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ADVERTISEMENT.

As the juvenile works which have appeared under the name of **PETER PARLEY** have obtained great celebrity in this country, the Publishers have accepted a proposal from Mr. **GOODRICH**, of Boston (America), the author of the book originally published under that name, to bring out a series of new works expressly adapted for English readers. The following letter from Mr. Goodrich expresses his views and intentions in regard to this undertaking.

Gentlemen—I think it is now understood between us that I am to prepare a series of books, of which you are to be the Publishers. I undertake this task with pleasure, because it is my wish to be judged in England by what I do write, and not by what has been written for me. I have been much vexed, since my arrival in this country, to see the name of **PETER PARLEY** attached to a number of books, published in London, which I never saw or heard of, and which contain much of which I wholly disapprove, and consider to be contrary to good morals. I have also seen my books mutilated and altered so that I could scarcely recognize anything in them as my own, except the title and some disfigured fragments.

It is therefore a real satisfaction to me, that my future works are to make their appearance in England in a genuine form, and with the advantage of Mr. **S. WILLIAMS'S** illustrations. I shall not fail to keep in view that I am now writing for English readers, and I trust I may thereby render what I write more worthy of the kind reception which, with all their disadvantages, my previous works have met with.

I am, Gentlemen, yours truly,
S. G. GOODRICH.

London; Aug. 1842.





THE LIFE, TRAVELS
AND ADVENTURE
OF

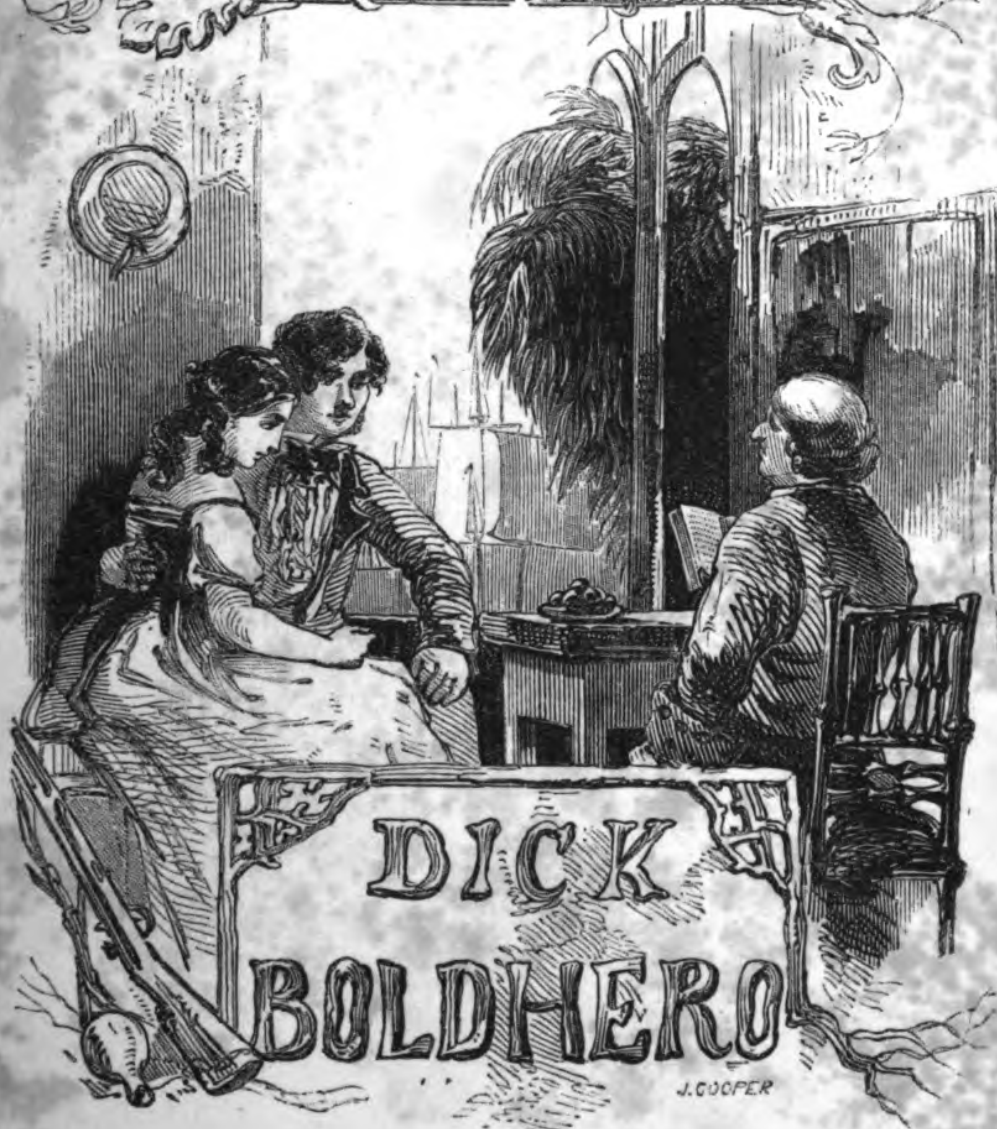


DICK
BOLDHERO

J. COOPER

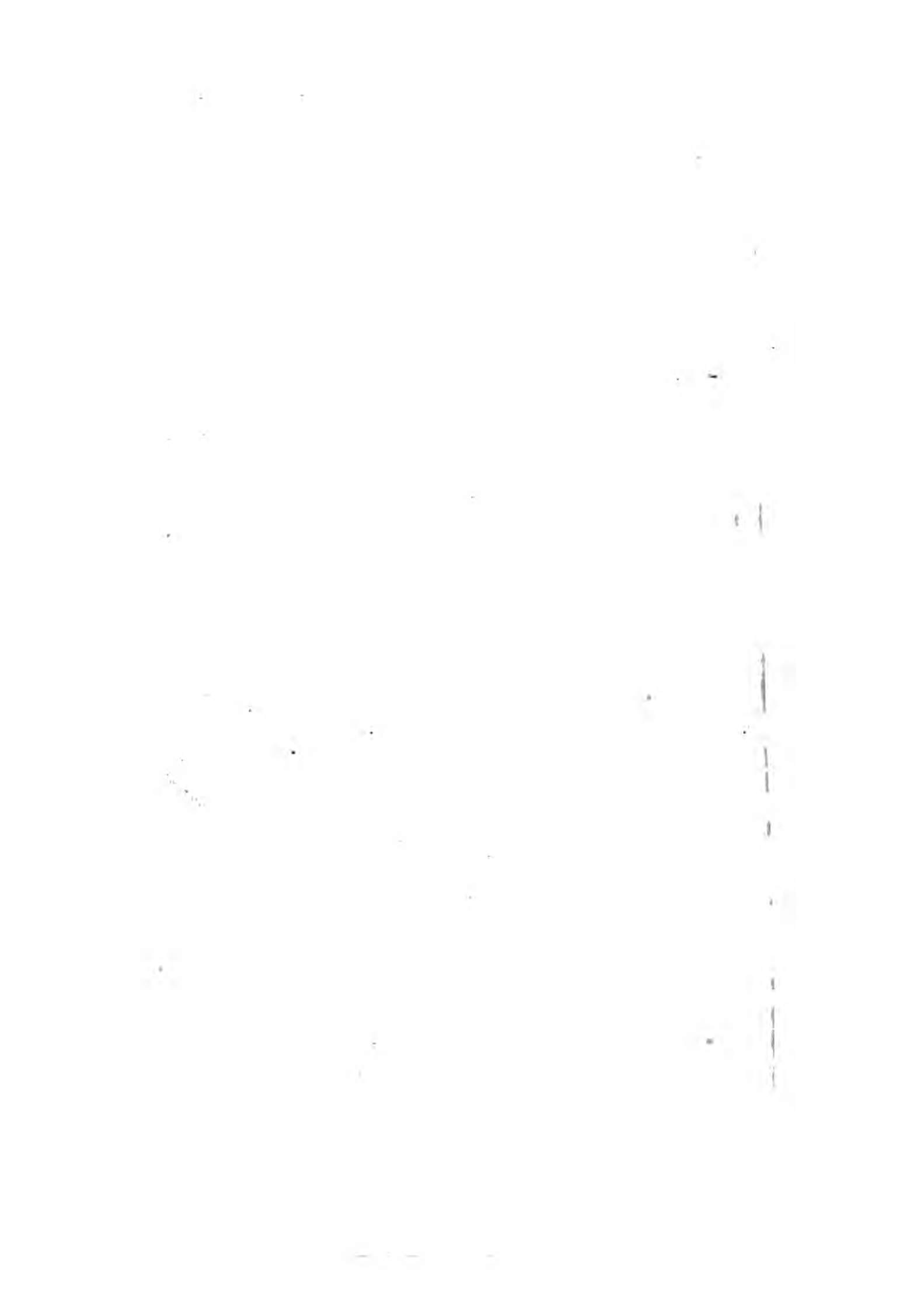


THE LIFE, TRAVELS
AND ADVENTURES
OF



DICK
BOLDHERO

J. COOPER



THE ADVENTURES
OF
DICK BOLDHERO
IN
SEARCH OF HIS UNCLE;
Or,
DANGERS AND DIFFICULTIES OVERCOME.

EDITED BY
PETER PARLEY.

LONDON:
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C AND J. ADLARD, PRINTERS, BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE.

PREFACE.

IT is a part of my purpose in these pages, to present to the reader the adventures of an American boy, placed in difficult and trying circumstances, and to show how the mind and character unfold and expand under such a discipline. I write, not merely to amuse the reader by the narrative of my hero's exploits, but to show the advantages which arise from the steady and persevering pursuit of a desirable and worthy object.

I have had one thing more in view : in the tale of the Siberian Sable Hunters, I have described the scenery of a frozen region : I

wish now to introduce my readers to a different quarter of the world, and a very opposite climate—the tropical regions of South America. There is no part of the earth which more abounds in curiosities, than this portion of the New World, and in tracing the travels of Richard Boldhero, I shall endeavour to lead my readers to contemplate some of the sublimest wonders of Nature, and to excite their admiration of the works of Him who in goodness and mercy has made all things.

S. G. G.

BOSTON, AMERICA.

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DICK BOLDHERO.



CHAPTER I.

**EARLY DAYS—MY UNCLE BEN—THE KEG
OF GOLD—MISFORTUNES OF MY FAMILY.**

As I am about to tell the story of my life, it is proper that I should say something of my parentage and early days. About half way between Hartford and New Haven, in Connecticut, is a small, pleasant city, called

Middletown.* It is situated upon the western bank of Connecticut river, and lies upon the high road which constitutes the great line of traffic between the two places first mentioned.

About a mile and a half south of Middletown, upon this road, is a turnpike gate, and contiguous to it is a small toll-house. This was originally called Hill-gate, being situated on a hill, but at last it was familiarly called Hell-gate. In the house which bore this ominous title, I was born, about five and forty years ago.

Our family then consisted of my father and mother, a brother, named Seth, and myself. Seth was two years of age when I was born. When I was about two years old, a girl was added to our circle, and she was named Sarah. At this time we were very poor, but our parents had once been in good circumstances. My father had formerly been a merchant in Middletown, in partnership with his brother Benjamin. They traded to the

* This place will be found on the map of the United States of America, about 100 miles north-east of the city of New York.

West Indies, with a sloop called the Car-buncle, and my uncle Ben used to command her. He usually went to St. Domingo, where he carried horses, mules, cows, oxen, potatoes, and onions, and brought back sugar and molasses.



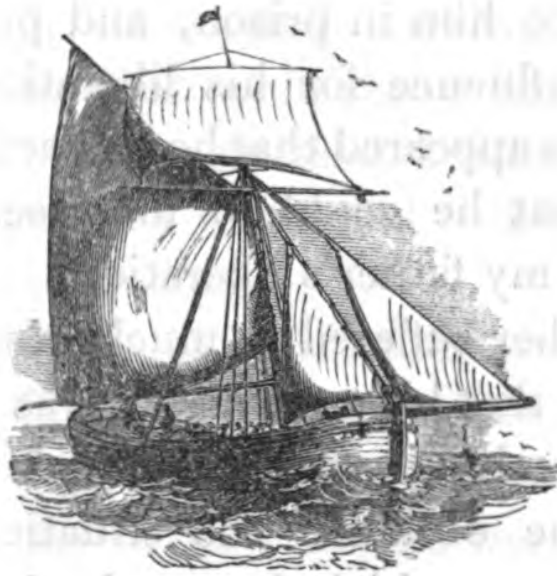
From all I can learn, it seems my uncle Ben was rather an eccentric character, but still he managed his part of the business well, and the concern went on in a thriving way for some years. At last, it was thought best for him to remain at St. Domingo, so as to carry on the business there, and accordingly it was so arranged. He took up his residence at Port au Prince; but, in about a

year after he was established there, the insurrection in St. Domingo broke out. My uncle, who was a hot-headed man, took some part in the struggle, in consequence of which he was obliged to seek safety in flight from the island. Whither he went, we could not exactly find out, but we were told that he went on board a Dutch vessel, bound for Surinam. From that time we lost all trace of him.

At the time that the disturbances commenced at Port au Prince, the Carbuncle was lying in port. Her cargo was in, she was almost ready to sail, and accordingly, she took her departure, and escaped. She brought a letter from my uncle Ben, very hastily written, saying that his life was in danger, and that very probably he should never return. He went on to say, that he should send a keg of gold by the vessel, which was of great value; and that, if my father never heard of him more, he might consider it as his own.

You may well imagine my father's disappointment, at finding that the precious keg was not to be found on board the sloop.

The supercargo, whose name was Ambrose Dexter, and who was familiarly called Amby Dexter, declared that my uncle had not had time to put the keg on board, that he was obliged to fly for his life, and that he went hastily by night on board the Dutch vessel of which we have already spoken.



My father continued the business for a year or two, employing Dexter as his supercargo; but the trade proved unprofitable, and at last he became a bankrupt. The notion was then common that the creditor has a right over the body of his debtor. Accordingly, the persons to whom he was indebted, threw him into prison, where he re-

mained for two or three years. My mother was reduced to extreme poverty, but she still continued to pick up a subsistence.

Upon my father's failure, Dexter took the store, continued the business, and very soon became a rich man. For some reason, he seemed to hate my father, though he pretended to be very kind to him. He used to go and see him in prison, and promised to use his influence for his liberation; but it afterwards appeared that he had actually been doing what he could to increase the difficulties of my father's liberation.

My father suffered so much from his confinement, that his constitution was weakened, and his health impaired for ever. After his release, he obtained the situation of toll-keeper, from which he received about one hundred dollars a year. Upon this pittance, our family was now obliged to live. My mother, however, was a good economist, and though we lived humbly, we had the necessaries of life.

As I have said, Amby Dexter advanced rapidly in wealth, and in the space of a few years he became a very rich man. In

reflecting upon the circumstances that had passed, my father became suspicious that he had embezzled the keg of gold, which had been sent by my uncle Ben, and that this was the secret of his sudden prosperity. He intimated these views, in a confidential way, to one or two whom he esteemed as his friends. He showed them the letter he had received from his brother, together with all the documents that could throw light on the transaction. These pretended friends, however, betrayed his trust, and told Dexter of my father's suspicions.

As if our cup of misfortune was not yet sufficiently full, our house was secretly entered shortly after this time, by some one at night, and my father's papers were carried off, together with two hundred dollars, which belonged to the turnpike company. A story was soon put in circulation, that the robbery was all a sham; and it was soon generally suspected that my father had taken the money, and set about the rumour of the theft to cover his guilt. He was tried for the embezzlement of the property, but though acquitted, he was deprived of his situation.

Nor was this all. Dexter brought an action against him, for defamation, in consequence of what he had said about him to his neighbours. A poor man's word is feeble, and carries little conviction with it; while the rich man's word is full of authority. Accordingly, in this contest, my father could hardly fail to be overwhelmed by his proud and prosperous enemy. He had even lost the papers, by means of the robbery, which justified the suspicions he had expressed, and thus he was regarded by the jury that tried the case, as without excuse or defence.

He was sentenced to pay five hundred dollars, and being unable to raise that sum, he was sent to prison. Here he lingered for a few months, till, at last, worn out and emaciated with confinement, and sick at heart, his spirit departed, as I confidently trust, to a better world.

As it is a painful story, I shall not detail the course of events which followed, in respect to my mother. It must be sufficient to say, that my brother Seth grew up rather a wild fellow, and the neighbours said—"I thought it would be so, for he comes of a

bad father, who never did any good for himself or his family." At last, when he was about seventeen years old, he went to sea, and was not heard of afterwards. For myself, I went to school till I was nine years old, when I went as cabin-boy on board a vessel which plied between Middletown and



New York. Here I continued for several years, though I was often beaten because they said I belonged to a bad family. They seemed to think I could do nothing right. However, I bore it all, and grew up a sailor. When I was about fifteen, I went on a voyage to St. Domingo, and was instructed

by my mother to make inquiries about my uncle at Port au Prince. This I did, but as it was about twenty years after the events occurred which I have mentioned, I could hear nothing of him.

After my return, I made several other voyages, and was soon able to do something towards the support of my mother and sister. At last I went upon a voyage which produced results of importance, of which I shall give an account in the next chapter.



CHAPTER II.

THE VOYAGE—ARRIVAL AT SURINAM—
BEGINNING OF A JOURNEY—ADVENTURE.

BEING now about seventeen years old, and having the reputation of being a pretty good sailor, I was offered a berth on board a vessel



that was going to Surinam, a Dutch settlement in South America. This I accepted, not only because the pay was liberal, but I had a vague notion that I might there hear something of my uncle Ben; for we had

always understood that when he left St. Domingo he sailed for that place. My mother seemed always to have a kind of faith that he was alive, and she hoped I might hear of him at Surinam. We set sail in November, our vessel being a brig, called the Sheldrake. We proceeded for some time on our voyage without any remarkable occurrence.

When we began to approach the coast of South America, I could not but be struck with the splendour of the stars at night. In those southern latitudes, we see a different set of stars from those which are visible in New England, and many of the groups are exceedingly brilliant. The beauty of a tropical night, especially at sea, even when the moon is not visible, can scarcely be conceived. The waves of the ocean are flashing with phosphoric light, and to such a degree as to throw a lustre upon the sides of the ship. The stars are of sufficient brilliancy to light up the atmosphere, giving to all the objects, above and around, an aspect of peculiar loveliness.

Surinam is part of a great country called

Guiana, which is on the north-eastern side of the South American continent, and belongs in part to England, in part to France, and Surinam to Holland. It is a low, level region, presenting not a single hill or highland for two or three hundred miles. When we approached the coast, I saw the land; nothing was presented to view but a line of trees edging the shore, as far as the eye could reach. Not a house was visible, nor, indeed, any other object which could give us the least intimation as to what part of the coast we had reached. We kept off the shore, and proceeded south-eastward, keeping the land in view.

As we were proceeding in this manner, a smart gale sprung up one night, and, in spite of our efforts to keep off, we were driven in towards the land. In the morning we struck the bottom, and soon found that we were stuck fast in the mud-bank which extends three or four miles out to sea, along the whole coast of Guiana. It was now December, a time when the whole face of nature is wrapped in snow in New England; but where we were, the heat was excessive.

After about two days, we contrived to work our brig out of the mud, and once more proceeded on our course. At last we saw a house upon the land, and the captain, coming to an anchor, sent a boat ashore, to inquire whereabouts we were. The answer was that we were near the mouth of the river Courantin, about a hundred miles west of Paramaribo, to which place we were bound. This was very agreeable news. We now proceeded cheerfully on our way, and in the course of two days we could perceive, by the appearance of the water, that we were near the mouth of a large river. This we knew to be the river Surinam, and now, pursuing a southerly course, we soon found ourselves at the wharf of Paramaribo.

I had travelled a great deal about the world, and had seen a great many beautiful places, but never was I more delighted than when I traversed the streets of this little city. It is not larger than Providence, in Rhode Island, having only twenty thousand inhabitants, but the streets are long, straight, and broad, and are lined with the most beautiful trees that can be imagined. These are of

various kinds, such as oranges, lemons, shaddocks, and tamarinds. At all seasons of the year, these trees are bending with fruit, and are yet covered with blossoms. The air is at all times filled with perfume, especially at night.

The inhabitants are generally Dutch. The houses are for the most part of wood, but they are of a curious fashion, having very heavy cornices, with abundance of strange ornaments. Nothing can present a stronger contrast than do the people in these streets to those of New England. In the latter place, there is great uniformity; in the former, all is variety. Here you may see the old Dutch planters, with their huge trousers, and broad-brimmed hats; sailors from all countries; soldiers, Jews, Indians, and Negroes. The dresses of these people strike a Yankee as being exceedingly odd, and at first, I could not help laughing at almost everybody I met. By degrees, the singularity of things around me wore off, and I became accustomed to the manners of the place. The river before the town of Paramaribo is at least a mile in width, and as

there are a great many boats and barges constantly plying upon its surface, the scene it presents is of a very lively character.

