,

IVE-AND-TWENTY years ago," said Willis,
"I was quartermaster on board the Norfolk
We had to leave Portsmouth shorthanded,
and we anchored at Queenstown, on the coast
of Ireland. That evening the lieutenant
called me.

"'Quartermaster,' said he, 'you know Cork, I

think?'

"'Yes, sir,' I replied.

"" Then you had better come with us, and lose no time."

"The prospect of going on shore is always welcome to a sailor. We are very fond of the sea, but when we get a chance we like a change.

"I found twenty picked men in the boat armed to the teeth. We pulled ashore, and then made all sail for Cork. I did not know the object of the expedition, but I was ready for an adventure; and though I did not care about being on horseback, as I was, I was pretty comfortable for all that.

"It was quite daylight when we arrived; the men were not to join us till night.

"'Now,' said the lieutenant to me, 'do what you like until four o'clock this afternoon, and then meet me at the George

Inn If you come before time all right, but if you are a second late, look out.'

"When I arrived at the rendezvous he gave me a parcel, and told me to dress myself. In a few minutes I was ready.

"'Very good,' said he, 'very good; that will do.'

- "'Now,' he continued, 'we are going after the deserters from the *Oregon*. We believe they have taken refuge in one of these underground taverns, and you have got to catch them for me.'
 - "'That is to say,' I replied, 'that I must act as a spy.'
 - "'I do not understand you.'
 - "'I mean that—that—'
- "And instead of finishing my sentence the lieutenant finished it for me.
 - "'Do you disobey orders?' he said.
 - "'No,' I replied 'but---'
 - "'It is not for you to question my directions—is it?"
 - "'No,' I replied, 'yet---'
 - "'Do you want a round dozen at the gangway? If so---'
- "He always commenced like this, but very soon calmed down.
- "'Your frankness does not displease me,' he said, after a pause. 'And as we are alone, I do not mind confessing my feelings agree with yours; but we must do our duty, at any rate.'
- "So I put my scruples in my pocket, and proceeded to the most populous quarter, and made my way towards the extremity of the quay. My destination was a very low-class public-house. The door was low, and guarded by a wicket, through which I passed my head, and called out 'Who's there?' There was no reply.

"In such places as that, where they fear the press-gang, people do not trouble themselves to open the door in a hurry. I was not very comfortable in such a neighbourhood, I confess; and, notwithstanding a round dozen in prospect, I was very nearly turning away, when I perceived at the end of the street the

lieutenant walking quietly backwards and forwards smoking, with his hands in his pockets. I was encouraged by this, and called at the door again. This time some one came to the wicket.

- "' What do you want?' said a voice.
- "'I want to escape the patrol, who will arrest me.
- "'I am very sorry, but I cannot help you.'
- "'What, what! such a gentle voice, so hard a heart?"
- "" Well, perhaps if one knew who you were, or whence you came, a person might——"
- "'I am,' I said in a whisper, 'an unfortunate sailor. Our ship is in the harbour, and——'
- "'I understand now; come in,' said the young girl to me, and she opened the wicket.
- "I entered. She shut the gate as soon as I was inside, and barred and bolted it. I then penetrated to the kitchen.
- "In Great Britain often, but most particularly in Ireland, travellers assemble in the kitchen. A sanded floor, a dresser embellished with bright kitchen utensils, an old clock in a case, and a large table, white as snow, were all the luxuries of the apartment.
- "At the head of the table was seated the master of the house, a wild-looking Irishman with a red face. He was so enveloped in smoke that he seemed to be engaged on half-adozen pipes at the time. Add to that a dozen sailors all smoking; add to that, again, that their clothes were all, more or less, damp and steaming, and a thick smoke from the lamp, as well as a very disagreeable smell from the oil, and you will imagine I had some difficulty in making my way across the room, for I was in no way assisted by the sprawling legs of the half-tipsy sailors.
- "'Well, my lad, where do you come from?' said the master of the house.
- "'It can't matter to you where I come from, so long as I pay for my liquor,' I replied.
 - "' Where are you bound for?'
 - "'I will tell you that when I know myself. Meantime, serve

out the whisky, and take care that the water is not too strong in the punch.'

"This sally was received with general approbation.

"'You are welcome,' said the master, 'you and your money.'

"We drank all round. I then lighted my pipe, and did my share of the smoking.

"'Messmates,' I said, 'I suppose you want to go to sea again?'

"'If I ever had an idea of it I haven't now,' said one.

"'That is a curious question for a man to ask who knows what good punch is,' said a second.

"'Go to sea,' repeated a third; 'yes, with a bowl of punch and a glass in my hand.'

"'I am perfectly of your opinion, I replied; 'but in that case you ought to keep your eyes open.'

"'Why, my lad?'

"'Is there no spy amongst you?' I said, looking round."

"Ah, Willis!" interrupted Jack.

"'We are all deserters,' they cried, 'every one of us!'

"'Well,' I said, 'I know that the press-gang is out, and I myself have only just escaped them. If it had not been for this dark alley——'

"This news was received with a volley of imprecations, and a terrible tumult arose. They all got up as well as they were able and tumbled over the chairs and stools. Some paid their score hurriedly, others collected their bundles, to avoid the imaginary danger which they thought would overtake them.

"'And what are you going to do?' said an old hand.

"'I am bound for Cove,' I said, 'where I saw the blue flag flying, which, as you know, is a sign of no press.'

"' He is right,' said another.

"'I have a great mind to go with him,' said a third, who was so tipsy that he could not leave his chair.

"An old sailor, quite overcome with the punch, clasped me in his arms, and swore we would sail together.

"'We will go with you,' they all cried.

"And then arose a tumult and disturbance such as I cannot describe, in the midst of which I made them understand that if we went altogether we should be remarked.

"I then gave them a rendezvous at a public-house at Cove, and they filed out, staggering, into the street."

"You ought to have been called Judas, not Willis," said Jack.

"When I told those poor fellows I saw the blue flag hoisted at Cove," said the pilot, "I did not deceive them; but I knew also that it had been lowered afterwards, to inform honest people that the pressgang were about, and they had better not go to certain well-known houses."

"What a miserable salve for your conscience!" said Fritz.

"I told you you would not call me your brave Willis any more."

"Why not? This happened long ago. You would not do so now?"

"Perhaps, Master Fritz, before that expedition I had my scruples, but once I saw the sort of men with whom I had to deal, it seemed to me that any means were fair. Besides, when we got them out to sea, thanks to discipline and the cat, they turned out such good and honest sailors."

"Go on," said Jack.

"Then I went to find the lieutenant and put on the uniform; and having rejoined our boat, we all started for Cove.

"The place I had agreed to meet them at was a little publichouse, situated in the midst of some dirty cabins, in a filthy little village.

"As we approached we drew closer together, and lighted our lanterns, and soon surrounded the cabin."

Willis here paused in his narration, and exclaimed, "There he is!"

"Who?"

"That man Bob, who called himself William, who was on board the *Unicorn*."

- "Where?" and Jack cried out "William."
- "You see," said Willis, "he turns round involuntarily."
- "Good-day, William."
- "Are you speaking to me, sir?" asked the sailor.
- "Yes, to you, William."
- "No doubt your honour was present at my baptism, so I must have mistaken my name for the last two-and-thirty years.'
- "There is nothing to be got out of him," said Willis, "so I will continue.
- "We surrounded the cabin, and placed six of our best men by the door, ready to rush in. The others were distributed so as to intercept the fugitives. The lieutenant advanced alone, and knocked. There was no reply. He knocked again, and kicked violently without result.
- "'Break down the door, my lads,' said he. The men approached, and prepared to execute the order.
- "'Pat Doolan,' cried the lieutenant,—this was the landlord's name,—'if you do not open the door, I will knock your house down.' Still no reply.
- "We could perceive a light through the chinks of the door. The men were just about to batter it in when some one called out, 'What is all this about? Are you coming to wake the dead? Do you not know that old Catherine is gone to glory?'
- "'Is she really?' said the lieutenant. 'I am so sorry. When did she die?'
 - "'Since the morning."
- "'It is a great pity,' said the lieutenant; 'but where is Pat Doolan?'
 - "" He is gone up the village for some whisky for the wake."
- "'We will also be present,' said the lieutenant; 'so open the door.
- "We were admitted. There was not a soul in the place except the old man who had let us in. A coffin was lying on two chairs, and upon it was a plate of salt, to keep away evil spirits. On the left was a small door, the approach to

which was barred by the coffin. This little door excited our suspicion.

