Title: The School Friends; Or, Nothing New

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"The School Friends"

"Nothing New"

Story 1--Chapter I.

STORY I—THE SCHOOL FRIENDS; NOTHING NEW.

Lance Loughton and Emery Dulman were brought up together at Elmerston Grammar-School. They were both in the upper or sixth form; but Lance was nearly at the head, while Emery was at the bottom, of the form. They were general favourites, though for different causes. Lance was decidedly best liked by the masters. He was steady, persevering, and studious, besides being generous, kind-hearted, and brave—ever ready to defend the weak against the strong, while he would never allow a little boy to be bullied by a big one if he could help it. Emery had talents, but they were more showy than solid. He was good-natured and full of life and spirits, and having plenty of money, spent it freely. He was, however, easily led, and had in consequence done many foolish things, which got him into trouble, though he managed, on the whole, to maintain a tolerably good character.

Lance and Emery were on friendly terms; and Lance, who thought he saw good qualities in his companion, would gladly have won his confidence, but Emery did not like what he called Lance's lectures, and there was very little or no interchange of thought between them. Without it real friendship can scarcely be said to exist. They were, however, looked upon as school friends, and certainly Lance would at all times have been ready to do a friendly act for Emery.

Emery was somewhat of a fine gentleman in his way. His father was a tradesman in the place, and wished his son to assist him in his business, but Emery often spoke of entering the army or one of the liberal professions. He therefore considered himself equal to those whose fathers held a higher social grade than his own. His father's style of life encouraged him in this. Mr Dulman had a handsome house, and gave dinners and parties; and at elections took a leading part, and entertained the proposed member and his friends, and indeed sometimes talked of entering Parliament himself, and altogether did a good deal to excite the envy of his less successful fellow-townsmen.

Emery constantly invited Lance to his house, and was really flattered when he came; for Lance's father, who had died when he was very young, was a lieutenant in the navy; and his widowed mother, though left with only her pension to depend on, was a lady by birth and education. Lance, however, very frequently refused Emery's pressing invitations.

"I never met such a stay-at-home fellow as you are," exclaimed the latter, when on one occasion Lance had declined attending a gay party Mr and Mrs Dulman were about to give. "We shall have half the neighbourhood present—Mr Perkins, our member, and I don't know how many other grandees—and we want some young fellows like you, who can dance and do the polite. Mother says I must get you, for we don't know what to do for proper partners for the young ladies."

"I should have been happy to make myself useful," answered Lance, laughing; "but I am no great dancer, and my poor mother is so unwell that I cannot leave her."

"Oh, she has got little Maddie Hayward to look after her, so I will come and get her to let you off."

"I beg that you will not make the attempt," answered Lance, more gravely than he had hitherto spoken. "My mother is seriously ill; besides I have work to do, and any time I can spare I must devote to her."

"Oh, but a little gaiety will do you good, and you can cheer her up with an account of the party," persisted Emery.

Lance was, however, firm, and he returned in a thoughtful mood to his humble little cottage in the outskirts of the

town.

A sweet fair face met him at the jessamine-covered porch—that of a girl three or four years younger than himself. It would not have been surprising had he preferred her society to that of the fine ladies his friend had spoken of, though he certainly was not conscious that this had in any degree influenced him.

Madelene Hayward was indeed a lovely young creature, sweet-tempered and good as she was beautiful. She was the orphan child of a distant relative of Lieutenant Loughton. Having been left, when still an infant, utterly destitute, she had been adopted by the kind-hearted officer at his wife's earnest wish, and brought up as their daughter, although their own scanty means might have excused them in the eyes of the world had they declined the responsibility.

Mrs Loughton had devoted herself to Maddie's education, and the young girl repaid her with the most tender love. Some time before this Mrs Loughton's old servant had married, and Maddie had persuaded her not to engage another in her place, consenting only that a woman should come in to light the fires and do the rougher work which she was less able to perform. While Mrs Loughton was well, she herself attending to what was necessary, Maddie's duties were not very heavy, but since her illness they had of necessity much increased.

Though she tried not to let Lance discover how hard she worked, he knew that her attendance on his mother must occupy the chief part of her time. His aim was therefore to relieve her as much as possible. Where there is a will there is a way. He soon learned to clean his shoes, and purchasing needles and thread and worsted, to mend his clothes and darn his socks; and Maddie was surprised to find one morning that his bed was made and his room set to rights, when she was sure that Dame Judkin had not gone into it. She found him out at last, and reproachfully asked why he had not given her his torn coat to mend, and a pair of socks which she had discovered darned in a curious fashion.

"I wanted to try if I could not do it," he answered, smiling. "Just look at that sleeve—I defy it to tear again in the same place."

"Perhaps so, but as every one can see that there has been a rent, I shall be accused of being a very bad tailoress, and I am afraid you will find an uncomfortable lump in the heel of your socks. Do, dear Lance, bring the next pair requiring mending to me, and I will find time to dam them."

Few could fail to admire Madelene Hayward.

"How is our mother?" asked Lance, taking her hand, as he found her waiting for him in the porch of their little cottage.

"She has at last dropped off to sleep; but she has been in much pain all the day," answered Maddie. "And, O Lance! I sometimes fear that she will not recover. Yet our lives are in God's hands, and we can together pray, if He thinks fit, that hers may be preserved for our sakes—I cannot say for her own, as I am sure, resting on the merits of Him who died for sinners, she is ready to go hence to enjoy that happiness He has prepared for those who love Him."

"But, Maddie, do you really think mother is so ill?" asked Lance, with an anxious look. "I know that when she is taken, the change to her must be a blessed one; but, Maddie, what would become of you?"

He spoke in a tone which showed the grief which Madelene's announcement had caused him.

"I have not thought about myself," she answered quietly. "My wish was to prepare you for what I dread may occur, and to ask you to join your prayer with mine that God will in His mercy allow her to remain longer with us. He can do all things, and the prayer of faith availeth much."

"I am sure it does," said Lance. "I will pray with you. I have too often prayed as a matter of form, but now I can pray from the bottom of my heart."

The young people lifted up their hearts and voices as they stood together, hand in hand, in the porch, which was hid by a high hedge from the passers-by.

They noiselessly entered the cottage. Mrs Loughton was still sleeping. Perhaps even then Lance realised the fact that Maddie was more to him than any other being on earth, and he mentally resolved to exert all his energies to procure the means of supporting her, should she be deprived of her present guardian.

They sat together in silence lest their voices might awaken Mrs Loughton. Maddie had resumed her work, while Lance had placed his books on the table; but his eyes scarcely rested on them—he was thinking of the future.

Mrs Loughton at length awoke. She appeared revived by her sleep, the most tranquil she had enjoyed for many a day. After this, to the joy of Maddie and her son, she rapidly got better, and with thankful hearts they saw her restored to comparative health.

Lance had no foolish pride, but he had refrained from asking any of his schoolfellows, especially those who, like Emery, lived in fine houses, to enter his mother's humble cottage. One day, however, Emery overtook him as he was returning from home. On reaching the cottage, his companion pulled out his watch, observing that it was tea-time, and saying in an off-hand way, "I daresay your mother will give me a cup, for I am fearfully thirsty."

Lance, without downright rudeness, could not refuse to ask him in.

The widow received her guest with the courtesy of a lady, though, more acquainted with the world than her son, she saw defects in the manners of his companion which he had not discovered. She was not pleased, either, with the undisguised admiration Emery bestowed on Maddie, and was very glad when Lance, bringing out his books,

observed, “Now, old fellow, I have got to study, and you ought to be doing the same, and though I don’t want to turn you out, you will excuse me if I set to work.”

Maddie got up to remove the tea-things, and Mrs Loughton took her work; so that Emery, finding that the young lady was not likely to listen to his fine speeches, at length, greatly to their relief, wished them good evening.

Story 1--Chapter II.

Emery had certainly not received the slightest encouragement to pay another visit to his schoolfellow’s abode. He, however, fancied himself desperately smitten with the beauty of Madelene Hayward, and after this very frequently sauntered by the cottage, or whenever he could make an excuse to accompany Lance, he walked with him towards his home, in the hopes of being again invited in. Lance, however, sturdily refused to understand his hints, and managed, generally without churlishness, to get rid of him.

Emery, however, met Maddie one day when out walking alone, and with a self-assurance of which no gentleman would have been guilty, in spite of her evident annoyance, accompanied her till just before she arrived at home.

Lance felt more angry than he had ever before been when he heard what had occurred, and the next day cautioned Emery not to repeat the offence, telling him very plainly that his mother did not wish to see him again at her cottage.

Emery, who stood somewhat in awe of Lance, looked foolish; but trying to conceal his vexation, muttered a sort of apology, and walked hurriedly away.

Emery had some time before made the acquaintance of a person who had for a year or so been residing at Elmerston, where he had acted as one of the inferior agents in the last election contest. Sass Gange had been a seaman. He was a long-tongued fellow, with an assumed sedate manner, which gained him the credit of being a respectable man.

Sass having been employed by Mr Dulman, Emery became acquainted with him, and he had ever since taken pains to gain the confidence of the lad, with considerable success. Emery always found himself a welcome guest at Sass Gange’s lodgings, when the old sailor was wont to indulge him in a pipe of tobacco and a glass of ale, while he spun long yarns about his adventures at sea.

After leaving Lance, Emery made his way to Sass Gange’s lodgings.

“What is up now, Master Emery?” asked the old sailor as the lad threw himself into an arm-chair before the fire. “You look out of sorts somehow.”

“With good reason too, I should think,” exclaimed Emery. “I have taken it into my head to admire a beautiful young creature; and though my father is rolling in wealth, and I suppose I shall come in for a good share of it one of these days, I have just been told that I must keep away from the house, and if they had their will, never see her again.”

“Well, take a blow, lad, and it will calm your spirits, and we will then talk the matter over,” said old Sass, handing a pipe which he had just charged, and filling up a tumbler with ale.

“Now tell me all about it.”

Emery gave his own version of what had just occurred.

“Don’t be cast down, Master Emery,” said old Sass, “I will help you if I can. I have no reason to love that young Loughton, and he is at the bottom of it, depend upon that. If she was his sister, he would not be so very particular; but that’s not what I was going to say. I once served under Lieutenant Loughton, and, thanks to him, my back more than once got a scoring which it has not forgotten yet. I vowed vengeance, but had no opportunity of getting it; and as the lieutenant is gone, why, I shall have a pleasure in paying the son what I owed the father. We must bide our time, though; but it will come if we are on the watch, depend upon that.”

Emery, instead of being shocked at these remarks, listened to them eagerly.

The rest of the conversation need not be repeated.

“I must go now,” said Emery, “for we have a grand party at our house to-night, and I must be at home in time to dress.”

Mr Dulman’s party was the grandest he had ever given. The member for the borough with all his family was there, and he had persuaded a number of his friends to come and honour Mr Dulman, by whose means he had gained his election. All the magnates of the town were also present, so that Elmerston had never before seen a more brilliant assemblage.

Mr Dulman exerted himself to the utmost to make the party go off well, and poor Mrs Dulman did her best, though she always felt overwhelmed with the responsibilities of the new position in which she was placed, and awed by the great people. Emery, though not a bad-looking young man, felt too much abashed to appear to advantage, in spite of his off-hand manner among his ordinary associates; and though he made many efforts to do the polite to his father’s guests, he as often failed from awkwardness, and would have felt much happier smoking his pipe and drinking beer with old Sass.

During the evening, as Mr Dulman went into the hall, a letter was put into his hand by a messenger who had been

waiting to see him. He retired to a corner to read it. His usually ruddy countenance turned deadly pale. He hurriedly thrust it into his pocket.

“I will attend to the matter to-morrow,” he said, in as firm a voice as he could command. “It’s impossible to do so now.”

He went to the supper-room, and rapidly drinking off three or four glasses of wine, hastened back to his guests. Many of them, however, remarked his agitated and absent manner, while some of his acquaintances observed that old Dulman had been over-fortifying himself for his arduous duties.

As soon as his guests were gone he shut himself up in his room, and spent the remainder of the night, with the fatal letter before him, making calculations. Before the rest of the family were up he had left the house, and was off by the first train to London.

The next day it was whispered that Mr Dulman, who was known to have speculated largely in railway shares, was ruined. People said that he had only love of ostentation to thank for what had occurred, and few pitied him.

His fine house and furniture were sold, but his estate did not yield a penny in the pound.

Ashamed of again showing his face at Elmerston, he sailed for Australia, leaving his wife and younger children living in a mean cottage in the neighbourhood, a small allowance having been made to them by the creditors, while Emery was sent to seek his fortune in London.

About the same time Sass Gange, for reasons best known to himself, finding it convenient to leave the town, went up also to London, where, with the character of a highly respectable and confidential man, through the influence of some of his political friends, he obtained a situation as porter in the large West End draper’s establishment of Messrs Padman and Co. Sass was not a man to allow his talents to remain under a bushel. By means of his persuasive eloquence, he soon induced the confiding Mr Padman to place the most unbounded confidence in his honesty and devoted attention to business. When the cash received during the day was sent to the bank by one of the clerks, Sass was invariably ordered to follow, to be ready to assist him should he be waylaid by pickpockets, and to see that he faithfully deposited the amount as directed. Sass did not know how much was carried, but he guessed that at times it must be a considerable sum.

Story 1--Chapter III.

Sass Gange had been for some time in the employment of Messrs Padman, when one day as he entered the shop he saw behind the counter his former Elmerston acquaintance, Emery Dulman, busily engaged in serving a customer. Emery did not recognise him, nor did he just then wish to be recognised, so he passed quickly on to deliver the parcels he had just brought in. He observed, however, that Emery was even better dressed than usual—that he wore a fashionably-cut black suit, a neck-cloth of snowy whiteness, a gold ring on his finger, and a somewhat large gold watch-chain, ostentatiously exhibited. As he was repassing, Emery looked up, when Sass gave him an almost unperceived wink, and turning away his head, hurried on.

“I hope that he will have the sense not to tell any one that we are acquainted,” he thought. “I must let him know where I live, and he will soon be coming to have a talk over old times.”

Sass might have been pretty sure that Emery was not likely to tell any one that they were acquainted; indeed, that young gentleman’s chief pleasure was boasting to his new associates of his highly-connected and fashionable friends, and bewailing the hard fate which had compelled him to become a draper’s assistant. Some were inclined in consequence to treat him with respect, but many of the older hands laughed at his folly, and having discovered who his father was, observed that he was fortunate in obtaining so good a situation in a business for which he ought to be well suited.

Sass soon found an opportunity of letting Emery know where he lived, and the next day received a visit from him, when the usual pipe and ale were prepared for his entertainment.

“Curious that we should meet again, Master Emery, in this big city,” observed Sass. “We all have our ‘ups and downs,’ and you have had one of the ‘downs’ lately, so it appears. Well, I have had them in my time. I never told you that I got my education, such as it is, at Elmerston Grammar-School, and I might have been a steady-going burgess, with pink cheeks and a fat paunch, if I had stuck to business. But I had no fancy for that sort of life; so one morning, taking French leave of school, and father and mother, and brothers and sisters, I went off to sea. When I came back some years afterwards, all who were likely to care for me were dead or scattered; so I set off again, and knocked about in all parts of the world till about two or three years ago, when, having a little money in my pocket, and thinking I should like a spell on shore, I found my way back to the old place. I made myself useful, as you know, to the grandees; and as I did not wish to go to sea again just then, one of them got me this situation. Though I can’t say it’s much to my taste, I intend to stick to it as long as it suits me.”

“I don’t see anything very tempting in the life you have led,” observed Emery.

“I have not told you much about its pleasures, the curious countries I have visited, and the strange adventures I have met with,” answered Sass. “For my part, I would not have missed them on any account.” “When you come to hear about them, you will have a fancy for setting off too, or I am much mistaken. With a young companion like you I should not mind taking another trip, and enjoying myself for a few years more afloat, instead of leading the dull life you and I are doomed to in London.”

Such was the style of conversation with which the old rogue entertained his credulous young guest. The adventures

he described were highly entertaining, garnished as they were by his fertile imagination, and Emery began to wonder how he could consent to remain on shore when so delightful an existence might be led by going off to sea.

Emery, however, had not got over his fancy for trying to assume the airs of a fine gentleman. On Sundays, though he went with his employer's family and the rest of the young men in the establishment to church, as soon as dinner was over it was his delight to saunter out into the Park, and loll over the railings round the drive with a gold-headed cane in his hand, watching the gay people as they drove past in their carriages. Occasionally he would lift his hat as if returning a bow from a lady, or he waved his hand as if recognising a gentleman acquaintance. Some might have considered him only foolish; but he was undoubtedly acting a lie, and trying to deceive those around him. He was besides wasting time given for higher purposes.

Unhappily, not only such as he, but many others waste time, without for a moment considering their guilt, and that they will some day be called to account for the way in which every moment of their lives has been spent.

In time Emery formed a number of acquaintances, mostly silly lads like himself, and inclined to consider him a remarkably fine fellow; several were vicious, and they, as vicious people always wish to make others like themselves, tried to induce him to accompany them to see something, as they called it, of London life. He at first feebly declined, but at length yielded; and though such scenes, it must be said to his credit, were not to his taste, he was over-persuaded again and again, and soon found that the greater part of his wages were spent at theatres, dancing-rooms, and other places to which he and his companions resorted. His employer, finding that he was out late at night, spoke to him on the subject. He excused himself with a falsehood, saying that he had gone to visit a friend of his father's, who had just come up to town, promising that he would not again break through the rules of the establishment. After this he was very exact in his conduct, and again, in consequence, rose in the estimation of his employer. He had, indeed, an attraction to keep him at home. Mr Padman possessed a daughter, a pretty, good-humoured young lady; and though she was considerably older than Emery, he took it into his head that she was not insensible to his personal appearance and gentlemanly manners. Whenever he had an opportunity, he offered his services to attend on her; and as he made himself useful, and he was quiet and well-behaved, they were frequently accepted, while Miss Madelene Hayward was, happily perhaps, soon forgotten.

Thus a year or more went by. Poor Emery might under proper guidance have become a useful member of society, as all people are who do their duty in the station of life for which they are fitted; but he wanted what no one can do without—right religious and moral principles.

Story 1--Chapter IV.

Mr Dulman did not fall alone. The bank at Elmerston, which had made him large advances, got into difficulties, and though its credit was bolstered up for some time, it ultimately failed, and many of the people in the place suffered. Among others of small means who had cause to mourn the wicked extravagance and folly of their ambitious townsman, was Mrs Loughton. Some cursed him in their hearts, loudly exclaiming against his extravagance, which had brought ruin on themselves and their families. Mrs Loughton bore her loss meekly. The sum of which she had been deprived she had saved up, by often depriving herself of necessaries, to assist in starting her dear Lance in life. This was indeed a great trial. Lance entreated her not to mourn on his account. He was not even aware that she had saved so much money, and only regretted that she should not have it to benefit herself and Maddie. He had for long determined to go forth into the world, trusting, with God's help, to his own industry and perseverance to make his way. He was ready to take any situation which offered, or to do anything which was thought advisable. All he desired was to perform his duty in that station of life to which he might be called, and to be able to assist his mother and Maddie. To secure their happiness and comfort was his great aim; for himself; independent of them, he had no ambition. He was aware that talent, such as his master considered he possessed, with honesty, industry, and zeal, must, should he get his foot on the ladder, enable him to rise higher. Still, metaphorically speaking, he was content to secure his position on the ground where he stood, while he refrained from withdrawing his attention, by looking up at the prize at the top.

"By thinking only of the prize, and not duly employing the means to obtain it, many a man has slipped off the ladder, and, crushed by his fall, has failed again to reach it," the Doctor observed to him one day. "Go on as you propose, my boy, and never trouble yourself about the result; God blesses honest efforts when His assistance is sought. I do not advise you to remain at Elmerston. Seek your fortune in London. You may have a much harder struggle to endure than you would here, but you will come off victorious, and gain ultimately a respectable position."

Such was the tenor of the remarks of his late master to Lance, during a visit he paid him, after he had left school. His mother agreed with what had been said.

"I should grieve to part with you, Lance; but as I am sure it will be for your advantage, it must be done, and we shall have the happiness of seeing you down here when you can get a holiday."

"That will indeed be great!" murmured Maddie, who had not before spoken.