The soil of Guiana is among the richest in the world. The land lies so low that it is necessary to build dikes, for the purpose of keeping out the sea and the inundations of the rivers. The chief productions are coffee, sugar, cacao, cotton, and indigo. The land also produces ginger, pepper, cloves, nutmegs, and castor oil. The object of our voyage was to obtain coffee and spices. There is no country in the world more rich in its fruits. Yams, sweet potatoes, bananas, and coconuts are produced in abundance, and so are oranges, lemons, limes, figs, shaddocks, melons of many kinds, and other delicious fruits.

Nothing can equal the luxuriance of the flowering shrubs and plants. Some of these are of gigantic stature. The trees often grow to a great height, and thousands of bright-winged birds seem to live a life of perpetual bliss amid the perfume that is shed from their perennial blossom.

As soon as I had become a little acquainted

with the town, I began to make inquiries about my uncle. I could, however, hear nothing of him, until, at last, an old sailor told me that he remembered him perfectly well; that he came from Port au Prince to Paramaribo more than twenty years before, where he remained several years, and carried on an extensive business. The man could give me no farther information about him. He added, however, that there was an Englishman residing up the country about a hundred miles, who had carried on some business with my uncle, and he could tell me all about him. As our vessel was likely to be detained about a month, I got permission of the captain to go and see this man.

I set out on foot, and pursued my way along the banks of the river Surinam. The road was roughly paved with stones, and heavy waggons were frequently passing to and fro upon it. Although I was in a strange country, I felt no concern, for I was naturally of a fearless disposition, and beside, I was armed with a cudgel in my hand, and a pistol under my belt. So far, indeed, was I from fear, that I felt a sort of pleasant excitement

in my present adventure. The strange appearance of everything around me rather excited than saddened my mind. The trees, the shrubs, the very birds, the whole aspect of nature, the forms of the houses, the dress of the inhabitants, all reminded me that I was far from my own country, that I was a stranger in a strange land; but still I was light of heart, and whistling Yankee Doodle, I plodded bravely on.

I had set out before sunrise, and by ten o'clock had travelled more than a dozen miles. Finding myself weary, I turned off the road, and seated myself on the bank of the river, beneath the shade of a large tree. Here I sat for some time, listening to the incessant chatter of parrots and macaws over my head, and observing the humming-birds that were buzzing among the flowering shrubs.

At last I fell asleep, as little dreaming of danger as if I were taking a nap upon a summer day upon the banks of the Connecticut river. I slept soundly for some time, but at last I began to dream about a great many strange things. I fancied that I was wandering in a distant land, that I finally

came to a great cavern, which I entered, that I was weary and laid myself down to repose, that a horrid monster stole upon me in my helpless condition, and was about to rend me in pieces; I dreamed that I attempted to rise and escape, but that I could not stir. Such at last was the horror of my mind, that I screamed aloud, and at the same instant I awoke from my sleep.

What was my horror to discover that my dream was almost a reality! At the distance of about twenty feet I saw an enormous alligator, with his jaws already distended, ready to crush me in his fangs. He was slowly stealing upon me, but as I moved, he rushed forward, his enormous tail brandished in the air, and his claws spread, as if ready to clasp me. Quick as thought, I leaped from the ground, and at a single bound placed myself behind the trunk of the tree beneath which I had been sleeping. The monster perceived that he was foiled in his main object; but unluckily I had left my wallet, containing a loaf of bread and some cold meat, upon the ground where I had lain. The creature picked this up in his mouth,

and wheeling heavily round, marched down the bank and plunged into the water. At first, I was quite satisfied to have escaped with my life ; but I soon began to lament the loss of my dinner. It was in vain, however, to repine, so I seized my cudgel, and proceeded upon my journey.



CHAPTER III.

MY JOURNEY CONTINUED—A PLANTER'S
HOUSE—A STRANGE VISITOR AT NIGHT.

As evening approached, I found myself quite fatigued, and my feet almost blistered from the heat of the ground. I was therefore very glad to see a coffee plantation about a mile distant on the right of the road. Thither I went, and applied to some of the negroes for a night's lodging, but found, however, that not one of them could speak a word of English, Dutch being the only language with which they were acquainted. Several of them came round me, chattering like so many magpies.

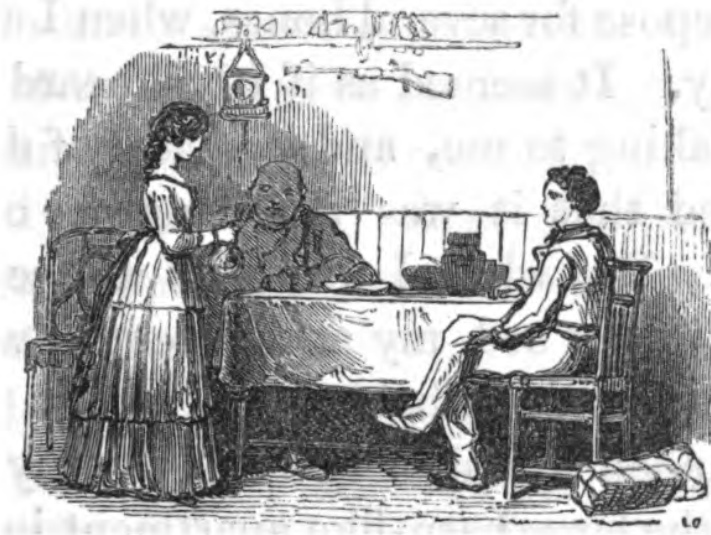
Finding it impossible to make them understand by words, I resorted to signs. I suppose I must have been a pretty good mimic, for they seemed to understand me at once, and burst into the most violent fits of laughter. At last they concluded to take me to

their master, whom I found to be a great stout man, with a swarthy complexion, and a farmer-like appearance; but he, being a Dutchman, could speak no more English than the negroes. The latter, however, interpreted my wishes, and the planter gave immediate directions to have me taken good care of. I was accordingly led off in triumph by my sable friends, who treated me as well as if I had been an emperor.

I never saw such a merry, kind-hearted set of fellows. They brought some water, and one of them washed my sore feet; another brought me a bowl of milk, and a third spread my bed. After I had rested for half an hour, I was called to supper, and took my meal with the planter and his family. They were all very kind and polite. There was one black-eyed girl, the planter's daughter, as I supposed, whom I thought handsome, but very different from our New England girls. Her complexion was extremely dark; her hair black as jet, and her skin of an olive colour. When her features were at rest, her countenance was pensive, almost sad; but the moment she spoke, there was a flash

of cheerfulness over her whole countenance.

The habitation of the planter was very different from a snug New England dwelling. In this delicious climate there is a perpetual summer; no frost, no snow, no blustering winds ever come to chill the inhabitants, to destroy the vegetation, or interrupt the ge-



nial course of nature. Little is needed for the comfort of the inhabitants, in respect to a dwelling, but a mere shelter. The planter's residence consisted of three or four distinct buildings, of irregular shape and arrangement. One was of brick, and covered with tiles; the rest were of wood, and had more

the appearance of cattle sheds than human dwellings. There were no chimneys, and the windows consisted of openings without glass.

When night came, I was put into one of these buildings. We ascended to a second floor by a ladder, and I laid down upon a bed which consisted of straw. Feeling very weary, I soon fell asleep. I continued in a sound repose for several hours, when I awoke suddenly. It seemed as if I had heard some one speaking to me, and in a sort of dream, I fancied that it was the daughter of the planter. But when I was fully awake, and rose up in my bed, my amazement at what I beheld was indescribable.

The moon was shining very brightly, and lighted the large barn-like apartment in such a manner, that I could see almost every object with distinctness. Above me, amid the dusky shadows of the room, I beheld a creature of the most extraordinary aspect. It seemed to have the head of a rhinoceros, with most enormous ears, the body of a bird, and the legs of an alligator. It had immense wings, shaped like those of a bat. To my

excited imagination, the creature seemed much larger than it really was, and as I gazed upon it, it seemed to wave its prodigious wings, and grin at me with a sneering and malicious expression.

My first notion was, that it was a mere night-mare; but when I recollected that I was in a strange country, and moreover remembered the adventure of the alligator, which had so recently occurred, I began to conceive that it must be a reality. There is no harm, at least, thought I, in being prepared for the worst. Accordingly, I reached out my hand, and seized my cudgel. I then laid down upon my bed, and keeping my eye fixed upon the grisly apparition, held myself ready for what might happen. I kept myself perfectly still, and at last the creature spread its wings and began to make a circuit through the upper regions of the apartment.

Round and round he went, upon a noiseless wing, and at last began to make a dip at me. Never shall I forget the sensations of that horrible moment! The very uncertainty, whether it was a reality, or some grisly phantom of the brain, seemed to in-

crease my agitation. Could I have been sure that it was a thing of flesh and blood, I should have been ready to give it battle. But the doubt, whether it was a being of this world or another, seemed to freeze my blood. I grasped my cudgel, but my arm was paralysed.

Thus I lay for several moments, while the creature wheeled round and round, at every evolution stooping lower and lower, as he came near the place where I lay. At last he paused in his flight, and hovered over the foot of my bed. I could distinctly feel his claws upon my feet, as well as the fanning of his wings, which were kept constantly in motion. The sensation restored my reason and my strength. I partially arose in my bed, and struck a furious blow with my cane at the monster. It took effect, and he fell lifeless on the floor. What was my surprise, on going to the spot where the creature lay, to discover that what my excited fancy had exaggerated almost to the dimensions of an ox, was, in fact, not bigger than a crow! It was one of the huge bats common to Guiana, and known by the name of the vampire.

I now laid myself down upon my bed, but it was in vain that I attempted to sleep. I lay for several hours, and finding it impossible to repose, I went to the window and looked out upon the scene. The moon was shining with wonderful brightness, and from the eminence on which the plantation stood, I had a distinct view of the surrounding country. The river Surinam shone like silver in the distance, the air was filled with spicy fragrance, and a kind of dazzling light or silvery mist seemed to be diffused throughout the whole space beneath the sky. The whole aspect of nature and of the objects around me was strange, yet lovely. There was a balmy softness in the atmosphere, a quiet splendour over the face of nature, which excited my admiration, and, at the same time, gave me a sort of pensive and lonely feeling, at the thought that I was far, very far, from my home.

I remained at the window looking at the scene before me for some time. At last the morning came, and before the sun had risen, I went forth into the fields. An immense extent of ground, belonging to the planta-

tion, was covered with coffee trees. These were about ten feet in height, planted in rows at the distance of about ten feet from each other: they somewhat resemble the peach tree; but the leaves are longer, narrower, and highly varnished. These trees, or rather shrubs, are evergreens, and produce fruit when they are about four years old. They live to a great age—sometimes a hundred years. They were now covered with large branches of white blossoms, which gave forth a sweet odour. The coffee berry grows in a kind of fruit, which is red when ripe, and has a very beautiful appearance upon the trees.

After walking about the grounds for a short time, I was returning to the house, when I met the daughter of the planter. She bade me good morning, in English, and, to my joy and surprise, I found that she knew a few words of that language. We tried to enter into conversation, but without much success. She asked me my name; and when I told her it was Dick Boldhero, she manifested much surprise and interest. She spoke with great earnestness, and seemed to

have an intense desire to know something more. At last, I saw the tears run down her cheeks, and I felt an emotion which I cannot describe. After a time we separated, and having taken breakfast, I bade adieu to the plantation, and set forward upon my journey, carrying with me the remembrance of the planter's daughter deeply imprinted on my mind.



CHAPTER IV.

SUGAR CANE—CACAO TREES—STRANGE
OBJECTS — BEAUTIFUL BIRDS—PERILS
—A DREAM IN THE WILDERNESS.

As I pursued my journey along the banks of the Surinam, I met with many plantations of coffee, sugar-cane, cotton, and cacao.

The sugar plantations, at a little distance, bear some resemblance to our fields of Indian corn. The cane has a broad, long leaf, with a jointed stalk or stem. It grows to the height of seven or eight feet, and is very smooth and glossy. The sugar-cane is not propagated by seeds, but by cuttings which are planted in rows or hills. It puts forth something like large silky tassels, which have a beautiful appearance. In eighteen months from the time of planting the cane, it is fit to cut; the stalks are put into a mill, and from the juice that is crushed out, sugar and molasses are made.

The labour of Guiana is almost wholly performed by negroes. During the period when they are making sugar, they live almost entirely upon the juice of the cane, and at that time, they are said to get very fat. The labouring horses, oxen and mules, though kept constantly at work, being allowed to eat refuse stalks, and scummings from the boiling-house, also thrive in the most surprising manner.

The cacao trees bear the fruit of which chocolate is made. They resemble young cherry-trees, but separate near the ground into four or five stems. The leaves are about four inches long, smooth, but not glossy, and of a dull green colour. The flowers are saffron-coloured and very beautiful, and the fruit somewhat resembles a cucumber in shape. Its colour, while growing, is green; but as the fruit ripens, it changes to a fine bluish red, with pink veins.

Each of the pods contains from twenty to thirty nuts or kernels, which resemble almonds, and consist of a white sweet pulpy substance, enveloped in a parchment-like shell. These are the cacao or chocolate nuts.

When the fruit is ripe, it is gathered, and the nuts are taken out of the pods, and laid on leaves or skins to dry. They are then put into bags, each containing about a hundred-weight, and thus packed, are exported to foreign countries.

I noticed, as I went along, a few fields of Indian corn and rice, and I was informed that two crops of each are frequently obtained in a season. I observed the castor-oil plant, growing wild, as well as the cabbage-tree, which is a kind of palm that derives its name, not from its appearance, but from the use to which it is put by the inhabitants. The leaves grow crowded together at the top of the stem, and when they are cut off, the central ones are found to be white and tender, and when boiled, are used as a substitute for cabbage.

I occasionally met with small patches of the indigo plant. It is cultivated by seeds, which are sown in rows, about a foot apart. In three months the top part is cut off, leaving the roots to shoot up anew. I used to suppose that indigo was a kind of mineral, but I now learned that it was made from these

small plants. The tops of the herbs being cut off, as I have mentioned, are steeped in vats, and are then pounded and again put into water. The colouring matter, consisting of a fine powder, forms a sort of cake of sediment, which is cut into small pieces about an inch square, before it is perfectly dry. It is then packed in barrels, or sewed up in sacks for sale. The process of making indigo is very curious, and one thing deserves to be mentioned: the plant itself is harmless, but the indigo drug is poisonous.

Although I had frequently a lonely sort of feeling, as I pursued my way, and sometimes wished that I was snug at home with my mother and sister, I still found it, on the whole, very pleasant to travel in this strange land, and picked up a good deal of information, and saw many things that were quite new and wonderful to me. I was constantly impressed with the strangeness of everything around me. Instead of forests of chesnut, walnut, and maple trees, so common in Connecticut, I here saw forests of gigantic mahogany, live oak, and other curious trees, the names of which I could not learn.

The birds, too, were all different from those to which I had been accustomed. The woods were all alive with flocks of green parrots and red macaws, which kept up a constant chattering. The latter seemed perpetually scolding each other, and I could sometimes fancy that they were calling each other all the hard names they could think of. I saw a great many toucans, with bills half as long as their bodies; they kept bowing their heads and making other odd quaint movements as if they were making speeches. Hence, the people call this bird the preacher.

I saw a great many other birds, most of them adorned with magnificent plumage; but they had harsh voices, and were all very unlike my feathered acquaintances in the "land of steady habits." I once met with a woodpecker, which resembled the red-headed thief who spears so many of our cherries with his long bill. He nodded his head, and uttered a sort of cry, which reminded me so strongly of home, that the tears filled my eyes, and I paused and was ready to turn about, and return. But this weakness was transient, and I pursued my way.

My path now turned from the river, and wound through a thick forest. It was no longer a waggon-road, but a mere mule-track. The weather continued very hot, and I suffered excessively from the bite of large gnats, three times as big as our musquitoes. At first I could hardly bear the sting of these insects; but by degrees I became hardened, and at last took it very quietly, even if one of the impertinent rogues thrust his little poisoned javelin into the point of my nose. At night I slept soundly, although the gnats continued to feast upon me from the crown of my head to the tips of my toes.

The forests through which I was proceeding grew more and more dense as I advanced; many of the trees rose to an immense height, and festoons of gray moss swung from tree to tree, with as much grace as if they had been arranged by the hand of art. Vines wreathed the trunks of the trees, and parasitical plants, with blossoms bright as gems, and of every colour and form, wound around their branches. Nothing could surpass the gorgeous splendor of the forest scenery. It appeared as if nature, in a sportive and fan-

tastic mood, had put forth every effort to combine the beautiful and the magnificent, in the vegetable kingdom; and as if to captivate every sense, the air was balmy, and the sweetest fragrance was borne on the gentle breezes that stole from the forest.

I was so much occupied with noticing the curiosities that met me at every step, that I did not observe, till the sun was setting, that my path had now shrunk into little more than a deer-track, and I then began to suspect that I had missed my way; this impression was strengthened by the fact that I did not reach a negro settlement, where I had intended to spend the night. I hesitated for a few moments, whether to proceed or turn back. Resolving upon the former, I pushed on with rapid strides. My path, however, grew more and more undefined, and at last I was completely lost in a bewildering maze. It was now sunset, and the shadows of night had begun to thicken around me. I attempted to retrace my steps, but could not recover the path. Finding it hopeless to attempt to extricate myself, I made up my mind to pass the night where I was.

My situation was not a pleasant one. I knew that the forests were the abodes of wild animals, which shrunk from daylight, yet prowled forth at night without fear or restraint. But courage is apt to come with necessity; and seeing that there was no help at hand, I sat down, clenched my cudgel, and determined to keep watch till morning. I remained in this condition for some time, listening to the strange sounds that began to steal upon my ear as the evening advanced. The day birds had gone to their repose, and their various cries had gradually faded into silence. But voices of a different kind now saluted me. Reptiles, of many kinds, began their uncouth noises. Birds, known only to these solitudes, and which, even here, were silent during the day, now poured out their music without fear: never did I hear such a jargon as seemed for a time to fill the woods around me. I could easily fancy that strange and unearthly spirits filled the air, and were trying to see what a variety of cries and sounds they could produce.

I listened to these noises for a long time, with a degree of painful excitement. It seemed

to me that a thousand voices had united in one wild chorus, as if to drive me mad. I stopped my ears to keep out the din: I closed my eyes to withdraw my attention from the scene around me. At last, the sounds began to subside, the darkness gradually gave way, and I saw the moonbeams tinging the tops of the trees. Silence stole over the scene, and I fell into a profound repose. My imagination wandered to the scenes of my childhood. I was once more, as I dreamed, with my mother and my sister: they embraced me with rapture. Tears of bliss fell upon my cheeks, and a tranquil joy filled my bosom. We went to church together, and once more I heard the sacred hymn, and the soothing, solemn tunes, which had become associated with all my religious emotions.

The psalm was ended, and the preacher began his discourse. He seemed at first a grave and reverend divine, holding in his hand the sacred Scriptures. But suddenly he seemed to change: his voice grew harsh and shrieking; his gestures became wild and fantastic, and at last he uttered a hideous yell, and jumping out of his pulpit, fell with

a terrible crash upon the persons who sat beneath.

Startled and terrified, I suddenly awoke; but the scene which now arrested my attention, was still more extraordinary than that which had been presented to my mind in my dream.

At a little distance, was an open glade, upon which the moonlight now fell with dazzling splendor. In the centre of this spot there sat at least a hundred figures, which seemed to me to be men and women, about half the size of life. Upon a branch of a tree, which projected over them, was another figure, who seemed to be addressing the assembly. He uttered the most extraordinary sounds, and showed a very animated manner. His gestures were strong, quick, and emphatic. Sometimes he sat upon his haunches, and sometimes he stood upright. Occasionally he leaped from one branch of the tree to another, and at times he swung from his seat, and suspended himself to a branch of the tree by his tail: this last performance led me to conclude that I was not looking upon an assembly of human beings.

I sat still, and for some time observed the scene. Nothing could exceed the seeming earnestness of the speaker, except the sympathy and sensibility of the audience. They appeared to feel every tone and gesture, and responded by sympathetic grunts, groans, yells, and every possible variety of attitude and gesticulation. At last, the orator, having uttered a tremendous burst of eloquence, leaped from his rostrum, and came with a bound into the midst of the audience. Upon this, they all set up a shout, which echoed far and wide over the forest.

I had become so interested in this spectacle, that I had risen from my resting-place, and advanced so far that I was within a few paces of the assembly. One of them now chanced to spy me; upon which he uttered a terrific yell. The eyes of the whole assembly were turned upon me, and, uttering a frightful howl, they all set out, and came bounding toward me.

Never in my life have I been placed in a situation at once so ludicrous and so appalling. A hundred monkeys now surrounded me; some mounting the trees over

my head, and some among the bushes at my feet; some howling, and all grinning at me, and making the most threatening demonstrations.



CHAPTER V.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE MONKEYS CONCLUDED—WEARINESS, DESPAIR—A TERRIBLE INCIDENT.

My readers can hardly imagine the bewildered state of my mind, occasioned by the circumstances described in the last chapter. The monkeys, who grinned, chattered, frisked, and frolicked in the moonlight around me, appeared like so many fantastic spirits, and I could scarcely believe that what I saw was not a dream. Never shall I forget some of their quizzical countenances and grotesque gestures, as they peeped at me from between the branches of the trees. After they had remained near me for several minutes, one of them uttered a shrill cry, and with many a leap, and jerk, and bound, they disappeared. They ran along the branches of the trees, passing from one to another as easily as a rabbit runs upon the ground.