"'Where does that lead to?' asked the lieutenant.

"'Ah, your honour, I can't say. I don't mix much with the neighbours.'

"'Well, then, with respect to the corpse, if there be one, I

must find out.'

"'Sure your honour would never spy about a house like that?'

"'Take it up,' said the lieutenant. Two sailors, with some difficulty, moved the coffin.

""The corpse is very heavy, Jack,' said one of them.

" 'Perhaps he has some lead in him,' said another.

"We pushed back the door, and the lieutenant, pistol in hand, entered alone.

"'Come along, my lads,' he said to the deserters, whom he could not see in the gloom. 'We know that you are here. Resistance is useless. You had better surrender at once.'

"There was no direct reply, but we could hear them whispering

together.

"Just then a light was brought, and we could see the poor fellows seated on their little bundles close together, looking as downcast as possible.

"We bound them by passing sticks under their arms and fastening them with cords, and the men filed out one after the other.

"Then addressing the officer, I said, 'Shall I put a bullet into that coffin, sir?'

"'If you please,' he replied.

"'What a shame,' said the sailor; 'it is sacrilege.'

"'It would be a pity,' I remarked, 'to kill a dead man; besides, what is the use of the plate of salt?'

"'To keep away evil spirits,' they said.

"'Well, my bullets have the same property. And if you are sure,' I said, as I drew a pistol and levelled it, 'if you are certain—'

"All of a sudden the lid was kicked up in the air, and out jumped an able-bodied seaman, who was soon secured like the others without making any resistance."

"They were a set of lambs," said Jack, "I must say."

"All 'press' men are not so easily taken," said the pilot, "and we should have been badly treated if we had not got away quickly."

"Perhaps the lambs were wolves in disguise," said Jack.

"No," replied the pilot, "but the affair got wind, and the neighbours began to assemble, and surrounded us in a threatening way, so we thought it about time to hurry down to the boat. Our object had been obtained, and we put to sea; and that is what sailors call a press-gang."

"And you say that William Bob has been pressed?"

"Yes, in New York."

"That is scarcely in his favour."

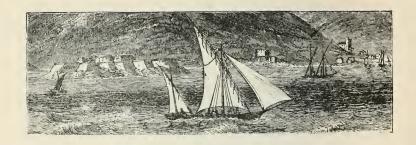
"However, one does not change one's name without a reason."

"I wonder you escaped so well, Willis, after what you did. I am surprised some of your victims did not strangle you or throw you into the sea."

"Ah, you do not know sailors. Those fellows had forgotten all about it in two days."

Just then the look-out reported a sail on the horizon.





CHAPTER XXIV.

A Naval Engagement.—A New Idea of Willis's.—La Bondeuse.

HE Essex had found what she was in search of.
The vessel signalled was an English frigate, which saluted the American ship with a cannon shot as soon as she came within range. The shot buried itself in the hammock nettings, only two paces from a midshipman.
"Hurrah!" said Willis, "the ball has opened."

"Hurrah!" said Willis, "the ball has opened.'
Then the captain gave the orders to clear for

action.

The crew went to quarters, and the marines drew up in line. The captain in full uniform inspected the ship's company, and made them a stirring speech.

Fritz, Jack, and Willis stood a little apart. The two former were armed with guns, and boarding pikes hung at their waists. Willis stood with his hands behind his back, smoking his pipe.

"Pilot," said the captain, "are you not going to take part in the fighting?"

"That is impossible, sir."

"Why?"

"Because a child does not fight against his mother, or a citizen against his country."

The captain nodded approvingly.

"I do not wish to offend you," said Willis, "quite the contrary; but if I were on the deck of that English frigate, as surely as I am on the *Essex*, it would be a very different thing."

"These young men?"

"These young men will fight, captain," said Fritz, bravely.

"They are not English," added Willis, "and there is nothing to prevent them fighting for you. I am sorry I cannot do the same."

"Besides," said Jack, "my brother and self can fight for three, so that will make it up."

"You must go below, Willis," said the captain.

"Excuse me," said Willis. "I would rather remain or deck."

"Why expose yourself needlessly?"

"It is a whim of mine, captain, and, besides, I can judge the shots."

"That is a queer fellow," muttered the captain, as with a speaking trumpet in hand he mounted the poop.

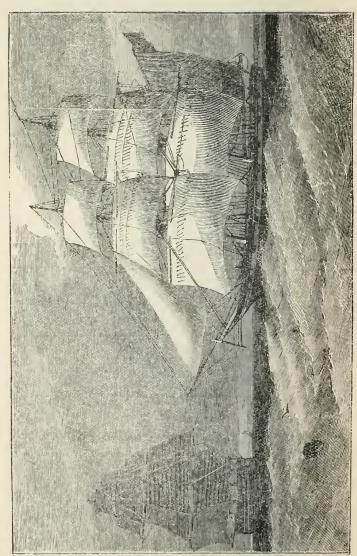
After a few shots to get the range, the battle began in earnest.

The two ships then came broadside to broadside, and fought desperately.

To what uses has human industry been directed! As if there were not a sufficient number of vessels lost without fighting! It has become necessary to assist in destruction by means of gunpowder, which leaves nothing to be desired. It kills, and it kills at a distance. Every nation with any claim to civilisation possesses this means of destruction, and nothing is wanting in the horrors of the naval engagement.

A thick smoke enveloped both vessels. The masts creaked, the sails hung down in shreds, the deck was covered with splinters of wood, and with dead and dying men. There are some people who would call this a magnificent sight. But none of those who witnessed it would say so.

Already on one ship or the other many souls had returned to their Maker, many women had become widows, many children



"The Vessel signalled was an English Ship."

had become orphans, and no one could say which side had most reason to congratulate itself, when the cries arose, "A leak! a leak!" and threw the crew of the *Essex* into disorder.

They did not abandon the batteries at once to run to the pumps; that would be to lose themselves and the ship together. To add to the confusion the captain now met his death. To defend the ship was then impossible. When they struck her flag, the *Essex* was nothing more than a wreck.

"God's will be done," said Willis. "Instead of going to America, we shall go to England. If there are good surgeons in Philadelphia there are more in England."

Fritz had received a wound in his shoulder from the bursting of a shell, and Jack had got a bullet in his right arm. Twenty times during the battle Willis had put himself before them as a shield, but the English bullets had not hit the Englishman.

William Bob, whose leg had been cut off by a cannon shot, was lying weltering in his blood. Willis was kneeling beside him and rendering him every assistance, less in the hope of hearing some explanations in this last hour, than with the hope of alleviating his dying moments.

For one instant the sailor appeared to revive. His glazed eyes fastened on Willis with a strange mixture of recognition and regret. His hand convulsively grasped that of the pilot's, which he placed to his heart, and his lips moved. Willis bent over him to catch his words, but the man expired with a deep sigh.

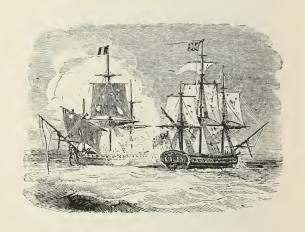
Then the rough sailor, who seldom wept, wiped the tears from his eyes, and went in search of the two boys, whose wounds. if he could have taken them upon himself, would surely have hurt him less than it did to witness their sufferings.

But the triumph of the English ship was of short duration. It was attacked two days afterwards by a French frigate, La Bondeuse, and all the British valour was in vain. In vain it was that Willis took a glorious revenge for his previous inaction, and fought for them, even as Fritz and Jack, now hors de combat

had fought for him. He found it necessary to surrender after all.