She was in the habit of looking at the bright side of things, and thought more of the joyful meeting than of the long, long time they must be separated.

"I will write to your uncle Durrant, and ask him what he can do," continued Mrs Loughton. "My brother is kind and generous, and though he has a large family, and I fear his salary from the Government office he holds is but small, yet I am sure he will do his utmost to assist you."

"I ought to be at work without delay, mother," said Lance; "so pray write as you propose to uncle Durrant." He cast a glance at Maddie, and added, "I'll do my best to employ my time profitably while I am at home. You know that I am

happier here than I can be anywhere else."

"Yes," said Maddie, "I am sure there is no happier place than this."

The letter to Mr Durrant was written, and while waiting for an answer, Lance spent much of the time not occupied in study in the garden, very frequently with Maddie as his companion. He had from his boyhood been accustomed to cultivate it, and he was anxious to leave it in the most perfect order possible. It was pleasant to sit reading with Maddie by his side, but pleasanter still to be working in the fresh air among sweet flowers, receiving such assistance as she could give, and talking cheerfully all the time.

The expected answer from Mr Durrant came in the course of a few days. "I lost no time in looking for a situation for Lance, and I was able, from the report I received from the Doctor, to speak confidently of him," he wrote. "I have obtained one in the office of my friend Mr Gaisford, a highly respectable solicitor in the city, who, knowing Lance's circumstances, will attend to his interests, and advance him according to his deserts."

"It appears very satisfactory, and we should be truly grateful to your uncle," observed Mrs Loughton. "You are to go to his house. You will have a long walk into London every day, but that, he says, will be good for you. He does not speak about salary, but as, from what I understand, you are to take up your abode with him, I hope that you will receive sufficient to repay him."

"I would rather live in a garret on bread and water, than be an expense to my uncle, who can with difficulty support his large family," observed Lance; "and so I will thankfully take any office where I can get enough to maintain myself, even in the most humble way."

"Well, well, dear Lance, your uncle and I will settle that," said Mrs Loughton. "He wishes you to go up the day after to-morrow."

"So soon?" exclaimed Maddie; "his things will scarcely be ready."

"I must not delay a day longer than can be helped," said Lance firmly; "I am eager to begin real work, whatever that may be."

"You will always do what is right," said Maddie. "And I will ask Mrs Judkin to come and help me iron your things," and she ran out of the room, it might possibly have been to hide the tears rising in her eyes.

Maddie was still very young; she had not before parted from Lance, even for a day, and had as yet experienced none of the trials of life. She would have felt the same had Lance been her brother; she scarcely recognised the fact that he was not.

The day of parting came. Mrs Loughton was unable to leave the house. She clasped her boy to her heart, and blessed him, committing him to the charge of One all able and willing to protect those who confide in His love. Maddie, attended by Mrs Judkin, whose husband wheeled his portmanteau, accompanied Lance to the railway station, and her last tender, loving glance still seemed following him long after the train had rushed off along its iron way.

Perhaps now for the first time he realised how completely his future hopes of happiness depended on her. With manly resolution, and firm confidence in the goodness of God, he prepared, as he had often said he would, to do his duty.

He safely reached his uncle's house, where he received a kindly welcome from his aunt and a number of young cousins. They looked at him approvingly; he was likely to become a favourite with them.

"I think you will get on with Gaisford," said his uncle after the conclusion of dinner. "He is an honest man, and a Christian, and feels that he has responsibilities which many are not apt to acknowledge. I will say no more about him. You tell me you wish to do your duty; and therefore all I can say to you is, to try and ascertain what that duty is, and to do it."

At an early hour the next morning Mr Durrant accompanied his nephew to Mr Gaisford's office. The principal had not arrived. His head clerk scrutinised Lance from under his spectacles for a few seconds. Apparently satisfied, his countenance relaxed.

"We can find work for him," he observed, after Lance had been duly introduced; "and as you have to be at your office you can leave him here, and the time need not hang heavily on his hand till Mr Gaisford arrives."

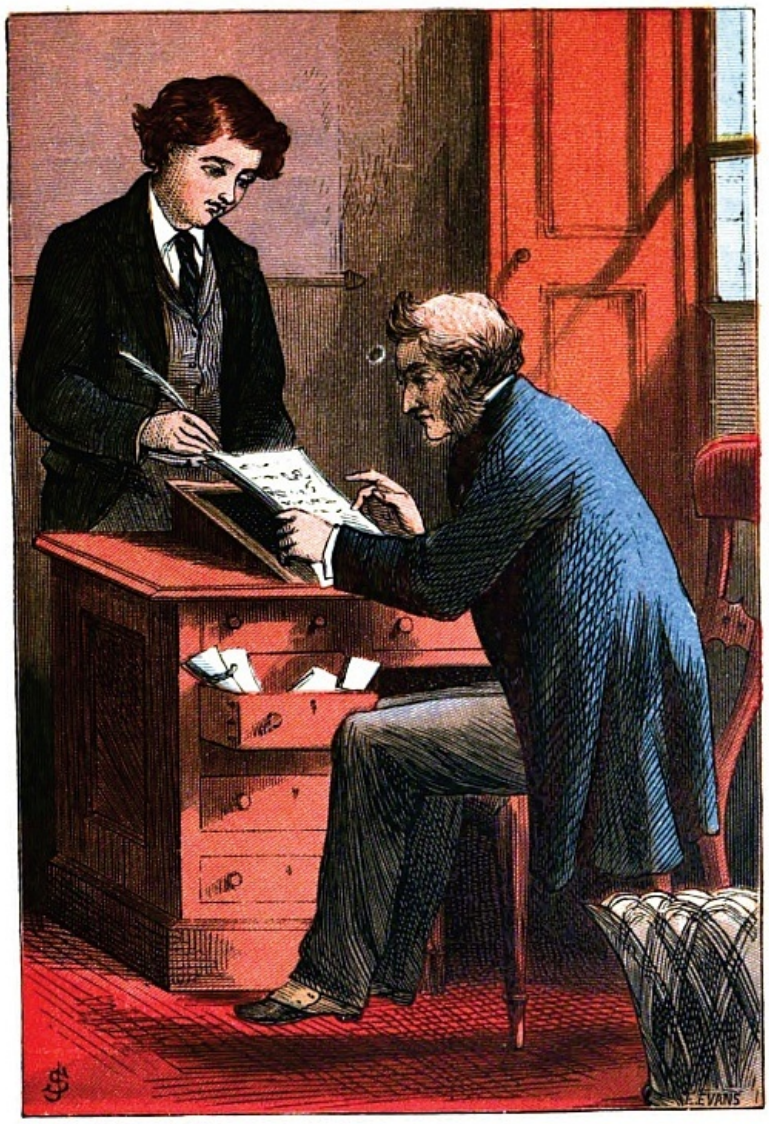
Mr Durrant, promising to call for his nephew on his way home, hurried off.

Lance had at once a draft placed before him to copy. He wrote a clear, bold hand. Mr Brown, the head clerk, watched him for a minute.

"That will do—go on," he said, and returned to his seat.

The draft was finished just as Mr Gaisford arrived. The clerk took it in his hand, telling Lance to follow him to their principal's room. While introducing him, he placed it on the table, and withdrew.

Mr Gaisford, a middle-aged man, slightly grey, with a pleasant expression of countenance, having glanced over the paper, turned round and addressed Lance kindly.



"'Where were you at school?'"

THE SCHOOL FRIENDS.

"Sit down," he said. "Your uncle has told me something about you, but I should like to hear more. Where were you at school?"

Lance told him.

"You were the head boy, I understand."

He then asked what books he had read, and a variety of other questions, to which Lance answered modestly and succinctly. He then handed the paper back to Lance, to give it to Mr Brown, who would find him something more to do.

"This is written as well as it could be," he observed. "I always like to have my work well done, and I can depend upon your doing it to the best of your ability."

"That is what I wish to do," said Lance, taking the paper and bowing as he left the room.

He had plenty of work during the morning. Mr Brown asked him to come out and take a chop with him at one o'clock.

The head clerk was never long absent from the office, as he might be wanted, and he made it a rule never to keep clients waiting longer than he could help.

"Time is money, my young friend," he observed. "We should never squander other people's time more than our own."

Lance worked hard till his uncle arrived just at the usual hour for closing the office. Mr Gaisford had gone away some time before.

"He has done very well, sir," observed Mr Brown as Mr Durrant entered; "and what is more, I feel sure he will do as well every day he is here."

He and his uncle walked home together. Mr Durrant told him that his employer promised to give him a salary at once should the head clerk make a favourable report of him.

“That he will do that, I am confident, from what he has said.”

Lance felt very happy, and wrote home in good spirits, giving a satisfactory account of the commencement of his career in London.

He generally accompanied his uncle to and from the office, but he soon learned to find the way by himself. He always went directly there and back, refraining from wandering elsewhere to see the great city which to him was still an unknown land. He was very happy in his new home, and on his return each day he was greeted by his young cousins with shouts of pleasure. Lance was never tired of trying to amuse them.

With intense satisfaction Lance received his first quarter’s salary. He took it immediately to his uncle.

“This should be yours, sir,” he said, “though I fear it is not sufficient to repay you for the expense to which you have been put on my account.”

His uncle smiled.

“I think you must settle that with your aunt; and if she finds her household expenses much increased, you shall pay the difference: to the room you occupy you are welcome.”

Lance received back the greater portion of the sum he placed in his aunt’s hands, and immediately forwarded it to his mother.

The balance from next quarter, however, was somewhat less, as he had to pay for a few articles of clothing. His mother begged that he would not send her any more, as she was sure he would soon require considerable additions to his wardrobe. He, however, resolved to be very economical, and with the assistance of Mr Brown, who knew where everything was to be got the cheapest and best, he found that he still had a fair sum left to forward for the use of the loved ones at Elmerston.

“Pay ready money,” observed his friend the clerk. “Owe no man anything; it’s a golden rule, and assists to give a good digestion in the day, and sound sleep at night.”

Some time after this Mr Gaisford sent for Lance into his room, and put a document into his hand.

“Here, my young friend,” he said, “are your articles. Your mother is a widow with limited means, and has, moreover, not only brought you up well, but supported an orphan relative, so I understand. Such as she has claims on one like me, who am a bachelor with an ample fortune. Such claims I must recognise, for I am sure God does, whatever the rest of the world may think. I say this to set you at your ease about the matter. You have done your duty hitherto, and I am sure you will continue to do it. Your salary will be increased from the commencement of this quarter.”

Lance’s heart was too full to thank his kind benefactor as he wished. He tried to express his gratitude; at all events, Mr Gaisford understood him.

From that time forward it was evident that he rose still more in the estimation of one who was a keen judge of character.

Story 1--Chapter V.

Lance had been more than a year in London, and having been frequently sent with papers to clients in all directions, he learned his way about the City and West End.

During the first autumn vacation, as it was soon after his arrival, he had not gone home. He was looking forward to a visit before the close of the following summer. He kept up, however, a frequent correspondence with his mother and Maddie. His greatest pleasure was receiving their letters.

Mr Brown continued his friend, as at first, and took pains to initiate him into the mysteries of his profession.

He was one evening in the West End, near the Park, having been sent after office hours to a client’s house with the draft of a will. He had performed his commission, and had just left the house, when he encountered a young man, dressed in the height of the fashion, with a gold-headed cane in his hand. The other stopped and looked at him, exclaiming as he did so—

“Upon my word, I believe you are Lance Loughton!” and Lance recognised his former schoolfellow.

“What! Dulman?” he said, unconsciously scanning him from head to foot. “I did not know what had become of you; I thought you were engaged in business somewhere.”

“Hush, hush, my dear fellow! let me ask you not to call me by that odious name. I am Emery Delamere on this side of Temple Bar. I had been sent to call on a lady of fashion about a little affair of my employers, and embraced the opportunity of taking a stroll in the Park, in the hopes of meeting some of my acquaintances. You, I conclude, are bound eastward; so am I. We will proceed together, though I wish you had got rid of a little more of your rustic appearance. And now tell me all about yourself. Where are you? Who are you employed with? What are your prospects?”

As soon as Emery’s rattling tongue would allow him to answer, Lance briefly gave him the information he asked for.

“Very good, better than I had thought, for I am inclined to envy you. At the same time, the dull existence you are

compelled to lead would not have suited my taste. However, you were always better adapted to plodding work than I am," he answered, with a slight degree of envy in his tone. "But I suppose you have managed to see something of London life; if not, let me have the pleasure of initiating you. What do you say, shall we go to the theatre? I have tickets for the Haymarket, but it's a dull house, I prefer Drury Lane; and though I ought to be in at ten o'clock according to rule, I can easily explain that I was detained by Lady Dorothy, and had to wait for an omnibus."

"I am much obliged to you for your kind intentions, but I have no wish to go to a theatre, and beg that you will not on my account be late in returning home, and especially that you will not utter a falsehood as your excuse."

"Falsehood! that's a good joke," exclaimed Emery; "you use a harsh term. We should never be able to enjoy ourselves without the privilege of telling a few white lies when necessary, ha! ha! ha! Why, my dear Lance, you seem as ignorant of the world as when you were at Elmerston."

"I knew the difference between right and wrong, as I do now," answered Lance gravely, "and I regret to hear you express yourself as you are doing. I was in hopes that the misfortunes you met with would have tended to give you more serious thoughts. Excuse me for saying so, but I speak frankly, as an old friend, and I pray that you may see things in their true light."

"Really, Lance, you have become graver and more sarcastic than ever," exclaimed Emery, not liking the tenor of his companion's remarks. "I only wished to find some amusement for you; and since you don't wish to be amused, I will not press you further to come with me. I myself do not care about going to the theatre, and will walk home with you as far as our roads run together."

Lance thanked him, and hoping to be able to speak seriously to him of the sin and folly of the conduct he appeared to be pursuing, agreed to his proposal.

Though Emery would rather have had a better dressed companion, yet recollecting that Lance was a gentleman by birth, he felt some satisfaction in being in his society; for notwithstanding his boastings of the fashionable friends he possessed, he knew perfectly well that none of those whose acquaintance he casually made were real gentlemen.

"You appear to be better off than I am in some respects, Lance," he observed. "For though I stand high in the opinion of my employer, and, I flatter myself, still higher in that of his daughter, a very charming girl I can assure you, they are not equal in social position to your relatives; and as you know, my desire has always been to move in a good circle, and maintain a high character among the aristocracy."

Though Lance could not help despising the folly of poor Emery, he felt real compassion for him as he continued to talk this sort of nonsense.

"Now, Emery," he said, "we have been schoolfellows, and you will excuse me for speaking freely to you. Would it not be wiser to accept the position in which you are placed, to work on steadily to gain a good name among those with whom you are associated, instead of aping the manners and customs of people who enjoy wealth and undoubtedly belong to a higher social grade than you do. You will be far more respected, even by them, if you are known to be looked up to by those of your own station in life. I speak from experience: I am treated with kindness and attention, not only by all the clerks in the office, and their friends whom I occasionally meet, but by the head clerk himself, not because I am the son of a naval officer, but simply because I work hard, and try to do whatever work is given me as well as possible. Besides, my old friend, we should have a higher motive for all our actions. Remember God sees us; and though we may give our earthly masters eye-service, we cannot deceive Him. Yet we should be influenced by a higher motive than that, not by fear alone, but by love and gratitude to Him who has given us life and health, and all the blessings we enjoy, and the promise of everlasting happiness if we will accept the offer He so graciously makes us, and become reconciled to Him, through faith in the great sacrifice—His Son offered upon the cross for us, His rebellious and disobedient creatures. Pray seek for grace to realise the great fact that we are by nature and conduct rebels, vile and foul—that if trusting to our own strength, we are in the power of our great enemy Satan, who is always trying to lead us astray—and that we have no claim whatever to God's love and protection while here on earth, or to enjoy the happiness of heaven when we leave this world—that there is but one state of existence for which, if we die in rebellion, we can be fitted, that is, to associate for ever with the fallen angels justly cast out from His glorious presence."

Lance spoke with deep earnestness, holding Emery lightly by the arm. He might never, he felt, have another opportunity of putting the truth before him.

Emery suddenly snatched his arm away.

"I really don't like the sort of things you have been saying," he exclaimed, "and I don't know what authority you have for talking to me thus. I did not know what you were driving at when you began to talk, or I should not have listened so patiently, I can tell you. I asked you in a friendly way to come and enjoy a little harmless amusement with me, and you in return first give me a grave lecture, such as some one might expect from a Solon, rather than from a lawyer's clerk, and then preach a sermon, which might be all very well if thundered out by the Archbishop of Canterbury from the pulpit, but really, when uttered by one young fellow to another, is simply ridiculous. I hope, for your sake, that you don't pester your brother scribes, and that head clerk you speak of, with such balderdash, or favour your principal with an occasional discourse in the same strain. We are old schoolfellows, as you have remarked, so you will not be offended at what I say. Ah! ah! ah! Good evening to you, friend Solon; should we meet again, I hope you will recollect such an address as you have just given me is not to my taste. I have to go south; you go north, I fancy;" and Emery, swinging round his cane, and cocking his hat on one side, sauntered off, whistling a popular street air to show his unconcern.

Lance was too much hurt and astonished at the effect his earnest and faithful remarks had produced to say anything. He stood irresolute for a minute, feeling much inclined to run after Emery, and to entreat him not to take what he had

said thus amiss. Just then he saw that his old schoolfellow was joined by another youth of a similar appearance, and the two went into a tobacconist's together. It would be hopeless, he felt, to attempt saying anything more. He therefore hastened homewards, hoping that he might before long have another opportunity of again speaking seriously to Emery.

Story 1--Chapter VI.

Emery had been sent by his employer on a commission of some importance. On his return he gave a highly satisfactory account of the way he had performed it. He had risen, in consequence of his address and supposed abilities, high in the favour of Mr Padman, who placed perfect confidence in his zeal and honesty. He was always prepared beforehand with a sufficient excuse when he intended to be late out, or to break through any of the rules of the establishment. He was utterly regardless of the truth Lance had put before him, that God at all times sees us, and that those who deceive their fellow-men are sure, misled by Satan, to be discovered at last, and left to the consequences of their sin.

Emery, proud of what he considered his cleverness, and trusting to the confidence Mr Padman placed in him, became bolder in his proceedings. "There was no young man," he said to himself, "so much thought of as he was;" and believing that Miss Padman also looked on him with a favourable eye, he determined to propose to marry her. He consulted old Sass, who, seeing no reason to doubt his success, advised him to try his chance. If he failed, Sass, knowing his secret, thought that he might take advantage of it. If he succeeded, he himself would certainly benefit by the influence he had gained over the young gentleman. Emery had to wait some time for the desired opportunity of speaking alone to Miss Padman. That young lady, however, did not hold her father's shopman in the high estimation he had flattered himself. Others had taken care to whisper that Emery was not as correct in his conduct as he professed to be, and she thought her father unwise in placing so much confidence in him. When, therefore, he at length made her an offer, she replied that she considered him very presumptuous, and begged him to understand that she had no more regard for him than for the boy who swept out the shop, or for any one else in the establishment; and having discovered how he deceived her father, she should put Mr Padman on his guard. As the young lady was perfectly cool and decided, Emery had discernment enough to perceive that her decision was final, and as is often the case with weak natures, any better feeling he might have entertained for her was turned into hatred.

As there was no one else to whom he could express his anger and vexation, he called as soon as he could leave the shop on Sass Gange.

"Well, it was a toss up, I thought, from the first, and you have lost," observed the old man. "However, Master Emery, don't be cast down, there is as good fish in the sea as out of it. If the girl threatens you, as you say, I would advise you to cut the concern altogether. You will get disrated, depend upon it, and be worse off. Make hay while the sun shines. Now, my lad, I don't want you to do anything that would get you into trouble, but there is nothing worth having without some risk. You have often said you would like a new sort of life instead of the humdrum counter-jumping work you have got to do. What do you say to making a start for South America or the Pacific? You might lead a jolly life among the natives, with nothing to do and lots of pretty girls to make love to, who would not treat you like Miss Padman, that I can tell you."

Thus the old sailor ran on, describing in overdrawn colours, with a large admixture of fable, the life he had himself led in his early days. He did not say how he had seen his companions, some murdered, and the rest dying of disease, or that he himself had narrowly escaped with his life.