I could but observe how singularly their limbs were adapted to accomplish this. They had not only four hands, but they were furnished with a tail, which seemed amazingly convenient and useful. Never was any instrument employed with more dexterity and success. They wound it around the limbs of the trees, where they hung suspended, or swung from branch to branch. When they were passing over the giddy heights of the forests they held it erect, in order to keep them steady, thus using it as a rope-dancer does his balance pole.

At this time I knew very little about these creatures, but I afterwards learned that the forests of Guiana, as well as other warm parts of South America, abound in various kinds of monkeys, and that those which made me the nocturnal visit I have described were of the sort called *howlers*. They are particularly noisy at night, and make the forests ring with their elvish din. It is common for one of them to mount a tree, and seem to address the assembled group around him, embellishing his discourse with the most extraordinary grimaces, as I had seen. One can hardly

look upon a scene of this sort, and not feel it to be a sort of satire upon human oratory.

I did not close my eyes again that night. Morning at last came, and I attempted to grope my way back through the thickets, to the paths I had lost. But I was encompassed by lofty forests, and my mind was in some degree bewildered. I rambled about the whole day, and at night found myself at the precise spot from which I had started in the morning.

My heart was now full. The prospect of perishing in the wilderness was before me ; I had eaten the last morsel of food that remained in my wallet ; it seemed impossible, therefore, that I should escape. The thoughts of never again seeing my mother and my home, of dying without a friend at my side, and leaving my body to be torn limb from limb by wild beasts, all rushed upon me with frightful force, and for a few moments I gave way to despair.

But these feelings gradually subsided, and though no situation could be more hopeless than mine, still hope revived, and I determined to make another effort the next morning to effect my escape. Having formed this

resolution, I stretched myself upon the ground and fell asleep, and nothing remarkable occurred during the night. At early dawn I arose, and set forward with the determination of being more wary than before, in order to avoid a similar result. I was very hungry, but I soon found some berries, which I ventured to eat, although I was not sure that they were wholesome. I pushed forward, as I imagined, in a direct line towards the path. But when one's head is turned, south seems north, and north south—so that a great part of the day I travelled in a direction opposite to that which I intended to follow.

Toward evening I came in sight of a lake, and as I was exceeding thirsty, I approached it gladly. It was encircled with tall trees and thickly matted shrubs, except on the side where I was. Here was a little opening, and as I came to the edge of the water I was about to stoop down and quench my thirst; but what was my astonishment to behold before me a huge beast, bearing a resemblance to a large black hog. He was completely under the water, but I could distinctly see him walking on the bottom and approaching

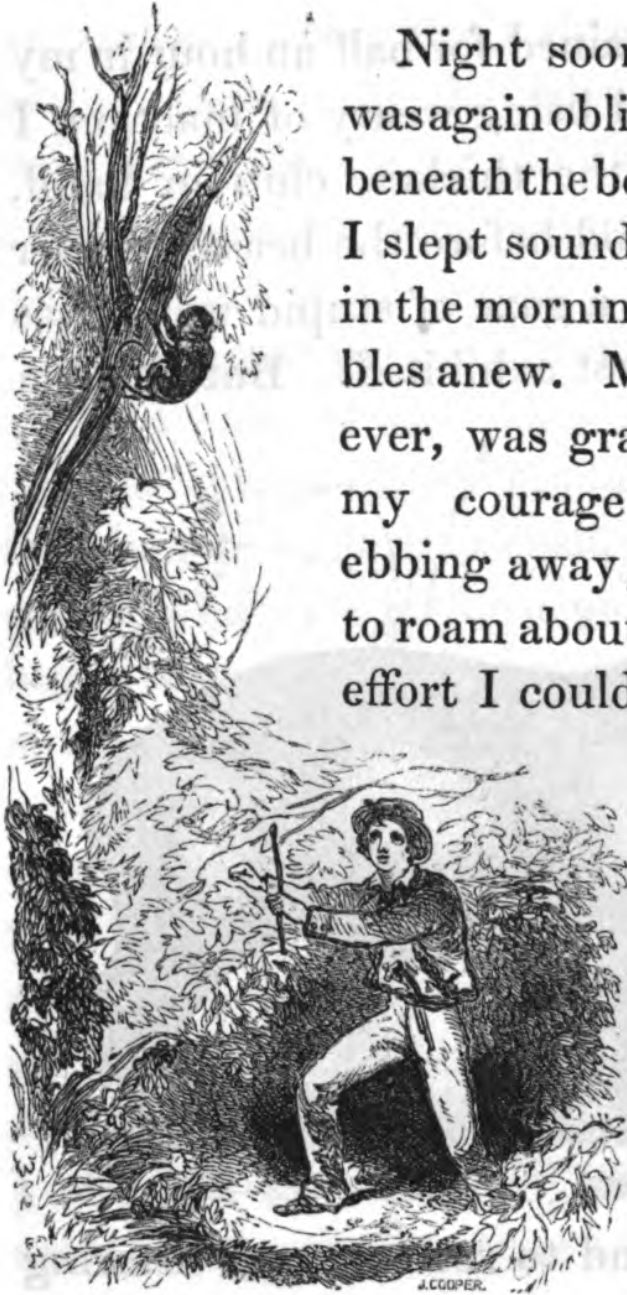
the shore. Being not a little alarmed, I ran hastily back from the lake, and concealed myself in a thicket, at the distance of several yards, choosing such a position as to command a view of the water.

I could soon perceive an undulation on the glassy surface of the lake, and shortly after the bristly back of the animal became visible. He leisurely came to the shore, looked around, snuffed the air a little suspiciously, and then began to devour the coarse herbage that grew along the margin of the water. The whole aspect of the creature was swinish, and I should have set him down as one of the hog family, but for two reasons. He was twice as big as any specimen of that race I had ever seen, and he had a long, flexible snout, which he used as an elephant does his trunk. I watched him narrowly, and never have I seen a more extraordinary looking creature. He seemed, indeed, to be half hog and half elephant, though his manners resembled the former rather than the latter. He seemed to feel perfectly at home, ate voraciously, flourished his little tail, and at last sat down like a tired dog.

I had now remained for half an hour in my concealment, and being weary of inaction, I rushed out from the thicket, club in hand, and suddenly stood before the beast. Never have I seen such a gaze of stupid wonder as the creature at first exhibited. But he soon



made up his mind to retreat, and uttering a grunt of indignation, he plunged into the water, and I saw him no more. I afterwards learned that this animal is common in the waters of South America, and probably is known to most of my readers, under the name of *tapir*.



Night soon followed, and I was again obliged to find a pillow beneath the boughs of the forest. I slept soundly, however, and in the morning began my rambles anew. My strength, however, was gradually impaired; my courage was gradually ebbing away; still I continued to roam about, making the best effort I could for my deliver-

ance. I felt the solitude to be the most painful, though I was never alone in the forest, for innumerable parrots were chattering among the

branches of the trees, and birds of many forms and hues were glancing through the air, or reposing in the leafy shade.

I frequently met with monkeys, skipping from tree to tree, and as they grinned at me from above, I could fancy that there was a

sneering and malicious expression in their faces, as if they understood and rejoiced in my forlorn condition. I once saw an animal bounding along upon the ground, which greatly resembled a raccoon, and a momentary flash of pleasure came over me at being thus reminded of a creature with which I was familiar in my native woods. But I soon perceived that the animal had a longer tail and snout than the raccoon. He speedily bounded up a tree, and coiling his tail around one of the branches, looked down upon me with a gaze of curious wonder. I learned that this creature was the *coaiti*; an animal which truly or falsely has the reputation of eating up his own tail.

Another and another day followed, my strength and spirits gradually failing beneath the efforts I was making, particularly as the food I procured, consisting wholly of berries, gave me but little support. It was, I believe, on the sixth day after I had wandered from my path, that I sat down, overpowered with heat, exhaustion, and despair. I felt as if my final hour was come—that I had found my last earthly resting-place, and that I must

prepare to die in solitude. The anguish of my feelings was not so great as might have been imagined. I was worn out both in body and mind, and contemplated my release, if not with satisfaction, at least with composure, when a fearful spectacle arrested my attention.

At the distance of about thirty feet before me lay an object, which at first I had taken to be the fallen branch of a tree. But its dull, earthy colours gradually changed to brilliant hues ; its relaxed and flattened form became rigid, round, and compact. Its head rose with a slow motion, and I perceived that it was an enormous serpent, gliding with a noiseless motion towards me. Its eye was fixed upon me with a glassy and terrific stare ; its jaws were expanded ; its tongue brandished, ready to strike the fatal blow. I had sufficient recollection to know that this must be an anaconda, and I expected the next instant to be crushed in its folds. The thought was too horrible to be endured. I felt a faintness come over me, and while a rushing sound filled my ears, my senses departed.

CHAPTER VI.

DELIVERANCE. — SICKNESS. — KINDNESS
AMONG STRANGERS.—ACCOUNT OF MA-
ROONTOWN.

THE rushing sound that filled my ears, as I fainted and fell to the earth before the terrific image of the monster that threatened me with instant death, was occasioned by the discharge of a musket. How often does it happen that Providence interposes to save us, when there appears to be no help at hand, and hope itself has departed ! A negro hunter happened to be passing at the precise moment that the serpent was about to rush upon me, and crush me in its folds. I was concealed from his view by the bushes that intervened ; but he saw the threatening attitude of the reptile, and knew that it was about to strike upon some object near at hand. The huntsman was on horseback, but the serpent was so intent upon its prey, that

it allowed the man to approach within a few yards. He then levelled his gun, and the discharge nearly severed its head from the body. The dying monster in convulsions



lashed the earth, and tore the adjacent herbage. The struggles gradually subsided ; the form was stretched out at length upon the ground in a waving line, and, except a tre-

mulous motion along the back, and a faint vibration of the tail, the creature ceased to move.

Of this scene I was, however, almost unconscious. The negro, in looking about for the object of the serpent's meditated blow, soon discovered me. He raised my head from the earth, and, after a few moments, I slowly recovered my senses. When my eyes first fell upon the face of the negro, his head covered with an immense palm-leaf hat, a strange fancy crossed my mind. I conceived myself to be in the coils of the serpent, and the countenance of the negro seemed to be the image of my destroyer. But this illusion quickly passed away, and I speedily knew that I had been delivered. A sense of unspeakable joy thrilled through my heart, and I burst into a flood of tears. I was utterly unable to speak, but I clasped the hands of the negro, who was kneeling by me, and showed in his countenance the utmost sympathy and kindness. Never have I felt toward any human being a more grateful emotion than toward my kind-hearted preserver at that moment.

I was soon able to get upon my feet, but when I saw the outstretched body of the serpent, and considered the danger I had escaped, a faintness again came over me, and I should have fallen to the ground, but for the support afforded by my protector. He now spoke to me, but in a language which I did not understand. He seemed to comprehend my situation, however, and placing me upon the saddle of his horse, he mounted behind me. After winding through the bushes for a short distance, we came to a pathway, along which we proceeded for the space of an hour, during which the negro paid the utmost attention to my weakness. He held me upon the saddle, kept the somewhat impatient steed to a walk, and did all in his power to render my situation comfortable.

I now observed that we were emerging from the forest, and that cultivated fields were opening before us. I noticed plantations upon the hill sides, and, at a little distance, I perceived scattered dwellings : they, however, were of a very humble description ; the sides seemed to consist of stakes woven together with palm leaves, and the roofs to

be made either of palm leaves or straw. As we passed along, I noticed a number of negroes engaged in various occupations; but I saw no white people. The population increased as we proceeded, and when at last we entered a long irregular street, the inhabitants swarmed like bees. Never have I seen such a strange spectacle. The town consisted of huts, such as I have described, and the people were all black. I had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that this was Maroontown, the negro settlement, through which I had expected to pass on my journey.

As we proceeded through the street of the town, we soon attracted attention, and I became a special object of curiosity. There were great numbers of children, and as they were entirely naked, they looked like monkeys. Many of them were lying down at their ease; others were skipping and frisking about like squirrels. Many of them began to follow us, and when once a train had formed behind us, we were soon surrounded by a throng of all sizes and sexes. They went on, leaping, shouting, babbling, laugh-

ing, and dancing, and performing all sorts of antics.

At length we reached a hovel of somewhat better appearance than the rest. Here my guide dismounted, and clearing a space among the crowd, partly by threats and partly by blows, he took me from the horse, and carried me into the dwelling. He placed me



upon a bed of straw, drove out the children that had rushed into the room, and fastened the entrance. He then spoke to his wife and daughter, no doubt giving an account of the manner in which he had discovered me. I became the immediate object of the care and kindness of the two women.

They provided for me some rice broth, of which I ate a little, and, overpowered with fatigue, I fell asleep. My slumbers, however, were disturbed, and my mind was agitated with terrific dreams. Worn out with suffering of mind and body, my constitution gave way, and I fell into a raging fever.

During the period of my disease, I had little consciousness, and I have but a faint remembrance of what passed. In the lucid intervals which visited me, I could always perceive some one of the kind family watching at my bedside, ready and prompt to attend to all my wants and wishes. For the space of three weeks, I remained in a critical condition, apparently hovering upon the narrow line between life and death. Owing, however, to the prescriptions of a black physician, who attended upon me with great care, and the affectionate nursing of my friends, aided by my elastic constitution, the disease was at last conquered, and I began to revive from my prostrate condition. I was, indeed, wasted to a shadow, and when the fever left me, I could not lift my arm from the bed, nor turn my head upon the pillow.

During this period of excessive weakness, I was as tenderly treated as if I had been an infant, and the heir of the house. Somebody was always at my bedside to wet my parched lips with lemonade, to bathe my forehead, or aid me to change my position. The rough, burly master of the hovel, when called upon to lift me from my bed, seemed to have a new sense of gentleness infused into his clumsy hands and arms.

Under these kindly auspices, when once the disease had left me, I gradually acquired strength, and in the space of a fortnight was able to totter to the door. I was led out by the two women, and, as I gazed upon the wild but beautiful scene, the ragged, irregular tenements, and the half-naked inhabitants, it seemed as though I was breathing the air, and gazing on the landscapes of a sort of paradise. Such was the cheering influence of that sense of returning health which flowed through my youthful veins.

I now began to make some acquaintances among the people; their language was Dutch, with a mixture of negro and Indian gibberish. Of this, I understood nothing, except

the names of a few familiar objects, which I gradually learned. At length, however, I met with a woman, who had been a servant in an English family, and could converse in the English tongue. From her I learned the history of this curious settlement. It seems to have sprung up from the slaves that escaped from their masters at Paramaribo, and the plantations along the Surinam. They were hunted down by the white people, and shot like wild animals, or, if captured, were subjected to the most cruel punishments, and the rigors of slavery were rendered more severe.

The number of these fugitives constantly increased. For a time, indeed, they wandered in the forests, often alone, and reduced to a state of wildness, like the native animals of the woods. But they soon associated together, and, by their union and numbers, became formidable to their oppressors. They retired to a considerable distance from the Dutch settlements, and, occupying a fertile tract of country, erected such slight habitations as their means afforded, and the climate required. They began to till the soil, and

bountiful nature returned an abundant harvest for their efforts. They increased rapidly, and in process of years they established a government suited to their condition. By degrees, the hostility between them and the Dutch settlement subsided, and amicable intercourse commenced; and at the time I was there, a considerable traffic was carried on between the inhabitants of Maroontown and those of Paramaribo. The settlement continues to the present time to consist entirely of a negro population, living in the heart of Guiana, almost without any mixture of foreign blood. Their manners are rather those of Africa than America. I shall have something more to say of this strange place in another chapter.



CHAPTER VII.

KINDNESS OF THE NEGROES—ASPECT OF
THEIR TOWN—STORY OF KING CONGO.

ALTHOUGH I was gradually recovering from the state of extreme weakness to which I had been reduced, still I continued so feeble as to render it impossible for me to proceed on my journey. I continued therefore with my kind friends at Maroontown, occasionally taking a short walk about the place. I soon became acquainted with a number of the people. I was very much gratified by the good-natured manner in which everybody treated me. The houses were extremely slight, many of them consisting only of sticks set in the ground, the roof and sides being formed of a thatch of palm leaves. Others were a little more substantial, the walls being framed of mud and stone. The place hardly seemed like the abode of human

beings, and more resembled a colony of some ingenious animals, a little elevated in the scale of being above the beavers.

But notwithstanding this rude aspect of their dwellings, the people themselves seemed the most light-hearted and merry I had ever beheld. Every night there was music and dancing, and laughter, and frolic, and what seemed strange, there was very little of riot or violence. A good feeling seemed to pervade all classes, and if they were poor, ignorant, and in some respects degraded, they seemed happy and kind-hearted. The government was of the most simple kind, and though they had magistrates, it was seldom necessary for them to exercise their authority.

While I was at this place, the old woman, who spoke English, as I have already mentioned, told me a good many tales relating to the history of the place, one of which was as follows :

“One of the earliest inhabitants of Maroon-town was King Congo. This personage was born on the African coast, and was the eldest son of one of the petty kings in that part of the world. He was captured by a party of

slavers, brought to Paramaribo, and offered for sale as a slave. He was a good-looking young man, about twenty years of age, of great strength and daring courage. He was purchased by a merchant, and became a servant in his family. Submitting to his fate, he performed the duties required of him for



the most part submissively, but occasionally the remembrance of his birth and former dignity crossed his mind, and for a moment caused his feelings to revolt from the drudgery required of him.

“ It happened that one day, when he was a little moody from reflections like these, his

master demanded of him some service of more than ordinary servility. Congo seemed to hesitate for a moment, and stood looking his master in the face, as if about to question his right thus to command him. The latter, greatly incensed, struck the negro in the face. Congo, surprised and irritated, seized his master by the collar, and was about to dash him to the floor, when suddenly recollecting himself, he unclenched his hand, and said, sneeringly, 'I scorn to wrestle with one so much weaker than myself; but I will not serve a man who treats me with such indignity.'

"The rage of the master now knew no bounds. He called aloud for his servants, and as about a dozen of them rushed into the room, he commanded them to seize the offender. But Congo was now thoroughly roused. As they were about to seize him, he retreated to a corner of the room, seized a chair, and brandishing it before him, defied the whole party. Knowing his prodigious strength, and frightened by his wild and threatening aspect, they stood aloof, afraid to grapple with such an enemy. In vain

were the threats of the master. Finding it impossible to urge them on, he seized a pair of pistols, and, taking deliberate aim, discharged them both at the offender. One of the balls missed; the other entered the right arm of Congo, and, shattering the bone, the



uplifted chair fell to the floor, and the broken limb swung useless by his side.

“ Finding it in vain to resist farther, the negro yielded, and being strongly bound, was immediately taken to a public establishment, kept for the purpose, and received a hundred lashes upon the naked back. The poor fel-

low was now shut up in a small room, almost without light or air, it being the purpose of his master to subdue him by privation and suffering. His arm was dressed, and care was taken that he should not die, for this would have been a serious loss to the pocket of his proprietor.

“At length, Congo recovered; but his strength was wasted, and he could only totter about with great effort. He was now released, and his master, not fearing him in his present enfeebled condition, took him once more into his house. Here he was treated with the greatest harshness. He was required to labour beyond his strength, and when he was tardy from exhaustion, he was buffeted either with the hand or foot of his lordly proprietor.

“Congo submitted to all this with apparent humility, but a feeling was burning within him which was destined ere long to work out his deliverance.

“In a few months his health and strength were completely restored, and though he continued to perform his duties with alacrity, he was meditating some plan by which

he might escape from his bondage. In this state of things, it chanced that he was one day passing by the public whipping-house, when, hearing the lashes and screams of the sufferer, he opened the door and went in. He there saw a young woman drawn upward by the wrists, so that her feet were three or four inches from the ground, while the executioner was inflicting upon her back the number of lashes commanded by her master.

“For a moment the blood rushed to Congo’s brain, and a dizzy feeling came over him ; but soon recovering, he rushed up to the whipping-master, wrenched the whip from his hand, threw him upon the ground, and laid the weapon lustily upon his back. He then cut the rope which tied the hands of the suffering girl, and rushed out of the place. Bewildered with his own emotions, he walked along the street, apparently unconscious of his situation ; but a loud shout, and a number of people at his heels, roused him and reminded him of his danger. Congo turned round, faced his pursuers sternly for a moment, and then, with a swift foot, set out for the country.

“For two miles he ran like a deer, but finding that he was pursued by men on horseback, he leaped over the banks of the river Surinam, and plunged into the water.

“Several of the horsemen came up and discharged their pistols at the fugitive, but he was beyond their reach. He swam across the river; but here a new danger awaited him. An immense alligator lay upon the bank, and, as he approached, sprung upon him. Nothing could have saved Congo at this moment but his strength and courage. As he was approaching the shore, he saw the alligator, and, drawing his knife from his belt, he faced the monster, and plunging his knife down his open jaws, killed him in an instant.