"It appears," said the pilot, "that we shall neither go to America nor England, so hurrah for France!"

"If this sort of thing continues," said Jack, "we run a great risk of not going anywhere at all. Poor mother!"





CHAPTER XXV.

Delhi.—Robert of Normandy and King John.—Isabel of Bavaria and Joan of Arc.—Trafalgar.—A Ghost Story.

HUS our three adventurers found themselves prisoners of war; but as soon as it was understood on board *La Bondeuse* by what a chapter of accidents they had come into that condition, they were no longer treated as enemics, but as guests, the captain saying that he was happy, in conquering the English frigate, to have gained the right to being useful to them.

According to popular ideas the captain of a ship was at that time a tyrant, with a hoarse voice, rude manners, and a bad habit of swearing. This supposition was a mistaken one, for as a rule, the captains were courteous gentlemen.

Fritz and Jack had their wounds dressed by a skilful surgeon, and were both in a fair way to recovery. Meanwhile the frigate made sail for the coast of France.

"There is nothing more easy than to make sail for a place, but the difficulty is to get there. I am very anxious to see a town with streets."

"Well, in that case,' said Willis, "you had better ask the captain to go about and land you in India. You can see Delhi, for instance. That is what you would like."

"But are there not Washington, London, Paris?"

"They are solitudes compared with an Indian town. Not because they have fewer inhabitants, but because in India every one is seen in the streets. In the streets they work, eat, transact business, and hold their meetings and their markets. In Europe people talk, in India they shout. Add to all this the bellowing of herds, the roaring of leopards, the howling of jackals, the cries of camels and elephants which are being led through the town, the beating of the tomtoms, the whistling of fifes, the grinding noise made by a horrible hurdy-gurdy, which is more fitted to frighten Beelzebub than to amuse human beings, and to this a perfect ocean of dust——"

"That will do, Willis. Let us go to Europe."

"But what troubles me is that England and France are not on the best of terms just now."

"You are not English, Willis; you are Scotch."

"Scotland, Ireland, and England are all the same."

"Why then is England offended with France?"

"How can I say, Master Jack? Has France a grudge against England?"

"That is a very old one," said Fritz, "and is simply because in the eleventh century, the Duke of Normandy, whose name was William—"

"Is that all?"

"Yes; he, finding his duchy too small for him, crossed over into England, defeated King Harold in the battle of Hastings 1066, and took the name of the Conqueror."

"That is all right," said Willis; "but so far I do not see, when France had put its finger in the pie——"

"In his capacity as Duke of Normandy William was a vassal of the King of France. Now, that a duke should be a vassal of a king is simple enough, but that a king should be a vassal of another king——"

"I see," said Willis, "that is awkward."

"And so much the more as in those days a vassal was obliged

to advance with his head uncovered, without sword or spear, and to kneel at the feet of his suzerain."

"And suppose he refused?"

"All the fiefs he owned reverted to the sovereign. It was in this manner that John Lackland, having assassinated his nephew Arthur, Duke of Brittany, was summoned to appear before Philip Augustus. As he did not comply, he was declared a felon, and the King of France invaded Normandy. There was the prime motive for hatred and strife."

"According to what you say there was no longer suzerain or vassal?"

"I beg your pardon, Willis. Guienne remained, which was equally a fief to the French crown, and which Eleanor of Acquitaine, repudiated by Louis le Jeune, was very anxious to take as a marriage portion to England."

"Good, more homage and genuflexions."

"The second cause of dispute. Some did not come at all, others came with a bad grace like Edward III., who had refused to kneel before Philip of Valois, so that one day they reasoned as follows:—

"'If we were King of France, King of England, and Duke of Guienne, we should be at the same time our vassal, and our own sovereign; and we should only have to render homage for ourselves, which would be less disagreeable than to prostrate oneself before a stranger.'"

"I quite agree with you, Master Fritz."

"But the kings of France did not, and from that period dates a series of wars which have lasted for centuries. From that arose the leaven of discord, which has never ceased to ferment between the two nations; and see how events follow each other.

"If William had remained quietly in Normandy, if Louis le Jeune had not been so impolitic as to put away his wife, France would never have lost that fatal battle of Poitiers."

"That is true," said Jack; "but then she would not have gained that of Bouvines."

"King John would not have been taken prisoner, and brought to England."

"That is true, too; but then if he had not been taken, he could never have given such a great example to the world in going to resume his captivity when the ransom was not paid, and there would have been no occasion to enunciate the maxim, that it good faith were banished from the rest of the earth, it would still be found in the hearts of kings."

"The English would not have been masters of Paris, and a great part of France under the unfortunate Charles VI."

"Quite so; but Charles VII. then would not have had the pleasure of turning them out, and history would not have had to blush for Isabella of Bavaria."

"That is true also, my dear brother; but then she would not have had to glory in Joan of Arc."

All this time the frigate *La Bondeuse* was sailing rapidly homewards. She had successively sighted the Philippine Islands, Java, Bourbon, had doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and crossed the line.

The boys had quite recovered from their wounds, and nothing remained but the feeling of satisfaction at having done their duty.

They had forwarded a second letter to Falcon's Nest by the same post as before, stating their hopes of final success and speedy return.

"It is as well," said Jack, "that one half of the family should know what happens to the other."

The days succeeded each other with monotonous uniformity, but not without a charm of their own, for there was much in the sea and sky, in conversation and instruction, to banish all those shadows which men call projects, and to embroider the canvas of the future with those rich and various designs of which youth alone possesses the magic secret.

Each one did his best for the amusement of all,—Fritz by his intelligence, and Jack by his amusing qualities, while Willis

brought all the naïveté of a child to bear upon a grand and vigorous mind.

One morning the two brothers found Willis pale and apparently upset. He was looking round everywhere, and searching all corners of the ship.



[&]quot;I have seen the captain," he said in a trembling voice. "Captain Littlestone, I mean."

[&]quot;In a dream?"

[&]quot;No, not in a dream, Master Jack, with my eyes open. He came up to my hammock, and said——"

[&]quot;Oh, nonsense, Willis!"

- "I tell you what I saw, Master Fritz, and he spoke to me. Is that clear enough?"
 - "Where is he?" asked the young men as they moved about.
- "I know nothing about it. I have been looking for the last hour."
 - "And what did he say?"
 - "He said, 'Good-day, Willis.'"
 - "Yes, that would be the first thing; but afterwards."
- "He then told me to beware of a great black cloud which was coming up from the west."
 - "Imagination."
- "And you see," said the pilot, "that there is actually a great black cloud coming up."
 - "It was nightmare."
- "I wished to answer him, but my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. I then tried to take his hand, but he disappeared."
 - "Oh, I am sure that--"
- "I tell you I heard it as distinctly as possible, the lapping of the waves against the ship's side, and I also heard the door of my cabin open and shut."
 - "You ought to have run after him."
 - "So I did."
 - "Well."
- "The sailors and officers laughed at me, and the surgeon came to feel my pulse. There is something behind all this."
 - "But, Willis---"
- "Either Captain Littlestone is alive, or he is dead. In the first case, I have seen him himself, in the second only his ghost."
 - "Then you believe in ghosts?"
 - "Why not?"
 - "Ah, indeed! Why not?"
- "If you had only heard old Dill tell the story of what happened to him in a castle, in the county of Durham,"
 - "Who was Dill?"