Emery listened eagerly. He had felt how unsatisfactory was the life he was trying to lead, the constant rebuffs of those into whose society he tried to thrust himself, and the hopelessness of succeeding in his foolish aims, and Satan was of course ready to suggest that he might find far greater enjoyment in something new.

"It will be capital fun!" he exclaimed at last; "but I have spent every shilling of my salary, and am in debt to a pretty considerable amount to some who look upon me as Mr Padman's future son-in-law, and to others who have taken me to be a young man of fortune; and if I were to sell my whole wardrobe, I don't suppose it would fetch enough to pay for a good sea outfit and my passage."

"So I thought," said Gange; "and as I have a notion that you have been shamefully treated by Miss Padman, if I were you, I would help myself in a way I can suggest to you, and the loss will fall upon her more than on her father, who is an old donkey, and it will do him no harm either. The chances are that he will send you to-morrow to pay the receipts of the shop into the bank, and as business is brisk just now, it's likely to be a good round sum. I shall be sure to be sent to look after you, to see that no one picks your pockets, or knocks you down, or makes off with it. Now, then will be the time to fill your purse, and have some cash to spare for me. I won't be very hard on you. To say the truth, I have had a little business of my own on hand, and have made up my mind to cut and run, so you won't have me here as your friend much longer if you stay. Come, what do you say? a free and independent life, with plenty of money in your pocket; or hanging on here, to be snubbed by Miss Padman, and jeered at by the other fellows at your ill luck. She is sure to tell them, and the chances are there is some one she likes better than you."

The unhappy youth listened to all the old tempter said, instead of at once seeking for grace to put away temptation and to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." He consented to all Sass had proposed.

"That's right!" said the old sailor, "I like your spirit, my boy; I will help you, depend on me. You had better get your portmanteau packed with all your best things, and just carry it down the first thing in the morning. You can tell the house-porter that you are going away for a day; he will not ask questions, and I will send a man to bring it here."

All other arrangements were speedily made. Sass had evidently thought the matter over, and Emery was impressed

by what he fancied the clever way all risks had been provided against.

Emery went home. He felt too nervous to sleep soundly, and rising, lighted a candle and packed up his portmanteau, keeping out his best things, in which to dress in the morning. If questions were asked, he would say that his mother was ill, and that he intended to ask leave to go home in the evening. The thoughts of the sinfulness of the act he was about to commit did not trouble him so much as the fear of possible detection. Still, the plan proposed by Sass was so feasible, and the arrangements he had made so perfect, that he had great hopes all would go right. He thought the matter over and over. Sometimes the remarks made by Lance would force themselves upon him, but he put them away, muttering, “That’s all old women’s nonsense, I am not going to be prevented from doing what I like by such stuff.” Dressing, and putting all the small articles of value he possessed into his pockets, as soon as he thought the porter would be opening the house he carried down his portmanteau, observing to the man as he did so, that he had had a sad letter the previous night, and should be compelled to start for home as soon as he could get leave from Mr Padman. In a short time the porter sent by Sass appeared, and he got it sent off without any questions being asked. He then went back to his room, and afraid of going to bed again with the risk of oversleeping himself, sat down in a chair by his bedside. Not having slept a wink during the night, his head soon dropped on his chest. His dreams were troubled—he felt a fearful pressure round his neck—it seemed that a cap was drawn over his eyes—the murmuring sound of numberless voices rang in his ears—he was standing on the platform at Newgate, the drop was about to fall beneath his feet. He had once witnessed such a scene, and gazed at it with indifference, moving off among the careless throng with the remark “Poor wretch! he has got what he deserved.” Could it be possible that he himself was now standing where he had seen the unhappy culprit launched into eternity. He awoke with a start, and found to his satisfaction that he had been only dreaming. His eyelids were heavy, his eyes bloodshot. He washed his face in cold water, and endeavoured to laugh off the recollection of his dream while he brushed his hair and arranged his cravat. He went down-stairs and joined his companions in the breakfast-room. They rallied him on his rakish look. He talked in his usual affected way, managing, however, to bring in the falsehood he had already uttered about his mother’s illness. It would assist, he hoped, to account for his not returning from the bank.

After a good breakfast he went with apparent diligence to business, waiting with anxious trepidation to be summoned by Mr Padman to convey the money received to the bank. Sometimes, as Lance’s words, and the recollection of his horrid dream, would intrude, he almost hoped that some one else would be selected; then he thought of, his debts, and the consequence of Miss Padman’s communication to her father, and the sneers of his companions, and he resolved to carry out the plan proposed by Sass Gange.

The expected summons came. He received nearly 400 pounds, with the usual directions.

“I need not tell you to be careful, Dulman, and keep out of crowds,” said Mr Padman as he gave him the money.

Emery, buttoning up his coat, replied, with a forced smile, that he need have no fear on that score, though it was with difficulty that he prevented his knees from knocking together as he walked away.

He hastened out of the house. As he expected, before getting far, on looking back, he saw Sass Gange following at his heels. Would it not be safer, after all, to pay the money in? Miss Padman might relent; and should he be captured, the dreadful dream of the morning might be realised. “Pooh! they don’t hang for such things as that,” he said to himself.

Directly afterwards he felt Sass’s hand laid on his shoulder.

“Have you a goodish sum, my lad?” he asked.

“Seldom have had more at one time,” answered Emery.

“Then come along, don’t let us lose the chance.” Sass called a cab, and forced his dupe into it. They drove away to Gange’s lodgings.

He ran in and brought down Emery’s portmanteau, and a sea-bag with his own traps. The cabman was ordered to drive to Euston Square station. Sass had a railway guide; he had been consulting it attentively; they might catch a train starting for Liverpool.

“Is it most in notes or gold?” asked Sass.

“About a third in gold, the rest in bank-notes, with a few cheques,” said Emery.

“Hand me out the gold, then, it will suit me best,” said Sass. “I will be content with that as my share. You can get rid of the notes better than I can.”

Sass promised double fare to the cabman if he would drive faster.

Emery wanted to keep some of the gold for himself, but Sass insisted on having the whole of it. He made Emery pay the fare. They had three minutes to spare.

“You take our tickets,” said Sass, “second class for me, there are no third, and a first for yourself. We had better be separate; and if by any chance we are traced thus far, it will help to put them off the scent.”

Emery having no gold, took out a bank-note for ten pounds. He felt somewhat nervous as the booking-clerk examined it. It was all right, however, and he received his change, and going on to the next shutter took a ticket for his companion.

“All right,” said Gange, “get in, and sit at the further side, and pretend to be sleepy or drunk, only keep your face away from the light. Your portmanteau is ticketed for Liverpool. Good-bye, my lad, till we stop on the road, and I will

come and have a look at you."

Gange disappeared. Off went the train, and Emery's brain whirled round and round, even faster than the carriage seemed to be moving. He tried not to think, but in vain.

The other seats were filled, but he had not dared to look at his companions. He heard them laughing and talking. A board was opened, and dice rattled, still he did not look up. Cards were produced.

"Will any other gentleman join us?" asked a man sitting opposite to the seat, next to him. He caught Emery's eye. "Will you, sir," he added in a bland voice. "We play for very moderate stakes."

Emery knew something about the game proposed. It would have been better for him had he been ignorant of it altogether. A game of cards would enable him to turn his thoughts from himself. He agreed to play. He knew that he did not play well, but to his surprise he found himself winning. The stakes were doubled. He still won. He thought that his companions were very bad players. Again the stakes were increased, he still occasionally won, but oftener lost. He had soon paid away all his gold, and was compelled to take out one of the notes which he had stolen; that quickly went, and another, and another. He felt irritated, and eager to get back the money he had lost; he had won at first, why should he not again? His companions looked calm and indifferent, as if it mattered very little if the luck turned against them.

When they came to a station, they shut up the board, and put the cards under their railway rugs.

Emery had lost fifty pounds of the stolen money. He felt ready for any desperate deed. Two of the men got out at the next large station. Could he have been certain that the money was in the possession of the remaining man, he would have seized him by the throat, and tried to get it back.

The man kept eyeing him sternly, as if aware of his thoughts. Just before the train started, he also stepped out, carrying the board concealed in his rug.

"You have been a heavy loser, I fear," said a gentleman in the seat near the door. "I would have warned you had I thought you would have lost so much, but it will be a lesson to you in future. I am convinced, by their movements, that those were regular card-sharpers. It's too late now, but you may telegraph from the next station to try and stop them."

As this remark was made, it flashed into Emery's mind that some one might telegraph to Liverpool to stop him. He scarcely thought about his loss, but dreaded that his agitation might betray him. The gentleman naturally thought it arose from his being cheated of so much money. Emery tried to look unconcerned.

"A mere trifle," he said, forcing a laugh, "I will try and catch the rogues, though."

However, when he reached the next station, remembering Sass Gange's caution, he was afraid to leave his seat.

"I might lose the train," he said, "and business of importance takes me to Liverpool."

"As you think fit," observed the gentleman, "but you will now have little chance of recovering your money."

Emery was thankful when the train again moved on.

Sass Gange had not appeared at either of the stations.

Liverpool was at length reached. He looked about expecting to see Sass, but he was nowhere to be found. His own portmanteau was in the luggage-van, but the sailor's bag was not with it.

Where to go he could not tell. His eye caught the name of a hotel. He took a cab and drove to it.

It was too late to change any notes that night; but he determined in the morning, as early as possible, to get rid of those evidences of his guilt. In the meantime, he went to bed utterly miserable.

Story 1--Chapter VII.

Mr Padman became anxious when neither Emery nor Sass Gange returned at the expected time. On sending to the bank he found that no money had been paid in. He made inquiries if they had been seen, and learned that Emery had sent for his portmanteau in the morning. He at once despatched a messenger to Gange's lodgings. Gange had left with his bag in the afternoon. Mr Padman immediately suspected the truth. He sent to the police, and to each of the railway stations. Lance's master, Mr Gaisford, was his lawyer. He hurried to consult him as to what other steps it would be advisable to take. Lance was in the room receiving instructions about a draft, and not being told to withdraw, remained. With sincere grief he heard of Emery's guilt.

"He comes from Elmerston, do you know him?" asked Mr Gaisford, turning to Lance.

"Yes," said Lance, "he was a schoolfellow, and I saw him but a few days ago. I have also frequently seen the man who is supposed to have accompanied him."

"If we can find out where they have gone to I will send you down with an officer and a warrant. It will save much trouble, and you will be able at once to identify them, and the sooner they are captured the less money they will have spent."

The number of the cab happened to consist but of two figures; a fellow-lodger of Sass had remarked it, and heard him order the cabman to drive to Euston Square station. A clue was obtained in the course of a few hours, and a telegraph message sent to stop the fugitives. Before Emery had reached Liverpool, Lance and the officer, having warrants for his and Gange's apprehension, were on their way.

The cunning old sailor, however, having obtained all the gold as his share, had quitted the train and gone off to Hull, leaving his unhappy dupe to follow his own devices. The Liverpool police being on the look-out for an old man and a young one allowed Emery to pass, though not altogether unnoticed; and when Lance and the London officer arrived, the latter, suspecting the true state of the case, inquired if a young man of Emery's appearance had arrived alone. The hotel which he had driven to was at once discovered, and he was still in bed when the officer, followed by Lance, entered the room. He awoke as the door opened. As the officer, turning to Lance, asked, "Is that the man?" Emery gazed at Lance with a look of the most abject terror, unable to utter a word.

"Yes, I am sorry to say he is Emery Dulman," said Lance, his voice choking with emotion.

The usual form of arrest was gone through. The officer examined his clothes, and found the pocket-book with the remainder of the stolen notes.

"Is this your doing, Lance?" asked Emery, at length making an effort to speak.

"No, it is not; I wish that I could have prevented you from committing the crime, and I am anxious, to serve you as far as I have the power," answered Lance; "I advise you to confess everything, and to restore the money to your employer."

The unhappy youth was allowed to dress, and while at breakfast told Lance everything that had occurred. Of Sass Gange he could say nothing, except that he believed he had entered a second-class carriage.

The wretched Emery, instead of enjoying the liberty and pleasure he had anticipated, as he sat waiting for the train, with his hands between his knees and his head bent down, looked the very picture of misery and despair.

"I have been befooled and deceived by every one—right and left!" he murmured, evidently wishing to throw blame on others rather than to condemn himself. "Mr Padman shouldn't have given the money to me to carry to the bank, and he ought to have known what an old rascal that Sass Gange is. To think that the villain should have played me so scurvy a trick, and have gone off and left me in the lurch! Then to have lost so much money to these cheating card-sharpers. I expected only to meet gentlemen in a first-class carriage. I would punish them for robbing me if I could catch them—that I would, and they would deserve it! And now to have you, Lance, whom I looked upon as a friend, ferret me out and assist to hand me over to prison, and for what you can tell to the contrary, to the hangman's noose, if the matter is proved against me. I wish that I was dead, that I do. If I had a pistol, I'd shoot myself, and get the affair settled at once!" he exclaimed, jumping up and dashing his fists against his forehead.

Lance did his utmost to calm the unhappy youth. "My poor Emery, Satan has duped you as he dupes all those who listen to his agents, or to the evil suggestions of their own wicked hearts. 'All our hearts are deceitful, and desperately wicked above all things,' the Bible tells us. Notwithstanding which, had you sought for strength from God's Holy Spirit, you would assuredly have resisted the temptations thrown in your way. I have ever been your friend, and I wish to remain so. You remember the line in our Latin Grammar—'A true friend is tried in a doubtful matter.' As a friend, I rejoice that through God's mercy you have been arrested in the downward course you had commenced. It must have led to your utter destruction. Think what you would have become old Sass Gange as your counsellor and guide. You will have much that is painful to go through—from that you cannot escape; but thank our loving Father in heaven for it. Far better is it to suffer a light affliction here for a short season, than to be eternally cast out. Never—let me entreat you—again utter the impious threat of rushing into the presence of your Maker; but turn to Him with a penitent heart, seeking forgiveness for all your sins through the one only way He has appointed—faith in our crucified Saviour: and oh! believe me, He will not deny you, for He has promised to receive all who thus come to Him. He has said, 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' Text upon text I might bring forward to prove God's readiness to forgive the greatest of sinners. Trust Him. Throw yourself upon His mercy. Do not fear what man can do to you. Submit willingly to any punishment the just laws of our country may demand you should suffer. Not that imprisonment or any other punishment you may receive can atone for the sin you have committed in God's sight—not if you were to refund every farthing of the sum you stole. As the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, so through that precious blood alone can the slightest as well as the deepest shade of sin be washed away. I say this now, Emery, in case I should be prevented from speaking again to you on the subject. Reflect, too, on the condition in which you would have been placed had you committed this crime a few years ago, for then an ignominious death on the scaffold would have been your inevitable doom, and bless God that you will now be spared to prove the sincerity of your repentance in some new sphere of life."

Happy would it be for criminals if they had, when placed as Emery Dulman now was, faithful friends like Lance Loughton to speak to them. Emery now and then, as Lance was addressing him, looked up, but again turned aside his head with an expression of scorn on his lips. Lance, however, was too true a Christian, and too sincerely desirous of benefiting his former acquaintance, to be defeated in his efforts to do so. Again and again he spoke to him so lovingly and gently that at length Emery burst into tears. "I wish that I had listened to you long ago, when you warned me of my folly, and it would not have come to this," he exclaimed. "I will plead guilty at once, and throw myself on the mercy of my employer whom I have robbed."

"I do not know whether he will be inclined to treat you mercifully. It may be considered necessary, as a warning to others, to punish you severely," answered Lance. "But, my dear Emery, I am very sure that our Father in heaven, whom you have far more grievously offended, will, if you come to Him in His own appointed way, through faith in the Great Sacrifice, with sincere repentance, not only abundantly pardon you, but will inflict no punishment, because the

punishment justly your due has been already borne by the Just and Holy One when He died on the Cross for sinners."

The officer, looking at his watch, interrupted Lance by saying that it was time to start. Emery was conveyed to the station, and in a short time they were on their way back to London.

The officer made inquiries at the different stations, and at length discovered the one at which Gange had left the train. He sent to London for another officer to follow on his track.

Emery was conveyed to prison. He was tried, convicted, and sent to gaol for twelve months' imprisonment. Old Sass, however, was too cunning to be caught, and got off to sea.

Lance obtained leave frequently to visit his unhappy schoolfellow, who, now left to his own reflections, listened to him attentively when with gentle words he impressed on him the truths he had hitherto derided. Before he left the prison Emery became thoroughly and deeply convinced that he was an utterly lost sinner, and that so he would have been, had he not been guilty of the crime for which he was suffering, or the countless others he had committed which his memory conjured up. Often had he cried, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!" That prayer had been heard, and he now knew that God is merciful, and that He has given good proof of His mercy by sending Jesus, the pure and sinless One, to suffer on the cross for every one who will trust to that sufficient atonement which He thus made for sin.

"God as a Sovereign with free grace offers pardon to rebellious man," said Lance. "He leaves us with loving gratitude to accept it, and if we reject His mercy, justly to suffer the consequence of that rejection, and to be cast out for ever from His presence."

"I see it!—I understand!—I do accept His gracious offer, and from henceforth, and with the aid of His Holy Spirit, will seek to obey and serve Him," said Emery. "And I feel thankful that all this has come upon me, for I might never otherwise have learned to know Him in whom I can now place all my trust and love."

At the end of Emery's term of imprisonment, with the help of Mr Gaisford, Lance was able to procure him a passage to Australia, where he had in the meantime learned that his father had obtained a situation of trust, and would be able to find employment for his son.

Lance went on as he had begun, and as soon as he was out of his articles his loving and faithful Maddie became his wife, his mother having the happiness of seeing him the partner of his former employer before she was called to her rest.

He heard frequently from Emery, who, ever thankful for the mercies shown him by his heavenly Father, continued with steady industry to labour in the humble situation he had obtained.

A decrepit beggar one day came to Lance's door with a piteous tale of the miseries he had endured, and Lance, ever ready to relieve distress, visited him at the wretched lodging where a few days afterwards he lay dying. He there learned that the unhappy man was Sass Gange. Lance told him that he knew him. Sass inquired for Emery.

"I'm thankful I did not help to bring him to the gallows," he murmured. "The way I tempted the lad has laid heavier on my conscience than anything I ever did, and I've done a good many things I don't like to think about."

Lance endeavoured to place the gospel before the old man, but his heart was hard, his mind dull. In a few days he died.

The End.

Story 2--Chapter I.

STORY II—ALONE ON AN ISLAND.

The *Wolf*, a letter-of-marque of twenty guns, commanded by Captain Deason, sailing from Liverpool, lay becalmed on the glass-like surface of the Pacific. The sun struck down with intense heat on the deck, compelling the crew to seek such shade as the bulwarks or sails afforded. Some were engaged in mending sails, twisting yarns, knotting, splicing, or in similar occupations; others sat in groups between the guns, talking together in low voices, or lay fast asleep out of sight in the shade. The officers listlessly paced the deck, or stood leaning over the bulwarks, casting their eyes round the horizon in the hopes of seeing signs of a coming breeze. Their countenances betrayed ill-humour and dissatisfaction; and if they spoke to each other, it was in gruff, surly tones. They had had a long course of ill luck, as they called it, having taken no prizes of value. The crew, too, had for some time exhibited a discontented and mutinous spirit, which Captain Deason, from his bad temper, was ill fitted to quell. While he vexed and insulted the officers, they bullied and tyrannised over the men. The crew, though often quarrelling among themselves, were united in the common hatred to their superiors, till that little floating world became a perfect pandemonium.

Among those who paced her deck, anxiously looking out for a breeze, was Humphry Gurton, a fine lad of fifteen, who had joined the *Wolf* as a midshipman. This was his first trip to sea. He had intended to enter the Navy, but just as he was about to do so his father, a merchant at Liverpool, failed, and, broken-hearted at his losses, soon afterwards died, leaving his wife and only son but scantily provided for.