“Delivered from this peril, Congo turned round, shook his fist triumphantly toward his pursuers, who lined the opposite bank of the river, and set forward upon his journey toward the woody districts that lay in the distance. These he at last reached, and burying himself in the recesses of the forest, he lived like a wild animal upon the fruits that nature afforded.

“A party of men soon set out for the pur-

pose of capturing the daring negro. They were provided with guns, and attended by several blood-hounds. The latter soon came upon the track of the fugitive, and their deep bellowing at once announced to him his danger, and to the hunters that the game was near at hand. Armed with a stout bludgeon, Congo fled from the spot, and for nearly two days the hounds were unable to overtake him. At last, finding himself excessively fatigued, he paused and determined to await the approach of the dogs, and give them battle. They soon came up, and the foremost one sprang upon him. With a single whirl of his club, the negro laid the animal prostrate upon the earth.

“In an instant, however, three more were before him, ready to bury their fangs in his flesh. With his uplifted weapon, Congo boldly faced the fierce animals. They paused for a moment; but presently overcoming their fear, they sprang upon him. Two of them were soon stretched lifeless upon the ground, but a third seized Congo by the leg, and brought him to the earth. The animal then sprang at his throat, but the nimble

knife of the negro despatched him in the very act. Wounded and weak from the loss of blood, the poor fellow arose and staggered forward. He was soon too faint to proceed, and fell to the earth.

“The hunters now came up, and seeing that their dogs were killed, began to deliberate as to the course they should pursue. Congo, sheltered in the bushes, saw and heard all that passed. They concluded that it was in vain to pursue the fugitive farther, and determined that after resting awhile they would return. Taking off their knapsacks, they laid them down with their guns, and three of the party went in search of water, leaving the fourth behind. This individual sat down upon the ground, and, leaning against a tree, was soon asleep.

“It may well be imagined that Congo watched these proceedings with great interest. Waiting till the three men were out of sight, he issued from his hiding-place, and carefully crept forward toward the slumbering hunter. The latter, however, was but partially asleep, and awaked by the rustling of the leaves, saw the negro creeping upon him.

Amazement paralysed him for a moment, then springing on his feet, he seized his gun and fired. The ball missed, and, the instant after, he was in the rough embrace of his formidable enemy. After a momentary struggle, they both fell, and Congo was uppermost.

“What was his surprise, on looking at the face of his prisoner, to see his former master. Congo drew his knife from his belt; the blade glittered aloft, and was already descending to inflict a fatal blow, when his purpose changed, and he said, ‘It was your intention to kill me, and were I in your place I should not have a moment to live. But I will not imitate a white man.’ Saying this, he took the straps of one of the knapsacks that lay near him, and bound his prisoner firmly on his back to the roots of a tree. Then seizing the four muskets, the ammunition, and the knapsacks, he said, with a stern smile, to the prostrate gentleman, ‘Good bye, master,’ and departed.

“The huntsmen soon returned and released their companion, but finding that their guns were now in the hands of the enemy, they

thought it most prudent to make a hasty retreat. While they returned to Paramaribo, to be laughed at for their defeat, Congo, well armed, secreted himself in the forest. He was now too formidable to be pursued by a small party, and soon meeting some of his countrymen, who, like himself, had become inhabitants of the wilderness, they repaired to the present site of Maroontown, and began to make a settlement. Here they were speedily joined by other fugitives, and the village, once commenced, soon became a considerable town. Congo received the title of king, and for many years continued to exercise authority over the settlement.”



CHAPTER VIII.

DEPARTURE—DECEMBER IN A TROPICAL
CLIMATE—WILD HOGS—A BATTLE AND
SIEGE.

It was more than two months after my arrival at Maroontown that I was in a condition to depart. Finding that I should not be able to return to Paramaribo in time to go back to Connecticut with my vessel, I sent word to the captain, requesting him to see my mother and sister, and to tell them what had detained me.

When I had sufficiently recovered to travel, I set out from Maroontown, having taken leave of my kind friends there. The negro who had rescued me, together with his family, had done everything in their power to make me comfortable and happy. The neighbours too had shown the greatest interest in my behalf, and were constantly sending me every sort of delicacy, such as small game and the choicest fruits. Never have I met with a

people so little selfish, and to whom hospitality has seemed to be so natural. Some of them shed tears as I departed, and one or two offered to accompany me on my journey. I accepted this proposition in part, and a young man set out to be my guide and companion for the first day.

I had heard at Maroontown something about the Englishman whom I was going to visit. I learned that he was a coffee planter with a large estate ; but I had discovered that his residence, instead of being a hundred miles from Paramaribo, was nearly double that distance. This taught me a good lesson, which I recommend to the attention of my readers ; it is this, that before setting out upon a journey they should be sure to ascertain how far they have to go.

It was now December ; a time when the winter had commenced in New England, but it was very different in Guiana. I found the weather very warm, and my strength was so impaired by my sickness, that the first day I did not proceed more than eight miles. I slept at a small plantation, and the next morning, having taken leave of my guide, I

proceeded alone upon my journey. For three days nothing particular occurred. The country was slightly undulating, and portions of it were exceedingly fertile. Here and there was a plantation, but a large part of the land was covered with forests. On the fourth day after my departure I met with a curious adventure. There is in this region a species of small wild hog called peccary: in some parts they are numerous, and I had frequently seen them crossing my path in the course of my travels. They seemed not to be very shy, but as I approached them they would usually start off with a kind of grunt or bark, and hide themselves in the bushes.

On the occasion just referred to I chanced to see a peccary, with a litter of young ones, lying by the side of my path. When I came near they sprang up and ran away. I however gave chase, and soon caught one of the little pigs. The fellow instantly set up the most vociferous squealing; upon which the mother turned back and came upon me with savage ferocity. Her mouth was open, and she uttered a sort of bellowing that was quite frightful. I was not disposed to yield my

prize at once, but holding the hind legs of the little creature with the left hand, and flourishing my club in the right, I faced the infuriated dam. She hesitated a little, but kept up her cry. In a few minutes I saw issuing from the adjacent thickets several other peccaries, apparently coming to the rescue. They immediately advanced, and I was soon surrounded by more than forty of the raging beasts.

Affairs were now getting serious, and I thought it best to release the little prisoner, hoping that this would pacify the tumult; but the tempest was not so easily stilled. The bristly mob still encircled me, grunting, squealing, barking, and bellowing, and at the same time displaying their tusks. I was obliged to keep wheeling round, brandishing my club, and occasionally giving an obtrusive snout a pretty hearty thump by way of caution. The storm, however, seemed to thicken, and it was obvious that the whole troop would soon rush upon me. In this extremity, discretion seemed the better part of valour, and concluding that I had better risk my honour than my life, I took advantage of an open

space, sprang through the circle, and leaped into the branches of a tree that was near.

The disappointed assailants pursued me, and encircling the tree, vented their rage in grunts and groans. Never did I see such a hubbub. Sitting upon a limb of the tree in perfect safety, I looked down and laughed very heartily at the scene. There was one boar who seemed particularly anxious to signalize himself. He had very long tusks, and in his fury he foamed at the mouth, and kept up a great outcry. He was probably the captain of the troop, for he generally led the way, and a party were always at his heels to support him.

I amused myself occasionally with stirring up this Hector of the field with a poke from my shillelah. It was amusing to see his indignation and courage. He rose upon his hind legs, and looked defiance with all his might. There was something about him which seemed to say, "Come down here, you coward; come down, and we will give you what you deserve." I did not, however, accept the challenge, though I should have been willing to have tried my hand with him in single

combat. Forty to one were rather too many, and so I remained in my stronghold.

Rage, like everything else, must have an end; so, in the course of half an hour, the spirit of these animals began to abate. Two or three of them slipped off into the bushes, and their example was soon followed by others. In the course of a second half hour they were all dispersed except the commander-in-chief, and even he, at last, took his departure, having expressed his contempt and defiance in a few significant grunts. I waited till the whole troop had vanished, and then cautiously descended, and proceeded with a light step upon my way. I looked back several times, and scrutinized the thickets that lay along my path. I travelled pretty rapidly for three or four hours, and I may as well confess that I breathed much more freely when I found I had distanced the enemy. It may seem ridiculous that one should be seriously frightened at such an attack, yet the scene dwelt for some time in my memory, and for several nights my dreams were embellished with images drawn from the swinish mob that had assailed me in the woods.

I now continued my journey, and at the end of eight days I reached the place of my destination. I found the person whom I had wished to see. He was a fat, burly Englishman, named Hartley, possessing about a hundred negroes, all of whom were engaged in



the cultivation of coffee. When I told him my errand, he looked at me with surprise, and seemed at first to be in doubt whether he should answer my inquires. At last, having satisfied himself that I had no sinister object in view, he told me a story, which shall be related in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

MR. HARTLEY'S ACCOUNT OF MY UNCLE—
MY RESOLUTION TO SEEK HIM.

“YOUR uncle,” said Mr. Hartley, “was directed to Surinam rather by chance than choice. He fled from St. Domingo during the troubles there. The vessel in which he came was the only one which offered him an immediate chance of escape, and as his life was in danger, he went on board of her. When he reached Paramaribo, he had considerable property, and thinking that the place offered a fair prospect for trade, he invested his money in ships, and established himself as a merchant. He was very enterprising, and, for a time, successful. Although eccentric in some things, his manners were pleasing, and he won the good will of everybody around him. He paid his addresses to the daughter of a rich planter, and soon married her.

“ He thus became allied to one of the first families in Surinam. This circumstance, added to others of a favorable character, soon gave him an eligible standing in society. But suddenly a blight came over his prospects, and his descent was even more rapid than his elevation.

“ After he had been at Paramaribo about three years, he had occasion to go to Amsterdam. Having adjusted his business there, he took passage in one of his own ships, to return. She was said to be richly laden, and according to his statement, had merchandize on board to the amount of more than two hundred thousand dollars. Previous to her departure, he sent to Surinam, and had an insurance effected there to the amount of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars upon the ship and cargo. He returned to Paramaribo, stating that his vessel had been wrecked upon one of the West India Islands in a gale, and that both ship and cargo were entirely lost; he, with the captain and two hands only, having been saved by swimming ashore.

“ Under these circumstances, he claimed the insurance, but it was refused by the com-

pany. Your uncle brought an action against them; but an affidavit was produced in court, signed by the captain and the two seamen, declaring that the ship had been run on shore by your uncle's orders; his purpose being to destroy the vessel and then claim the insurance, which was said to be twice the amount of the real cost. The astonishment that prevailed through the city of Paramaribo at these disclosures cannot be described. Your uncle breasted the shock with great courage, declared his innocence, and asked only for time and opportunity to clear up the whole transaction; but the judgment of the court was against him, and public opinion went with it. His popularity vanished at once; his friends deserted him, and his creditors all pressed upon him for the payment of their debts. He was unable to pay them, and was consequently thrown into prison.

“He remained there for two years, during which period his wife died, leaving a daughter, who has since lived with her grandfather, M. Scager, and is now grown up to be a beautiful black-eyed girl.”

At this point of Mr. Hartley's story, my

mind turned back to the place where I spent the first night after my departure from Paramaribo, and it seemed to me probable that the girl whom I had seen there was my cousin. I interrupted the narrative, and said, "Allow me to inquire, sir, where the girl you speak of now lives?" "With her grandfather," was the reply, "about ten miles from



Paramaribo." "Then I have seen her," said I. "Indeed," said the Englishman; "and how did that happen?"

I then related my adventures at the plantation, giving a brief account of my fright at the bat, the hospitality with which I had been treated, and the interest that had been excited in the black-eyed girl on learning my

name. When I had done, Mr. Hartley proceeded as follows :

“ It is a strange accident that should have brought you to meet with your cousin Mirabel. However, to proceed with your uncle’s story. As he continued in prison, no opportunity was afforded for him even to make an attempt to clear up his character. His name, therefore, passed into contempt and infamy. M. Scager, who was a proud and haughty man, was sorely mortified at the disgrace which had fallen upon his family through the the connection, and would permit no one even to speak of his son-in-law.

“ Time passed on, and the subject was nearly forgotten. Your uncle seemed as completely lost to the world as if he had been dead and buried ; but at length a considerable excitement was produced by a rumour that he had escaped from prison. On inquiry, it was found that he was gone, but no one could tell how he had effected his liberation, nor whither he had fled. This occurred about a dozen years ago. It excited no little curiosity at the time, and various reports were afloat respecting it.

“There were a few persons who had always entertained the belief that your uncle had been the victim of a foul conspiracy between the insurance company and the captain of the ship ; that the loss of the vessel was unavoidable ; and that, in order to save the immense sum for which the insurance had been effected, the captain had been bribed to make oath to a false statement. But the interest in the matter gradually subsided, and for the space of nearly a dozen years, your uncle's name was hardly mentioned.

“But about a twelvemonth ago, something quite unexpected occurred. I had known your uncle intimately, for during his residence in Paramaribo, I also lived there. I had the greatest confidence in him, and was as much attached to him as if he had been my brother. I never fully credited the charges that were brought against him, and therefore made some efforts in his behalf during his imprisonment ; but it became necessary for me to establish myself here, and I was able to render him no effectual assistance. I had no communication from him after I left Paramaribo, and had no better

means of judging whither he had gone than any other individual. His escape, however, seemed to be an argument against him, and as nothing was heard from him, even by his friends, my mind gradually yielded to the conviction that he had been guilty of the crime with which he had been charged.

“But about a year ago, I was astonished as well as delighted to receive from Amsterdam a remittance amounting to sixty thousand dollars, with directions to pay your uncle’s creditors the full amount due to them, both principal and interest. No explanations whatever were given; no clue was afforded as to the source from which the money came. I proceeded to distribute it according to the directions I had received; I paid every one of the persons to whom your uncle was indebted, and had still a balance of about two thousand dollars in my hands. I wrote to the persons at Amsterdam, through whom the money came to me, making inquiries as to your uncle, and asking for instructions respecting the surplus that remains. I heard, in reply, that the parties knew nothing whatever of your uncle, except that he had in-

trusted the money to them, with the instructions that they had sent to me as to its distribution.

“My inquiries in all quarters have as yet failed in obtaining any further information. Upon the payment of his debts, an entire revolution of public opinion took place at Paramaribo, in regard to your uncle’s character. The belief became general that he was what he had seemed to be, a high-minded and honorable man, and that he had suffered from a base conspiracy. The uneasiness displayed by a certain lawyer who had been connected with the insurance company, served to confirm these suspicions.

“There was also another circumstance which contributed to the same result, and this was, that the captain had left Paramaribo, and never returned, although he had a wife and family there; and it was reported that he had turned out a desperate character, and had been engaged in several piratical expeditions.”

It may be well believed that I listened to this recital with the most intense interest. Scarcely was it finished, when my determi-

nation was formed to set about a search for my uncle. I soon communicated these views to Mr. Hartley. At first he objected, urging my youth, the utter want of a clue by which he could be traced, and my destitution of means for sustaining the expense of the undertaking, as conclusive arguments against it.

He considered the project, indeed, to be the hair-brained dream of a sanguine boy; but as I persisted in my resolution, and suggested my plan of operation, he began to listen; and in the end gave me his hearty support and efficient aid. He supplied me with letters to several persons in Paramaribo, who might aid me in my researches, furnished me with money for my immediate expenses, and gave me a letter of credit for what I might farther need. Being thus provided, I soon set out for Paramaribo, with high hopes of success in my proposed search.

CHAPTER X.

RETURN TO PARAMARIBO — VOYAGE TO
CARACCAS — A FEARFUL CONFESSION
—IMPORTANT RESULTS.

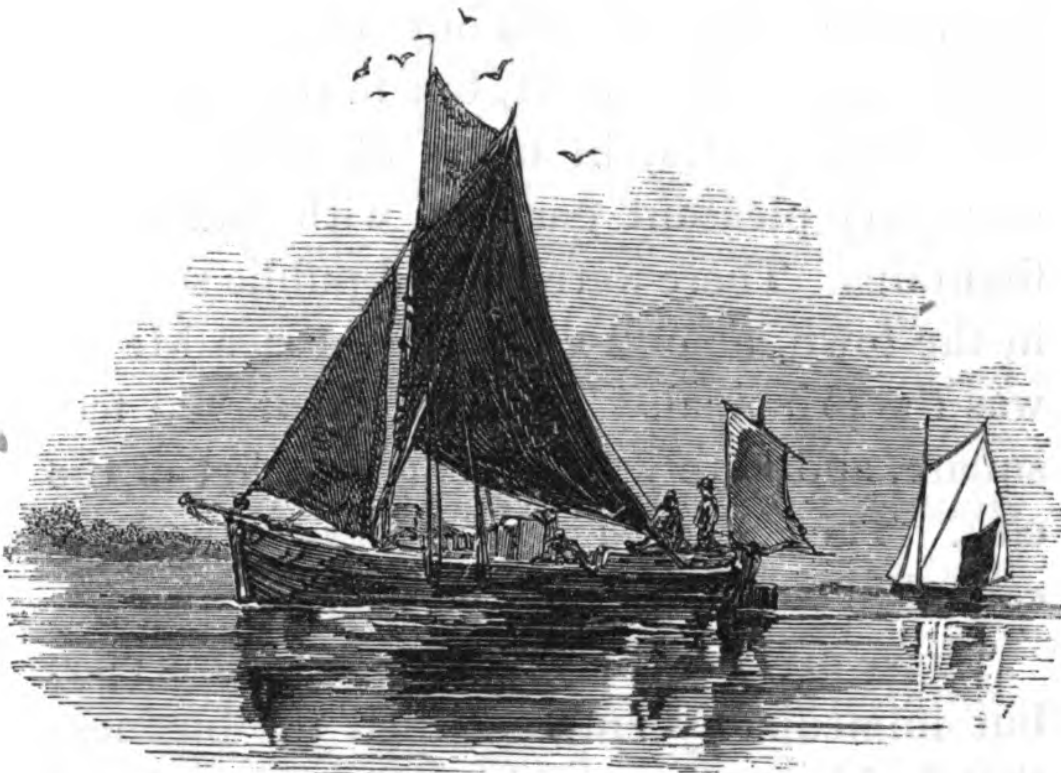
MOUNTED upon the back of a small but vigorous Dutch pony, I made my way upon my return much more rapidly than I had done on foot in proceeding into the country. At the end of about eight days, I reached the city. During my ride I had resolved many schemes in my head, and I had determined, not only to find out my uncle, but, if possible, to vindicate his reputation. The scale of my expectations was pretty large, considering my youth; but through life our anticipations are very apt to be extensive almost in proportion as our means are small.

Immediately upon arriving at Paramaribo, I set about my inquiries; but a fortnight passed away, and nothing had transpired to give me the least hope of success. But one

night, as I was walking along the quay of the city, a person muffled up in a cloak met me, handed me a letter, and disappeared. I hastened to my room, opened the paper, and read as follows: "Your uncle is an innocent and injured man. There are those in this city who have participated in the means by which his character was rendered infamous. The chief instrument by which the base plot was executed, is the captain of the ship that was lost. He now lives in a splendid villa near the city of Caraccas, under the name of Signor Sevil."

There was neither date nor signature to this paper, and whether to consider it as a mere imposition, or as founded in truth and designed to aid my researches, I could not determine. I submitted it to my adviser, to whom I had been commended by Mr. Hartley, and he deemed the communication of great importance. It was finally determined that I should proceed to Caraccas, in the hope of ascertaining whether the statement in the paper was true, and if so, how far the fact could be made available to the clearing up of my uncle's character. Before my departure,

I went to see my cousin Mirabel, and proffered my claim to relationship. She received me kindly, and entered with enthusiasm into my projects. I left her, and taking passage in a small coasting vessel, set out for Caraccas.



This city is situated near the northern coast of South America, and is the capital of the fine province of Venezuela. In about twenty days we reached our destined port, and I set out immediately for the city, which lies about fifteen miles from the sea. Our road lay over mountainous ridges, but we were safely car-

ried by mules, and reached Caraccas in the space of a few hours.

I found the place to contain fifty thousand inhabitants, nearly all of them Spaniards. The streets are built at right angles, and were exceedingly narrow. The houses had a gloomy look, there being in each but one or two windows towards the street, but in the rear they had large courts, in many of which there were very pleasant gardens, with walks and fountains. There were several public squares in the town, among which the *Plaza Mayor* was the principal. This was about 320 feet square, and here was the chief market of the city. The churches were numerous, and the cathedral was a splendid edifice.

I gave myself little time to survey the city, but immediately entered upon the business that had brought me hither. I soon found that a person, called Signor Sevil, actually lived in a handsome house in the suburbs of the city. Upon further inquiry I ascertained that he had resided there but a few years, that he was a foreigner, and a degree of doubt and mystery hung over his life and character. There had been even suspicions that he had

been engaged in certain piratical expeditions ; but as all this was surmise, and he appeared to be in the possession of wealth, the subject was soon suffered to drop.

I remained for several weeks, endeavouring to trace out his history, and became satisfied that he was actually the man who had commanded the vessel in which my uncle's property was lost, and through whose villany he had been made to suffer so severely. Still I was unable to obtain any specific proofs that would answer my purpose. I revolved a great many schemes, and finally determined to seek an interview with the man himself, tell him my object boldly, and take my chance for the result. If I gained no advantage, I knew I should at least lose nothing.