- "He was an honest man, and belonged to the Royal Navy, incapable of telling a falsehood."
 - "And what happened to him?"
- "What is the use of my telling you? You will not believe me."
 - "I will believe you, Willis, all in advance."
 - "Well then, once--"
 - "Once upon a time," added Jack.
- "Once upon a time, then, in the county of Durham, there was an old manor-house which was falling to decay, as it had not been inhabited for years. Here, Master Jack, I am a little at a loss for description."
- "Oh, that is very simple. The old ivy-clad towers, the dismantled and blackened walls, inhabited by owls and other birds, and covered with moss and lichens, the grass-grown moat, and the creaking drawbridge, with its rusty chains swinging in the breeze; the second floor sunk to the level of the original first, while what was once the ground floor is now underground."
- "Much obliged to you, Master Jack. The cause of all this decay was the presence of a ghost. Every night as the clock struck twelve——"
 - "That is right, Willis; you have hit the mark."
- "On the stroke of midnight, a ghost walked through the manorhouse from top to bottom, and when he was tired he took up his position behind the great door, and began to cry and groan, so that everybody must have pitied him."
- "That was very annoying to the neighbours, I should think."
- "Very disagreeable indeed; but fortunately there were no neighbours. The castle was absolutely deserted. The ghost did no harm, and contented itself by crying out, 'Oh, release my soul, release my soul!' Country people said, and I believe it, that this was the ghost of the last occupier, who, being a miser, had buried a great treasure. Now you know that when any one

dies with hidden money on his conscience he is obliged to remain in torment till the money has been found."

"I was not aware of that fact," said Jack, "but I am delighted to know it now."

"This state of things lasted for many centuries, until Dill, who was wounded at the battle of Trafalgar, went on sick leave, and went to his native village, not far from the old castle. He was a brave fellow, and feared nothing. As he had served in all parts of the world, he declared in the public-house, when under the influence of ale, that those who were afraid of ghosts were only idiots, and if any one would supply him with fire-wood, and some old port wine and something to eat, he would go and pass a night in the castle.

"Dill was taken at his word, and that very night he went to the ruin with his food and firing. He established himself in a large room on the first floor, in which an old table and two chairs had been left in fair preservation. He lighted his fire, prepared his supper, and opened a bottle of port. A very appetising odour of cooking, which had nothing in common with the sulphurous air of the infernal regions, soon permeated the apartment. Dill began to lick his fingers, and when the first pancake was done on one side, and he was just tossing it over, a hand intervened, and it did not fall into the pan again."

- "'A thousand what-d'ye-call-'ems!' exclaimed Dill.
- "He looked at the chimney, but saw nothing."
- "No pancakes either?" said Jack.
- "Nothing at all. The port wine began to get into his head; he thought that he had forgotten the pancake altogether, so he began again."
 - "And the second pancake disappeared like the first?"
- "Yes, Master Fritz, but with this difference, that a bone fell into the frying-pan this time."
 - "Scarcely a good exchange, was it?"
- "'How absurd!' exclaimed Dill, laughing; 'if they think to take me in with their bones they are much mistaken!'

"Nevertheless he was patient and also hungry; so he began again, but he had scarcely made the pancakes when they turned to collar-bones, knee-caps, and suchlike.

"'This is the end of it, I suppose,' said Dill, as he threw them one by one into the corner. And he consoled himself by opening another bottle.

"This kind of thing continued, until at length a skull fell into the frying-pan."

"Not a nice dish for a hungry man," said Jack.

"'I wonder what they will give me next,' said Dill to himself, as he threw the head into the corner with the bones.

"But nothing more came, and he cooked quite a number of pancakes, and sat down to enjoy them.

"He are and drank for about an hour, and then twelve o'clock sounded from the village church.

"Dill heard a sort of rustling movement, and looking up he beheld, a few paces off, a horrible spectre."

"Wrapped in a white sheet?"

"Yes, Master Jack."

"I am glad of that, else I should not have believed it. All ghosts have white sheets."

"All the bones, instead of remaining in a heap in the corner, had joined together again. The unhappy ghost had become so thin from continual running up and down and weeping, that Dill could see right through him. He looked at the ghost for some time, rather doubting his reason, but at length he satisfied himself that he had to do with a ghost.

"Another man might have been afraid. Dill was not in the least put out.

"'How do you do?' he said to the ghost. 'I have had the pleasure of seeing something of you already. If convenient, will you take a chair, and come to the table.'

"The ghost made no reply, except to beckon him to approach.

"Dill paid no attention to that, but said, 'If you like to remain in your corner you can do so. You are master here, but

in your place I should come to the fire; the room is very damp, and you may catch cold.'

"The ghost answered not, but still beckoned.

"'Can you not speak English?' said Dill. 'I am sorry for that.'

"And then, without troubling himself about the ghost, he continued his supper."

"There is something more astonishing about your friend even than his coolness, and that is his appetite," said Jack.

"At the stroke of half-past twelve the ghost advanced slowly towards the sailor, still beckoning with his finger."

"I think, now," said Jack, "that you ought to make the ghost groan and rattle his chains."

"I was thinking of that, Master Jack.

"'I have something to tell you,' said Dill, as he saw the spectre approaching; 'that is, you may tell me what you want, as I am not of a talkative disposition. But if you touch me we shall quarrel.'

"The spectre merely extended one finger, and touched Dill on the hand. It burnt like a hot iron.

"'Ah!' said the sailor, as he jumped up; 'it seems that you have hot hands. But since you insist, we must have a more intimate acquaintance with each other.' He began to spar at the ghost as he spoke, and his blows took no effect.

"Dill was getting angry. He wished to floor the spectre, but he wasted his blows on the empty air.

"'Look here,' he cried, 'this has lasted long enough. Why do you come to make difficulties where none exist? We have nothing in common. Let me alone, then, and go to——'

"But the ghost still made the same sign, and now pointed to the door.

"Dill took up the lamp, and said to the ghost, 'Go ahead; I will follow you.'

"When they reached the top of the staircase the ghost was pointe enough to wish D.II to go first.

"'You are too good,' said Dill. 'I could not think of such a thing.'

"The truth was hat he began to fear the phantom might strangle him.

"When they came to a vault under the entrance, opposite a tombstone, in which was sunk an iron ring, the ghost signed to Dill to raise it up.

"'I believe you are making a fool of me,' said the sailor, laughing; 'and if you have not got a capstan-bar in the pocket of your paletot, you will have to wait some time I expect.'

"The spirit raised the stone without the least exertion, and Dill saw underneath three large iron boxes filled with gold pieces.

"As soon as the sailor perceived the money, the spirit found its tongue.

"'Do you see that treasure?' asked the ghost.

"'Why, what a funny fellow you are!' said Dill. 'You can talk English, after all. Now we shall get on capitally. Yes, I can see something down there that looks like guineas.'

"'Those are three chests of money which I buried there before

my death,' said the phantom, as they lifted them out.

"'You are dead, then?' said Dill. 'I should not have thought so.'

"'You have come to deliver me from the torment to which I was condemned, until these three boxes were found. Now I burn no longer. My hands are cold.'

"'I can see that very well; keep your hands to yourself. You need not make so many bows. I know you very well. You are the devil himself.'

"'Of these three boxes,' said the spirit, 'I beg you will give one to the poor, one to the church, to have masses said for the repose of my soul, the other——'

"'Hold hard,' said Dill; 'do your own commissions yourself. I am not your servant. Besides, you make a mistake. What would there be for me? If there were a little present I should

not say anything; but I wonder you are so badly clothed this winter season, if you are so rich.'

"'You did not let me finish,' said the spirit. 'The third case is for you.'"

"Was there a great deal of money in these boxes?" asked Fritz.

" More than a thousand millions."

"Pooh!" said Jack, disdainfully.

"You think that is enough, I suppose?"

"Oh! it is quite enough; just the proper thing indeed. It is a good omen."

"Dill was not less satisfied," continued Willis. "He jumped about and wished to embrace the ghost, whose parchment cheeks appeared to him as fresh as a rose."

"That is because he looked at them through a golden medium."

"But, unfortunately, he stumbled, fell into the ditch, and the light was extinguished.

"'My dear ghost!' he exclaimed, 'since I have delivered you from torment, be good enough to help me up.'

"But the ghost had disappeared.

"Dill picked himself up as well as he could, and regained the room in the castle, where he went to sleep, after having placed the bottles so that he might reach them without inconvenience.