Tenderly had that wife, though suffering herself from a fatal disease, watched over him in his sickness, and Humphry had often sat by his father's bedside while his mother was reading from God's Word, and listened as with tender earnestness she explained the simple plan of salvation to his father. She had shown him from the Bible that all men are by nature sinful, and incapable, by anything they can do, of making themselves fit to enter a pure and holy

heaven, however respectable or excellent they may be in the sight of their fellow-men, and that the only way the best of human beings can come to God is by imitating the publican in the parable, and acknowledging themselves worthless, outcast sinners, and seeking to be reconciled to Him according to the one way He has appointed—through a living faith in the all-atoning sacrifice of His dear Son. Humphry had heard his father exclaim, “I believe that Jesus died for me; O Lord, help my unbelief! I have no merits of my own; I trust to Him, and Him alone.” He had witnessed the joy which had lighted up his mother’s countenance as she pressed his father’s hand, and bending down, whispered, “We shall be parted but for a short time; and, oh! may our loving Father grant that this our son may too be brought to love the Saviour, and join us when he is summoned to leave this world of pain and sorrow.”

Humphry had felt very sad; and though he had wept when his father’s eyes were closed in death, and his mother had pressed him—now the only being on earth for whom she desired to live—to her heart, yet the impression he had received had soon worn off.

In a few months after his father died, she too was taken from him, and Humphry was left an orphan.

The kind and pious minister, Mr Faithful, who frequently visited Mrs Gurton during the last weeks of her illness, had promised her to watch over her boy, but he had no legal power. Humphry’s guardian was a worldly man, and finding that there was but a very small sum for his support, was annoyed at the task imposed on him.

Humphry had expressed his wish to go to sea. A lad whose acquaintance he had lately made, Tom Matcham, was just about to join the *Wolf*, and, persuading him that they should meet with all sorts of adventures, offered to assist him in getting a berth on board her. Humphry’s guardian, to save himself trouble, was perfectly willing to agree to the proposed plan, and, without difficulty, arranged for his being received on board as a midshipman.

“We shall have a jovial life of it, depend upon that!” exclaimed Matcham when the matter was settled. “I intend to enjoy myself. The officers are rather wild blades, but that will suit me all the better.” Harry went to bid farewell to Mr Faithful.

“I pray that God will prosper and protect you, my lad,” he said. “I trust that your young companion is a right principled youth, who will assist you as you will be ready to help him, and that the captain and officers are Christian men.”

“I have not been long enough acquainted with Tom Matcham to know much about him,” answered Humphry. “I very much doubt that the captain and officers are the sort of people you describe. However, I daresay I shall get on very well with them.”

“My dear Humphry,” exclaimed Mr Faithful, “I am deeply grieved to hear that you can give no better account of your future associates. Those who willingly mix with worldly or evil-disposed persons are very sure to suffer. Our constant prayer is that we may be kept out of temptation, and we are mocking God if we willingly throw ourselves into it. I would urge you, if you are not satisfied with the character of those who are to be your companions for so many years, to give up the appointment while there is time. I would accompany you, and endeavour to get your agreement cancelled. It will be better to do so at any cost, rather than run the risk of becoming like them.”

“Oh, I daresay that they are not bad fellows after all!” exclaimed Humphry. “You know I need not do wrong, even though they do.”

The minister sighed. In vain he urged Humphry to consider the matter seriously.

“All I can do, then, my young friend, is to pray for you,” said Mr Faithful, as he wrung Harry’s hand, “and I beg you, as a parting gift, to accept these small books. One is a book above all price, of a size which you may keep in your pocket, and I trust that you will read it as you can make opportunities, even though others may attempt to interrupt you, or to persuade you to leave it neglected in your chest.”

It was a small Testament, and Harry, to please the minister, promised to carry it in his pocket, and to read from it as often as he Could.

Humphry having parted from his friend, went down at once to join the ship.

Next day she sailed. Humphry at first felt shocked at hearing the oaths and foul language used, both by the crew and officers. The captain, who on shore appeared a grave, quiet sort of man, swore louder and oftener than any one. Scarcely an order was issued without an accompaniment of oaths; indeed blasphemy resounded throughout the ship.

Matcham only laughed at Humphry when he expressed his annoyance.

“You will soon get accustomed to it,” he observed. “I confess that I myself was rather astonished when I first heard the sort of thing, but I don’t mind it now a bit.”

So Humphry thought, for Matcham interlarded his own conversation with the expressions used by the rest on board; indeed, swearing had become so habitual to him, that he seemed scarcely aware of the fearful language which escaped his lips.

By degrees, as Matcham had foretold, Humphry did get accustomed to the language used by all around, which had at first so greatly shocked him. Though he kept his promise to the minister, and carried the little Testament in his pocket, he seldom found time to read it.

He wished to become a sailor, and he applied himself diligently to learn his profession; and as he was always in a good temper and ready to oblige, the captain and officers treated him with more respect than they did Matcham, who was careless and indifferent, and ready to shirk duty whenever he could do so. Matcham, finding himself constantly

abused, chose to consider that it was owing to Humphry, and, growing jealous, took every opportunity of annoying him. Humphry, however, gained the good-will of the men by never swearing at them, or using the rope's-end: this the officers were accustomed to do on all occasions, and Matcham imitated them by constantly thrashing the boys, often without the slightest excuse.

As the ship sailed on her voyage, the state of affairs on board became worse and worse. On one occasion the crew came aft, complaining that their provisions were bad, and then that the water was undrinkable, when the captain, appearing with pistols in his hands, ordered them to go forward, refusing to listen to what they had to say. Another time they complained that they were stinted in their allowance of spirits, when he treated them in the same way. They retired, casting looks of defiance at him and the officers. On several occasions, when some of the men did not obey orders with sufficient promptitude, Humphry saw them struck to the deck by the first and second mates without any notice being taken by the captain. The officers, too, quarrelled among themselves; the first officer and the second refused to speak to each other; and the surgeon, who considered that he had been insulted, declined intercourse with either of them. The younger officers followed their bad example, and often and often Humphry wished that he had listened to the advice of his friend Mr Faithful, and had inquired the character of his intended companions before he joined the ship.

At the first port in South America at which the *Wolf* touched, the surgeon, carrying his chest with him, went on shore, and refused to return till the mates had apologised. As this they would not do, she sailed without him; and although the men might be wounded, or sickness break out, there was now no one on board capable of attending to them. Such was the condition of the *Wolf* at the time she was thus floating becalmed and alone on the wide ocean.

Story 2--Chapter II.

Harry Gurton stood gazing on the glassy sea till his eyes ached with the bright glare, his thoughts wandering back to the days of his happy childhood, when he was the pride and delight of his beloved father and mother. He had come on deck only to breathe a purer air than was to be found below.

Soon after leaving the coast of South America a fever had broken out on board, and several of the crew lay sick in their berths. Their heartless shipmates, afraid of catching the complaint, took little care of them. Humphry could not bear to see them suffer without help, and from the first had done his best to attend on them. He constantly went round, taking them water and such food as he could induce the cook to prepare.

Tom Matcham was the only officer who had as yet been struck down by the fever. He lay in his berth tossing and groaning, complaining of his hard lot. The officers, who were annoyed by his cries, often abused him, telling him roughly not to disturb them.

"The cruel brutes! I will be revenged on them if I ever get well," exclaimed Matcham.

In vain Humphry tried to pacify him.

"Don't mind what they say, Tom," he observed. "I hope you may get well; but if you were to die, it would be dreadful to go out of the world with such feelings in your heart. I remember enough about religion to know that we should forgive those who injure us. If you will let me, I will try to say some of the prayers which my mother taught me when I was a child, and I will pray with you. I have got a Testament, and I should like to read to you out of it."

"I can't pray, and I don't want to hear anything from the Testament," answered Tom gloomily.

"It would be very dreadful if you were to go out of the world feeling as you now do," urged Humphry.

"What! you don't mean to say you think I am going to die!" exclaimed Tom in an agitated voice.

"I tell you honestly, Tom, that you seem as bad as the two poor fellows who died last week," said Humphry.

"Oh, you are croaking," groaned Tom, though his voice faltered as he spoke.

After talking for some time longer without being able to move him, Humphry was compelled to go forward to attend to some of the other men.

In the first hammock he came to lay Ned Hadow, one of the oldest, and apparently one of the most ruffianly of the crew. He seemed, however, to be grateful to Humphry for his kindness; and he acknowledged that if it had not been for him, he should have been fathoms down in the deep before then.

"I hope, however, that you are getting better now," said Humphry.

"Thanks to you, sir, I think I am," answered Ned. "I don't want to die, though I cannot say I have much to live for, nor has any one else aboard this ship, except to be abused and knocked about without any chance of gaining any good by the cruise."

"Perhaps we may do better by and by," observed Humphry.

"I have no hopes of that while such men as the captain and his mates have charge of the ship. Take my advice, Mr Gurton, if you have a chance, get out of her as fast as you can. You will thank me for warning you—it is the only way I have to show that I am grateful to you for your kindness."

Hadow's remarks made no deep impression upon Humphry, but he could not help occasionally recollecting them.

After visiting the other sick men, he went on deck to keep his proper watch; then, weary with his exertions, he turned into his berth to obtain the rest he so much needed.

He was awakened by hearing the cry of “All hands shorten sail!” He quickly sprang on deck.

A gale had suddenly sprung up. The ship was heeling over, and ploughing her way through the seething waters. The crew flew aloft. The loftier sails were taken in, and the top-sails were being closely reefed, when another blast, more furious than the former, struck the ship, and two poor fellows were hurled from the lee-yard-arm into the foaming waters. There was a cry from the crew, and several rushed to lower a boat—Humphry among them.

“Hold fast!” cried the captain; “let the fellows drown; you will only lose your lives if you attempt to save them.”

Still the men persisted, showing more humanity than they had exhibited in attending to their sick shipmates, when the captain swore that he would shoot any one who disobeyed him. Though spare spars and everything that could float had been hove overboard, the poor fellows in the water could no longer be seen.

The crew, with gloomy looks, assembled forward, muttering threats which did not reach the officers’ ears.

The change of weather had the effect of restoring some of the sick men to health, though several died. Among the first to appear on deck was Ned Hadow. He still looked weak and ill—the shadow of his former self. He was changed in other respects, and Humphry observed that he was quiet in his behaviour, and no longer swore in the way he had been accustomed to do.

Matcham remained in his berth. He seemed a little better, though he still refused to listen to Humphry when he offered to read the Bible to him, and when asked the reason, replied, “Because I am not going to let those fellows suppose that I am afraid to die. They would be sneering at me, and calling me a Methodist; and I don’t intend to die either, so I don’t see why I should bother myself by having religion thrust down my throat.”

“If you are not going to die, I suppose the case is different,” answered Humphry. “Still, I know that if you were, the Bible is the best book to read. I wish that I had read it oftener myself.”

“If I can get hold of it, I will take care that neither you nor I am troubled with it in future,” answered Matcham. “You have teased me too much about it already. I wish you would just try what the captain or mates would say to you if you were to bother them.”

Humphry put his little Testament into his pocket, determining that his messmate should not get hold of it. Still, much as he valued the book as a gift from his old friend, he looked upon it, as many other people do, as a book to be reverenced, and to be read in times of sickness or trouble; but he had little notion of the value of an open Bible, to be studied with prayer every day in the week, to serve as a light to his feet and a lamp to his path, and to guide him in the everyday affairs of life.

Humphry, wishing Matcham good evening, went on deck.

As he looked ahead, he saw in the distance a small island rising like a rock out of the blue ocean. The ship was standing towards it. The sun, however, was just then setting, and in a short time it was concealed from sight by the mists of night. As he was to keep the first watch with the third mate, he went down and took some supper. When he returned on deck, he found that the sky was overcast with clouds, and that the night was excessively dark. He could scarcely distinguish the man at the helm or the officer of the watch.

“Is that you, Gurton?” asked the third mate. “The orders are to heave to in an hour, so as not to run past the island we saw at sunset, as the captain wishes to examine it to-morrow morning. Go forward, and see that the look-outs are keeping their eyes open; the reefs may run further off the land than we think for.”

“Ay, ay, sir,” answered Humphry, making his way along the deck.

Having spoken to the men as directed, he stood for some minutes trying to pierce the thick gloom, and as he was sure no danger could be seen till the ship was close upon it, he resolved to return aft, and advise the mate to heave her to sooner than he had been ordered.

When just abreast of the fore-rigging, he suddenly felt his arms pinioned behind him, and a gag thrust into his mouth. At the same time a voice whispered in his ear, which he recognised as Ned Hadow’s, “Do not cry out—no harm is intended you; what we do is for your good.” The next instant he felt himself lifted off his feet and placed in the fore-rigging, up which a man on either side forced him to ascend. He soon reached the top.

“He will be safer in the cross-trees,” said one of the men, and he was compelled to ascend till he got there. “We must make you fast where you are,” whispered Hadow, compelling Humphry to sit down on the cross-trees, and lashing him to the rigging. “If you will promise not to cry out, we will remove the gag from your mouth; if not, you must be content to bear it for some time longer. Here, press my hand if you promise to do as I tell you—I can trust to your word.”

Humphry was very anxious to get rid of the gag, which hurt him, and pressed the hand placed in his. The gag was immediately taken out of his mouth.

“Whatever sounds you hear, or whatever you see, don’t cry out, as you value your life,” whispered Hadow.

The next moment Humphry was left alone. He sat wondering why he had been thus treated. Hadow could certainly not have intended to injure him; at the same time, he could not help fearing that the crew contemplated some dreadful act of mutiny, and that Hadow had contrived to get him up there to keep him out of harm’s way. Nothing

could he see but the tall mast above his head tapering towards the dark sky, and the yard and ropes immediately below him. All on deck seemed quiet, no voices reached his ear.

The moments passed slowly by. Suddenly a loud shriek rent the air, followed by a heavy groan; then came the flash and report of a pistol—another, and another followed. Now rose fierce shouts and cries from many voices, loud thundering blows, and the clash of cutlasses. A desperate fight was going on. He no longer had any doubt that the officers had been attacked, and were struggling for their lives.

Suddenly, as they began, all sounds of strife ceased, though he could now distinguish the voices of the crew shouting to each other.

The helm during the contest had been deserted, and the ship had come up to the wind. It seemed a relief to him to hear the boatswain's voice ordering the crew to brace up the yards. The ship was then hove to.

No one, however, came to release him. If his friend Hadow had fallen in the strife, what would be his fate when the rest of the crew discovered him? The dreadful certainty forced itself upon his mind, that the officers had been overcome. He heard the men moving about the deck, and talking in loud voices to each other; but though he listened eagerly, he could not ascertain what was said.

Hour after hour passed by. No one came aloft to release him.

Notwithstanding the fearful anxiety he felt, he at length dropped off into forgetfulness; but his dream were troubled, and full of the horrors which had just occurred.

Story 2--Chapter III.

"It was well I thought of lashing you securely, or you would have fallen and been killed," said a voice in Humphry's ear.

Consciousness returned. He recognised Ned Hadow.

"It will be wise in you not to ask any questions, Mr Gurton," he whispered. "Just be sure that you are wide awake, and I will cast off the lashings. I have done the best I could for you. The men did not ask you to join them because they believed you would not, nor do I either. I am too grateful to you for what you have done for me to wish you to be among them. They have now possession of the ship, and intend to keep it. As we shall be at daybreak close in with the island we saw last night, they give you your choice of being put on shore there, or taking the oath of fidelity to them, and joining their cause. As I said before, I don't suppose you will hesitate about the matter."

"Indeed I will not," answered Humphry; "whether or not the island is inhabited or means of subsistence can be found on it, I would rather be put on shore than remain an hour longer than I can help on board the ship, after what I fear has taken place."

"As I said, Mr Gurton, you must ask no questions," repeated Hadow. "I wish I could go with you, but I am sworn to stay by the rest. I would give anything to be out of the ship, but it is too late now to draw back; though, as I have heard it said, that hell with sinners often begins on earth, so it has begun with me. Yes, Mr Gurton, I almost wish that I had been carried off by the fever instead of living on, to become what I now am. I was bad enough before, but I am a thousand times worse now. There is no one on board I can say this to, and I cannot help saying it to you."

"Surely you could manage to come on shore with me," said Humphry. "Your messmates will probably release you from any oath you have taken if you wish it."

"They will not do that, sir, they will not do that," answered Hadow in a despairing tone. "I am bound hand and foot to them; their fate, whatever that is, must be mine. You must not stay up here longer. I will cast off the lashings now, but you must take care, as your arms will be stiff after being bound so long, that you don't fall. I will hold you till you get the use of them."

Saying this, Ned cast off the rope, and grasping Humphry round the body, assisted him to get on his legs; then, after he had stood for a minute or two, helped him to descend the rigging.

On reaching the foretop, Hadow told him to wait there till he should come for him.

"I don't want you to go among the crew," he said in a low voice. "I have got four men whom you looked after in their sickness, who have agreed to pull you on shore, which we hope to reach as soon as there is light enough to land. The boat is already in the water, and we are stowing her with things which we think will be useful to you. As you saw nothing of what happened, even should you be taken off the island some time or other, you cannot swear against any one. All you know is that you were lashed in the rigging, and were put on shore the same night before daybreak. If any one asks you questions on deck, that is what you must say to them—you understand me?"

Humphry replied that he did understand, and, suspecting that his safety depended on his answer, said that he would do as Ned advised.

"Well, then, stay here till I come for you," and Ned disappeared down the rigging.

Harry had not long to wait when he again heard his voice.

"All is ready," he whispered. "We took the bearings of the island before dark, and can steer a straight course for it.

Don’t speak to any one. Follow me into the boat; she is waiting under the forechains; you will find a rope by which you can lower yourself into her.”

Humphry followed Ned without ever stepping on deck, and took his seat near him in the stern of the boat, which noiselessly shoved off from the ship’s side. The crew bent to their oars, while Ned steered by a boat compass lighted by a lantern at his feet.

Humphry breathed more freely when he felt himself out of the ship. Yet what a fate was to be his. To be left alone on an island where he might have to spend long, long years, cut off from all intercourse with his fellow-creatures. Yet anything was better than having to associate with the wretched men on board the *Wolf*.

They soon lost sight of the ship, and the boat made her way across the dark water, the island not being yet visible ahead.

“Are they all dead, have none been spared?” asked Humphry at length, yet half fearing to speak on the subject which occupied his thoughts.

“I told you, Mr Gurton, to ask no questions,” answered Ned in a hollow voice. “The sooner you put all thoughts of what happened last night out of your head the better. Just think of what you have got to do. You will have to keep your wits awake where you are going, depend on that. I wish we could stop to help you, but we have promised to be back as soon as we have landed your things. All I can tell you is, that there is said to be water, and you will probably find cocoa-nut and bread-fruit trees, and other roots and fruits; and as we have put up lines and hooks, and a gun and ammunition, and a couple of harpoons, and lines for catching seals, it will be your fault if you do not manage to find as much food as you want.”

“But how shall I be able to live all alone by myself on the island?” said Humphry with a sigh.

“Better to be all alone than food for the sharks, I have a notion,” observed one of the men who overheard him.

Humphry made no further remark. He now felt more than ever certain that a fearful tragedy had been enacted, and that he ought to be thankful to get out of the company of the perpetrators. Yet he was sorry to leave Hadow among them, for he had observed, he thought, the signs of something better in him than in his companions, rough and ignorant as he was.

As day dawned the island appeared ahead, rising out of the blue water with black rocks piled one upon another, and some hills of considerable elevation. Humphry observed also a deep sandy bay between the rocks, but an encircling coral reef intervened, over which, even on that calm morning, the sea broke in masses of foam.

They pulled along till the bay opened out more clearly, and just in front was a cascade, which came tumbling down the rocks. A narrow piece of dark water was seen between the masses of foam which danced up on either side of it.

“There is a passage,” exclaimed Ned. “Give way, my lads, and we shall get through it without difficulty.”

The men bent to their oars, and the boat, dashing between the two walls of foam, was in a short time floating on the calm surface of a lagoon. Pulling up the bay, they reached a small sandy beach, though the dark rocks which everywhere rose up around it gave the place a gloomy aspect.

The boat was hauled up, and the men quickly landed the various articles which Ned had secured for Humphry’s benefit.

He and Humphry searching about soon found a level spot on one side of the bay where the ground looked capable of cultivation.

“This will do for you, my lad,” said Ned. “And as I found some papers of seed in the captain’s cabin, I put them into one of the casks; though I don’t know what they are, maybe if you sow them they will come up, and supply you with vegetables.”

The men now brought up all the things from the boat. They all wished him good luck and a happy life on the island, and then hurried back to the boat.