Accordingly, I wrote a letter, directed to Signor Sevil, stating that a person from Paramaribo desired to see him on important business. This I despatched to his house, and received for answer that he would call upon me at the place I had mentioned on the morrow. At the time appointed he came, and seemed not a little surprised at the youthfulness of a person with whom he was

to have an interview. I began by addressing him as Captain Pierce, remarking that I was well acquainted with his history and character, and that my name was Boldhero. He started to his feet as if he had been stung by an adder, and then seemed about to rush upon me. I had provided myself with a pistol, which I drew from my pocket. This seemed to have a cooling effect; he immediately forced a smile, resumed his chair, and said, "Well, well, let us hear what you have to say."

I then stated that my object was to vindicate the reputation of my uncle, and to recover the large amount of money due from the insurance company at Surinam. I assured him that my purpose was not to bring him to justice, but only to obtain from him a solemn affidavit, retracting his former perjury, with a confession of the means by which he had been bribed to commit so foul a wrong.

When I had done, the man looked at me with a mixture of amazement and mirth. The audacity of my proposition seemed at once to astonish and amuse him. After looking me steadily in the face for a few moments, he said, with great civility, "I will think of this

proposition, and when I am prepared to erect a gallows and twist a halter for my own execution, I shall perhaps comply with your very reasonable request." Saying this, the man rose from his seat, saluted me with great politeness, and was about to depart.

Stung with disappointment and indignation, I placed my back against the door, determined to oppose his departure. While I stood a moment in this position, facing the captain, my feet seemed jerked from under me, and I fell on the floor. At the same instant I saw that he was thrown forcibly in an opposite direction, and laid prostrate. I arose, but was instantly thrown down again. I could now perceive that the room was rocking backward and forward; at the same time, my ears were filled with the most terrific sounds I ever heard. With a powerful effort, I succeeded in rising and rushed down the stairs, into the street.

The earth trembled beneath my feet, and the buildings around seemed to be sinking into a mass of ruins. On every side, I could hear the crash of houses falling to the earth; the screams of men, women, and children,

filled with despair or crushed beneath the falling fragments ; together with a heavy and portentous sound, like the deep bellowing of thunder, smothered in the bowels of the earth. Completely bewildered, I rushed along the street, escaping as if by miracle from the bricks and stones and timbers that were falling around me. At length I reached the Praça Mayor, which commanded an extensive view.

The whole space was nearly covered with people ; priests with their crosses ; women with their children ; aged men and women, tottering with years ; the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, the young and the old ; some silent and some wailing ; some prostrate on the earth ; others kneeling and telling their beads ; others standing erect, and spreading upward their beseeching hands to Heaven. While such was the spectacle before the eye, the ear was stunned with strange and appalling sounds in frightful variety.

Around the square, most of the buildings were prostrate ; the only edifice that seemed to defy the shock, was the cathedral, which occupied a portion of the open space. The

agitation of the earth continued for a few minutes, when it gradually subsided. The trembling at last totally ceased, the air became still, and a deathlike silence settled over the ruined city. It was evident that the earthquake had ceased, and the inhabitants, by slow degrees, began now to recover from their panic.

The desolation that pervaded the place was, however, terrific. Thousands of people had been killed, and many of the living were now houseless and homeless. Endeavouring to shun the sights of misery that presented themselves on every side, I wandered about, scarcely knowing whither I went. At last I found myself near my lodgings. The building was still standing, though considerably injured. While I stood before it, surveying its aspect, I heard a deep groan near at hand. On going to the spot from whence the sound issued, I found the captain half buried beneath a mass of bricks. I went to him, and he instantly recognized me. "For God's sake give me help," said he, "though it is perhaps of little consequence, for I have but a few hours to live."

Touched by the poor man's sufferings, I immediately fell to work to extricate him, but found the task beyond my strength. I ran for help, which I obtained with some difficulty, and the sufferer was taken up, and carried into the adjacent building where I had lodged. "I am dying," said he to me. "I beg you to send for a priest. Be speedy, as you would have mercy on the soul of a great sinner."

I ran to the Praça Mayor, and speedily brought a friar to the bedside of the dying man. We were all required to leave the room, and the captain proceeded to make his confession in the ear of the priest. The holy father told him that his crimes were great, and he could only offer him absolution upon condition that he would put his declaration in writing, so as to enable the parties he had injured to obtain justice. After a violent struggle with his pride, the sufferer yielded, and a magistrate was called to receive his dying deposition. This was executed in due form, and in my presence. It completely exculpated my uncle from all blame. It declared that his ship was lost by

stress of weather, and that he, the captain, had been bribed to swear that the catastrophe had been brought about by my uncle's orders.



Scarcely had he finished this declaration, and sworn to it, when he was seized with spasms, his mind wandered, and with a struggle that shook his whole frame, he expired.

CHAPTER XI.

NEW PROJECTS — VOYAGE TO BUENOS
AYRES—SCENES UPON THE PAMPAS.

THE object of my visit to Caraccas having been completed in a manner which seemed almost miraculous, I was impatient to return to Paramaribo, and take counsel as to what steps should be adopted for the discovery of my uncle. I therefore took passage in the first vessel bound for that port; and in the space of twenty-four days found myself again sailing up the Surinam.

We soon landed, and after despatching a letter to Mr. Hartley, informing him of my success, and requesting him immediately to repair to Paramaribo, I hastened to the house of M. Scager, my uncle's father-in-law: I had seen the old gentleman before my departure for Caraccas, but had not consulted him as to the object of my expedition. Such, indeed, had been the bitterness of his

feelings towards my uncle, on account of the disgrace associated with his name, that even an allusion to him excited his anger.

I had, however, as I have already stated, seen my cousin Mirabel, and imparted to her the hopes I entertained of rescuing her father's name from reproach, and my determination, should I be successful in this, to range the world until I might discover him.

Young as she was, Mirabel had entered into my views with such ardour, that I believe my resolution was quickened in no small degree by the feelings which animated her own bosom, and which I saw vividly painted upon her countenance.

When I reached the house, M. Scager was absent, and my first interview was with Mirabel. She saw me, indeed, before I reached the door, and was about to fly towards me; but she suddenly stopped, and earnestly gazed in my face. Seeming to be satisfied with the tidings it bore, she rushed forward, and I received her in my arms.

My story was soon told, and I cannot describe the happiness that shone in Mirabel's face. But in a short time I perceived that it

was shaded by a look of the deepest sorrow. I inquired the cause, and begging me to excuse her seeming ingratitude, she told me that her anxiety to know her father's fate, and to see him if living, was now so great as even to drown the enjoyment derived from knowing that his name would be rescued from the shame which had long attended it. I spoke cheerfully to her in reply, and promised again to compass sea and land in search of him.

While we were thus engaged in conversation, M. Scager returned. I hesitated as to the manner in which I should communicate the intelligence I had brought. Mirabel, seeing my embarrassment, took the papers which I had obtained from Caraccas, and placing them in her grandfather's hands, begged him to read them at his leisure. The old man sat down, and while he was taking out his spectacles, Mirabel slipped out of the room, beckoning me with her finger to follow her.

We had not long been absent, when we were recalled, and M. Scager inquired how these papers came into Mirabel's hands. She

briefly told him how I had obtained them. The old man looked at me steadfastly and doubtingly for a moment, and then, seeming to assent to the truth of the documents he had been perusing, he exclaimed, "After all, Mirabel, your father was what he seemed, a noble and an honest man, and I have done him grievous wrong. Come here, my child." As he said this, he held out his hand, and as Mirabel approached him, the old man took her in his arms, and his tears fell upon her face. I felt the scene to be almost more than I could bear, and hastily left the room.

I need not detail the events which immediately followed. It will be sufficient to say that in the course of a few days Mr. Hartley arrived, and upon consulting a lawyer, it was thought that the papers I had procured would be not only sufficient to establish my uncle's innocence, but to enable him, if living, to recover from the insurance company a large sum of money, not only for the loss of his cargo, but for interest. If he were dead, this amount, it was thought, could be recovered by his heirs.

It now became a matter of more interest

than ever to trace my uncle's career from the time he escaped from the prison and left Paramaribo. M. Scager had received several letters from him, but they did not clearly indicate the place of his abode. After perusing them again, and putting together all the information that could be obtained, it was determined that I should proceed with all possible despatch to Valparaiso, at which place it appeared nearly certain he had been established in business about ten years before. Being supplied with letters of introduction and sufficient money, I took my departure; not, however, without an affectionate farewell from my gentle cousin.

My plan was to proceed to Buenos Ayres in a vessel, and cross the continent in a westerly direction, to Chili, of which Valparaiso is the chief commercial port. I accordingly embarked on board a brig bound to Buenos Ayres. We were soon upon the ocean, and I had now leisure to reflect upon the circumstances which had recently transpired, and the prospects that lay before me.

Although I was still a youth, I had already accomplished something, and was now en-

gaged in an enterprise such as is seldom committed to the charge of one so young as I was. I was surprised to observe the change which had taken place in my feelings and character in the space of a few months. When I first arrived at Paramaribo, I was but a boy: I had now the settled thoughts, plans, and purposes of a man. I was bound to a distant country, and dangers and trials lay before me; but these did not in the slightest degree shake my resolution. Though I had still the ardent hope and sanguine expectation which belong to youth, I was quite calm and considerate.

I was not unmindful of the extreme uncertainty of my being able to find my uncle, but I had still a sort of faith that I should at last succeed. "What happiness," thought I, "would flow from such an event!" I often indulged my imagination in picturing his return, and in fancying the meeting between him and his daughter. I thought also of the benefits that might ultimately flow to my mother and sister; I had likewise some dreams of a vague but agreeable nature which had relation to Mirabel and myself.

Our vessel stole on her voyage before a gentle wind. Though I was entirely at leisure, my mind was never more busy ; my faculties seemed roused in every respect, and while my thoughts dwelt so much upon the particular purpose of my present expedition, I still noticed with lively interest every object of curiosity that came in my way. I was greatly struck with the splendour of the starry firmament in these tropical regions. As we proceeded farther and farther south, groups of stars, which I had never seen before, and which are not visible in the northern hemisphere, came to view. Many of them were exceedingly brilliant, and at night, in the absence of the moon, seemed to fill the whole atmosphere with a mild lustre.

Nor were the objects connected with the sea much less interesting. Flocks of flying fishes, pursued by dolphins in the water, occasionally burst from the briny element, and shot like arrows for a considerable distance through the air. Huge sharks accompanied our vessel, day after day ; and a large species of seal which it is said has often been taken for the imaginary mermaid, would occasion-

ally lift its head above the wave, and having surveyed us for a moment, would sink back into the water. The albatross, the largest of sea-fowl, occasionally swept by us, and myriads of wild ducks skimmed the surface of the waters, along the shores of the continent.

In about forty days from the time of our departure, we entered the mouth of the mighty river La Plata. Such was its width, that it seemed like a sea; but we gradually approached the shore, and on the southern bank of the river, 150 miles from its mouth, we saw the city of Buenos Ayres. Anchoring at the distance of seven or eight miles from the town, on account of the shallow water, the captain and myself entered a boat and were rowed to the city.

My stay in this place was short, and I had not an opportunity to examine it with care. It stretches along a high bank for two miles, and contains about 60,000 inhabitants, who are chiefly of Spanish descent. There are a few negroes, some of whom are slaves. By far the larger portion of the lower class are Indians, who perform the common labour, and discharge the menial offices of society.

They speak the Spanish language, and have forgotten alike their original habits and their native tongue.

On inquiry, I found that the distance from Buenos Ayres to Valparaiso was about a thousand miles, the road led across the vast plains called the *Pampas*, and also over the lofty mountainous chain called the Andes, and that it was rough and ill wrought, and was therefore seldom traversed by carriages. I learned also that it was beset with robbers.

In four days after my arrival, my preparations were complete, and I departed. I was mounted on a strong horse, which had been caught upon the plains and trained to the saddle. I was attended by a stout Indian, also well mounted, as a guide. We were each armed with a brace of pistols and a dirk: thus equipped, we set forward.

Soon after leaving the city we entered a broken country, which was for the most part in a state of nature. Here and there was a villa surrounded by a plantation, but except in these spots everything had a wild aspect. It was in the month of May, a period at which, in the land of my birth, the trees and

plants are springing into life. But here it was autumn, and the sere and yellow leaf gave the colour to the landscape. Still many of the shrubs and grasses maintained their verdure, and put forth their blossoms. The aspect of nature, however, was strange. The trees were of kinds I had never seen before, and the birds were all different from those with which I had been familiar.



In the course of two days we were upon the Pampas. These plains resemble the prairies of the west of North America, but they are on a far grander scale. They stretch out to an amazing distance, their whole extent being nearly ten times as great as that of New England. The surface is slightly undulating, and generally covered with grass. A

few groups of stunted palms are visible, and pools of salt water are occasionally met with.

By the roadside we found huts, about twenty miles apart, designed for the accommodation of travellers. We sometimes met persons on horseback, and saw numerous herds of wild cattle and troops of horses grazing upon the plains. We had several opportunities of witnessing the skill of the hunters in taking these animals with the lasso, which is a long rope with a noose at the end. The hunter, who is mounted, carries it in a coil upon his arm ; when he approaches his prey, he whirls it in the air, and at last throws it with such skill and precision that the noose falls over the animal's neck.

We one day saw a hunter noose a wild bull at a short distance from us. When the lasso was thrown, the animal was at full speed, and the hunter in chase, at the distance of about twenty feet. The noose was immediately drawn tight around the neck of the flying beast. Wild with fright the creature rushed forward, bellowing with all his might. The huntsman held on to the rope ; the horse, seeming to understand the game,

his narratives quite a resource during the tedious hours in which we seemed to be creeping like snails over the almost interminable plain.

He had frequently before served as a guide over the road we were now travelling, and he gave me an account of several occurrences in which he had taken part, which might have graced the pages of romance.

It appears that the Pampas are inhabited by a peculiar race of men, called Gauchos. They are the descendants of Spaniards of wild and irregular character, who had fled from civilized society, and settled upon the plains, subsisting almost entirely by hunting and rearing cattle. The son followed the vocation of the father, and thus several succeeding generations of hunters had been scattered over these prairies. At the time of which I am speaking, they consisted of considerable numbers of people, though they lived apart from each other in families, dwelling in small huts, and spending the greater part of their time on horseback. They generally respected travellers, but occasionally they committed desperate acts of robbery.

There were small bands of Indians, also, whose homes were along the southern borders of the Pampas, but as they possessed fleet horses, they occasionally made incursions even into remote portions of the plains, and after having struck a sudden blow upon some unprotected family, they would speed to



another and another, marking their route with blood and conflagration. Of these wild and savage people, my guide told me various anecdotes, of which the following is one.

“A few years previous to the period of which I am speaking, a wealthy Spanish gentleman, with his daughter about eighteen years of

age, was travelling from Chili to Buenos Ayres. They were in a carriage drawn by four horses, and were attended by several servants, two of whom were on horseback. One night, as they were passing through a thicket of tall grass, a terrible cry burst upon their ears, and at the same moment about a dozen savages sprung from their lurking places, and immediately assailed the travelling party. The servants who were armed, discharged their pistols, but they were speedily torn from their horses; the coachman was knocked from his seat, and the two post-boys in their fright ran away. The gentleman in the coach threw open the door and rushed out; but in a moment he was laid prostrate upon the earth by a a blow on the head.

“Frightened at the sounds around them, the horses in the carriage began to rear and plunge, and then, suddenly springing forward, ran off with all their might. In a few moments, they were lost to the view, but the rattling of the wheels was heard for a time, and was then suddenly terminated by a heavy and crashing sound.

“The pockets of the travellers were soon

rifled, and the Indians then departed in pursuit of the coach, leaving two of the servants who had been engaged in the fray dead upon the spot, and the Spanish gentleman himself stunned by the blows he had received.

“At the distance of two miles, the savages found the coach overturned, and reduced to a mere wreck. The young lady within, overcome with terror, was in a state of insensibility, but on being taken out, she recovered speedily. The coach was then rifled, and the lady being placed on horseback, before one of the savages, the party pushed forward across the prairie in a southerly direction.

“In the course of four days, they reached their settlements, and the young lady, whose name was Donna Marina, was committed to the charge of a daughter of one of the savage chiefs. Worn out with fatigue and anxiety, she seemed at first indifferent to her fate; but in the course of a few days, having recovered her health and spirits, she ventured to inquire the fate that awaited her. She then learned that a messenger was to be despatched to Buenos Ayres, where, it was ascertained, her father had arrived, proposing

to surrender his daughter for a ransom of 5000 dollars.

“Understanding from the Indian maiden, under whose care she was placed, that no personal injury to herself was intended, she became tolerably calm. But it chanced that there was among the Indians a fiery young warrior, whose father was a Spaniard, his mother being an Indian. He was born at one of the Spanish huts in the vicinity of Buenos Ayres, and in his early days had acquired a taste for the refinements of civilized life. But his natural daring and love of adventure had led him to join the wild inhabitants of the Pampas, among whom he had now become a celebrated leader.

“At this period, he was in the bloom of early manhood, and was remarkable alike for the symmetry of his form, the grace of his movements, and the manly beauty of his countenance. Among the women of the tribe, he was an object of universal regard, on account of his fine person, and even the stern old warriors could not withhold their admiration at his achievements in the foray and the field. Thus an object of universal

adulation, it may well be supposed that the young warrior, whose name was Yorika, had a pretty high estimate of himself. He was not of the party who had captured the fair Marina; but when he heard of the beauty of the maiden, he sought an opportunity to see her. His wishes were easily gratified by means of a little flattery bestowed upon her keeper. Vanity and curiosity had at first led the youthful Indian to seek the interview, but a deeper sentiment led him frequently to renew it.

“The beauty of the captive stole into his heart, and doubtless, her gentle manners awakened his recollections of scenes that had been familiar in his childhood. He became deeply enamoured of the Spanish maiden, and did not hesitate to avow his passion. His overtures, however, were sternly repelled; and, stung to the quick, the fiery savage determined to obtain by force the maiden whom he could not win by affection.

“During these events, the messenger had communicated with the father of Donna Marina at Buenos Ayres, and brought a favourable answer to the proposal of ransom.

In two days a gentleman was to arrive at a certain point to pay the required sum and receive the captive. Preparations were immediately made to carry the treaty into effect, and in due time four men were despatched with Donna Marina to meet the Spanish agent. Yorika had been proposed as one of the party, but he excused himself, seeming to disdain a service which offered so little of enterprise or adventure.

“The men set forward, and at the place of meeting found the person whom they expected already in attendance. The negotiation was speedily settled, the money paid, and the captive surrendered. The savages went home, and the Spanish maiden, now under the charge of her affianced lover, also departed. The latter were mounted on horseback, and by the light of a summer moon they made their way across the plain. Rejoicing in their re-union after the distressing events which had transpired, they rode side by side, their hearts being often too full for utterance.

“At length their path led them into a shallow vale thickly overgrown with wild thistles.

As they were passing through this place, a pistol was fired, and a ball whizzed near the breast of the attendant of Donna Marina. A moment after, the athletic form of Yorika rose from the thicket and sprung like a lion upon the object at which his pistol had been aimed. The Spaniard was immediately pulled from his horse, and a desperate conflict ensued. The superior strength of the Indian, however, prevailed, and he soon pressed the form of his antagonist beneath him. He drew his dirk, and was about to plunge it into the breast of his foe.

“At that critical instant, the Spaniard brought his pistol to bear, and discharging it in the breast of the Indian, laid him prostrate upon the earth. Bruised and faint, he rose from the ground and made his way to Marina. At first, the girl shrunk back with horror, imagining that it was the victorious Yorika, who had come to claim her as his own. But when she learned the truth, the joyful change in her feelings may be better conceived than described.”

Such was one of the tales of my guide, which beguiled the weariness of our journey

over the Pampas. He related several narratives respecting the jaguar, which is a kind of tiger, infesting the thickets which border upon the road. One day, as we were passing through an immense forest of thistles, ten feet in height, and spreading out like an interminable sea on every side, he pointed to a spot where a traveller, on descending from his horse, had been seized and torn in pieces by one of these furious beasts.

Day after day, we continued our monotonous course. It was winter, but the weather by no means answered to my notion of that season, which had been formed in a very different climate: we had occasional rain, but it was seldom colder than during our April or May. Few incidents occurred to break the uniformity of our journey: one day appeared like another, and as we had no striking objects by which we could mark our progress, we seemed, like a ship in the waste of waters, to stand still in the midst of the shoreless desert. As we stood alone upon the bosom of the mighty prairie, stretching out on every side, and blending itself with the sky, we seemed dwindled to the dimensions of insects.

Never have I felt such a sense of nothingness as in the presence of that mighty plain. In measuring myself by the gigantic scale which the Pampas presented, it seemed that I might be blotted from existence like the moth that fluttered in the breeze. It was not until I turned my mind upon my plans and prospects, my hopes and fears, that my bosom began to swell again with those powerful emotions which seem to give importance to our existence, and enable us to triumph over the despondency which often invades the heart, and might otherwise sink us in despair.