"He had wonderful dreams. He thought he was eating silver bread with golden crust; that he was doing his sailor's work on horseback; that he was his own captain; that the cat-o'-nine-tails had been done away with; and that the sea, instead of being salt water, was port wine.

"The next morning when he awoke Dill could scarcely credit his good luck, but there was no mistake. There was the fryingpan and the empty bottles, but the money had disappeared."

"And what conclusion did Dill come to?" asked Fritz.

"That robbers had taken advantage of his sleep, and carried away the treasure, and closed up the cabin,"

"In his place I should have thought differently, for I know that the mind often brings forth delusions, and wine is apt to get into the head, so that one may think one sees things which are but dreams."

"Impossible, for two reasons, Master Fritz. In the first place, his hand still bore the mark where the spirit had touched him."

"He had burnt himself making the pancakes."

"The second reason is, that from that day no one has ever heard the spirit in the castle."

"You are quite shut up, my dear brother," said Jack. "What answer can you make to such an argument?"

"Did you sigh, Master Fritz?" said the pilot, with a tremor in his voice.

"It was not I," said Fritz, looking at his brother.

"Nor I," said Jack, looking at Willis.

"Nor I," said Willis, as he looked behind him.





CHAPTER XXVI.

Willis encounters the Corvette on Terra Firma.—Admiral Cicero.—The Deceased is not dead.

HE voyage was completed peacefully without any more fighting, but not without Willis experiencing much uneasiness. In fancy or in reality Captain Littlestone came every night to the pilot's hammock, and spoke the same as before. Then Wiilis said or thought he saw the ghost disappear, and heard the cabin door close.

He may have been deceived by a dream once or perhaps twice, but a healthy mind cannot be affected like that

continually.

One fine night he grappled with his hallucination, and finally conquered it. Either the hallucination was not a delusion, and the shade was a body, the dream a reality, or the man was a maniac. So the question was reduced to this—

Either Willis was out of his mind, or Captain Littlestone was on board La Bondeuse.

Now Willis did not appear the least out of his mind, and the strictest investigation had not succeeded in unearthing the captain of the *Unicorn*.

Now there was a third issue to this question, but it is too

delicate to discuss at present. The reader is therefore requested to have patience.

On the 12th of June they passed the island of St. Helena, which had not yet become illustrious by being associated with the names of the two men, Napoleon and Sir Hudson Lowe.

On the 30th they touched at the island of Ascension, where, according to custom, they left a bottle containing a paper, on which was written an extract from the log, with the destination and the date of the arrival, as well as the name of the ship.

On the 15th of July they sighted Teneriffe, the peak of which rises 3,800 mètres above the level of the sea.



Tenerifie.

Six weeks afterwards the frigate dropped anchor at Havre.

In consequence of the blockade exercised by the continental war, the authorities confiscated the pinnace and its cargo.

This was very hard indeed upon the two brothers. Family, fortune, and future, the three beacons which had cheered their lives, were extinguished.

Their fortitude almost succumbed to this heavy blow; but the very extent of their distress saved them. Grief requires leisure to shed tears, while, when there is the absolute necessity to gain one's daily bread one has not time to weep, and this was the case with our three friends.

If they had known something of history, Greek and Latin, or been doctors, or advocates, or lawyers, or even in the profession, they would have found it very difficult to make money; but fortunately they had been accustomed to hard work; their bodily strength had been developed at the same time as their moral courage, and the blouse of the workman suited them better than the gown of the student. Thanks to their skill, they were admitted into a timber yard, and gained sufficient to support their modest existence.

Jack never joined his companions till midday. Though he got up at daybreak they did not know where he went to. His companions in vain tried to discover his secret, but judging by the ardour with which he worked, the brave lad had devoted himself to one of those enterprises which are called foolish before they succeed, but magnificent when successfully accomplished.

If sometimes, when they retired to their little room and were overcome by fatigue, though regrets for the past drove away sleep, Jack did not succeed in making them feel gay, they would all pray together for strength to bear their lot with resignation.

One day after a trying month, they had a stroke of good luck.

The director of the custom-house was an upright man, and when he heard of the régime of the pinnace and cargo he decided that it did not come within the category of ordinary captures. "It will never do," he said, "that these young men, having come so far, should be robbed on their arrival. The name of this gentleman was M. de la Bouillerie; when such names as these occur we like to record them. So he referred the matter to the emperor, who ordered the immediate restitution of the pinnace and its contents, and thanked the director for having enabled him to repair an injustice.

Nothing that can elevate the soul can be out of place in this work. We shall therefore quote a trait of the great Napoleon.

It was in 1806, when the Prussians had been vanquished,

and a letter from the Prince of Saatyfeld, the civil governor of Berlin, in which he informed the enemy of the disposition of the French army, was intercepted. The crime was evident; there was nothing between the prince and death but a dozen loaded muskets.

The princess hastened to Napoleon, and on her knees appealed to his generosity to pardon her husband.

"Madame," said Napoleon, "this letter is the only proof that exists against your husband. Throw it in the fire."

The fatal paper took light, and burnt slowly away, and no trace of the prince's treachery was left but a small heap of ashes.

The mysterious ways of Providence do not always lead where they appear to conduct us, and we find ourselves in harbour instead of on a reef as we expected. So, in the case under consideration, in consequence of the scarcity of colonial produce, the natural result of the absolute prohibition which obtained in 1837, the cargo of the pinnace fetched more than double its value.

So the young men gave up the workshop; but they did not squander the money they had become possessed of. They only sought means to return quickly to New Switzerland.

Jack undertook to find the surgeon who was to save his mother's life, which was a hard task; for how could be persuade a surgeon of reputation to leave his family and patients to go out to a desert island where no reward awaited him? Nevertheless, Jack did not despair.

As for Willis, he was sent in search of a small ship, either to purchase or to charter, according as their finances permitted.

One morning the pilot came into the hotel and threw himself down in a chair.

"I will give you a thousand or ten thousand pounds (if I had them), if you can guess what has happened."

"We need not waste time in guessing," said Jack; "let us know at once."

"You need not tell me there are no miracles nowadays."

"What is it?" said Jack.

"Well, as I was walking about with my nose in the air thinking of nothing particular, I encountered—if I had received a bullet in my chest I could hardly have been more astonished——Are you prepared?"

"Yes, we are ready to hear the miracle."

"Well, then, I have seen the Unicorn."

"What Unicorn?"

"The corvette."

"What, walking about the streets?"

"You have been out to sea then?" asked Fritz.

"If I had encountered it at sea I should not have been so surprised. The sea is the natural place for ships. We do not fish in stubble-fields, nor shoot rabbits at sea. But nevertheless it was on land that I encountered the *Unicorn*."

"You met it turning the corner of a street, no doubt. Which of you spoke first?"

"I perceived it first, Master Jack."

"Willis, I wish you would be a little less mysterious. You talk like a sybil."

"Well, to cut it short-"

"Oh, when you say cut it short," said Jack, "I know we are in for a yarn."

"In two words, then, I was going through the shipwright's yard looking out for a cutter or a sloop in which we could return to New Switzerland. I naturally looked for those with the prettiest lines, and to be brief——"

"H'm," said Jack.

"I found myself face to face with a dismantled craft, which was the *Unicorn*, but so dilapidated and changed that it required the heart of a Willis to recognize it. My eyes alone would not have sufficed."

"Now are you quite sure?"

"Suppose you were to meet Ernest or Frank in the street to-morrow, pale, emaciated, and in rags, would you know them?"

- "What a question!"
- "Well, then, sailors, real sailors, are so constituted that ships are like their own families; they never can forget them. Besides, the name, the gearing of the figure-head, left no room for doubt."
 - "But Irow did it get there?"
 - "You know, Master Fritz, that I could not ask the boat."
 - "Quite so," said Jack, "and it could not have answered you."
- "I then recollected a tavern where masters and pilots often meet, and there I went in the hope of obtaining some information, when—"
 - "What, another meeting?"
 - "I think I astonished you about the corvette-"
 - "I should say so."
- "Well, then, this will astonish you more. You remember that sailor on board the Essex; the William I called Bob?"
 - "Or rather the Bob who called himself William," said Jack.
- "The deserter from the *Unicorn*," added Fritz, "who was killed."
 - "Precisely. Well, I met that very Bob."