“I only wish I could stop with you, that I do!” exclaimed Ned with some feeling, as he wrung Humphry’s hand. “I dare not say ‘God bless you!’ but I hope He will, that I do with all my heart,” and Ned ran down to join his companions, who were already shoving off the boat. He would not have been sorry if they had gone without him.

Humphry watched them going down the bay. They passed through the reef, and pulled out to sea till the boat was lost to sight, though he could distinguish the ship hove to in the offing waiting for her return.

Story 2--Chapter IV.

Humphry sat down on his chest, feeling very forlorn. Here he was on a desert island, a mere speck in the ocean, hundreds of miles away perhaps from any place inhabited by civilised man. He might perhaps never be able to make his escape, or again hold intercourse with his fellow-creatures. All alone, without speaking, without exchanging an idea with another human being, he might have to drag out a weary existence; and then, should sickness overtake him, have to lie down and breathe out his life, leaving his bones to whiten in the sun.

He had read Robinson Crusoe, but then his case was very different to that of the far-famed voyager. Robinson Crusoe

had the companionship of Friday, and his island was fertile and smiling, and he had goats and fowls and other animals to cheer him or to serve him as food. He would have to go in search of fish and birds for his daily food, and as yet was uncertain whether any were to be found, though at present he did not fear starvation, as he had the salted beef and pork and biscuits with which Ned had supplied him. But then when they were gone, how should he live?

“It won’t do to indulge in these thoughts,” he exclaimed to himself, suddenly starting up. “I must think about building a house in the first place; and then as soon as I can prepare the ground I will put in the seed, and, as I hope, some may produce good edible vegetables, I shall have a variety in diet and keep myself in health.”

As he began to examine the articles which had been brought on shore, he found a large roll of canvas. It was part of an old sail.

“This Ned must have intended to serve as a tent till I can put up a more substantial building. I am much obliged to him, and I need not be in any great hurry about building my house.”

He spoke his thoughts aloud on nearly all occasions. It gave him some relief to hear his own voice.

“I must get some poles for the tent, though; and no spars, I see, have been brought on shore.”

He looked out an axe, and sticking it in his belt, set out to search for what he wanted.

“I shall not lose my way in this new kingdom of mine, that’s one advantage in having it of moderate size; and if I climb to the top of the hill, I shall be able to sing with Robinson Crusoe, ‘I am lord of all I survey,’—ah, ah, ah!” and he laughed for the first time for many a day.

There was nothing to excite his risibility on board. He felt his spirits rising.

“Stay!” he exclaimed suddenly. “What an ungrateful wretch I am! Here have I been saved from a great danger, and placed in safety, at all events for the present, and yet I have not uttered one word of thanks to Him who has preserved me.”

He knelt down, and lifted up his heart as well as he could to God.

“Careless, worthless fellow that I have been! yet God promises to hear all those that come to Him, not trusting to themselves or to their own good deeds, but to the perfect and complete atonement Jesus Christ made for their sins on the cross, so I know that He will hear me; and I am sure, though I am unworthy of His care, that He put it into the hearts of those men to bring me on shore instead of throwing me overboard, or what would have been worse, keeping me among them.”

He felt his heart much lighter when he rose from his knees.

He then, carefully observing the appearance of the rocks, that he might find his way back without difficulty, proceeded on his expedition. Clambering over them, he came to more level ground covered with various bushes, and soon reached a hill-side on which grew a number of trees, palms and others, with the names of which he was unacquainted. He looked in vain for cocoa-nuts, not being aware that the trees are only generally found on the level shore to which the nuts have been borne by the wind and tides of the ocean from other islands. He cut two stout poles for uprights, and a longer one for a ridge-pole, and shouldering them, returned to his camp.

“I shall want a fire, though,” he thought, as he got back, and throwing them down he again set out to get fuel.

This he had no difficulty in finding among the brushwood, and with the aid of his axe he quickly made up a number of faggots.

“I shall not be obliged to have a fire burning all night to keep off wild beasts, that is another comfort,” he observed. “But it will be cheerful to sit by when it grows dark. I shall not find the time hang heavily on my hands for some days to come, that’s another comfort.”

His first thought was to do the most necessary work. Having brought the faggots to his camp, he next put up his tent.

This accomplished, as soon as he sat down to rest he began to feel hungry. He rummaged in a small cask, which contained a number of miscellaneous articles, and discovered a tinder-box. He had soon a fire blazing in front of his tent. He had prudently made it up at a sufficient distance to prevent the risk of the flames reaching the canvas. While he stayed his hunger with some biscuit, he prepared a piece of beef, which he spitted and placed before the fire on two small sticks, such as he had read of people doing under similar circumstances. He turned the meat on the spit, which grew blacker and blacker.

“I think it must be done now,” he said at length, taking it off.

When he cut it with his knife, he found it almost as hard as wood. He attempted to eat a few mouthfuls, but he could scarcely get them down.

“This won’t do,” he said. “I must get some water, to enable me to swallow this dry food.”

On searching for something to hold the water, he found a saucepan, and on his way with it to the cascade it occurred to him that he might have cooked his beef much better by boiling. “I must try that way for dinner,” he thought.

A draught of pure water greatly refreshed him. He returned to the camp with his saucepan filled. He put it on at once

with a small piece of meat in it, recollecting that salted beef requires a long time to boil, and he hoped to have better success in his second attempt at cooking.

He now made a survey of the articles his shipmates had left with him. There was enough beef and pork to serve him for many months, but he regretted to find that the bread would not last him nearly so long.

“I must try and find some substitute for it,” he said, “and economise it in the meantime. I would rather have had much more bread and less meat, as I hope to catch some fish and kill some birds. However, I need not go hunting till I have put my home to rights.”

Then he thought of his seeds. He had no spade, however, to dig the ground; so going to the wood he shaped one, which he hoped would answer the purpose, out of the stem of a small tree. It did better than nothing, but he would have been very glad of an iron spade. He at once began to dig up the ground. It was covered thickly with grass with long roots, but the soil was rather sand than earth. “I must dig all this up,” he said, “or they will soon sprout up again, and destroy the seed.” So he marked out a small plot, carefully throwing the roots and grass into a heap. It then struck him that if they were scattered about on the ground in the sun they would more quickly dry, and he might then burn them, and the ashes would contribute to fertilise the ground.

He worked away till he felt quite weary. He then went back to his fire to see how the beef was boiling. As it was not yet done, after resting a short time he returned to his digging. It was a very long operation, but after labouring for four or five hours he found that he had dug up almost ten square yards of ground. “It is thoroughly done, though there is not much of it, and that’s a satisfaction,” he said. He thought, however, even when the ashes of the grass were mixed with it, it would scarcely be sufficiently fertile for the seeds. “I will go into the woods and collect rotten leaves, and with the ashes of my fire I hope in time to make the soil good.” This was a wise thought, but the sun was already getting low, and he determined to wait till the next day to do so. “It will be better to have a small piece of good ground than to dig up the whole plot, and I will only put in a few seeds at first, to see how they answer; so that if some fail, I may try a different way of cultivating them. I shall, at all events, have work enough. How sad it would have been if I had had nothing to do but to sit still and bemoan my hard fate. I may not, after all, find my life so miserable alone as I had expected, that’s another comfort.”

With these reflections he went back to his fire, and now, to his satisfaction, he found that his beef was thoroughly boiled. Ned had forgotten to put in any salt or mustard, but as the beef was salt in itself, that did not signify. It reminded him, however, that if he shot any birds or caught fish, he should require some. That made him resolve to try and look for it amongst the rocks, or to try and manufacture it from salt water, as he had read of being done. He had been accustomed to read a good many books of travels before he came to sea, and he now found the advantage of having done so, by being reminded of the various ways people, when placed in situations similar to his, had been enabled to support existence. This contributed to keep up his spirits, as it made him have no doubts of obtaining food. His only dread was that he might meet with an accident, or might fall ill, when there would be no one to help him.

“Well, well, I ought not to trouble myself about that either,” he said. “I must pray to God to preserve me, and do my best not to run any unnecessary risk.”

He then recollected the dreadful complaint, the scurvy, which had already attacked some of the crew of the *Wolf*.

“That is brought on by people living too exclusively on salt provisions. I must try to find some roots or herbs till the seeds come up; and then, if they produce vegetables, as I hope they will, I need not be anxious about that.”

Such were his cogitations during his meal. Having finished, he hung up the remainder of his beef in his tent, to serve as breakfast for the next morning, and then went back to the fountain to enjoy a draught of pure water.

He felt but little inclined to do any more work, and the sun had not set when he recollected that he had not yet read from his Testament. He took it from the pocket of his jacket, which hung up in his tent, and sat down to read. He read on for some time, feeling his spirits greatly refreshed, till, by the increasing darkness, he found that the sun had gone down, and that it was time to prepare for rest. Ned had thrown a bed into the boat and a blanket.

“Few people left on a desert island as I am have enjoyed so luxurious a couch as this is,” thought Humphry, as he laid himself down after offering up his prayers, as he had been accustomed to do before he came to sea. Since then, shame, and the indifference which arises from it, had prevented him ever kneeling in prayer. He now, left all alone as he was, felt that prayer was his greatest comfort; though he had no fellow-creature to talk to, he had the privilege of speaking to his Maker. He had not been reading his Testament without gaining enlightenment. He had learned that he must come to God in His appointed way—through Jesus Christ; that he had no right to approach Him in any other way.

He had scarcely placed his head on the bundle of clothes which he had rolled up to make a pillow, and drawn his blanket round him, than he fell fast asleep.

Story 2--Chapter V.

It seemed but a moment afterwards that Humphry heard some birds chirruping, and opening his eyes, he found that it was already daylight. He instantly sprang up, recollecting that though the days were long, he had plenty of work to do. He first knelt down and earnestly offered up a prayer for protection and guidance.

The water in the bay looked bright and clear. Throwing off his clothes and plunging in, he enjoyed a refreshing swim. The warm air soon dried him, for Ned, as may be supposed, had not thought of providing him with towels. As he sat on a rock for a few moments to rest, he saw a dark object floating by in the water, then a triangular fin rose above it,

and he observed a pair of fierce-looking eyes gazing up at him. He shuddered, for he recognised the sailor's enemy, the shark. How mercifully he had been preserved! Had he remained in a few minutes longer the monster might have seized him. He must be cautious in future how he bathed. He might find, however, some quiet pool into which no shark could enter.

After recovering himself he returned to the camp, and lighted a fire to cook his breakfast, which consisted of salt beef and biscuit. He thought he should like some tea. He searched in his cask of stores, and to his satisfaction he discovered a large bagful, and another of cocoa. This showed him more than ever how thoughtful his friend had been. He knew, however, that he must husband it carefully. Having brought water from the fountain, he made a little, which he found very refreshing. After draining off the liquid he put the leaves carefully by, to serve for another time. With this, and some of the cold beef and biscuit, he made a hearty meal. Then taking his spade in his hand he set to work to dig up more ground. He enriched it also with rotten leaves which he collected, and with the ashes of the grass and roots which he dug up and burned.

He had already spent nearly two days on the island. "I shall forget how time passes if I don't take some note of it," he thought. "I must follow Robinson Crusoe's plan, and notch a stick." He at once went and cut a long one. He made a notch to show the day he had landed, and another for that which was then passing. He then smoothed off the end, and carved the date—"20th November 1812." "I will cut a notch every morning, directly I am up, and then I shall not run the risk of missing a day by forgetting to mark it."

He was surprised to find how soon Sunday came round. On board the *Wolf* that sacred day had only been observed by the men being allowed to mend their clothes; or if they were not so employed, they used to sit idly gambling or singing ribald songs. Humphry had been considering all the previous day how he should spend it. "We are told by God in the Bible to do no work, and to make it a day of rest. I am sure that I ought to obey Him, though it may seem important to me to get my house up or to dig more ground. I will therefore obey His commands, and leave the rest to Him."

He rose at the usual hour, and went to wash at the waterfall, where he found that he could take a shower-bath, which was cooler and more refreshing than even a dip in the sea. He came back to breakfast, and then taking out his Testament, read for a long time with deep interest. While so employed, it occurred to him that he would learn portions by heart. This amply occupied his mind, and afforded him so much satisfaction, that he determined every morning to commit a verse to memory that he might think of it while he was at work. He began at the "Sermon on the Mount" on Monday morning, so that by the end of another week he had learned six verses.

While waiting for the result of his gardening operations, he began putting up his house. As he had the greater portion of the summer of the Southern hemisphere before him, he was in no hurry about this; so during a portion of each day he went out with his gun to shoot birds, or sat on a rock with a line catching fish. He never failed to kill as many birds as he wanted for food, or to catch as many fish as he could eat. He fitted one of his harpoons, and kept it ready for use in case any seals appeared, though he suspected that if they visited the island at all, they would not come till the winter season.

He had gone on increasing his garden, and putting in more seeds. Greatly to his delight those he first sowed now appeared above ground. He watered them regularly, and the plants rapidly increased in size. Some were evidently cabbages, while others put forth roots with tubers; others, again, greatly resembled spinach.

He had now got up his house, and had dug a garden sufficiently large for his wants. The soil, by being watered every day, became even more fertile than he had expected.

Story 2--Chapter VI.

Several weeks thus passed away before he thought of exploring his island.

His stores had during this time visibly diminished. He therefore saw the necessity of laying in a store of food which might serve him when he could not obtain it either by his gun or fishing-lines.

During bad weather, when the sea breaking over the reef washed into the bay, he was frequently unable to catch fish. He thought over various ways of preserving them. "I might dry some in the sun, and salt others; but I suspect they would keep better and be more palatable if I could smoke them."

He found salt in the hollows of the rocks as he had expected, but it required much time and labour to collect. One of his small casks was now empty. A fine day, when the fish bit freely, enabled him to catch a large number, and he made his first experiment. He had already got a large pile of salt, though it was somewhat sandy, but he thought that would not signify. He cut off the heads and tails of the fish, then rubbed the salt thoroughly into them, and packed them away in layers, with salt between each. It took him three or four days' fishing to fill his cask, when all the salt was expended. He then stowed it away in a dry part of his hut, hoping that he had now secured food to last him for several weeks.

He next tried drying some in the sun, but did not succeed to his satisfaction. He afterwards, however, built a smoking-house, and cured a considerable number in it, though they were less palatable than those preserved with salt.

These tasks finished, one day, being prevented from fishing by a gale of wind, he set out on his proposed expedition, taking his gun, with some provisions in a wallet he had manufactured for the purpose.

He made his way towards the nearest hill, and then struck down a valley which led to the sea. Between it and the bay a high ridge of rocks extended, so he continued his course along the shore in an opposite direction. He had not gone

far before he came to another ridge which he had to surmount, the coast becoming wilder and wilder as he advanced, instead of improving, as he had hoped it might do. At last he reached what he took to be the southern end of the island. Looking back he saw the slope of the single high hill which composed its chief feature. He had now great difficulty in proceeding. The cliffs which faced the sea were almost perpendicular, and the rocks over which he climbed were extremely rough. He proceeded cautiously, knowing the fearful position in which he would be placed should he meet with an accident. He saw, however, at a little distance off, a number of wild-fowl circling round the cliffs. He was certain that they had come there for the purpose of laying their eggs. Could he reach the spot, he might obtain a pleasant addition to his larder.

After great labour he reached the spot, when he found himself among hundreds of birds, many of them already sitting. They screeched and quacked and scolded, pecking at his legs as he got among them. Without ceremony he quickly filled his wallet with eggs.

“This will serve me as a poultry-yard for a long time to come,” he thought. “I will not kill any of the old birds, but will wait till the young ones are hatched, as they are likely to be more palatable than their parents. In the meantime, I will supply myself with eggs.”

It was now time for him to commence his return home. He felt very tired when he reached his hut, for he had not taken so long a walk since landing on the island. To preserve his eggs, he covered them over with the grease which remained in the pot after he had boiled his pork, and then packed them away in cool, dry sand.

Every day he had reason to be thankful that he had read so much, for recollecting the various methods by which others had supported themselves, he was able to supply himself with food.

His garden yielded him a daily meal of either sweet potatoes, yams, cabbages, or other vegetables. He now caught more fish than at first, and also from his poultry-yard obtained a good supply of young fowls.

His shoes were wearing out, and he was desirous of catching some seals, from the skins of which he might manufacture others to supply their place. At last he saw several sporting in the bay. He at once got his harpoon ready, and took post on a rock, expecting that one would before long approach him. He was not disappointed Darting his weapon, he struck the animal, which swam off, dragging out the line at a rapid rate. He found that he had made a mistake, and was nearly losing his line and harpoon as well as the seal. Fortunately, just as it neared the end, he got a turn round a projecting piece of rock. The poor seal plunged and tumbled, and swam back to the rock to ascertain, it seemed, what had hurt it. He drew in the slack, and was thus able to secure it more completely. After a time its struggles ceased, and he dragged it to the beach. He here took off the skin, with which he hoped to make several pairs of shoes, while the flesh supplied him with a dinner of fresh meat for a couple of days; the other portions he salted, in store for future use. Stretching the hide on the ground, he dressed it with a ley formed by mixing the ashes of his fire with water. This he found would not answer completely, and after searching in the forest he discovered some bark which formed a strong tan.

The seals now came on shore in large numbers. Recollecting that their skins would be of value should a ship come to the island, he determined to capture as many as he could. Arming himself with a thick club, he attacked them when asleep on the beach, and every day succeeded in knocking over a considerable number. This gave him abundant occupation; and continuing his experiments he succeeded in perfectly preserving the skins. When at length the creatures took their departure, his hut was nearly filled with the result of his industry.

Day after day went rapidly by, and had he not been careful in notching his stick, he would soon have lost all count of time.

Story 2--Chapter VII.

Three years had passed away since Humphry landed on the island. He was startled one calm day, when fishing from a rock in the bay as he caught sight of his own countenance in the water, to observe how changed he had become. Instead of the laughing, careless, broadly-built boy with the ruddy face, which he once was, he had grown into a tall, thin young man, with a sunburnt countenance, its expression grave and thoughtful. He was not melancholy, however, nor did he ever feel out of spirits; but he had of course been thrown back on himself, while his mind was constantly occupied. He had but one book to read, but that book, above all price, had given him ample subjects for reflection. “What should I have done without this?” he often said to himself, as he opened the book with a prayer that what he was about to read might enlighten his mind.

“I have heard people talk of reading their Bibles, but though I have read nothing but my Testament for three years, I every day find something fresh and interesting in it.”

He had often made excursions to the top of the hill, whence he could obtain a view over the surrounding ocean.

It had been raining heavily during the previous day. No seals were to be caught on shore, nor fish in the water. Taking his gun, he set off, intending to go over the hill to get a shot at some wild-fowl. The wind had greatly increased; and wishing to obtain a view of the ocean with its huge foam-covered billows rolling around, he climbed to the top of the hill. As he reached it, his eye fell on a ship driving before the gale towards the rocky shore. Two of her masts were gone; the third fell while he was looking at her. Nothing could now save her from destruction, for even should her anchors be let go, they were not likely to hold for a moment. He considered whether he could render any assistance to the unhappy people on board. Too truly he feared that he could be of no use. Still he would do his best. Hurrying home, he procured the only rope he possessed, and a spar, and with these on his shoulder he hastened towards the spot at which, considering the direction the ship was driving, he thought she would strike the shore. He had scarcely reached it when he saw the ship driving on towards him on a mountain sea. The next instant down she

came, crashing on a reef of rocks far away from where he stood, the foaming sea dashing over her. Several poor wretches were carried off the deck, now driven towards him, but directly afterwards carried back by the retiring surf. He could distinguish but one alone still clinging to a portion of the wreck, all the others had in a few minutes disappeared. As long as that man remained, he could not tear himself from the spot.

Several hours passed by; still the man clung on, having secured himself apparently by a lashing. The storm seemed to be abating. Humphry took off his shirt, and fastening it to the end of a spar, waved it, to show the shipwrecked seaman that help was at hand if he could reach the shore. It was observed at length. The man, casting off the lashings, lowered himself into the water, and struck out for land. Humphry prepared his rope. Fixing the spar deep in the sand, and securing one end of the rope to it, he stood ready to plunge in, with the other end round his waist, to drag the man on shore should he get within his reach. How anxiously he watched! Nearer and nearer the man came. Now he was seen floating on his back, now he struck out again. A sea rolling in bore him on, but as it receded it threatened to carry him off once more. Now was the moment. Humphry dashed into the surf. The man's strength had almost failed when Humphry grasped him, and hauling himself up by the rope dragged the man out of the surf, sinking down exhausted by his side the instant he was out of its reach.