The sense of loneliness, the yearning for society, the longing to be restored to the sympathy of human beings, which beset one in such solitudes, can only be understood by experience. I doubtless felt these the more from my youth and the want of that stern habit of self-reliance which is acquired by men who pursue a life of hazard and adventure. But I was becoming trained in the school of experience, and day by day I was learning to sustain myself with my own thoughts, plans, and prospects.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN ADDITION TO OUR PARTY—STORY OF
GAMBO THE OLD NEGRO.

AFTER we had left Buenos Ayres about twelve or fourteen days, we fell in with a young Spaniard, accompanied by an old negro who acted as his servant, and an Indian guide. They were travelling the same road as ourselves, and by degrees mutual confidence arose between us, and we became very friendly. The Spaniard was a merchant who was going to Valparaiso on business: we soon found that the negro (whose name was Gambo) was of a very lively and communicative disposition. He was an African by birth, and whiled away our tedious hours with many a story of what he had seen in his own country. In spite of his early recollections of the relations and friends from whom he had been torn, he now seemed perfectly

happy. His talents and good character had advanced him in the esteem of his master, and he was treated more like a friend than a servant.

He gave us a narrative of his early life, and of the circumstances which had brought him into his present condition, of which the following is the substance :—

“I was born near the lake of Maravi, where the elephant and the lion are as easy to find as peccary and parrots are here ; and where the guinea-fowl and the antelope are as common as sparrows and rabbits. My father was a famous warrior, and one of the first things I remember was his returning from a battle with the Namaquas, and bringing me a string of beads that he had taken from the neck of one of their chiefs whom he had killed. I was much pleased with this, and longed for the time when I should go with him to the wars, and get fine things for myself. I was one of five children, of whom three were girls. These used to help my mother cultivate the garden and dress the food, while I and my brother fished, or caught birds, or amused ourselves with the other boys of our

village in running races, wrestling, or throwing the spear. I was soon distinguished in these exercises, as well as in swimming; and as I became more expert and stronger in the use of the bow and spear, I persuaded my father to take me with him to a grand hunting match, where I first saw the lion and the leopard killed. There were many hundreds of men and boys collected, and while the men watched for the game as it started from the jungle, the boys were ready to hand the arrows or spears as they wanted them. I was standing near my father, when I noticed something moving among the long grass, and had hardly time to point it out to him when a lioness sprang out, and, seizing my father by the side, ran off with him into the bush. I snatched up the bow which he let fall, and, taking an arrow from the quiver I carried, followed to the thicket where I saw the lioness enter. She was growling fiercely over my father, and was too busy to attend to me.

“And now my heart beat with the hope of delivering my father. I drew the bow with all my strength, and, aiming at the creature’s

side, sent the arrow almost through her. She gave a terrible roar, and a spring that made me tremble, and fell without moving again. I could scarcely believe my eyes when I saw what I had done. My first act was to run to my father and raise him. His side was terribly torn, but his hurts were not dangerous; and he declared that he would have borne ten times as much to see his son act with such courage and promptitude as I had done. He caressed me fondly, and, taking off his cutlass, that had been given him by a white man for a prisoner that he had taken in war, presented it to me before all our neighbours. During the three days that this hunting lasted we killed three lions and five leopards, besides many antelopes and baboons. When we returned to the village we were received with much joy, and I was carried on a litter, made of branches of trees, with the skin of the lioness spread under me: and one of the head men of the place declared how bravely I had acted, and called upon all the other boys of the village to imitate my example.

“A few days after this a council was held,

and it was there decided that I should be admitted to the rank of a man. One of the old chiefs said, 'Though his beard does not yet appear, and his body is not yet so large as his father's, not one of us could have showed more courage than he has ; let us therefore acknowledge him as a man, and put upon him the marks that only men may bear.' The doctor of the village then came forward, and, taking out of his bag the necessary implements, the principal of which were shark's teeth, my father and another threw me on the ground, and held me firmly. The doctor then began cutting my forehead from the roots of the hair to the end of the nose, leaving about half an inch of skin between each cut, and turning in the edges with the point of a leopard's claw, so as to cause the skin to show scars, as you see. This caused me great pain ; but I was too proud to cry out, for there was not one in our village who had been permitted to receive this honour at so early an age. When that operation was finished I was allowed to rise, and was complimented on the firmness with which I had borne it.

“For many days following I had a similar task to undergo, till all these marks that you see” (showing some rows of lumps all along the nose, and the temple bones, and many stars and lines on the arms and chest) “were completed, and I had then only to have my teeth cut, to be considered as a perfect man.* This, however, was deferred till I should distinguish myself in some other expedition: and as an elephant hunt was to take place very soon, it was decided that I should accompany the party, in order to prove my right to all the honours of manhood.

“The time that intervened appeared to me very tedious, for I no longer deigned to join in the sports of boyhood: and some of the men regarded me with a degree of jealousy that would not permit me to smoke with them. My mother and sisters did all in their power to amuse and please me, and predicted my speedy return with yet greater honours than I had gained. At length the preparations were complete, and we set off on the

* Several of the African tribes have the front teeth cut like the teeth of a saw. The only reason they give for so strange a fashion is that they may be like others.

wished-for expedition. Our scouts had brought us the intelligence that a herd of elephants had been seen feeding on the side of a mountain at a few hours' distance; whither we accordingly bent our steps, observing a profound silence. Our arrows were all prepared with the poison of the puff adder, so that the least wound would prove fatal. As we walked stealthily forwards, we began to hear the crashing of the branches, and the noise made by the elephants as they beat their food against their forelegs, to clean it from dust or insects. And now we had to observe the greatest caution. We at once changed our direction, making a long round, in order to come upon the elephants against the wind, as they would otherwise smell us, and take the alarm. We crept onwards with the greatest caution, stealing from one tree to another, till our principal marksmen were near enough to shoot. While we were waiting the favourable moment for this, I saw the huge creatures feeding and caressing their young ones, of which there were several in the herd, that consisted altogether of seventeen. They thought themselves in perfect security. The

next moment what a change ! Five arrows had taken effect among them ; and, with up-raised trunks, and flapping ears, and brandished tails, they were rushing towards our ambush. The head chief of our nation was discovered by an immense male, that had been struck by an arrow. He had scarcely time to fly when the enraged beast was close upon him. As he passed the tree behind which I was hidden, I drew the cutlass—my father's gift—and, with one well-aimed blow, cut the tendon of the hind leg of the elephant, who fell with a tremendous shock, utterly unable to recover himself. But I had no time to rejoice in my prowess. The mate of the elephant I had overthrown was seeking her companion, and I had hardly time to take shelter in a large tree before she was on the spot. She caressed him most tenderly with her trunk, and endeavoured to help him to rise, and, finding her efforts useless, moaned most piteously. The poison was beginning to take effect on the male ; and, as he felt the pain occasioned by it, his cries were distressing, and rendered doubly so by the anguish of his faithful mate, who would

not leave him, but continued her efforts to relieve his sufferings. Proud as I was of my day's achievement, I could not help regretting the pain I had caused, especially when the noble brute, in dying, turned his eyes on me. I shall never forget that look. The female seemed perfectly frantic with rage and grief; she tore up the earth with her tusks, and butted against the tree in which I had taken refuge with such violence as almost to dislodge me. She was so much occupied with the death of her mate that she did not heed the approach of two of our party, who thus got a good shot at her; and one poisoned arrow pierced her trunk, while another lodged in one eye. Half maddened with rage and pain, she rushed forwards with so much impetuosity, that she fell over the prostrate body of her dead comrade, and, ere she could rise, was hamstrung by the swords of the hunters, who then left her to die from the effects of the venom of their arrows.

“ I now descended from my perch, and our band soon assembled in order to cut off the tails of our victims, to be used as charms against witchcraft, and to take the tusks to

barter for salt and cotton cloth, with the tribes living near the sea-coast.

“As soon as the chief, whose life I had saved, rejoined the party, he presented me with the tusks of the largest elephant that had fallen that day; and acknowledged, in the presence of all the hunters, that it was to my courage he owed his existence. We next cut off the feet and trunks of our game—they being the most delicate parts—and set off on our return to the village. The women were speedily set to work to prepare ovens for baking our feast; and when it was prepared, the chief bade his favorite wife present me with the largest portion, acknowledging, in the presence of all the tribe, how much he was indebted to me. You may suppose I was proud enough: there was not a young man in the village who had so distinguished himself.

“The following day was fixed for the final ceremony of the full initiation into the ranks of manhood; and, before daylight, I was impatiently waiting the assembling of our elders and chiefs. Soon after sunrise they began to gather; and the priests first came forward

to try, by their charms, whether it was a lucky day for the ceremony. Several fowls were killed, and the examination of their entrails having proved satisfactory, a large bowl of milk was poured upon the ground, and three balls of maize flour were given me to swallow. I then laid down, the eldest man in the village supporting my head between his knees; and the priests, taking each a sharp stone, began rubbing away my teeth, refreshing themselves and me, from time to time, by draughts of palm wine, of which the company also largely partook. About noon the affair was completed, and I was regularly entered as a man in the tribe, and allowed my full share of game or plunder. The first use I made of my newly-acquired dignity was to purchase myself a wife with the tusks that the chief had given me; and as these were very large, and I was an object of admiration among all the girls of the village, on account of my prowess, I had no difficulty in obtaining the fattest and finest young woman of the tribe.

“I set to work to build myself a hut, and in a few days had as comfortable a dwelling

as any of my neighbours. My wife was industrious and good-tempered, and we lived very happily together, except for the envy of some of my former companions, who were jealous that I, though younger than they, should enjoy so much honour, while they were still regarded as boys. In several hunting expeditions, after my marriage, I was very successful, and had soon gathered a good quantity of skins, besides some ivory and ostrich feathers. My father and mother were proud of me, and the ancients of the village spoke of me as one likely to be the richest man in our tribe; for no chase was undertaken in which I did not bear a part. My wife used to encourage me by her praises, and thus stimulated me to still greater exertions, while she attached me more strongly to herself.

“One day she returned from our rice ground with the rest of the women, wringing their hands, and exclaiming that our hopes of harvest were gone. A herd of river horses had passed through our plantations, and left nothing but trampled mud where our blooming crops were growing but yesterday. I seized my bow and arrows, and, calling upon

all the men of the village to follow me, made at once for the river. We easily traced the hippopotami to the water's edge, but there we were at fault. Some proposed returning, and giving up the pursuit; but I would not hear of this. 'Let some,' said I, 'go up the stream, while others go down its bank, and we shall surely find our spoilers. Then, leaving some to watch their motions, let the others assemble and lay wait for them at night, when they will again come ashore to feed.'

"This counsel was followed, and we separated, after agreeing upon the signals by which our discoveries should be communicated to each other. It fell to my lot to go up the stream, and I was accompanied by one of the best hunters of our tribe. He had often hunted the hippopotamus before, and told me we must observe the greatest caution, as, although so strong and fierce when provoked, it is a very shy and wary animal. We therefore kept at some distance from the banks of the river, only taking care to have a good view of it as we passed along. After walking above an hour in perfect silence, I

began to grow impatient, when my companion, touching my arm, pointed before to a bend in the river. I only saw a few bubbles on the surface, and was going to speak, but hastily pressing his finger on my lips, he again pointed, and I saw a huge black head rise for a moment above the water, and then disappear. I was immediately despatched to give notice to our fellows, while my more experienced companion waited to watch our game. I rapidly retraced my steps, and soon communicated the welcome tidings of our success. Armed with strong lances, and provided with torches made of dried coconut leaves, we advanced in pursuit of our scout, and soon found the signal agreed on, indicating that we were to place ourselves in close ambush along the margin of the river, on the opposite side of which were the rice grounds of a neighbouring village. As it wanted some hours to sunset, and we knew the hippopotami would not leave the river till night, with the exception of two, who kept watch, we all lay down to sleep.

“When I awoke the stars were shining in the sky, and nothing could be heard but the

howling of the wolf, or the occasional roar of a lion, in the distance. Soon, however, a splashing in the river, with a harsh grunting noise, aroused every one of us; and, by the dim light, we saw five river horses just mounting the opposite bank. Some of the younger of our party were about to leap up, but the more experienced huntsmen checked them in silence. But when the enormous creatures were fairly landed, and busily engaged in devouring the rice, they whispered us to plunge silently into the water and swim across, holding our torches above our heads to keep them dry. The moment we landed we procured a light, by rubbing two sticks together, and planted ten blazing torches along the banks of the river, at the same time shouting with all our might. The terrified hippopotami knew not which way to run. Dazzled by the light, and confounded by the noise, they jostled each other, and ran hither and thither in the greatest terror. Two of them had fallen, mortally wounded, when the others made a terrific rush towards the river, charging those who stood in their way with irresistible fury. One of my unfortunate com-

panions was crushed to a mummy under their feet; and I got my shoulder cut open by a side blow from the tusks of the hindmost, which left this scar which you see. As pursuit was out of the question, we now began to think about turning our game to some profit. We began by extracting their tusks, which the ivory merchants purchase; and next flayed off the fat, which covers the whole body; this is one of our greatest dainties. After taking some portions of the thickest part of the skins, to make shields, we left the remainder for the vultures and hyænas, and returned to our families, having first buried the corpse of our unfortunate comrade. I went to my father's hut, and presented my mother with a good share of our savoury booty; and then each one of the party carried a present to the widow of our lamented friend. He was one of the best hunters of our tribe, and was never known to turn his back on a friend who needed his help, or an enemy that braved his attack.

“With my diligence in hunting I had now become master of a good quantity of ivory, and many skins; and I began to be impatient

for the arrival of some of those Moorish merchants who travel through our country, in order to collect them in exchange for iron and cotton cloth. As my wife and I were resting under a palm-tree before my hut, we saw some men approaching, riding on camels. We soon perceived that they were the merchants we had been wishing for, and I hastened to meet them, in order to have the first choice of their goods. I invited them to my hut; and when they had made their camels kneel down under a tamarind tree, my wife brought them water to wash their feet, and hastened to dress some antelope flesh and yams for their refreshment. They seemed pleased with our attentions, and told my wife I was the finest young man they had seen; at the same time expressing their wonder that one who appeared yet so young was admitted to all the honours of manhood. She was proud to tell them how it had happened; and, as she boasted to them of my strength and activity, they spoke with each other in their own tongue, and often looked at me. When supper was finished, the villagers began to gather round, asking many questions about the

goods they had brought, and what they most wished to purchase. They declined doing any business that evening, so we had a dance in front of my hut, at which all the young people of the village were present.

“ While the young reposed after their exercise, the old men inquired after other merchants who used to trade there, and also after some of their acquaintance who had, while I was a little boy, gone away with one of them, and never returned. They said that the merchant had gone back to his own country, and that their comrades were not likely to return; for that they were now great men, who had hundreds of slaves, and riches of all kinds, in the country to which they were gone; and that they were far too well off there to think of coming back. They said they no longer walked on foot, but had camels and horses to carry them; and that, instead of bows and arrows, like ours, they had arms that made a noise like thunder, and killed men or beasts at a great distance by lightning. At this time we had not seen guns, and our elders thought they were only deceiving us by their tales. But I was all

curiosity to know more of these wonderful arms, about where they got them, and how they were used. I thought if I could only get one of these I would soon be the richest man in our village, for I could kill the elephants all alone. And then I fancied how my father and mother, and the rest of our old people, would wonder to see me go out alone, and return laden with ivory.

“At last the company dispersed, and we all retired to our mats; but I could not sleep. The tales of the merchants had made me restless, and I seemed as though I could never be happy without the wonderful arms they talked of, that would enable me, singly, to cope with the mightiest beasts of the forest. Before the east began to redden with the rising sun I arose, and walked out to where the merchants were sleeping beside their camels. As soon as they awoke, I began to ask them about the subject that so deeply interested me. They both said that it would be impossible for them to procure what I so much desired, but that if I would go with them, carrying the articles I had to barter, I might certainly obtain it for my-

self. I asked them how long it would require me to be absent from the village, and they told me I could be back in a moon. My decision was at once taken; and, cautioning them against saying anything to my family on the subject, I agreed to set off on the following morning and meet them on the road at a spot agreed on. They greatly commended my spirit, and told me that, to encourage my plan, they would give me such goods as I wanted for my wife, to be paid for when we should meet again.

“They disposed of the greater part of their merchandise during the day, for the hunting of our tribe had been very successful of late; and they had a larger quantity of ivory and ostrich feathers than had ever been taken from our village at one time before. In the evening there was another dance, and a great feast in honour of their departure; and they made many presents of beads and brass wire among our women; but to my wife they gave a looking-glass, which was an object of envy to the whole village. When, at last, we retired to our homes, I could not rest; I was still more unquiet than the preceding night.

Something in my heart told me I was not doing right in going away without telling my wife and my parents ; but I knew they loved me too well to consent to my going so far away, and, as I had determined to possess that which was to make me the first hunter of my tribe, I wished to avoid the pain of parting.

“ When Abdalla and Ali, the two principal merchants, arose in the morning, my wife hastened to give them a bag of meal and a jar of the butter of the shea tree, as provision for their journey, and they took their leave. They were hardly out of sight, when, taking my bow and arrows, I went out, saying I was going to shoot some guinea fowl. I felt that I was doing wrong, but ever since the passion for the wondrous arms described by Abdalla and Ali had taken hold of me, every other impulse was carried away by that. I went off to the spot appointed, where I met those who were to be the companions of my journey. They had often passed this way before, and after we had journeyed some distance, they pointed out to me the Lake Maravi, a larger piece of water than I had

ever before seen. I remember being much pleased with the beautiful appearance of the various little islands that are scattered in it; and was struck with the splendid scarlet flamingoes, of which hundreds were feeding along the water's edge.

“We lay down that night under the spreading branches of a large tree; and the distance I had travelled, with the restlessness of the preceding nights, made me sleep very soundly. The sun was up when Ali awoke me, and we set off, along the banks of the lake, towards a village, whose date trees were visible in the distance. On our way thither I shot an antelope, which furnished us with a good breakfast. But I could not help feeling sad when I thought of her who used to cook my food, and who was now, no doubt, lamenting me as dead, and supposing I had fallen a prey to some lion or leopard. About noon we arrived at the village, whose houses were larger and stronger than those I had been used to. The dress of the people was also different; and articles that with us were only seen on the person of the chief or his family, were here quite common. Abdalla

pointed this out to me, and told me that the nearer we drew to the place where my rich countrymen resided, the more common would these things become.

“The merchants here disposed of the remainder of their goods; but I observed that they did not get so much ivory for their merchandize here as they did in our village. We lodged that night in this place, and the next morning agreed with some of the people to carry us across the lake. We embarked in one canoe and the camels in another; but before we started, Abdalla paid a conjuror to give us a charm against the spirit of the lake, lest it should be angry at strangers crossing it. This charm was contained in balls of meal, which we swallowed. We left soon after sunrise, and landed on the other side about noon. I was very glad to get on shore again, for I had never been on the water before, except in crossing a river; and I thought, when I saw the land so far off on each side of us, that we could never get there. But I was ashamed to confess my fear, as I saw that my companions did not appear at all terrified. That night we slept

in the woods, each of us keeping watch by turns, for fear of wild beasts, whose howlings we heard on all sides ; but our fire kept them off, so that we saw none.

“ Early in the morning we again set out on our journey, which lay across the most miserable country I had yet seen. For many hours we travelled without seeing a single tree, or meeting with a drop of water ; but my companions told me that we should soon arrive at a better country, and find water and provisions in plenty. It was dark before we arrived at our next halting-place, which was a larger village than I had ever seen. Instead of taking up our quarters without ceremony, we had to go to the chief and make him a present before any one would receive us. He then sent two of his guards to conduct us to a house, the inmates of which were ordered to supply all our wants, and to be answerable for our safety and that of our merchandize. We were regaled with dates, and milk, and roasted corn, and had no need to do anything for ourselves, the chief’s orders having secured us every attention. In the morning, at sunrise, two of his guards came to sum-

mon us to his presence. We found him seated on a piece of scarlet cloth, under a large umbrella, surrounded by guards, armed with spears and swords. When we came in, an Englishman, who, as I afterwards found, had been shipwrecked on the sea-coast near, was standing in his presence. Abdalla and Ali bowed themselves before him, and I did the same; but I did not understand the language in which they conversed. After talking for some time, Abdalla took a chain of gold, which he had concealed in his turban, and, ungirding his sword, handed it, with the chain, to the king. He then bowed, and left the presence, with Ali and myself, and two guards followed us, as before. Instead, however, of returning to our lodgings, we went into another part of the town, where the guards, going up to a large house, before which some armed men were standing, went in and led forth four men and two women, who were tied together by a long cord. These they delivered to the merchants, who told me they were slaves they had just purchased, to sell at the town whither we were going.

As we were leaving the village the women wept much, and I endeavoured to discover the cause of their sorrow, but we could not understand each other. These slaves belonged to a tribe far to the south, and were not so black as my countrymen. They were made to walk between two camels ; on the foremost of which rode Ali, while I and Abdalla followed on foot. In the afternoon we crossed some high mountains, where the stones hurt the camels' feet, and made our progress very slow. We encamped that night on a plain, by the side of a brook, watching, by turns, both against wild beasts and to prevent the slaves from running away.