At this most extraordinary assertion the brothers looked at each other uneasily.

- "You think I am mad?" asked Willis.
- "Well-"
- "I confess that it looks a little like it, but it is a mistake to think so. You will soon understand."
 - "By all means, Willis, if possible."
- "The extraordinary resemblance between the men made me mistake one for the other. The truth is, the real William had a wart on his nose, which the other had not. I had quite forgotten this."
 - " Like Cicero."
 - "Another admiral, no doubt," said the pilot, ironically.
 - "No, Willis, only an orator."
 - "I do not know that profession. Is he ever at sea?"

"Sometimes," said Jack, "though water is not his element."

"However," continued the pilot, "this time it was the real Bob. We were delighted to see each other, and almost wept for joy."

"Do get on, Willis, pray. You are keeping us on tenter hooks all this time."

"Good gracious, the thing is very simple. After having been knocked about for two days and nights by that awful tempest, you remember the *Unicorn* was driven such a distance from New Switzerland that Captain Littlestone determined to make for the Cape, and deliver his despatches. He had finished his mission, and was bringing back with him young Woolston, the clergyman, when he was attacked and captured by a French frigate. Thus our poor corvette was brought into Havre a prisoner to rot in a corner of the dockyard."

- "And the crew?"
- " Prisoners of war."
- "And the captain and the young clergyman?"
- "Prisoners on parole."
- "Where?"
- "Here."
- "In Havre?"
- "Not two paces off, at the Hotel d'Espagne."
- "And we are actually here!" exclaimed Jack, and rushed downstairs four steps at a time.

Willis and Fritz followed him.

- "By-the-bye," said Fritz, as they were going out, "if Captain Littlestone were a prisoner at Havre, he could not have been on board *La Bondeuse* at the same time."
 - "That is true," said Willis.
- "In that case, my dear Rono, you must have been dreaming all those nights."
 - "I am quite sure I was not dreaming, Master Fritz."
 - "Well, then, how can you explain the mystery?"
- "I cannot solve it at present, but perhaps it will explain itself some day, as many other things do."



CHAPTER XXVII.

Captain Littlestone is found at last, and we are introduced to the Abbé Woolston.

ACK rushed into the apartment occupied by the abbé and the captain. No doubt it would have been more polite to have knocked at the door, but he was too impatient to think of these little acts of politeness.

Captain Littlestone was buried in thought, his head leaning upon his hands, thinking, no doubt,

of his native land. The abbé was reading his breviary. He was a young man, about twenty-five years of age, of a gentle, but noble appearance. His habit of meditation, the pious practices and yet eventful life of a missionary had tempered the fire of youth, and had given him a most interesting expression. He was one of those privileged individuals whom one could never pass without remarking, but without knowing why.

"Captain!" cried Willis, seizing Mr. Littlestone with both hands, and pressing them to his lips.

The captain stared at him with mute astonishment, as if in a dream. Then he made a motion with his hands, for he was quite unable to speak for some seconds.

"How on earth did you get here?" he asked at length, when his surprise had somewhat abated.

"By sea," replied Jack.

"I suppose so; but you must have had a ship?"

- "Faith, captain, since you would not come to us, we are obliged to come to you. We had no ship, it is true, but we had a boat; and with the help of Providence, our own courage, and Willis, why, we can go anywhere."
- "I admit that, but your mother. Did she consent to your coming away?"
- "Alas, captain!" said Fritz, "it is for her, and against her will, that we have come."
 - "I do not understand you."
 - "For her, because every day brings her nearer death."
 - "Death, did you say?"
- "Yes, captain, and we have come to Europe to seek for a surgeon to save her life."
 - "And have you found one?"
 - "Not yet," replied Jack, "but hope to do so soon."
 - "If you only want money——"
- "A thousand thanks, captain; but owing to the sale of our cargo we have plenty of means. Unfortunately there is one thing more necessary."
 - "What is that?"
- "Disinterestedness in the first place; for what can we offer to a celebrated surgeon who must give up so much? He must brave the sea, and possess unbounded love of humanity,—the heart of a son, in fact, in the body of a savant. All these are things one cannot purchase for money."
 - "Then what are you going to do, my poor Jack?"
 - "That is my secret," said Jack.
 - "How has it happened that we meet again thus?"
- "We have had a great many difficulties," said Fritz; "my brother Jack was nearly devoured."
 - "Yes, indeed, captain, I was almost in the cannibal's mouth."
 - "How did you escape?"
 - "By the assistance of Providence."

"I can quite understand that, Master Jack."

"And besides Willis was taken for a god in the island of Hawaï, and carried about in triumph and worshipped. It is true that next day he was nearly killed by arrows."

"Then we encountered an American ship, which rescued us. And the American ship was taken by an English vessel."

"And Willis met a sailor of the *Unicorn*, who got on board we do not know how, a man named Bob, who called himself William, and who was killed in action—a trivial circumstance, which did not prevent Willis from meeting him this morning as well as ever."

"Then," continued Jack, "the English ship in its turn was captured by a French frigate, in which you had taken your passage incognito."

" I ?"

"Yes, you, captain. Ask Willis."

"If you had not been there, captain," said the pilot, "how could you have come to talk to me every night in my cabin?"

A grieved and anxious expression passed over the captain's face. He looked at the priest, who looked at Fritz, Fritz looked at his brother, Jack looked at Willis, and Willis looked at everybody.

"So," said Jack, "we have had variety of fortune. Sometimes conquerors, sometimes conquered; sometimes full of hope, some times despairing; wounded or whole, poor or rich, carpenters or merchants; the whole thing is a chaos which will clear itself up some day."

"The ways of Providence are very mysterious," said the abbé; "allow me to draw a comparison. A ship is beaten about by the waves; it staggers like a drunken man, rolling first to one side then to the other; the crew hasten hither and thither; some furl the sails, some rig the pumps, all the while crying aloud, evidently under the impression that nothing can save the ship. But go down to the wheel-house, where the pilot is. He is alone, calm and pensive, with his hand on the wheel, and his eye fixed on the chart. He gives his orders calmly to the crew.

Around him are numerous instruments, and you see there that all that appears so confused around him is, in fact, prepared and calculated to ensure the safety of the vessel."

"One does not understand it much better for that," said Jack.

"That is true; but the skill of the pilot gives one full confidence. Well, the world is an ocean; society is a ship piloted by Providence; men, their passions, and events which surround them, are the rigging masts, sails, anchors, instruments, and sailors of Providence. You do not understand the object of all those instruments. You tremble at every blow. You fear the least breeze will upset you; but, enter the pilot house—that is to say, go to God, and then all your fears will banish. You will be ashamed of your murmuring, and whatever may happen your heart will repose peacefully in full confidence on Him."

"That is to say," said the captain, "that prisoners as we are we ought to be resigned and hopeful."

"And you have reason to be, for Willis will make it my business."

"I cannot tell when peace will be concluded."

"What does it matter about peace? We cannot wait for that. I will have you out of this in a month in defiance of the French."

"An escape? Impossible!"

"I have my idea about that, captain. We are now in possession of a very large sum of money. We are going to charter a ship. We hope to carry away a doctor one of these fine nights if he will come; if not, we will take him all the same."

"He will come," said Jack.

"And the next morning," continued Willis, "Captain Littlestone and the Abbé Woolston will have disappeared."

"But you forget we are prisoners, Willis."

"I do not forget it at all, captain, else I should not have spoken of escape."

"Prisoners on parole, my friend; on parole."

The pilot made a strange grimace, and, scratching his ear, said, "True; I had forgotten that."