Humphry was the first to recover.

"If you are strong enough to accompany me to the other side of the island, friend, where I have my home, we will set off at once; but if not, I will go back and get some food for you," he said.

"I shall soon be better," answered the man. "I think I could walk. Have you a companion with you?"

"No," answered Humphry, surprised at the question; "I am all alone."

"That's strange! What, isn't there a young lad somewhere about the island?"

"No," said Humphry. "I have been here three years and have seen no human being."

The man gazed into his countenance with a look of astonishment.

"What is your name, then?" he asked.

Humphry mentioned it.

"You Mr Gurton!" he cried, pressing his hand. "I suppose it must be; and don't you know me?"

Humphry looked into the man's face. It was covered with a thick beard, and his tangled hair hung over his shoulders.

"You must be Ned Hadow; yet I should not have known you more than you know me. I am indeed thankful that you have been saved. But where have you been all the time?"

"Greater part of it living on shore," answered Ned. "After we landed you, we took three or four prizes; but not being able to navigate the ship, we put into a convenient harbour in an island inhabited by savages. There we remained, living among them much as they did. Several of our men were killed; and at last, finding that the savages intended to cut us all off, we put to sea again. We had been knocking about for some time, and used up all our provisions, when we fell in with the gale which drove the ship on yonder rocks."

Ned insisted that he could walk across the island, and with Humphry's help he was able to accomplish the journey, though nearly exhausted at the end of it. Humphry then made him lie down in his bed, while he prepared some soup and other food.

Next day Ned somewhat recovered; and in the course of a week, owing to Humphry's constant attention, he looked more like his former self.

"It's very dreadful to think that all the others have perished, but I am truly thankful that you have been sent to be my companion," said Humphry. "You little thought when you acted so kindly towards me by saving my life, and getting me put on shore here, that I should ever in any way be able to repay you."

"I did not, Mr Gurton; but I feel that I am such a worthless fellow that my life was not worth preserving."

"We are all worthless, Ned: that's what the book I read every day tells me, and I am convinced of it when I look into my own heart, and know how people in the world are generally acting."

"What! have you got that book still, Mr Gurton?" asked Ned.

"Yes, indeed I have, and I shall be glad to read it to you, Ned," said Humphry.

"I shall like to hear it, sir, for I have not heard anything like a good word since you used to read it to me when I was sick. I had almost forgotten there is a God in heaven. I remembered that, however, when I was clinging to the wreck, and expecting every moment to be in His presence."

"It's the best thing to read God's Word, and to be guided by it, when we expect to live. I hope you may be spared many years, even though we never get away from this island, and that book will serve us better than any other companion who could join us."

Humphry, instead now of reading his Testament to himself, read it daily to Ned, and even while they were at work he used to repeat portions he had learned by heart.

Though Ned could not read, he gained in time a good knowledge of the book, and his dark soul by degrees becoming enlightened, he understood clearly at length God's plan of salvation, and cheerfully accepted it.

"You see, Ned, all things are ordered for the best," said Humphry one day, "and you must be convinced that God loves us, however little we may have loved Him. If I had remained on board the privateer, I should have become, as I was fast doing, like the rest of the unhappy crew. Though I thought it very dreadful to be left all alone on the island, I now feel that it has been the greatest blessing to me. God in His mercy also saved you, though you would have preferred remaining among the savages. Now you are happy in knowing the glorious truth that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; and though we may both of us wish to be once more among our fellow-men, we can live contentedly here till He thinks fit to call us out of this life."

"I hope He may take me before any ship comes to the island, for if I once fell among the sort of men I have lived with all my life, I should soon again be as bad as they are," said Ned with a sigh.

"Not if you sought help and protection from God's Holy Spirit," answered Humphry, "and prayed that He would keep you out of temptation."

Ned was surprised to find how much Humphry had done during the time he had been alone on the island. He assisted him in all his undertakings, and they together caught enough seals to fill another large storehouse.

At last, after two years had thus passed away, Ned, who had been fishing down the harbour, came hurrying back. His countenance was grave, and he looked much agitated.

"I have been watching a vessel standing in for the island. She has hove to, and is sending a boat on shore. The time has come, Mr Gurton, when we must part. I dare not go back into the world, and have made up my mind to remain here. You are young, and have many years before you, and I would advise you to go, and all I ask is that you will think of me and pray for me."

This announcement made Humphry even more agitated than Ned. He hurried to the spot where the boat could be seen.

She made her way up the harbour. Humphry and his companion went down to meet her. An officer-like looking man stepped on shore, accompanied by another in dark clothes. They seemed much surprised at seeing Humphry and Ned.

"What! are you Englishmen?" asked one of the strangers. "We only discovered the island this morning, and had no expectation of finding it inhabited."

Humphry explained that they were the only inhabitants; that he had been left there some years before, and, pointing to Ned, said, "This man was afterwards wrecked on the coast, and he alone was saved from his ship."

"I am Captain Summers of the *Hope*, now lying in the offing. This gentleman is the Reverend Mr Evans, a missionary, whom I am conveying to an island where he is about to settle. What is your name?" asked the officer.

Humphry told him.

"And my name is Tom Martin," said Ned coming forward, greatly to Humphry's surprise.

"Well, my friends, it seems but a barren island. I wonder how you have managed to live here so long."

Humphry briefly explained the various means by which he had procured food, and leading the way to the garden, showed them the perfect cultivation into which it had been brought. He then invited Captain Summers and Mr Evans into his hut. His Testament lay open on the table. The latter took it up, observing—

"I am glad to see, my young friend, that you have not been deprived of God's Word during your long stay here."

"It has indeed been my great solace and delight," answered Humphry. "Without it I should have been miserable."

"Well, my friends, I shall be most happy to receive you both on board my ship; and as I hope to sail for England in the course of a few months, you will then be able to return home."

Humphry thanked the captain for his offer, which he gladly accepted. Ned looked very grave.

"I am much obliged to you, sir," he said, "and though I shall be sorry to part from Mr Gurton, I am very sure that I had better stay where I am till God thinks fit to call me from this world. I have lived too long among savages, and worse than savages, to go back again and live with civilised people. If Mr Gurton will leave me his Testament, which he has taught me to read, and his gun and harpoons, it's all I ask."

"No, my friend," observed Mr Evans, "man is not made to live alone. If, as I hope from what you say, you have learned to love Jesus Christ, you should try to serve Him, and endeavour to do good among your fellow-creatures. Now, as I am going to settle in an island inhabited by savages, I shall be very glad of your assistance, and if you already understand their language, which I have to learn, you may speak to them, and tell them of Him who died for them, that they may be reconciled to Him. You will thus be showing your love for Him far more than by living a life of solitude, even although you spend your days in reading His Word. Remember it is not only those who hear the Word of God, but those who hear and do it, who are His disciples."

"You are right, sir," exclaimed Ned, brightening up. "My only fear if I left this was to find myself among those who would lead me back into bad ways, but I will gladly go with you—that I will, sir."

As the captain was anxious to see the island, Humphry undertook to guide him and Mr Evans to the top of the hill, whence they could obtain a view over the whole of it. Before setting out, Humphry showed them the store of seal-skins.

“I shall be sorry to leave these behind,” he observed, “and if you can receive them on board, they will assist to pay my passage.”

“As to that, my friend,” answered the captain, “I will very gladly send my boats to take them off, and you shall pay freight for them; but you, I am very sure, will be able to work your passage, and I hope you will find they will sell for some hundred pounds in England.”

“Part of them belong to my companion,” observed Humphry.

“No, no, Mr Gurton,” said Ned. “They are all yours. Not a shilling of their value will I touch, except enough to give me a new rig-out, as I am not fit to accompany Mr Evans in these tattered old clothes of mine.”

“Set your mind at rest about that,” said the captain. “You shall be welcome to a thorough fit out, suitable for the task you are about to undertake, and your friend Mr Gurton will require the money more than you will.”

Captain Summers, according to his promise, loaded his own boat with seal-skins, and sent her off to the ship with orders for the long-boat to come ashore and carry off the remainder. Meantime he and Mr Evans paid their intended visit to the hill-top.

On their return Humphry took the first opportunity of drawing Ned aside, and asking why he had not given his right name.

“I did give my right name, Mr Gurton,” he answered. “Ned Hadow was merely a purser’s name which I took when I entered on board the *Wolf*, because you see, sir, I had run from a man-of-war. Now I know better, I would only tell the truth; and so, please, call me Tom Martin in future, and I am ready to stand the consequences.”

Humphry and his companion were kindly received on board the *Hope*, when the good captain supplied them with new suits of clothes, which they indeed much required.

The *Hope* continued her voyage.

How different was the life led on board her to that on board the *Wolf*! Captain Summers and his officers were Christian men. The crew were kindly treated; not an oath escaped the lips of any of the men, while all did their duty with cheerfulness and alacrity.

The voyage was prosperous. At the end of three weeks the *Hope* dropped her anchor in the harbour of a fine island where Mr Evans was to remain.

A native missionary, who had been sent there a year before, came off to receive him, and brought him the satisfactory intelligence that a large number of the natives were anxiously looking out for his arrival.

Some days were spent in landing his property, and assisting him in putting up his house, while an abundance of fresh provisions was brought off by the natives to the ship.

Humphry parted from his old friend with the less regret from feeling sure that he would be well occupied, and free from the temptations he dreaded.

“We shall meet again, I trust, as Captain Summers has offered me a berth as third mate of the *Hope* on her next voyage, which he expects to make to these seas,” said Humphry, as he bade him farewell.

“If we don’t meet here, we shall in another world, sir. And bless you, Mr Gurton, for pointing out to me the way to it,” said Tom, as he wrung Humphry’s hand, and tears burst from his eyes.

The *Hope* had a prosperous voyage home, during which Humphry did his utmost to fit himself for the duty he was to undertake. He had no ties in England, so he gladly again sailed in the *Hope*. Captain Summers having sold the seal-skins for a good price, judiciously invested the proceeds for him.

Humphry had the satisfaction of meeting his old friend Ned, or rather Mr Martin, as he was now called, and of finding that he had been of the greatest service to Mr Evans. He never returned to England, but died at his post, labouring to the last in spreading the gospel among the natives.

Humphry won the regard of Captain Summers by his steadiness and good conduct, and at the end of his third voyage he married his daughter, and soon afterwards obtained the command of a ship. When at length he was able to quit the sea and live on shore, he often used to relate to his children, among his many adventures, how he spent five years of his life alone on an island.

The End.

Story 3--Chapter I.

STORY III—THE BROTHERS; A TALE OF THREE LIVES.

Many years ago, while King George the Third sat on the tranquil throne of England, and before the First Napoleon became Emperor of France, Gilbert Maitland, the youngest of Farmer Maitland's three sons, was one autumn evening, mounted on his shaggy pony, riding through the New Forest. He had set out from the town of Christchurch to return to his father's house, which was situated between it and Lymington. The shadows of the trees grew longer and longer, till they disappeared altogether in the general gloom, as the sun sank, into the leaden-coloured foam-topped waves of the English Channel, which could here and there be seen from the higher ground through the openings of the trees on his right. The wind howled and whistled, and the dry leaves and twigs, blown off by the south-westerly gale, came flying by even faster than he galloped, while the clouds gathering thickly overhead increased the darkness.

Gilbert was not altogether comfortable in his mind. He had gone, contrary to his father's wish, to pay a visit to Dick Hockley, whose acquaintance he had formed while at school at Christchurch, and whom Mr Maitland considered an unfit companion for one of his boys. Mr Hockley held a small farm, and though it was badly cultivated, he had become wealthy, and had built a good house, and rode a fine horse, and lived in a style much above his position. He was, indeed, more than suspected of being connected with one of the many gangs of daring smugglers who at that time carried on their illicit traffic on the coast of Hampshire and Dorsetshire. Dick, a bold, rough fellow, two or three years older than Gilbert, boasted openly that he had already engaged in several smuggling enterprises.

Gilbert was fascinated by the accounts his acquaintance gave him of the risks he had run, the excitement of being chased, and the triumphant satisfaction of landing a valuable cargo, and conveying it, escorted by a large body of armed men, under the very noses of the Revenue officers, into the interior. Gilbert's great ambition was to join in one of these expeditions; whenever he could get an opportunity, he rode over to see his friend, and to listen to his long yams.

His father had at first cautioned him against any intimacy with a person of so doubtful a character as young Hockley, and then, finding that his warnings were of no avail, had positively prohibited Gilbert from associating with him.

He had grumbled greatly at this, when one day, Mr Maitland being away from home, in the hearing of his sister Mary and his two elder brothers Hugh and Arthur, he declared that he would go, notwithstanding what his father said.

"Dick is an honest fellow, and he has asked me to come, and I don't see why father has a right to stop me," he exclaimed.

"Father has forbid you to go, as he does not approve of young Hockley, and at all events it is your duty to obey him," said Mary. "Pray, Gilbert, do not go; it will vex father so much."

"I will tell you what, Gilbert," exclaimed Hugh, "if you are going to play any tricks of the sort, I will lash your hands behind you, and shut you up in your room till father comes back. I am the eldest, and it is my business to keep order while he is away."

"You had better not try to lay hands on me, or it will be the worse for you," exclaimed Gilbert, dashing out of the room.

"I don't think he will dare to go," said Hugh, resuming his studies, which had thus been interrupted.

Arthur, who was also sitting with his books before him, had not spoken.

They were both reading hard. Hugh had sometime before left school with great credit, having gained numerous prizes, and an exhibition which would enable him at his own earnest desire to go to college, where he hoped that with the talents he was supposed to possess he should make his way to a good position in life. He had a fine constitution, was strongly built, and neither study nor bodily exercise ever seemed to fatigue him; so that with the resolution and clear intellect he possessed, he had every prospect of succeeding.

Arthur, though studious, was delicate, and had been kept back somewhat by ill health. Neither of them had any taste for farming pursuits, and their father, who was proud of their talents, was anxious, as far as he was able, to give them the means of following the course in life they had marked out for themselves. He and his ancestors, sturdy yeomen of the upper class, the pith and marrow of the English population, for many generations had held the farm he occupied; and as he wished it to continue in his family, he had determined that his younger son Gilbert should become a farmer. Gilbert was what is often called a fine-spirited lad, but unfortunately he had been allowed to have his own way, and in consequence, frequently exhibited a determination not to submit to control. He had also never known a mother's tender and watchful care, for Mr Maitland had been deprived of his wife soon after Gilbert's birth, and perhaps this circumstance may have prevented him from restraining the child's temper, or punishing him when guilty of faults, as strictly as his better judgment would have prompted him to do.

Mr Maitland, an upright man, proud of his old family, and satisfied with his position, did not wish to rise out of it, though he was ready to allow his sons to run forward as far as they could in the race of life. He held the laws in respect, and, an exception to many around him, was strongly opposed to the smugglers and their illicit traffic. He would never allow them to deposit any of their goods on his property, and the active part he took in assisting the Revenue officers gained him much ill-will from the contraband traders.

Gilbert had scarcely left the room when Arthur got up, saying in his gentle way—

"I will try and persuade him to obey father, and not to go off to Christchurch. If he wants a ride, I will accompany him to Lymington, where there is to be a review of the Foreign Legion; or if he has a fancy for fishing, we will take our rods, and try and get some tench for father's supper."

"Oh, do get him to do that!" said Mary. "Father likes them better than anything else, and I will try and cook them

nicely for him."

Arthur, leaving his darling books, hastened out after Gilbert. Mary hoped he might find him, and prevent him committing the act of disobedience he threatened. She loved all her brothers, and the two elder treated her with tenderness and respect. She was a kind-hearted, good-tempered, and intelligent girl, in every way worthy of their love, and possessed of a considerable amount of beauty. She came next to Hugh in age, but she and Arthur were more generally companions, as they agreed in most of their tastes. Hugh was already a young man, and though he had no objection to a gallop through the forest, he devoted the greater part of his time, even when at home, to study. He had determined to make his way in the world, and he knew that only by steady application could he hope to do so.

Mary now sat at the window, busily plying her needle, and refraining from speaking lest she might interrupt him, though she wanted to talk to him about Gilbert, whose general conduct had of late given her great anxiety. She could not help thinking that it would be better if he were to be sent to a distance, and thus be separated from his present companions. Neither she nor Arthur liked to tell their father what they knew about him, but she thought that Hugh might do so, and might suggest the plan which had occurred to her.

Arthur, after some time, came back. He had searched everywhere for Gilbert, but had been unable to find him, his saddle was not in the harness-room, nor his pony in the stable; it was evident that he had ridden off somewhere.

In the evening Mr Maitland came back, and inquired for Gilbert. His other children were unwilling to say that they feared he had gone to Christchurch, for they hoped he might have taken a ride in some other direction. Night came on, and still he did not appear. Mr Maitland inquired whether any of them could tell where Gilbert had gone. At last Mary confessed that he had said he should ride over to see Dick Hockley; but that she hoped, from her and his brothers' remonstrances, that he would have refrained from doing so.

Hour after hour passed away, and Mr Maitland, at first angry, became anxious about him. The night was too dark to permit of any one going out to search for him; indeed, as there were numerous ways through the forest by which he could come, he might be easily missed. Midnight arrived, and he was still absent Mr Maitland now became seriously alarmed, and he, with Hugh and Arthur, went out in different directions from the house, listening anxiously, in the hopes of hearing the sound of his pony's footsteps, but the roaring and whistling of the wind in the trees drowned all other noises. At length they re-entered the house, Mr Maitland sent the rest of the family to bed, but sat up himself watching for Gilbert's return.

Story 3--Chapter II.

Gilbert knew his way, and that he could trust his little forest-bred pony to carry him safe home; so he gave it the rein, and let it gallop along the open glade, though the gloom was often so dense that he could not see a yard beyond the animal's head. He had got some distance, and had just crossed another road, when he heard the sound of horses' hoofs behind him. There were several. They came on at a rapid rate. Who the horsemen were he could not tell. The sounds increased. He put his little forester at its swiftest gallop, but his pursuers were soon at his heels, and a stentorian voice shouted to him to stop, with the threat of a pistol-bullet through his head. He pulled up, feeling that all hopes of escape were vain.

"Who are you? what are you after here?" shouted the same voice, and two men galloping up seized his rein. "What business takes you out at this time of night, youngster?" asked one of the men.

"I am going home," answered Gilbert.

"Where is your home?" said one of the men, drawing a pistol from his belt; "answer truly, or I will send a bullet through you!"

"I am going to the house of Mr Maitland, my father," answered Gilbert, more frightened than he had ever before been in his life.

"Mr Maitland! you will not go there to-night!" exclaimed the man, with a loud curse. "Why, he is the fellow who before brought the soldiers down upon us, and this youngster has been sent out to learn where we are going, and will be setting the dragoons from Lymington on our heels. If Mr Maitland ever falls into our hands, he will find we have a heavy score to settle with him."

These remarks were interlarded with numerous fierce oaths, which need not be repeated.

The men now turning round the pony's head, led Gilbert back, swearing at him in a way which made his blood curdle, and fancy that they intended to shoot him or knock his brains out.

They had not got far when Gilbert saw a long line of horsemen riding two and two, in close order, crossing the road. They appeared to have heavy packages on their saddles, and were armed with blunderbusses and swords. Gilbert's conductors seemed to be watching for some one to come up. After the horsemen came a line of waggons, with an armed man sitting in front of each and another behind, while a horseman rode on either side. There seemed to be no end of them, one following close upon the other. Gilbert counted a hundred or more. At last another band of horsemen appeared. One of Gilbert's captors called to a man riding among them whom he addressed as "Captain," and told him of the way they had found Gilbert, and their suspicions.

"Bring him along with you," was the answer, "we will have a talk by and by with him."

Gilbert's captors joined the ranks, and the party of smugglers continued to make their way by unfrequented paths

through the forest. He now recollected hearing that a strong force of military had been sent down to Lymington to assist the Revenue officers, and every moment he expected to see the smugglers attacked. They, however, seemed to have no dread of being interfered with, but rode on, laughing and joking with the utmost indifference. From the remarks Gilbert overheard, he found that they had taken good care to mislead the military, who were waiting far behind them, near the coast, under the belief that the intended run of contraband goods had not yet been landed. At length the smugglers reached a spot where their large band was to break up into separate parties who were to branch off in various directions, some with silks and ribbons to go even as far as London, others to different towns, while a portion of the goods were to be stored in hiding-places in the forest. A large party of mounted men still remained after the waggons had gone off. Among them were those who had seized Gilbert.