“The next day, at noon, we arrived at another large village, where the king appeared to know Abdalla and Ali well. They presented him with some ostrich feathers, and he sent the slaves to a strong house, under charge of his guards, while the merchants and myself were entertained at his table. He asked my companions what I was doing with them ; and when they told him of my strength and courage, he bid them ask me to remain

with him, promising to make me a great man. But I was too much set on being the first hunter in my own tribe, and surpassing all the companions of my childhood in my exploits, to be willing to listen to any other plan: besides, I was impatient to return to my wife and parents. The next day we feasted with the king; and when we were setting off on our journey, I saw that we had fifteen more slaves added to our band. These had been previously purchased, and were now taken for the same purpose as the others. There was one among these whose language I understood; and he told me that they had all been taken together by the king we had just left, who had come upon their village in the night, with his soldiers, and had attacked them so unexpectedly, that they had no chance either to fight or to flee. He said that the old people and children alone had been left, but that all who were able to work had been taken. Some had been sent away a few days before; and he told me they had been bought by a white man, who wore clothing all over his body, and carried arms

that made a noise like thunder. This excited my curiosity very much, and I was much pleased when my conductors told me that in three days I should see plenty of such, and should possess that weapon for which I so much longed.”



CHAPTER XIV.

THE STORY OF GAMBO CONCLUDED.

“THIS night we again encamped in the woods, taking care to tie all the slaves’ feet, lest any of them should escape us in the dark. There were so many leopards about us here that none of us could sleep: they were prowling round us all night, and the women were terribly frightened at their growling. The next morning Ali ordered us to start as soon as the sun was up, for we had a long day’s march before arriving at the town where we were to pass the night. The road was very rough in some places, so that we took the loading off the camels and distributed it among the slaves, who carried it on their heads. We halted about noon at a spring, by which grew some date trees. We were hardly seated when a lion sprang out from a thicket just by, and ran off with one of the slave women. I would willingly have

pursued him, but Abdalla said we had no time to spare ; and, after a hasty repast, we continued our journey. The sun was just setting when we drew nigh the town to which we were bound ; and as soon as we were perceived, three Moors came to meet Abdalla and Ali, whom they saluted with much friendship. They examined me very particularly, and seemed much pleased with what was told them, which, however, I did not understand. Ali told me that these men were friends and countrymen of theirs, who traded with them. When we entered the town we went, all together, to a large hut, where there were a great many slaves, who were all fastened to a stout cord, that was tied to the posts that supported the building. After there leaving the slaves we brought, we went to another house close by, where an excellent supper, of rice and fish, was ready for us ; and a grand dance was arranged for our amusement afterwards. I found the people of this town very different from those of my nation : they were shorter in stature, their hands and feet were larger, and their skins were not marked in the same manner. Their

way of dancing was also much less pleasing to me than that of my own country.

“The sun was high in the sky before we started the next day; and I then found that our three new comrades were to accompany us, with all the slaves that I had seen the evening before; so that our band amounted to more than a hundred. These were almost all loaded with ivory, wax, gold-dust, and ostrich feathers. They were tied two and two, and a long cord united all the couples together. Some of those that had last joined us were weak and thin, and the Moors often whipped them, to make them quicken their pace. I did not like to see this, for it was never done in my country, except when the slaves were insolent, and never because they were weak. However, I said nothing.

When we halted the sun was low, our shadows were long before us, and most of the slaves seemed very tired. Some meal and water were served among them, and they were allowed to rest awhile on the grass. When we were setting off again one youth said he could go no further: his feet were much swollen, and the soles of them quite

raw ; and his head was sore with the load he had carried. His burden was divided among some of his companions, and he was tied by the hands to the tail of one of the camels, and thus dragged along. When I saw this it made me sick of the company of the Moors, and I wished I had never left my own people ; for I had seen more suffering and tears since I had been with them than in all my life before. That day we passed through one village, and encamped at another not far from it, in the evening. Here the slaves were shut up in a large hut by themselves, their burdens being all placed in that in which we slept.

“ In the morning I found we had a further addition to our numbers, twenty-five slaves having been gathered for the Moors during their absence. I was all impatience to start, for this day was to show me what I had so long coveted. Abdalla and Ali told me we should not arrive till late in the evening. As we were passing through the forests in which our road lay, we were joined by several other Moors, who came by another route. They had with them a large gang of slaves, of the

Namaqua and Sofala tribes ; but these carried only gold-dust, wax, and skins ; ivory being rare among them. The youth that fell lame the day before now dropped on the road, utterly unable to go on. He was abandoned on the spot ; and, no doubt, before night, he was a prey to the hyænas or the jackalls. We travelled but slowly, owing to the weariness of our slaves, many of them being foot-sore. Towards sunset I heard a hollow rumbling sound, which was quite new to me, and it gave me great alarm. I asked Ali what it was. He told me it was "the great water," and that as soon as we were out of the wood I should see the town where my desires were to be gratified. I ran before, impatient to behold what I had travelled so far to gain ; and, ascending a sandy hill, from its top I saw a town larger than any we had passed through, and with huts altogether different from any I had ever seen. Beyond that was water, reaching so far that I could see no shore ; and this kept dashing upon the land, and produced the strange noise I had heard. I sat down to wait for my companions, looking eagerly at the novel scene before me,

which was just now hid from my wondering gaze by the shades of night. This was my first sight of the ocean.

“When my companions came up I asked them many questions about my countrymen, but they told me I could not see them till tomorrow. We all lodged together in a large building outside the town, for the gates were shut. During the night two other bands of slaves arrived, carrying hides, wax, gold-dust, ivory, and rice. They were conducted by Moors, who seemed well acquainted with Ali and Abdalla, and conversed much with them, but in a language I did not understand. I could not sleep, from impatience to see the many wonders which had been described to me. Long before sunrise Abdalla called up the slaves, and, bidding me accompany him, led us to the bank of a large river. Here he bade us all bathe ourselves; and, as soon as the sun rose, he gave each of us a piece of bullock’s fat, to rub our bodies with; and told us, that as we were going to see many great chiefs, we should look as gay as possible. He and the other Moors put on clean clothing, and we all set off together to

enter the town, the name of which they told me was Quillimane. I was so astonished at what I beheld, that I could not speak. I saw around me many white men, and blacks of nations different from any I had ever met with before. But what surprised me still more was to see little floating houses, as I thought, with tall trees in them, on the great water. Three of these were still; but I saw one that seemed to me to walk on the water, with great white leaves on the trees that grew in it. Presently I saw what I thought lightning from it, and in a moment after it thundered. I was just going to ask Ali what this was, when all the other little houses on the water began to lighten and thunder too. As soon as I was calm enough to speak I asked Ali the meaning of all this; and he told me that what I took for little houses were ships belonging to the white men who came to buy goods; and that the thunder and lightning I saw was from the arms, of which he had told me, and that I came to seek.

“As we advanced the crowd became greater every moment; and I saw many hundreds of slaves, of all ages, and of various nations, and

goods of all sorts. I was just going to inquire for my countrymen, when we arrived at a spot where a great many slaves were seated on the ground, each band with its master. Here Ali and Abdalla commanded theirs to halt, and divided them into gangs; and they gave me my ivory and skins, telling me I should soon have an opportunity of bartering them for the arms I coveted. We had not waited long here before we saw canoes coming from the ships, and many white men in them; who brought swords, knives, cloth, beads, and many things that I had never seen before, and of which I did not even know the names. I have since learnt that they were guns, flints, powder and ball, and arrack. Several gangs of slaves, that were nearest the shore, were soon bought by these strangers, and paid for in various goods. I was looking on, wondering at everything around me, when a white chief came up to Ali and began looking at his slaves. He surveyed me very attentively, and Ali told me he had bought my goods, and I was to carry them to his canoe, where I should get what I wanted. All the fatigues of my journey were

now forgotten, and I began to think how speedily I should return home with my prize, and was already thinking how I should astonish my parents and wife, by the wonders I had seen. I caught up my packet, and was going to the canoe with it, when Ali told me to wait a moment. He had just concluded a bargain for a number of slaves, and they were to go to the canoe with me.

“Presently the white chief went on, and Ali and I followed, with the slaves, who were much afraid to get into the canoe, and some of them screamed and cried very much. But the white men tied them fast together and put them in. And when they had put in the last, Ali said something to them, and two of them seized me by the arms, and two of them by the feet, and before I had time to say or do anything I was fast bound. I began to cry out that I was not a slave, and to reproach Ali with his treachery, and threaten him with the vengeance of my tribe; but the more I cried out the more did he and the white chief laugh at me; and some of the white men struck me, to make me quiet.

“ I was laid in the canoe with the slaves, and I now saw that I had been deceived by the treacherous Moors, who had not only got my valuable ivory and skins, but had also sold me for a slave. I was frantic with rage and despair, and strained to break my bonds, but all in vain. One of the whites, seeing me struggle so much, kicked me as I lay in the bottom of the canoe. I had not then been used to kicks, and I was mad with rage that I could not revenge myself. Presently, however, his leg was within reach of my mouth, and I seized it with my teeth, and did not let it go till I had bitten him like a hyæna ; for which he struck me on the head, and gave me this cut, of which you see the mark on my forehead.

“ Having taken in as many slaves as the canoe would hold, they now left the land and went towards one of the ships, into which we were all put, a rope being passed through the bands of each one, and tied fast to some rings that were in the sides of the ship. Here I saw more white men, and also some blacks, who spoke the white man’s language. The

canoe went and returned several times, bringing more slaves, until at last the ship was quite full.

“ We were now taken below, and were all put close together, where we had not room to stand up. In the evening rice and water were served to each of us, but I could not eat. The thoughts of home; vengeance against Ali and Abdalla; fears for what was to come;—all affected me: and I saw that most of those around me were as uneasy as myself. When it got dark I could not sleep, and was very thirsty, and I and several others asked for water; but no one attended to us; and thus we remained all night. It was very hot, and being so many together in a small place, I felt as I had never done before; and wished that a lion had eaten me, or an elephant crushed me, rather than I should ever have come where I was.

“ In the morning we were taken, a few at a time, out of our prison; and one of the blacks, who spoke the white man’s language, told us that if we were quiet we should be well treated; but if we made any noise, or were unruly, we should be whipped and

chained ; and they showed us several things to punish those who were disobedient. We had then rice and water given us, and those who would not eat were flogged till they did. I did not wish to eat ; but, rather than be flogged like a slave, although I knew I was one, I took the portion of rice that was given me. That day we heard a great noise over our heads, and we soon found that the ship was moving. Almost all of us complained of pain in the head and stomach, and I felt very ill. I wanted to lie down, but there was not room ; and all around me were complaining, and the women and children crying very much. The vessel moved about so that we were jostled against each other, and many began to quarrel and fight because of this. But one of the white men came down, and began to beat all who were making a noise, telling us if we were not quiet it would be much worse for us. We were very thirsty, but scarcely one could take his rice in the evening. The night was very dark, and I had never found it so long. Our bodies were streaming with perspiration ; we were all sick, thirsty, in pain, and darkness, and

could not have even the comfort of lying down.

“ In the morning, when we were called on deck, one woman and three children were found dead, and their bodies were at once thrown into the great water. Many refused their food that morning, and were beaten till they ate it ; but some would not take it, even though they were flogged the more. All of us looked sad ; our skins were no longer black and shining, but dusky and dirty, and we loathed ourselves, and everything about us. That night we began to get a little used to the motion of the ship, and in the morning many ate their portions with a good appetite. The white chief bade one of his slaves beat the tam-tam, and told us to dance ; but we were sad and weak, and did not wish to do it. He then was very angry, and told his men to beat us if we did not ; so we tried to dance, but could hardly stand, for the ship was rolling about. That day it was very hot, and we often asked for water ; but we were told that if we asked they would give us none, but if we were quiet we should be served three times a day. In the night it

thundered very much, and the wind blew very hard; the vessel rolled about a great deal, and many were sick again; the water often came down upon us, and we heard the men running about all night. In the morning nine of us were taken out, but our rice and water were given us where we were. The wind blew louder and louder, and soon a great deal of water poured in upon us, and directly after we were shut up in utter darkness. We had been hot before, and had suffered for want of air; but now it was ten times worse, and we felt so ill that we were willing to be beaten rather than remain, and cried out as loud as we could; but no one attended to us, and we screamed in vain.

“ A woman who was next to me, and who had been crying very loud, suddenly became quite still: I felt her, and found she was dead. The noise of the water was terrible, and we hoped every moment that it would break into our prison, for we should all have preferred death, if we could but once more breathe the fresh air, to remaining in the torture we now felt. I shall never forget that day; the shrieks and groans of those around

me, and the horrible feelings I endured, used to awake me from my sleep for years afterwards, when I happened to dream of them. All cried for water ; but our voices got fainter and fainter, till at last almost all were quiet, except a moaning noise. My head grew giddy ; my whole body seemed as if on fire, and my parched tongue could no more utter a word ; then I lost all strength, and remember nothing more than falling upon the body of my dead neighbour. How long I remained in that state I cannot tell ; but at last I thought I was in my own hut, and that I was just awaking, when, opening my eyes, I found myself in the dark, surrounded by my unhappy companions. Water was now given to us, but in small quantities ; and we then saw a great many corpses taken up out of our prison and thrown into the sea. Those that were not dead were all in as bad a state as I, and could not stand. I felt pain in every limb, and a burning fever over my whole body. The wind had ceased, and the vessel now scarcely moved at all, except rocking to and fro, and the sky was bright and clear. The ship was cleaned, and we

were no longer bound, for we were too weak to cause any fear to the white men.

“For several days we continued in this state, recovering our strength very slowly. With lying continually on the boards our bodies were very sore, and the flies tormented us terribly, by pitching upon our wounds. At length a breeze sprung up, and as the heat was less we soon got better. About seventeen days after we left Quillimane I saw the sailors all looking out at the head of the vessel, and soon after I could distinguish land. I saw high-peaked mountains; and, as we drew nearer, the green trees and fields looked very pleasant. In the morning we were quite close to the land; and there the white chief told the men to anchor the ship, and he went away in the canoe, with two or three of the other whites. The next morning he came again, and the ship was taken into the harbour, where I saw many others, much larger than the one in which I came; and houses bigger and higher than I had ever seen before. Many canoes came alongside the ship, and white men came on board, and began to buy the slaves. I was one of the

first sold, and twelve others were purchased by the same man.

“ I soon found that the port at which we arrived was Rio Janeiro, and I was quickly purchased from the man who had first bought me by my present master’s father. Since then there has been nothing worth remark in my life, except that I have had the rare good fortune to serve one of the best of masters.”

The old negro’s story had very much interested me, and as we went on, I became more and more pleased with him and his master.

We met but few travellers upon the road : four men on horseback, and a company with two carriages, were all that we encountered in a distance of more than 500 miles. The latter consisted of some five and twenty persons. They had a baggage cart, which was a capacious, rude, uncouth-looking vehicle, with cane sides, and a roof covered with hides. The body was balanced upon two prodigiously high wheels for the convenience of passing through rivers. The other vehicle was a long coach, called a *galera*, and resembled an omnibus ; the seats ran sideways,

and the door was at the end. To each of these carriages there were four horses, and a postilion to each horse. Such is the ordinary equipment of travellers upon the Pampas.

The post-houses on the road were miserable tenements, generally of mud, and affording scanty accommodation. The lazy inhabitants seemed to offer the commonest civility with reluctance or languid indifference. We occasionally met with huts inhabited by squalid Indians, who seemed sunk in indolence and apathy. They were nearly naked, but they possessed a gentle and kindly disposition. The herds of cattle upon the plains furnish them abundance of meat, and they parted with it freely, seeming to be almost indifferent whether they received compensation or not.

At the end of twenty days, we reached the verge of the Pampas, and began to ascend the highlands, which rise gradually for the distance of nearly two hundred miles, at the foot of the Andes. Industriously pursuing our journey, we rose step by step, and at last arrived at a village, situated in a deep

gorge at the foot of mountains that seemed to reach the skies. Here we sold our horses, and purchased mules, which are considered safer in climbing the dizzy precipices, over which our road now lay.

Being duly equipped, and having rested three days, we departed and began to creep up the frowning heights of the Andes. Sometimes we seemed lost in deep and dark ravines; sometimes we threaded our way amid rocks that lifted their shaggy pinnacles over our heads, and seemed to threaten us with destruction; and sometimes, we reached a lofty peak from which we could see the rugged valley stretched out behind, and still loftier pinnacles rising up to the heavens in front. How striking the contrast between these savage mountains and the level prairie! but the emotions they excited resembled each other: there was the same overpowering sense of vastness in nature; the same oppressive sense of my own insignificance, visited me here as upon the Pampas. There was, indeed, something exhilarating in the mountain air, and the consciousness of danger fre-

quently experienced as we wound along the edges of the mountains with a yawning chasm of five hundred feet below, imparted something of a romantic interest to our journey. The scenery, too, was often amazingly grand, and when at last we reached the highest ridge of the Andes, and I gazed upon its glittering peaks covered with everlasting snow, I experienced a sensation which I shall never forget. The mountains seemed like blueish-white clouds piled up to the very heavens. They appeared like the ghosts of mountains, dreamy and mist-like, rather than the adamantine masses of granite which they really are.

After winding for several days along the devious path, amid the wilderness of rocky peaks and cliffs, we began to emerge from the labyrinth, and the western slope of the Andes opened before us. Creeping over a succession of ridges, we finally reached the undulatory plain, and from an eminence, we caught a distant view of the Pacific. Proceeding through a country of great fertility, we arrived at the place of our destination, thankful indeed that I had reached it safely.

I here had to part with the Spaniard and his faithful negro immediately on my arrival. They were going to some place south of Valparaiso ; and as they found a ship about to sail, they embarked without delay. The Spaniard, however, had just time to introduce me to some persons with whom he was connected in business, and whom I afterwards found very serviceable to me in the inquiries I had to make.

I was not more sorry to take leave of the Spaniard than I was with Gambo. I had conversed a great deal with the old man during our desolate journey, and had learned a great deal from him. He was never tired of talking of his own country ; and though he was generally cheerful and much attached to his master, it was plain that he could never forget the African home from which he had been torn.

CHAPTER XV.

DESCRIPTION OF VALPARAISO—FRUITLESS
SEARCH FOR MY UNCLE—DEPARTURE—
A TERRIFIC PHENOMENON.

I FOUND the city of Valparaiso to be much smaller than its commercial importance had led me to suppose. It is the chief port on the western coast of America, and from it the principal commerce is carried on with the islands of the Pacific and the coast of Asia. Valparaiso is indeed the centre of trade in this quarter of the world. Still, at the time I was there, more than twenty years ago, its population did not exceed 15,000. In 1822, it suffered from a dreadful earthquake, but it has now increased, and since the independence of Chili, it has become still more important than in former times. It is built along a bending beach, at the foot of a high cliff, which overlooks the town. The buildings are ornamented with piazzas,

painted with different colours, which give the place a very lively appearance. The present number of inhabitants is about 25,000.

It may well be believed that the business which brought me to this place, engrossed my thoughts, and that immediately after my arrival, I began to devote my attention to it. I delivered the letters of introduction I had brought, and pursued my inquiries in relation to my uncle, in the channels which had been pointed out. To my great mortification, I soon found that he was not in Valparaiso.

The only clue I could obtain which seemed to offer the least chance of discovering him, was that a man bearing the Spanish name of Signor Morales, had come to this city some fifteen years before. He had engaged in commerce, and being a man of enterprise, was very successful, and speedily amassed a large estate. Suddenly, and without any known cause, he became poor, closed his business and lived a life of seclusion. At last he disappeared, and no one seemed to know with certainty whither he had gone.

I found various rumours respecting him. One person said he had gone to the Island

of Juan Fernandes, and now lived there alone as Alexander Selkirk had done before him. I was told by another that he had become a monk, and lived as a hermit on a mountain. Another story was, that the mysterious merchant had gone to Potosi, where he had purchased a silver mine and become immensely rich.

Amongst these various rumours, one thing only seemed to be clear, and this was, that the individual to whom they related was in fact my uncle. The description of his person, manners, and appearance was exact. Everything else, however, was uncertain. It seemed probable, indeed, that he had himself set afloat the contradictory rumours as to his residence, with a view of concealing his real purpose.

I remained several months at Valparaiso, following out every suggestion that seemed to offer a clue to the object of my search. At last there seemed some reason to suppose that the story of my uncle's being at Potosi was not altogether without foundation. Faint, indeed, was the hope thus offered, but in the absence of every other, I determined to visit

that celebrated place. My guide across the Pampas had continued with me, and again setting out on horseback, we laid our course for southern Peru, a country which is now known by the title of Bolivia.