"We are here," said Jack, "in something the same situation as Louis XIV. at the famous passage of the Rhine, of which Bouillion has spoken. Your grandeur chains you to the bank; so if you were only a simple sailor you would have, at least, the right to escape."

"But look here," said Willis; "can you not—yes, that's it."

"Can you not what?" asked the captain.

"Suppose you were to go to the authorities and say, 'Gentlemen, you know that our native country is dear to all our hearts, so you will not be astonished to hear that we have a great wish to visit the land of our birth. This feeling is so strong that we are afraid some day we shall be tempted to break our way and depart without beat of drum. Should such a thing happen we should be dishonoured. When one feels weak it is necessary to be protected from oneself. Be so good as to withdraw our parole and put us in prison, so that if we can manage to escape we may do so honourably."

"Well, admitting that they grant us the favour of putting us in prison; once in a dungeon, what shall we have gained?"

"You will have gained your freedom, that is evident, is it not?"

"It may be very clear, Willis, but you must enlighten my darkness a little more before I can see it."

"Leave it to me, captain; just trust to me."

"But we must know."

"They will commence by putting you in Francis I.'s Tower, a charming fortress rising straight from the sea; a delicate attention of which I am very conscious."

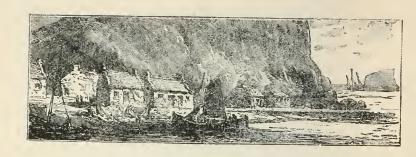
Captain Littlestone got up and made Fritz an almost imper ceptible sign.

"Is Willis touched in the head, do you think?" he asked.

"Do you mean mad, captain?"

"I did not dare say so much."

Fritz shrugged his shoulders, as much as to say, 'I really can scarcely tell."



CHAPTER XXVIII.

In which Willis proves that the Way to get Free is to go to Prison.—The

Escape.

HREE weeks later the cargo of the pinnace sold for a fabulous sum.

Willis, like those connoisseurs who buy up apparently worthless paintings because they have detected some masterly touch in them, or some new vigour of style, had bought, not a ship, but he carcase of a ship, of which he knew the "run," which he would soon render graceful

when properly rigged up.

Whether the pilot had persuaded the captain and the missionary, or whether they had good reason for thinking him sane, the fact remains that they were no longer prisoners on parole. On the other hand, they were confined in the tower of Francis I.

The ship was got ready with all despatch, and was found to swim like a duck; the breeze was favourable, the night was dark, there was no moon.

On that evening, at some little distance from the tower, against which the waves beat sullenly, a boat might have been seen waiting as if for a signal. It was manned by Fritz, Jack, and had four oars.

It was about one o'clock in the morning.

In a cell in the tower, sixty feet above the water, were Abbé Woolston, Captain Littlestone, and Willis.

During the day this cell was very dimly lighted in consequence of the great thickness of the walls, and at night there was no light whatever. It was therefore impossible for them to see each other; and they spoke in whispers.

A noise, something like a file grating iron, was heard all this time.

"I should like to see your gaoler to-morrow morning when he comes in to bid you good-day, really to see that you are all safe; but you will not be here then."

"Do not make too sure, Willis; we are not away yet."

"Not yet, certainly, but we shall be soon. The window-bar is as hard as—iron. I have taken a great deal of pains to get it out; but what can you expect from iron?"

"I hope," said the captain, "that he will not find us out when he makes his first round in the morning. Thanks to the habit we have of sleeping late, with our faces to the wall, he may have the same respect towards the dummies we have made as he has for us, and may walk on tip-toe, so as not to awake them."

"That is very well for the first visit; but how about the second? He will then approach the bed and shake the effigies by the shoulder; and say, 'Perhaps your honour does not know that it is ten o'clock, and that your breakfast is cooling.' The figures, of course, will not reply, then we shall, I hope, have had time to shake the reefs out of our top-sails and set pursuit at defiance."

- "Poor man," said Mr. Woolston, "I hope our escape may not cost him his place."
- "Oh no, at first he will perhaps tear nis hair a little, but as he wears a wig that will have no evil consequences."
- "I cannot do less than leave my purse on the table to console him," said the abbé.
 - "I will place mine with it," said the captain.

"Brave men," thought the pilot.

"It is two o'clock in the morning," said the captain, as the sprung his repeater.

"Well," said Willis, "there goes one end of the bar, now for

the other."

"This escape was a little too hurried," said the abbé; "you only informed us of it at nine o'clock last night."

"I could not get here sooner, captain; the commissary would

not take me into custody."

"I have been wondering how you managed to get in here at all; you are not a prisoner on parole (or otherwise), and had not the same delicate notices to plead."

"So I had to plead others."

"Willis," interrupted Mr. Woolston, "you have been working at those bars for two hours, let me take your place."

"If you please, sir."

"And what excuse did you make?" asked Mr. Littlestone.

"I told the commissary that one of the French frigates, La Bondeuse, some time ago had captured the English corvette, the Unicorn, but the capture was incomplete."

"He asked me what I meant, and I told him that they had not taken the pilot, and what is a ship without a pilot? A body without a soul, nothing more."

"'Is that all you have to tell me?' said the commissary, frowning.

"I said, 'The pilot you want is now standing before you, but he has been detained by private business on one of the desert islands in the Indian Archipelago,' so I begged him to excuse me for not coming before.

"'What do you want me to do?' said he.

"'The same thing that you would have done if I had been captured on board the *Unicorn*.'

"'Make you a prisoner?'

" Precisely.'

"'Do you really mean it?' said he,



- "'I do indeed, certainly.'
- "'Impossible.'
- "'Then you refuse?'
- "' Most positively. We make prisoners, but we do not accept them.'
- "'So you will not permit me to share the captivity of my commander?'
- "'He is another idiot that captain of yours. He was free, and might have remained so, but he did not wish it.'
 - "'It was a matter of taste, commissary."
 - "The bar is yielding," interrupted the abbé.
 - "A quarter to three," added Captain Littlestone.
- "Well," continued Willis, "the commissary got very impatient. He got up, turned his back on me when I placed myself before him, and said, 'Two more words, if you please; you know all the French law. Will you have the goodness to tell me the surest and quickest way to get arrested?'
 - "'There are a great many ways,' he replied.
 - "'Suppose I were to knock you down?' I said."
- "Oh, Willis!" interrupted the abbé, "I think you went too far there."
- "What could I do Mr. Woolston? The ship was ready, time pressed. I had no choice; and then you understand that I should have taken great care only to have knocked him down sufficiently to have got arrested."

A that moment the bar gave way. The pilot gave a long whistle, and took from his pocket a piece of twine, then fastening a stone to one end of it, he let it down through the window.

"I hope you did not hurt the commissary after all, Willis."

"No, captain, the threat was sufficient, and I am not sorry for it. I was quietly handcuffed, for what he refused to my prayers, he yielded to my insolence. I was at first placed in a subterranean dungeon, but at length my gold united me to you. By-the-bye, what a terrible staircase it is to mount here, that obliges us to go out by the window."

All this time Willis was holding the cord, the lower end of which was seized by Fritz and Jack. At a given signal it was drawn up again with a rope ladder attached, which was fixed to the remaining bar. They all knelt down and uttered a fervent prayer for safety.

The abbé passed out first, then the captain, and the pilot brought up the rear.

They had descended a short way when the abbé said that he had forgotten to leave his purse for the benefit of the gaoler.

"So have I," said the captain.

The young clergyman tried to hold on with one hand while he took his purse from his pocket with the other to give to Captain Littlestone above him. But from the movement that resulted, the captain found it necessary to stoop to take it, and this nearly upset Willis. They found it was impossible.

"The only help for it is to go up again," said the missionary.

"That is very awkward," said the captain.

"Three o'clock is striking," said Willis.

"God sometimes permits good actions to be unrewarded in this world," said the abbé, "but He never punishes them."

"Let us go up again."

And they ascended.

They had scarcely entered the cell than they heard the noise of a key in the lock, and the door opened.

"What is it?" asked the captain as calmly as he could.