“Well, Captain, what shall we do with this young viper; he is a son of old Maitland’s, and there is no doubt has been after mischief.”

“Do?” answered the person addressed, a big dark-bearded man, clothed like his companions in rough seafaring costume. “The easiest way would be to leave him here to frighten the crows,” and he looked up at the overhanging branch of a tree.

Gilbert felt ready to drop from his pony with terror.

“Oh, don’t, don’t hang me!” he cried out; “I did not want to do you any harm. If you will let me go, I will not say a word about what I have seen.”

“Very likely?” growled the Captain, “but you knew that a cargo was to be run, and were galloping off to bring the dragoons down on us.”

“I knew that a cargo was to be run, because Dick Hockley told me so; but I was not going to fetch the dragoons, for I did not even know where they were.”

“A very likely story; and if Dick Hockley has been chattering to you, he will have to answer for it,” observed the Captain. “However, bring the lad along. We will hear what Master Dick has to say for himself.”

The troop, with Gilbert in their midst, now rode back by the way they had come towards the coast.

Gilbert supposed that they were about three miles from Christchurch, when, turning to the left, they came in sight of one of the numerous small farms which existed in those days in the forest, consisting of several straw-thatched mud buildings. Here he was told to tumble off his pony, which was led away, while he was conducted into a small inner room in the cottage. The window, high up near the roof, was closed by a shutter from the outside. The only furniture was a truckle-bed and a stool. The cottage apparently belonged to one of the men who had captured him, for Gilbert heard him inviting the rest to partake of the provisions he placed before them. They were all engaged in eating and drinking and talking loudly for some time. He heard the Captain at last say—

“We will now go and hear what account Master Dick has to give us about this youngster, and if he has been trying to play us a trick, he must be shipped off out of the way.”

Gilbert could not tell whether the smuggler referred to Dick or to himself, though as it was very evident they would not scruple to use violence if they thought it necessary for their own safety, he felt very uncomfortable.

At last, from the sounds he had heard, he supposed that most of the men had mounted their horses and ridden off. Feeling tired, he groped his way to the bed, on which he threw himself, and in spite of his anxiety, was soon asleep.

He was awakened by the entrance of his host, bringing him some bread and cheese, and a jug of milk.

“There,” he said, “you must be hungry by this time, youngster. It’s more than you deserve, though.”

“How long am I to be kept here?” asked Gilbert.

“I again tell you I did not want to do any one harm; on the contrary, I think you smugglers very fine fellows.”

The man laughed.

“It does not matter what you think; if Dick cannot give a good account of you, you will be sent across the seas, that I can tell you.”

Saying this, the man left the room. Gilbert was very hungry, so he ate the bread and cheese, and drank up the milk. By the light which came through a small chink in the shutter and under the door he saw that it was daytime; but hour after hour passed on, and he was still a prisoner.

Story 3--Chapter III.

Mr Maitland became seriously anxious when morning dawned and Gilbert did not return. Calling up Hugh and Arthur, he told them to mount their ponies, and ride in the direction Gilbert was most likely to have taken; and as soon as the farm servants arrived, he sent them out to search the forest far and near. He himself, after consulting Mary, mounted his horse, and rode off to Christchurch, to ascertain from Dick Hockley whether Gilbert had paid him a visit.

He found the young man lolling over a gate smoking.

“Your son, Mr Maitland? what, has not he got home?” he exclaimed in unfeigned surprise. “Yes, he paid me a visit

yesterday. He is an old schoolfellow, you know, and I am always happy to see him. He and I are very good friends, and there is no reason we should not be that I know of."

"That is not to the point," said Mr Maitland, sternly. "You acknowledge that he paid you a visit. I wish to know when he left you."

"Somewhere about five o'clock, as far as I recollect," answered young Hockley; "and as he was as sober as a judge, I should think his forester ought to have carried him home in a couple of hours at the outside."

Mr Maitland continued to cross-question Dick.

"I tell you he left me at five o'clock, and I know nothing more about him," was the only answer he could obtain. Mr Maitland was at length convinced that young Hockley knew nothing more than he said about his son. He made inquiries in the neighbourhood, and ascertained from two or three people that they had seen a lad resembling Gilbert in appearance riding towards the forest. He gained, however, a piece of information; it was that a large cargo of goods had been run that evening from the well-known lugger, the *Saucy Sally*, and had been conveyed with a strong escort inland, under the command of her daring captain, Slippery Rogers, who was so called from the way in which he managed on all occasions to elude the Revenue cruisers afloat, and the Government officers and soldiers sent in pursuit of him on shore.

"It's lucky you did not fall in with them, Mr Maitland," observed his informant. "They have vowed vengeance against you; and it would fare ill with you if they were to get you into their power."

"I am not afraid of them, or any ruffians like them!" said Mr Maitland. "I shall do what I consider right; and try to rid the country of such pests as these outlaws have long been to it. It is a disgrace to those who should know better, and who yet encourage them by buying their goods, and refusing to give evidence when they are caught. They not only deprive the king of his just dues, but injure legitimate trade, and encourage a general lawlessness among the whole population of the coast. However, I must hasten off, and try and find out what has become of my poor boy."

On making further inquiries, Mr Maitland ascertained the route the smugglers had taken, and became convinced that Gilbert must have crossed their path, and probably fallen into their hands. He accordingly called on the two neighbouring magistrates, and deposed, to his belief, that violence had been offered to his son by the smugglers. He gave information also to the Revenue officers, who promised all the assistance they could afford.

Having done all he could, hoping that Gilbert might in the meantime have arrived there, he set off home. Mary met him at the gate. Gilbert had not been seen. Hugh and Arthur had come back, and had gone out again to renew the search. The whole day was spent in searching for the missing one, but no trace of him could be discovered.

Day after day passed by, and Mr Maitland could gain no tidings of the son, who, notwithstanding his disobedience, he loved truly, as the last gift of his affectionate wife.

Many weeks afterwards Gilbert's pony was found in the neighbourhood of the farm with its saddle on its back.

Arthur, from overstudy, it was supposed, fell ill, and his life was despaired of. Poor Mr Maitland feared he should lose him also. He had not unhappily the consolation of true religion. He was a just and upright man in his own sight, and in that of his neighbours, and fully believed that he deserved the favours of God on earth, and merited heaven when he should be called hence. When the time of trial came, there was something wanting. He could not look up to God as his loving, tender Father, and go confidently to Him in prayer for support, or say truly, "Thy will be done."

Hugh had gone to college, where from the first he exhibited the talents which had gained him credit during his school career, and his tutor wrote word that he was among the most promising young men in the University. He avoided all unnecessary expenses, and being of a thoroughly independent spirit, kept aloof from those who would have drawn him away from his studies. His aims were, however, worldly; the human intellect he held in the highest estimation, and was satisfied that by his unaided efforts he could do as he desired. He was sober, moral, and economical, because he was convinced that should he be otherwise he would injure his prospects. Hugh Maitland was therefore looked upon as an excellent young man, and perhaps few were more convinced that such was the case than himself. He wrote home deeply regretting Arthur's illness, hoping that the doctor's skill and Mary's watchful care would bring him round, and sympathising with his father in his grief that no tidings had been received of Gilbert.

"I am still convinced, however," he observed, "that had he met with foul play, or by any accident lost his life, his body would have been found, and I have hopes that he will still turn up. Perhaps, as he had been reading Robinson Crusoe, he may have taken it into his wise head to run off to sea, though I should have supposed that he would have sent a line to inform us of his romantic proceeding. Tell Arthur to keep up his spirits, and not to say die."

Mary watched over Arthur with the most loving care, and through God's mercy he gradually recovered his strength, and was able to resume his studies. The doctor warned him, however, that he must not slick to them too closely, and advised him to take constant rides with his sister, and be in the open air as much as possible.

"If you will be guided by me, my young friend, you will give up your intention of going to college, and assist your father on his farm," he observed. "You will find it a more healthy life than the one you propose, and probably get as strong as you can wish." Arthur began to consider whether it was not his duty to follow the doctor's advice. Mary hoped that he would do so, as he would then live at home with her. Mr Maitland promised every encouragement, remarking—

"Now I have lost poor Gilbert, there is no one else to keep on the farm when I am gone, or to afford a home to Mary."

This latter argument weighed greatly with Arthur. He had had indeed no definite aim in his wish to go to college; he

might perhaps become a master in a school, or take pupils at the university, or should he get a fellowship, obtain a living, but he had never thought even in that case of the duty of striving to win souls for Christ. Of the gospel and its requirements he had a very imperfect knowledge. Possessing a more gentle and loving spirit than Hugh, he thought it would be pleasant to go about among the poor, to try and make them moral and good, and relieve them in distress. There were very few cottagers in their neighbourhood who required much assistance. When any of them were sick, he and Mary had found much satisfaction in carrying them food and delicacies which they were unable to procure, and in helping them sometimes with money from their own scanty means.

During the summer long vacation Hugh did not come home, having gone with some young men who had engaged him to read with them. When he returned at Christmas, Arthur's resolution of becoming a farmer was somewhat shaken. Hugh put before him so many of the advantages a hard-working man with good talents might obtain at the university, that his desire to try his fortune there revived. He had continued his studies for several hours every day, and now Hugh being able to assist him, he set to work with renewed vigour during the long winter evenings.

Story 3--Chapter IV.

Gilbert scarcely knew how long he had been a prisoner when he heard a voice which he recognised as Dick's. For some time he could not make out what was said.

"I will have a talk with him," he at length heard Dick observe.

Some more remarks were made when the door opened, and he found Dick standing outside.

"Why, Gilbert, they have treated you somewhat scurvily; but it was for your good, lad, and no one is more anxious about that than I am," said Dick. "Come along, and have some dinner, and we will talk matters over."

They repaired to the kitchen, where an ample meal, with no lack of spirits, was placed on the table. Gilbert did justice to it, and Dick plied him with liquor, which he drank off without considering its strength.

"I must tell you, Gilbert, that your father is in a tremendous taking about you," continued Dick. "If you were to go back, I should not be surprised if you found yourself turned out of house and home. He came to me this morning, and accused me of spiriting you away. I told him that I knew nothing about you, which was the fact. Now as matters have come to the worst, you are not likely to have a pleasant home even if you do go back, let me advise you to put the plan we have often talked about into execution, and come and have a trip with me to sea. Captain Rogers sails in the *Saucy Sally* to-night, and I promised to go along with him. We will have a jolly time of it; you will only have to swear that you will never reveal anything you see or hear about the doings of the smugglers. I told him that you were as true as steel, and that I would answer for you."

Dick said much more to the same effect. At another time Gilbert might have refused to leave his kind father and sister and brothers, even with only the intention of making a pleasure-trip, for he was not yet hardened in vice, but the spirits he had drunk had taken effect. He had committed the sin of wilful disobedience to his father's commands, and was thus easily deceived by his treacherous companion, who persuaded him that that kind father was too angry to forgive him, and that he would be henceforth an outcast from home. Such is the way Satan always tries to deceive erring people, both young and old, and to persuade them that their heavenly Father is not at all times ready to blot out their offences if they come to Him seeking forgiveness according to the way He has appointed through the all-sufficient atonement of His Son.

His false friend had fully calculated on gaining over the unhappy Gilbert, and had told his host to get a pony ready for him. As soon as evening approached they mounted and rode to the banks of the Christchurch river, near which the *Saucy Sally* lay moored. Though a notorious smuggler, as she had then no contraband in her, she could not be touched by the Revenue officers. Most of her numerous crew were already on board; Others were preparing to go off.

"Come!" said Dick, "we will soon be among the fine fellows," and sending back their ponies by a lad who came for the purpose, he and Gilbert jumped into a punt, and paddled alongside.

Gilbert was welcomed by Captain Rogers, who had been expecting him.

"Glad to see you, lad!" he said, shaking him by the hand, "and hope we shall have a pleasant cruise together."

Gilbert did not suspect that that slippery fellow had an object in getting him to join his gang. It was that he might revenge himself on Mr Maitland, whom he hated heartily. Rogers thought also that by getting Gilbert among them it might prevent him for the future from interfering in their illegal traffic as he had hitherto done.

The *Saucy Sally* was the longest boat of her class ever built—so it was said—measuring one hundred and twenty feet from her bowsprit end to the extremity of her outrigger. She had a large cuddy forward, and another aft, while the whole of the midship portion was open for the stowage of casks, of which she could carry from between two and three thousand. She pulled forty oars, and carried an enormous spread of canvas; so that in calms, light winds, or gales she could easily give the go-bye to any of the king's cruisers who might chase her.

The *Saucy Sally* was soon gliding swiftly out to sea. She had got some distance from the land, when a light breeze springing up, her sails were hoisted, and away she sped at a rate no ordinary vessel could equal towards the French coast. Gilbert, who had often longed to take a trip in the craft he had so much admired, was delighted with the way in which she sailed, and Dick took care to keep him amused, getting several of the men to recount some of the daring and hazardous adventures in which they had been engaged. Gilbert thought the life of a bold smuggler about the finest and most exciting he could wish for.

They soon reached the French coast. Dick invited Gilbert to go on shore, and introduced him into scenes of vice of which before he had had no experience. The *Saucy Sally* was detained some days taking in her cargo. The whole of this time was spent by Dick and Gilbert on shore, in company with several other profligate young men.

“Well, you have seen something of life,” observed Dick, as they were once more on board. “You will find it somewhat slow work when you go back to help your father on his farm—eh, lad?”

“I cannot go back,” answered Gilbert gloomily; “I should like to assist in running our cargo. There is excitement in that sort of work which suits my fancy.”

“I admire your spirit, lad!” exclaimed Captain Rogers, who overheard him. “If you stick by us, we will stick by you, and you shall have a share in the profits of our Venture; I know I can trust you, from what I have seen of you. Wherever there is danger, I shall expect you to be near to help me,” and Slippery Rogers shook Gilbert’s hand warmly.

On the voyage back to England a bright look-out was kept for any Revenue cruisers which might be on the watch. Twice the *Saucy Sally* was chased. Once, as a thick fog lifted, she found herself close to a Revenue bruiser, from which several shots struck her, killing one man and wounding two; but notwithstanding, with the help of oars and sails, she managed to get away. The *Saucy Sally* reached the English coast at night, and Captain Rogers threw up a signal, to let his friends on shore know of his arrival. A signal, to show that all was right, was returned. The *Saucy Sally* ran in, and boats coming to her, in a wonderfully short time the whole of her cargo was landed.

“Come!” said Dick to Gilbert, “if you wish to see all the fun, you must assist in conveying our cargo inland,” and he gave him a brace of pistols and a short gun, such as the rest were armed with.

Dick then told Gilbert to mount a horse, over the back of which a couple of ankers were slung, and he found himself riding along in company with a large gang of smugglers similar to those he had met with a short time before. He was now thoroughly involved with the smugglers, and less than ever could he venture, so he thought, to go home. Captain Rogers and Dick felt that they had got him securely in their toils, and that they could make use of him as an instrument to do whatever they might require.

They had got some distance inland when a halt was called, a scout having come back with the information that danger was ahead. A consultation was held among the leaders, who determined to push on, and if necessary, to fight their way. Dick and Gilbert, and others on horseback, were summoned to the front. Advancing for half a mile, they saw drawn up a strong body of mounted Revenue officers. The smugglers with oaths ordered them to get out of their way, and on their refusing, rode boldly forward, firing as they advanced. The Revenue officers fired in return.

“Make use of your weapon, Gilbert!” cried Dick, seeing that his companion hesitated to attempt killing his fellow-countrymen engaged in the performance of their duty. “Are you chicken-hearted, lad? I thought better of you.”

Thus taunted, Gilbert raised his piece. One of the officers was seen to fall from his saddle. More smugglers coming up, the Revenue men, finding themselves far outnumbered, retreated, carrying off two or three wounded companions. One smuggler had been killed, and several slightly wounded. The smugglers dashed on, the dead man being put into one of the waggons, and without further hindrance reached their destination.

“You did that well,” said Dick to Gilbert; “I saw you bring the fellow down; should not be surprised that you killed him.”

Gilbert shuddered. Had he really been guilty of the death of a fellow-creature? if so, all hope of ever returning home was gone; he would be hunted as a murderer, and murder, he had often heard, was sure to be discovered.

Dick saw the effect his remark had produced, and tried to laugh it off.

“Why, my good fellow, such things happen every day, and it’s no use being downcast about it,” he observed. “You can take up your old quarters at Deadman’s Farm till the *Saucy Sally* sails again; and then if you have a fancy for it, we will make a longer trip. The skipper intends to try his luck on another part of the coast, as this little affair will probably make the forest too hot for us for a time. We shall be back again, however, when it blows over, depend upon that.”

Gilbert lay concealed for about a week. He had time for reflection, and had he dared, he would have gone back.

“It’s too late now, though; it’s too late!” he groaned out, and had recourse to the brandy-bottle to stifle conscience.

He was once more on board the lugger, and from henceforth for several years was the constant associate of the smugglers. During the time he paid several visits to the neighbourhood of Christchurch; but he was so completely changed in appearance that even had he met any of his old acquaintances, they would not have recognised him. He had long ceased to be called by his own name, having assumed another, by which he was known among his associates. Dick Hockley and Slippery Rogers, and others who were acquainted with his secret, kept it for their own objects, and under his assumed name he became known as one of the most daring and desperate of the band.

Story 3--Chapter V.

Hugh had returned to college. It was again summer. Arthur studied harder than ever during every spare moment. He assisted his father as far as he could, but Mr Maitland saw that his heart was not in the work, and he more than once observed—

“I am afraid, Arthur, you will make no hand at farming.”

“I will do my best, at all events,” was Arthur’s reply. He frequently, as before, rode out with Mary. They were sometimes joined by Harry Acton, a young man who had lately taken a farm in the neighbourhood, and who seldom failed when he met them to turn his horse’s head round, and accompany them on their ride. He was intelligent and well educated, and Arthur liked him from the first. Mary gave no opinion, but she did not object to his accompanying them. Mr Maitland, after hearing Arthur’s report, invited Mr Acton in to tea, and seemed favourably impressed with him. He only thought him rather grave, and was surprised that a young man accustomed to country life should not take any interest in races or sporting, and had even declined to join the hunt.

“Life is too short for idle amusement,” Harry observed to Mary one day. “I have abundance of exercise in attending to my farm, and I feel that I am responsible to God for the proper employment of my time.”

Mary thought that a little amusement now and then could not be wrong.

“Relaxation from business for our mental or bodily health may not be so,” answered Harry; “but when I reflect that I am responsible to God for every moment of my life, I cannot reconcile it to my conscience to spend time in pursuits which do not tend to honour and glorify Him.”

Mary had never heard such language used before; and though she had already learned to like him too much to quarrel with him, she was disposed to think him somewhat puritanical.

Still Harry Acton came and came again, and Mary looked forward to his visits with pleasure. Serious as his remarks were sometimes, he talked well on numerous subjects, and she confessed that he was very agreeable. Arthur liked him more and more, and was thankful to have found a companion who could enter into his feelings and views.

Mary and Arthur had ridden over one day to Lyndhurst, and were passing through, that picturesque village, when they saw a large number of people collected on the green beneath the wide-spreading trees which bounded one side of it. Approaching, they saw a person mounted on a small platform, which raised him above the assemblage. He was of a tall, commanding figure; and as he stood bareheaded, it was seen that his hair was slightly tinged with grey, thrown back from off his high and expansive forehead. He was giving out a hymn in a clear, full voice, which reached even to the distance they were from him.

“He is a Methodist of some sort,” observed Arthur. “I suppose, Mary, you do not wish to stop and hear him.”

“I should be sorry to pass by without ascertaining whether what he is saying is worth listening to,” answered Mary. “I like the tone of his voice, and I remember learning that hymn from our poor mother.”

It was “Rock of Ages cleft for me.”