The road led to the north, and lay at a distance of sixty or seventy miles from the ocean. For the most part we travelled over an undulating table-land, nearly a thousand feet above the level of the sea. On our right, lay the mighty range of the Andes; on our left, the almost boundless Pacific. The country was thinly inhabited, there being only here and there a small village, or the villa of some Spanish planter. The land was exceedingly fertile, and the cattle seemed as abundant as upon the prairies of Buenos Ayres. As we rode along, the grass, now in its fullest bloom, frequently concealed the pasturing herds from view, and often the herbage seemed to form a wall on either side of the path, rising even as high as my head. Never have I seen a more lovely climate, or a more fruitful soil.

Though we met with few adventures, our journey was delightful. In ten days we approached the celebrated desert of Atacama,

which stretches four hundred and fifty miles along the Pacific, and forms the maritime district of the present republic of Bolivia. Upon this spot, as if it were deserted of Heaven, the rain never falls, and it is accordingly given up to everlasting blight and desolation. It is a sandy waste, and is not only destitute of vegetation, but it is said that no animal, not even a spider, a cricket, or a worm, is found throughout its vast extent.

Our road, for two days, lay along the verge of this waste. It seemed marked with a peculiar aspect of solitude and desertion. No words can express the emotions which it suggested. Neither life, nor motion, nor verdure were visible. No sound seemed to stir the atmosphere, in that region of silence. I paused as we rode over its surface; and such was the absolute void of nature, such the settled silence of the very atmosphere, that I felt oppressed, and moved forward to throw off a feeling that my heart would cease to beat in the midst of this pulseless creation.

Taking leave of the desert, our course turned more to the eastward, and we began to enter a more mountainous territory. One

evening, as the sun went down, we saw before us a lofty peak, covered with snow. From its top, issued a perpendicular column of dark smoke, which, at the elevation of a few hundred feet, expanded into a thin cloud. Its shape was nearly that of a pine-tree.

We knew this mountain to be a volcano, and I gazed upon it with intense interest. We soon arrived at a small village, and took up our lodgings for the night. Being greatly fatigued, I retired early to bed, and was speedily wrapped in profound repose. I was at length awaked by a violent shaking, and the most terrific sounds I ever heard. I sprang out of bed, and rushed to the window. The whole heavens seemed to be on fire, and as I caught a view of the volcanic peak, I perceived that it was vomiting forth torrents of lava, smoke and flame. The inhabitants of the village were already in the street, and seemed to be frantic with alarm, if not despair. I hurried on my clothes and descended to join them.

The volcano was in full blast, rumbling to its foundation, and keeping up at its mouth

a roaring sound, like the continued discharge of artillery. Amidst the columns of black smoke that rose to the sky, hundreds of rocks, red hot, were shot upward, while the molten lava—a river of fire—was seen pouring over the edge of the crater, and making its way toward the village. But this was not the greatest danger. The thick masses of snow and ice, around the crater, were melted, and roaring torrents of water were already bursting down the declivity.

The confused sound of the raging waters was audible, even amid the thunder that shook the fabric of the mountains. The valley was situated in a gorge, through which the river must pour its flood. Conscious of the peril, the people were preparing for flight; but the danger was even more near than was anticipated. While I stood gazing at the sublime spectacle, I heard a rush at a little distance, and suddenly I perceived the tumbling waters gushing between the houses and filling the narrow street. Most of the people had already fled, and I followed in their train. Scarcely had we reached a rocky

eminence on the side of an adjacent ridge, when the whole village was engulfed, and speedily swept away.

So sudden had been the alarm, so rapid our retreat, that I had not saved a single article, except the clothes upon my back. My own horse, as well as that of my guide, with every particle of baggage, money, papers,



and letters, were swallowed up by the inundation; I was even uncertain of the fate of my guide, till at last I discovered him, half crazed with terror, amongst the throng that had now gathered upon the cliff.

As I now felt secure as to personal safety, I could look deliberately upon the awful scene before me. The impressions that I then received were such as must ever remain on my mind in all their vividness. The recollection of the serious loss I had sustained, and of the distress of the poor people whose habitations and property had been annihilated by the flood, did not take off my mind from contemplating with the deepest interest and admiration this mighty operation of nature.

During the remainder of the night the volcano remained in violent agitation, and the swollen torrent of water continued to flow down its side and sweep over the buried village. One by one, the people departed to seek shelter at a small town about two miles distant, and when morning came, finding no hope of recovering my horse or baggage, I followed the rest, and took up my lodgings at the post-house.

CHAPTER XVI.

DIFFICULTIES—THE INDIANS—THE CON-
DOR—ARRIVAL AT POTOSI.

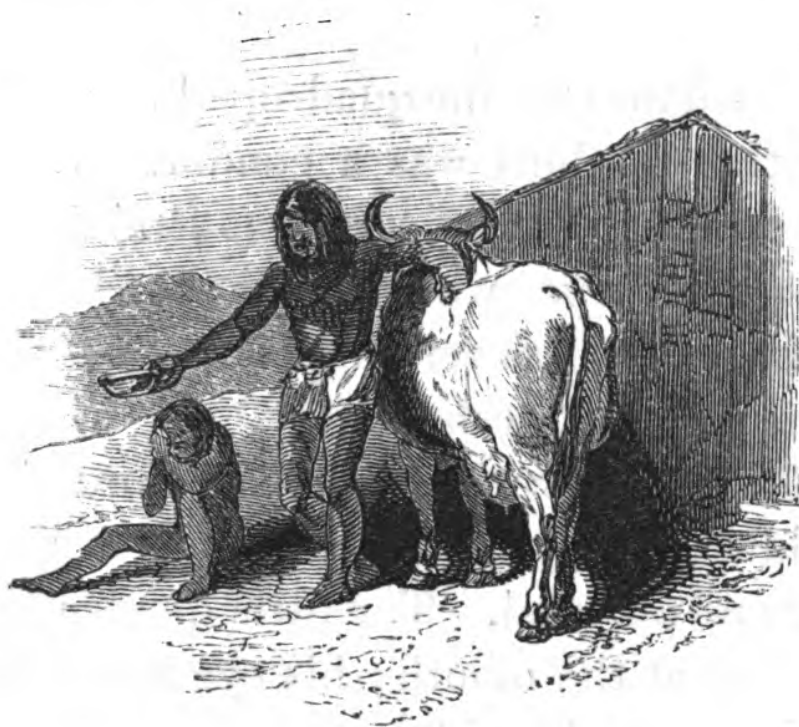
My situation was now in the highest degree embarrassing and painful. I was at least three hundred miles from Potosi, and excepting a small piece of gold, and a few dollars in silver, which I happened to have in my pocket, in all amounting to about seven dollars, I was absolutely destitute of money. I was in the midst of strangers, and had no means of obtaining credit, by which I might repair my losses. I spent two or three days in walking up and down the side of the torrent, which had swept away our horses and baggage; but the water continued to increase, and had now the aspect of a permanent river. Not the slightest hope was therefore presented of retrieving our fortunes. No other alternative was offered but to make our way to Potosi on foot.

No sooner was my resolution taken than I

departed, still accompanied by Balbo, my Indian guide. When I was once again in action, my spirits rose, and with a cheerful heart I pursued my way over the rugged country that lay before me. For several days, the tall summit of the smoking volcano was in view, and indeed, as we proceeded, it seemed to lift its head above the surrounding mountains as if to watch us, or to keep us company. It was not till we had travelled a distance of more than forty miles, that it began to dwindle in the distance, and sink down amid the mountain peaks that encircled it.

It was a beautiful season, and on every side there were objects to attract my attention. The strange but gorgeous flowers that were scattered in profusion on every hand; the gaudy birds; the contrast between the mountain scenery on one side, and the broad plain, marked with cultivation, on the other, afforded constant topics for observation and reflection. No very remarkable incidents occurred, yet there were passages in our journey which were by no means devoid of interest. We met with no towns, and but few villages.

The Indians constituted the chief inhabitants upon the route. They were marked with a peculiar character of gentleness, and their hospitality was unbounded. They allowed us freely to share in whatever food they possessed, and would seldom accept of pay-



ment. Their houses were of the simplest materials, consisting of poles set upright in the ground, the sides and roof being firmly thatched with palm leaves. Their furniture was rude and scanty. They seemed to sail down the stream of life, resigning themselves

with easy indolence to its current. They had most of them some cattle, and milk furnished a leading article of their food.

In one instance, we met with an exciting adventure. As we were crossing a broken range of mountains, we perceived a small animal, resembling a deer, pursued by a bird of enormous size. My guide immediately informed me that the quadruped was a vicuna, and that the bird was a condor. When we first saw them, the vicuna was straining every nerve to escape, while the condor hung over his back, and at every opportunity struck his talons into his flesh.

They both swept by us, so close that we could distinctly see every feature of the pursuer and pursued. The little quadruped was foaming at the mouth; his eye was wild and glaring, and his sides streaming with blood. The condor, with his merciless gaze fixed upon his prey, held his talons ready for the blow, while he seemed to glance through the air on his outspread wings, like an arrow from the bow. On they went, till at last the vicuna came to a precipice of nearly two hundred feet in depth. Pressed by his remorseless

enemy, he hesitated not for a moment, but taking the fatal leap, fell crushed and lifeless into the depths of the rocky gorge beneath. The condor wheeled round and round, and finally stooped with an easy motion to partake of his booty.

I had some curiosity to see the monster at his meal. After winding round for a considerable distance, we reached the bottom of the ravine. We approached the savage bird, and perceived that he had already commenced his feast; he seemed to cut and rend the flesh with his enormous beak as easily as if it had been a butcher's knife. As we drew near, he glared upon us fiercely, and seemed to deliberate for a moment whether he should not repel the unwelcome intrusion. Finding us not disposed to retreat, he seized his prey in his claws, and beating his wings with a furious impulse rose heavily upon the air. Bending his course slightly downward along the distant slope of the mountains, he continued for some time in view, and at last disappeared in the mazes of the forest.

Pursuing our way with diligence, we now began to ascend the mountains which encir-

cle the valley of Potosi. Winding our way through deep vales, and often climbing along the dizzy edges of beetling cliffs, we reached the top of the mountain range and looked down upon the scene below. The wild and rugged ramparts which surround the city, bear a desolate and wintry aspect. Scarcely a tree crowns their summits, and nothing but mosses and lichens seem to flourish in the chill and ungenial climate. But below this we could perceive bright patches of vegetation, which indicated a milder temperature.

Beginning now to descend, we proceeded with caution, and were soon lodged in the celebrated city of Potosi.



CHAPTER XVII.

DESCRIPTION OF POTOSI—THE MINERS—
CHIMBORAZO.

BEFORE I proceed with my narrative, I must give some account of the celebrated town in which I now found myself. Potosi is situated within a circle of mountains, and stands at the foot of a lofty peak which rises far above the rest, and in which are the rich mines of silver which have given such fame to the place.

The number of inhabitants in Potosi was once 100,000, but it has greatly diminished, and at present does not exceed 15,000; half of whom are Indians. The towns of South America are not famous for their neatness; but in this respect, Potosi has the advantage over most of them. It is the custom frequently to whitewash the houses on the outside, which gives them a cheerful aspect.

Potosi is very remarkable in several re-

spects. In the morning the air is keen and cold, but in the middle of the day it is burning hot. At night, the cold returns, and it seems almost as chill as during our New England March. Potosi is situated at an elevation of 13,265 feet above the level of the sea, and is the highest inhabited place on the face of the globe.

After my arrival, my first business was to despatch letters to my friends at Valparaiso for a supply of money, and letters of introduction. I then sallied forth to take a view of the town. On my return I stated the manner in which I had lost my baggage to the landlord of the hotel, and having informed him that I had come on important business, requested him to supply me with such articles as I needed till I could obtain remittances. The man looked in my face with a gaze of amazement, and then laughed outright at what he deemed my brazen impudence.

I was at the time miserably clad, and my servant was worse off than myself. We looked, indeed, like a couple of vagabonds, and though I was at first angry, I did not

think the conduct of the landlord unreasonable, when I reflected upon the whole matter. But what was to be done? I was out of money and totally unknown to everybody in the place. It was necessary to do something for immediate support, and I therefore determined that my guide, Balbo, should go to



work in the mines if I could get him a place, hoping that he would obtain the means to support us both for awhile.

It was by a simple accident that the silver mines of Potosi were discovered. An Indian hunter was pursuing a vicuna up the slope

of the mountain. In order to aid his ascent, he took hold of a small tree. The tree gave way, and beneath its roots, he saw a shining mass of silver. This occurred three hundred years ago, and since that time, more than a thousand millions of dollars have been taken from the mines in the mountain where the discovery was made.

I had heard the story of the Indian hunter, and fancied that silver in Potosi was almost as abundant as common earth. When I reached the mines, however, I found the fact to be otherwise. The openings to the mines are small holes, which are entered by crawling on the hands and knees. In this manner you go along for many yards, when the space widens, and you are able to stand upright. There are a great many of these holes or shafts, and some of them penetrate to a considerable distance into the mountain. The silver ore is found in veins, in following the course of which the miners have wrought out irregular winding caverns, sometimes ascending, and then descending. They work by blasting the rock with gunpowder. The ore, as it is found amongst the fragments of

rock broken off, is carried out in the leather aprons of the workmen.

Most persons have no other than pleasant ideas in regard to silver; but if they could see the miserable Indians toiling in the mines, shut out from the light of day, grimed with soot and gunpowder, and haggard from the want of pure air, for the purpose of obtaining this precious metal, they would ever after feel that it is purchased at too dear a rate.



I was not a little shocked and disgusted to observe the severe and painful toil exercised in the mines. After the ore is obtained, it is broken into pieces about the size of a hen's egg. It is then put into a mill, and reduced

to powder. In this state, it is mixed with salt and quicksilver, and remains fifteen days. By this time the silver has become mixed with the quicksilver. The earthy particles are then washed away, and the silver is separated from the quicksilver by squeezing. For this laborious work I found the wages to be less than eightpence a day. But the urgency of the case overcame all scruples, and I agreed that Balbo should go to work the next day.

This he accordingly did with great cheerfulness, and I found that, by the utmost economy, we could both of us subsist upon his earnings. I was now at leisure to pursue my inquiries in relation to the object of my journey. It is unnecessary to detail the careful investigation that I made, or to say with what anxiety I pursued my search. I may sum up the whole in stating that my uncle was not in Potosi, and that if he had ever been there, he had removed to some other part of the country at least three years before.

At the end of two months, I expected an answer from Valparaiso, but none came; and after two months more I formed the con-

clusion that my letters had been miscarried, or my correspondents had refused to comply with my request. My situation was in the highest degree embarrassing. After revolving a great many schemes in my mind, I determined to join a company of merchants who were going at that time to Quito. I offered myself as a mule-driver, and Balbo as a servant. Both were accepted, and we speedily set forward. I have not space to detail the incidents of this journey of more than 1500 miles in length. Indeed, if I had an opportunity I do not know that they would be worth reciting. As I met with no fresh adventures different from what I have described in my previous journeys, the detail would be rather tiresome than interesting. It will be enough to say, that, after travelling over mountains and plains, and beholding some of the most sublime scenery in the world, we reached the capital of Equador.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN INTERESTING DISCOVERY.—RETURN TO
PARAMARIBO.—CLOSE OF MY STORY.

THERE are few places in the world more remarkable than Quito. It lies nearly under the equator, and is more than 9,000 feet above the level of the sea. It has a climate like that of our June during the whole year. The face of nature all around it seems to be covered with perpetual bloom. While some of the people are sowing their wheat, others are harvesting theirs.

The city of Quito itself is built upon the skirt of the volcanic mountain of Pichinca. It is a fine city, with many elegant buildings, though the streets are irregular, and arched bridges are necessary in many parts in order to cross the yawning chasms created by the eruptions of the mountain.

In the southerly direction, at the distance of about a hundred miles, is the celebrated

peak of Chimborazo. It is 21,440 feet in height, and is capped with everlasting snow. In a clear day, I could see this sublime mountain, appearing like a thin cloud, almost to blend with the distant sky. I had now given up every hope of meeting with my uncle, and thought only of finding my way back to Guiana. An opportunity was soon offered for setting out for my return. Three Spanish travellers were about to proceed to Assumpcion on the Pilcomayo, and then descend the Amazon to its mouth. Balbo and myself were engaged as servants, and we speedily set forward.

We crossed the mountains on mules, sometimes employing lamas for carrying our baggage. These animals are about twice the size of the sheep, and have a gentleness of character that seems to win kindness from every one. They cannot endure chastisement. They will perform the utmost labour of which they are capable : but if you strike them in order to urge them beyond this, they will lie down and it is said that they sometimes die, merely from the effects produced on their feelings.

In a fortnight we reached the small town of Assumpcion. We here embarked upon the Amazon in a boat, being liberally provided with everything needful for our voyage.

After a diversity of incidents, we reached the town of Barra, just below the point where the Rio Negro enters the Amazon. We here parted with our boat, and joining some other travellers, hired a larger craft and proceeded on our way. The weather was exceedingly hot; several of our company were taken sick, and the Spaniard in whose service I was engaged, died of fever. We went on shore, and in a spot surrounded by impenetrable forests, we made a grave in the earth, and left the body to its solitary repose.

Amongst the strangers who had joined us at Barra was a gentleman who appeared marked with care and bowed with years. He was now one of the sick, and I was engaged as his attendant. He had caught the fever common to this climate, and the disease seemed rapidly advancing to its crisis. We had no physician on board, but the stranger seemed competent to give directions, and these I scrupulously followed. At last we

came to a small settlement on the banks of the river and he determined to be set on shore, in order to obtain medical aid, and have the comforts necessary for his sickly state. I went with him to his lodgings, and saw him placed in his new quarters.



I had felt an interest in him from the beginning, and I now offered to continue with him, at the same time expressing my desire to return to Paramaribo. The name seemed to excite his curiosity, and he looked me

steadily in the face for a moment. "Are you going to Paramaribo?" said he. I replied in the affirmative, "I was going thither myself," said he, "but I may never reach that place. Take this, young man, and on your arrival, deliver it according to its address." He then handed me a parcel, and as I took it, I saw upon it the name of M. Scager.

At this moment an agitating thought took possession of my mind. "Who—what is this stranger? May he not be the individual whom I have sought so long?" Struck with this suggestion, I gazed at the sick man with such intensity as to attract his attention. "What is the matter, young man?" said he. "Oh, tell me, sir, tell me your name. For heaven's sake tell me your name," said I. The stranger rose from his pillow, and with a startled aspect demanded, "Why this curiosity? what mean these questions?"

"Pray, sir," said I, "are you not my uncle?" The sick man leaned back upon his pillow, and with a broad smile upon his countenance, as if I had said something exceedingly ludicrous, replied, "I think not; but what is your name?" "Richard Boldhero?"

said I. The stranger once more rose from his pillow, saying, "Indeed, indeed, Richard Boldhero?" "Yes, yes," said I, "and you are my father's brother—I know you now—you are indeed my uncle."

I need not describe the remainder of the scene. The object of my long search was found. For seven weeks I watched by his bedside, during which period he seemed ho-



vering betwixt life and death. By slow degrees he recovered, and as soon as he was strong enough, we took passage down the river, and at last reached its mouth. I had now traversed nearly the whole length of this giant stream—a distance of about 3,500 miles.

At Mazago we took passage in a brig for Paramaribo, and in two weeks we reached that place. During our voyage, my uncle gave me an account of his life after his departure from thence. He had settled for a time at Valparaiso, and had acquired a considerable amount of property. This he converted into cash, and remitted it to Mr. Hartley, for the purpose of discharging his debts, as we have already related. Since that period, he had led an unsettled life, being engaged at different times in various enterprises. Finding himself advancing into the vale of years, a desire to return to the scenes of his youth took possession of his mind, and when I met him, he was on his way to fulfil this wish. He had not heard of the turn of fortune in his favour, but considered his name as still disgraced in Paramaribo. It may be readily believed that the information I gave him brought back the sunshine which had long departed from his bosom.

I must pass over my own meeting with Mirabel as well as that of her father. The imagination of the reader will doubtless do

better justice to the scene than any words I can supply. I had been absent a year and eleven months, and during that period had often suffered the deepest anxiety for my mo-



ther and sister. I now found letters from them, saying that they were quite well, and enjoying as much happiness as their straitened circumstances would permit. In a few

weeks I set out to return to Connecticut, my uncle having promised soon to follow me, and bring Mirabel with him.

I reached home in due season, and four months after, his promise was fulfilled. He settled at Middletown, having recovered from the insurance company that had inflicted upon him such gross injustice and so many sorrows, a sum of money sufficient to make him wealthy. On hearing the conduct of Dexter to my father, he caused a suit to be instituted against him, in the course of which, it was proved that he had been guilty of embezzling property belonging to the concern. He was obliged to pay a large sum to my mother, and his own reputation which he had built up with such hypocritical care, was blasted for ever.

In the course of my life, viewing the hard fortune of my father and my uncle, I had sometimes distrusted the justice of Providence; but I now saw that the persecutors of both had been made to suffer the severest retribution. With this reflection I must close

my story, only adding one or two particulars regarding my subsequent life. Mirabel no longer calls me cousin, but many years ago exchanged that pleasant title for one of a still dearer character. My mother and uncle lived to see us married, and the parents of three dear children, who added much to the pleasures of their declining years. They are now no more upon earth; but they live in the fond memories of Mirabel and me and our children.



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