"I thought I heard some noise, your honour," said the gaoler, "and I thought you might be ill."

"I am much obliged to you, Ambrose, but I am quite well, thank you."

"We are quite well," added the missionary.

"Never better in our lives," said the pilot.

At this triple affirmation, which not only assured the gaoler of the health, but also of the safety of his prisoners, the door was again closed and fastened.

"I am sorry I woke your honours," said the gaoler as he went

out, "the noise must have been downstairs." His footsteps died away, and silence was at length restored.

"Now," said the abbé, "do you tell me that God does not interfere in worldly affairs?"

"A man ought to pass his whole life on his knees," added the captain.

"And then he would not be kept from doing what he ought," said Willis.

They then re-commenced to descend in the same order as before.

The night was pitch dark, a fine misty rain was falling.

"Gentlemen," said Willis, as he descended on the captain's shoulders, who had descended on the abbé's back in his turn, "I have been very careless."

"How so, Willis?"

"Because it is raining, and I never brought you any umbrellas. It is true I had not got any, but that is no reason," and they laughed heartily. Half an hour later they were on board the ship which was awaiting them in the roadstead, and ready to make sail.

"Have you succeeded in procuring the doctor?" asked Mr. Littlestone.

"He is on board, captain."

"He is invisible then."

"Perhaps his science is," said Jack, as he rose, "but in person he is before you."

In fact, so soon as Jack had perceived that his search for a doctor to go out would prove unsuccessful, he went to the chief surgeon at the hospital at Havre, and told him the facts of the case, and begged to be initiated in the secrets of that disease from which his mother was suffering, and on the removal of which her life depended. The ardour of the son had come to the assistance of the student's inexperience, and he had conquered.

The doctor had taken him by the hand, and Jack had actually become his favourite pupil.

By theorising in the silence of the study, and practising in the medical schools, by dint of hard work, and in concentrated intelligence on one object, and with the assistance of Heaven, which never fails to smile on such enterprises, complete success had crowned his efforts.

And that is why in their days of poverty Jack had never appeared at the carpenter's shop till midday, while Fritz and Willis were there from morning till night.

There was only one thing to fear, and that was that natural emotion might interfere at the most critical moment, and cause the hand of the operator to tremble.





EPILOGUE.



APTAIN LITTLESTONE naturally took command of the ship, and Willis was quartermaster.

Early next morning the captain got up, but very sad.

He had dreamed that he had never struck his flag to a French ship, and that he was still captain of the *Unicorn*. As we all know, it is not the

dream, but the waking which makes us sad.

His grief was all the more pregnant, because everything on board reminded him of the *Unicorn*. The same elegant lines and finish of the hull, the same speed, and all those little things which a sailor at once recognises, brought the remembrance of the ship back to him with redoubled force.

This resemblance, however, appeared less extraordinary when he knew that it was actually the *Unicorn* herself. Willis had bought it in a most dilapidated state, and had turned it out splendidly.

The voyage passed without any incident deserving notice, except the following.

They had not got out to sea very far, when Willis again fell under the influence of the nightmare in which he had previously seen Captain Littlestone come up to his hammock on board the French frigate.

One can understand that the pilot, who was much put out to recognise Captain Littlestone as his nocturnal visitor when it was almost impossible that it could be the captain, was still more disturbed when there was nothing supernatural in it at all.

The more the captain denied it, the more the pilot insisted on the fact.

On the one hand, the captain was a serious personage, and though quite capable of a joke, would never have had the bad taste to prolong the mystification, which sooner or later must have a bad effect on Willis's mind. On the other hand, Willis appeared so confident, and he had so decidedly proved that he was not mad, that they were obliged to yield some credence.

It was one of those cases where argument was of no use, and the pilot made up his mind not to go to bed, and above all things not to sleep; but the remedy was worse than the disease.

Under these circumstances Willis one night made up his mind to lie in ambush, and at the moment the right man entered the cabin to go up and seize him.

"If the figure does not come," he said to himself, "it is evident that I have imagined it all; but I think he will be taken in."

But he did come, and just as he was leaning over the empty hammock, the pilot seized him by the collar with the left hand.

"I beg your pardon, captain," said Willis, "but I can't help it." The intruder was not the captain after all. It was a sailor who had been one of the erew of *La Bondeuse* whom Willis had engaged for the *Unicorn*.

The explanation of the mystery was as follows:

Willis had actually seen, but only once seen, the captain in a dream. This dream he had told the next morning to Fritz and Jack. A sailor happened to overhear it, and had told his comrades; but as the story was so short they determined to add a few chapters to it. So every night when they heard the pilot snoring they played out the little comedy which you know.

There was very little variation in the chapters. Sailors are not particular so long as they have something to read.

The Unicorn

Now he had discovered his persecutor, Willis had to choose between two things, whether to give the fellow a thrashing, as he first thought of doing, or to punish him for his practical joking on his superior officer. His instinct impelled him to the former, his reason inclined him to the second, but his heart took a third line, and he pardoned him altogether.

Five months after their departure from Havre, Fritz, Jack, the abbé, Littlestone, and Willis, kneeling on the deck of the corvette, sighted New Switzerland.

Then rose in their minds a current of hopes and fears. They fired a gun, and the few inhabitants of the colony came down to the shore.

"There is father," cried Jack, as he looked through the telescope, "and Frank and Mrs. Woolston."

"And Ernest and Mr. Woolston," said Willis.

"And where is mother," said Fritz, "and the young ladies?"

"It is very odd," said the captain, "but I cannot see them anywhere."

A terrible fear took possession of them, for they knew that if Mrs. Muller had been able, she would be the first to appear.

They were about to give vent to their sorrow and disappointment, and to find fault with the dispensations of Providence, when at a considerable distance from the shore three figures appeared.

They were Mrs. Muller, slowly advancing, supported by Mary and Sophie.

The poor mother's heart flew out to her sons, but her failing strength betrayed her.

"Thank Heaven, we have arrived in time," exclaimed Fritz and Jack, as they clasped hands.

Willis's hat, as usual, was tossed up in the air, and this time so high that it lodged in the mizzen-yard.

The Abbé Woolston prayed in silence.

In less than half an hour afterwards, hand in hand, heart against heart, lips on lips, they all re-united in the little chapel

where Ernest and Frank had never ceased to pray for the safe return of the absent.

Next morning, at daybreak, preparations were made for the terrible operation in Mrs. Muller's apartment. The excitement was intense, and the hum of a fly could be distinctly heard in the deep silence.

They had bandaged the patient's eyes under the pretext of hiding the instruments and preparations from her gaze; the real motive was to hide the operator, whom she believed to be an European surgeon, and they did not wish to add the anxieties of a mother to the agonies of the patient.

At the supreme moment they all knelt down. Jack alone stood by the bedside of his mother.

The old lively Jack seemed to have disappeared. He was pale, grave, very anxious, but firm and resolute. This was, perhaps, the first time that a son had ever been obliged to lacerate the bosom which had nourished him, but God had imposed the task on him, and would help him in its accomplishment.

When, a day or two after, calm, radiant, and safe, Mrs. Muller asked to see her deliverer, she clasped Jack in her arms. That which, had she known it before the operation, would only have intensified her terror and disease, now increased her joy, and hastened her convalescence.

Willis and Frank went to England with Captain Littlestone. The former, instead of being hanged, as he expected, was promoted to a lieutenancy for having rescued the *Unicorn* from the French dockyard.

After two years he went out again to New Switzerland, with his dear little Susan, who became a third daughter to the two elderly ladies, and a sister to the younger ones.

Frank became a clergyman, as he had a long time wished to do. He is now the vicar of New Switzerland.

The Abbé Woolston has resumed his missionary work.

That land was too favoured by Heaven not to have some misfortune happen sooner or later.

The misfortune has come upon it. Gold has been discovered there. Adicu to simplicity, adicu to happiness, adicu to all quietness of life. We may also say adicu to virtue, for the demon of European society has hastened thither.



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