The young people drew near to the outside of the circle formed round the preacher. Though thus at some distance, every word he uttered was distinctly heard. The hymn concluded, in which a number of people joined, he offered up a short prayer that the blessing of God’s Holy Spirit might convey the words he spoke to the hearts of his hearers, and he implored them to reflect that they had immortal souls which must live for ever in happiness unspeakable or in immeasurable woe.

“And yet what claim have we to the bliss and glory of heaven?” he asked. “We have none. Every man is vile and outcast, full of disobedience, utterly sinful—ay, a rebel against God! Unregenerate man lives in open rebellion against his Maker. As well might a rebel taken in arms against his lawful sovereign demand pardon by right, as man, till reconciled to God, claim to be admitted to heaven. Men virtually acknowledge this when they profess a hope of going there by their performance of good works, by their penances, by the confession of their sins to other sinful mortals, by their sacrifices to Him who has said that He takes no delight in the blood of bulls and of goats.”

He continued, with text upon text, to prove the utter depravity of human nature, and man’s lost condition. He pointed to the state of society in all countries, people of all classes, to the hearts of each of his hearers, compelling them to search within, and many with horror felt that they were utterly lost. Then suddenly he pointed to the blue canopy of heaven, undimmed by a single cloud, and spoke of the unapproachable purity and holiness of God, in whose sight even the heavens are not clean; of heaven His dwelling-place, where all is peace and joy and love and holiness and purity, surpassing human comprehension. He spoke, too, of the might, the awful majesty and immutable justice of the Divinity, who can by no means look upon iniquity, who considers every departure from His exact and strict law as sin, who allows no such sins as small sins, and considers the least infraction of one of His laws as sinful.

“But I have not yet finished the catalogue of God’s attributes,” he continued. “He is a God of mercy: He is a God of love; though He hates sin, He loves the sinner, and that love caused Him to form the glorious plan by which His justice and mercy can both be satisfied—by which sinful and rebellious man can become reconciled and fit to inhabit a pure heaven, in which nothing vile and undefiled can enter. That plan I would now with swelling heart unfold to you. That gospel plan which God sent down His well-beloved Son, not only to declare to sinful man, but to carry out. Christ Himself announced it when He said, ‘God so loved the world, that He sent His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.’ Yes, God could not pass over sin; but in His infinite grace and mercy He allowed His only-begotten Son, all pure and holy and obedient, to be punished instead of unholy and rebellious man. He might have sent an angel, but then man would have given to that angel the love and reverence and obedience which is due to Himself alone. Christ left not one particle of the work to be done by man, graciously allowing man to take hold of it through a living faith, producing love and gratitude and adoration towards Him who accomplished it. Yet even thus sinful man was not left to his own unaided efforts. When Christ rose, the first-fruits from the dead, He promised, ere He ascended, to sit at the right hand of God, there to be man’s great High Priest, Mediator, and Intercessor—to send one to dwell with, to enlighten, support, and comfort, to urge and to enable man to take advantage of that salvation which He had completely wrought out. Oh, my friends! rebels though you are,

that gracious, loving God asks you to be reconciled to Himself. He has done the whole work for you. You cannot undo a single act, or unsay a single idle word; every evil thought is registered against you. But all, all will be blotted out—'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool;' 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin!' Oh! let me urge you to take advantage of that blood shed for you on Calvary. Accept without a moment's delay our loving Father's gracious offer of reconciliation. Only have faith that Jesus died for *you*—that He bore *your* sins upon the accursed tree—that He nailed them there, and put them out of God's sight, and give Him your willing, loving obedience! Seek in His Word with faithful prayer to learn His will, and His Holy Spirit will enlighten your minds, enable you to comprehend what you read or hear, and will aid you in obeying His commands."

Mary and Arthur were among the most attentive of those assembled round the preacher.

Much more he said. Another hymn was raised, a prayer offered.

Mary had sat with her eyes on the ground. She looked up, and saw Harry Acton by her side.

"I rejoice that you have been here," he said. "I will, with your leave, accompany you home."

Mary said, "Pray do."

"It is humbling to our human pride to be called on to acknowledge that we are outcast and rebellious sinners," he remarked, "but it is a truth all must be convinced of before they can understand the value of God's plan of salvation."

"I do feel it most deeply," murmured Mary; "and had I gone away without hearing the gospel part of the address, I should indeed have been most miserable."

Arthur made no remark, but as soon as he reached home, producing a Bible, he asked Acton to help him to refer to many of the passages which had been quoted.

"Remember, Arthur, we must not only search the Scriptures, but search them diligently, with earnest prayer for enlightenment," observed Harry.

They did so. Mr Maitland was from home, and the three thus sat together without interruption, searching, as Harry remarked, "whether these things were so." It was the commencement of a new era in the lives of the brother and sister. No longer legalists and formalists, as they had hitherto been, they became true and humble followers of Jesus, and found a happiness and contentment they had hitherto not known.

Story 3--Chapter VI.

Mr Maitland gladly allowed Mary to accept Harry Acton, who had asked her to become his wife. Arthur, on this, entreated his father to allow him to go to college.

"I would rather that one of my own sons should have taken the farm after me; but as Harry seems willing to occupy your place, and as I am afraid you will never give your heart to the business, I must let you follow the bent of your inclination," answered Mr Maitland.

Arthur at once, therefore, went to college. As his father could make him but a small allowance, he entered as a sizar. He worked, however, so diligently, that though he did not possess the brilliant talents of Hugh, he made good progress. Hugh had not only supported himself, but when he left the university, had saved sufficient to enter as a law student at Lincoln's Inn. Having not only eaten his way through his terms, but studied hard all the time, he was at length called to the Bar, and was shortly afterwards engaged as junior counsel in a case relating to the purchase of a property in his own county. His senior counsel having been taken ill, the cause remained in his bands. Having frequently been in the house about which the dispute had arisen—he was well acquainted with the locality—he brought forward witnesses to prove what he knew to be the truth. He had thus an opportunity of exhibiting his powers as a speaker, and triumphantly won. He had no lack after this of briefs, and in a short time became known among the solicitors on the circuit as a rising barrister, in whose hands they could safely commit the causes of their clients.

Mr Maitland was proud of his son's success, and welcomed him whenever he could spare time for a visit.

Between Hugh and Harry Acton there was, however, no sympathy. Hugh looked upon Harry as a very worthy young man, to whom he was happy enough to see his sister married, but thought him somewhat weak, and too much absorbed in his religious notions. Harry, on the other hand, considered Hugh a hard, worldly man, whose sole aim was to push his way in the world, forgetful of all higher spiritual matters. Still they were very good friends, and Harry took every opportunity of putting the truth in a loving and affectionate way before Hugh.

"Very good," answered Hugh one day to some of his remarks, "but life is short, and those never get on who waste time on subjects which interfere with their lawful pursuits. I want to be a judge some day, and when I am not studying law cases or my briefs, I must take a little relaxation, and should break down if I attended to the matters that interest you."

"But, my dear Hugh, agreeing that life is short, I argue that for that very reason we should employ it in a way to prepare ourselves for the event which must occur at its termination. Its very brevity proves to me that it is only a portion, and a very small one, of our existence, and that it is given us to prepare for another and a holier state of existence. As we employ it here, so shall we be better fitted for that higher, and what may be most glorious, state."

"Very well argued, Harry!" said Hugh; "I will consider more than I have hitherto done the plan which you say the Bible

contains for man’s redemption from the sinful and rebellious condition in which you argue he lives here below.”

Harry had more than once clearly placed God’s scheme of salvation before Hugh, who had listened to it with a dull, if not inattentive ear.

Hugh, however, went back into the world to enjoy its amusements, and to attend to his legal duties, and did not allow Harry’s remarks to trouble him.

Arthur, meantime, took his degree, and as soon as he was of age, entered the ministry. He had, however, no interest, and was not likely to obtain preferment. He was, indeed, indifferent to it, provided he could have the opportunity of preaching the gospel, and winning souls for Christ. His worldly acquaintances declared that he had no high or lofty aims, and Hugh pitied him for being content to go through life as a humble drudge. His Christian friends considered his aims were as noble and lofty as any human being could possess. His earnest desire was to gain subjects for his Master’s kingdom. He was ready to preach the gospel at all times, and in all places, wherever he could get men to listen. He felt as earnest when pressing one poor lost sinner to accept the truth and be saved, as when addressing a large multitude, hanging on his words; and he made his way into hospitals with that object in view, looking upon the souls of the humble and wretched as of as much value in God’s sight as those of the rich and powerful. He was at length appointed chaplain to the prison of the county gaol, a post which many would consider as among the least hopeful for winning souls. Arthur Maitland performed his duties in no perfunctory way; he entered upon them with all the zeal which the love of souls can alone excite, influenced by God’s Holy Spirit. Here, month after month, he laboured with untiring energy. Unhappily, the prison cells were at that time always full; and many who entered them in dark ignorance, went forth rejoicing in that risen Saviour, against whose loving laws they had long been rebels. Arthur would seldom even allow himself a short visit to Mary and her husband, much as they rejoiced whenever he was able to come.

Mr Maitland continued, as heretofore, engaged in his agricultural pursuits, and as stern an opponent of the smugglers as before; he was, indeed, more than ever incensed against them, on account of a fearful outrage which had lately been committed on a Custom-house officer residing at a neighbouring village. This officer, Bursey by name, had been always a conscientious and zealous servant of Government. He had mortally offended the smugglers by his activity. On this account Mr Maitland held him in much esteem, and had constantly afforded him support. On a dark night in winter, Mr Bursey, after he had retired for some hours to bed, was aroused by a loud rapping at the door. On looking through the casement of his chamber, he perceived two men, whose countenances he could not distinguish because of the gloom of midnight. He inquired their business, when one of them informed him that he had discovered a large quantity of smuggled goods in a barn at no great distance, to which he and his companion would lead him on the promise of a certain reward. A bargain was immediately struck, and Mr Bursey, telling his wife what had occurred, and that he would soon be back, unsuspicious of danger, hastily clothed himself, and descended unarmed into the passage; and on opening the door, his brains were instantly dashed out on the threshold. The other inmates of the house were aroused, but before they could reach the hall door the murderers had fled. There could be no doubt that some members of the daring smugglers who had so long infested the neighbourhood were guilty of the murder, but who they were it seemed hopeless to discover. Every effort was made to trace them; Mr Maitland was among the most active engaged in the search. Hitherto, however, the culprits had escaped, and it was supposed that they had left the country.

All hopes of finding them had been abandoned. At first Mr Maitland, knowing the feeling of hatred he had excited against himself, though a brave man, thought it prudent to avoid riding to any distance from home after nightfall. By degrees, however, he grew less cautious; and if business called him out, he did not hesitate to delay to any hour that was convenient. He had one day gone to Christchurch, and it was somewhat late before he mounted his horse to return home. The friend he was visiting had begged him to stop till the next morning.

“If you fancy that I fear the smugglers, set your mind at rest; I am not likely to be attacked, and my mare will give them the go-bye if they attempt to do so.”

He set off. Darkness came on, and a storm of thunder and lightning that had long been brewing broke over his head. While passing through a thick part of the forest, four men suddenly sprang out on him, and a couple of bullets whistled by his head. Putting spurs to his horse, he was dashing on, when his bridle was seized, and he was dragged from his saddle. A heavy blow on the head almost stunned him, but he retained sufficient consciousness to distinguish the voice of another man who had suddenly rushed up.

“Who have you got there?” asked the new-comer.

“Old Maitland, and we will give him his deserts,” replied one of the men with a fierce oath.

“Hold! hold! don’t kill him!” cried the man.

It was too late. One of the ruffians let the butt end of his pistol fall with a tremendous blow, which made the unfortunate farmer fall helpless to the ground. A cry of horror echoed through the forest.

The murderers, satisfied that they had performed their deed of vengeance, hastened from the spot.

Story 3--Chapter VII.

Harry Acton and his wife anxiously sat up till a late hour, waiting the return of Mr Maitland. When he did not appear the next morning, his son-in-law rode over to Christchurch to inquire for him. Harry became alarmed on hearing that he had left that place, and hastened to the nearest magistrate. A search was at once made in all directions. Mr Maitland’s body was at length found. It was evident how he had been killed, and it was at once suspected that some

of the gang of smugglers who had murdered Bursey were guilty of the deed. While the party were waiting for a cart to convey the body to Christchurch, a man was caught sight of among the trees in the distance. On finding that he was observed, he took to flight. He was chased, and at length overtaken. His dress showed that he was a seaman, probably a smuggler, his countenance was haggard, his eyes bloodshot. He made no attempt to defend himself, though he had a brace of pistols in his belt, and they were both loaded. As he was being dragged along, blood was observed on his coat, and blood had flowed from the victim's head. His name was asked.

"Geoferey Marwood," he answered promptly.

"What do you know about the death of this man?" he was next asked.

"I did not kill him," he answered.

"You will have a hard job to prove to the contrary," observed one of his captors, as they dragged the unhappy man along.

Mr Maitland's body was conveyed to Christchurch, where an inquest was held, when a verdict of murder was returned against Geoferey Marwood, and others not in custody. He, notwithstanding, protested his innocence, and accused four others of being guilty of the crime. Warrants were therefore issued for their apprehension, while he was conveyed to Winchester gaol to await his trial. Notwithstanding his protestations of innocence, it was generally supposed in the neighbourhood that Marwood was guilty of the murder of Mr Maitland, and that he had accused the other men in the hopes of prolonging his own life while search was being made for them. Though, however, they for a considerable time evaded the officers of justice, the whole were at length apprehended and conveyed to gaol. For many weeks the wretched man known as Geoferey Marwood lay in the felon's cell. Arthur Maitland frequently visited him, though he could not do so without horror as the supposed murderer of his father. Yet his sense of duty overcame all other considerations, and he endeavoured to address him as he would have done any other prisoner. The man, however, seemed to have hardened his heart, and to have an utter indifference to his fate.

"I have said that I did not kill the old man; but if it is proved that I did it, they will hang me, I suppose, and there will be another man less in the world. It is no matter, for I have nothing to live for; if I had, I should not have been taken in the way I was."

"But you have a soul, and that must live for ever," urged Arthur. "If you die impenitent, still refusing to accept God's offer of mercy, which He holds out even to the worst of sinners, that soul must spend eternity in misery unspeakable, cast out from His presence."

Arthur then read to him the account of the Crucifixion, and of the Saviour's gracious promise to the penitent thief.

"Great as is the crime that you are accused of, even if guilty, though man may not pardon you, God has promised to do so if you turn to Him and accept His offer. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,'"

"I tell you I am not guilty of that crime," answered Marwood. "I have done a number of things I wish that I had not; but if they choose to hang me, they may—that's all I have to say about it."

Still, although Arthur had seldom met with a prisoner who appeared more hardened or more indifferent to his fate, he persisted in visiting him, and placing before him the truths of the gospel.

He had endeavoured to show him what sin is, how hateful it is in God's sight, and he had warned him that God is a God of justice, and can by no means overlook iniquity. He had faithfully placed before him the fearful condemnation which he would bring down upon himself if dying impenitent. He now spoke to him of God's long-suffering and kindness, of His mercy, and readiness to forgive. He inquired whether he remembered a fond mother and kind father whom he had offended.

"Surely when you did so, and went back to them and expressed your sorrow, they received you again, and forgave you."

"I never remember my mother," answered the prisoner. "My father was a good man, but he was stern, and because I disobeyed him and joined some wild companions, I was told that he would not forgive me, and so I ran off and kept out of his way. I found out afterwards that he thought me dead. It was too late then to go back, for I had done so many things which he would have condemned that I could not face him."

Just at that moment the warders arrived at the door to conduct him to the court. His trial was about to commence. He and the other four men accused of the murder of Mr Maitland were placed in the dock. The junior counsel for the prosecution was Hugh Maitland. As had occurred at the commencement of his career, his senior counsel was unable, on account of sudden illness, to attend. His private feelings, as well as his professional interest, induced him to exert all his talents to procure the condemnation of the prisoners, whom he believed to be guilty. Every effort had been made to obtain proof against them. Of this they well knew.

Evil-doers, though often faithful to each other while success attends them, are frequently, for the sake of saving their own lives, ready to betray each other.

One of the men had offered to turn king's evidence. Hugh brought him forward as a witness.

The trial went on. The evidence contributed to fix the guilt on all the prisoners. That, however, of their traitorous companion was crushing. The jury were convinced that Marwood was guilty, as well as the three others. The blood on his coat, and his having been found in the neighbourhood, left no doubt on their minds, notwithstanding all the counsel of the accused could say in their favour. The jury brought in a verdict of "guilty." The judge was about to

pronounce sentence, when one of the condemned men claimed to be heard. He acknowledged that he and his three companions were the murderers of Mr Maitland, and that though he had not struck the fatal blow, he had been assisting; but that Marwood, though he had arrived at the moment, had no notion of their intention, but, on the contrary, had interfered and endeavoured to stop them. This evidence was considered of so much value, that though the judge condemned the whole to death, he recommended Marwood to mercy.

In those days a brief time only was allowed between sentence and execution. The three other prisoners knew that they had no hope of escaping, and Arthur felt it his duty to warn Marwood that the Government were so determined to put an end to the smuggler's traffic, and to punish all who fell into their hands, that he must not entertain much expectation of being reprieved.

"I care not for my life; but of this crime, as I have always said, I am innocent, and would die a thousand deaths rather than suffer for it," he answered. "And tell me, sir, who was that lawyer that appeared against me. I heard his name; it is one I once well knew."

"He is a barrister of high talent, the eldest son of the murdered man."

The prisoner, who was now in the condemned cell, lifted his manacled hands, exclaiming, involuntarily it seemed—

"My brother appear against me! God have mercy on him, for through him I have been unjustly condemned. As there is a God in heaven, whom I have so often blasphemed, I tell you again that I am guiltless of the crime for which I am condemned!"

Arthur was too much agitated to speak for a moment.

"You the brother of Hugh Maitland?" he exclaimed, "I am his brother. We had but one other brother, Gilbert, who lost his life when a mere lad; so we believed, and long mourned him as dead."

"Arthur! Arthur!" exclaimed Gilbert, for he was indeed the prisoner. "I recognise your features, although I had not till now done so. Can you believe me guilty of our father's death? I confess to countless crimes, but of that I am innocent."

Arthur at length recovered himself. From several circumstances which Gilbert brought to his memory, he was thoroughly convinced that he was indeed his brother.

"I before hoped that you might escape death, and now that I am convinced that you are innocent, I must use every exertion to prevent the risk of the reprieve not reaching Winchester in time to stay your execution."

Arthur hastened away in search of Hugh, who was on the point of starting for London. The calm, self-confident barrister sunk almost fainting into a chair when he heard Arthur's account. He, however, soon recovered his self-possession.

"If Gilbert is innocent, I am guilty of fratricide, and shall have contributed to bring disgrace on our family!" he exclaimed.

Together they set out for London. A reprieve, which had hitherto been refused, was granted.

It was on the very morning that the execution of the prisoners was to take place. An accident might delay them. It was daylight before they reached the gaol. They found the Governor in a state of agitation, for one of the prisoners had escaped. He was greatly relieved on finding that it was the man for whom they had brought a reprieve.

"One difficulty is got over," he observed; "but I should have had to keep him here, for he and another were accused, by that fellow who turned king's evidence, and who hopes to get the promised reward, of being implicated in Bursey's murder."

The two brothers looked at each other. Hugh could scarcely restrain his feelings; a sense of bitter shame predominated, however, for the disgrace he had hoped to escape might still fall on his family. Arthur earnestly prayed that the information might be false, and that his unhappy brother was innocent. The prisoner was supposed to have made his way to Southampton, and to have escaped on board a foreign-bound ship.

Several months passed away; it was the autumn. Arthur had gone to spend some days with Mary and her husband. He had ridden over to call on some friends at Christchurch. A heavy equinoctial gale was blowing from the south-west. As he was returning along the coast, wishing to obtain a view of the stormy sea, now covered with foaming waves, he observed a large lugger, under a press of sail, standing towards the shore. A number of people were collected on the beach, and he guessed, from the light waggons and horses of which he had caught sight, that preparations were being made for running a cargo of smuggled goods, then often done in open day, the Revenue officers being either enticed away or bribed not to interfere.

The danger a vessel must encounter venturing in at that time appeared fearfully great. He could not bring himself to leave the spot. The reason of the lugger's attempting the hazardous experiment, however, was evident. In the offing appeared a sloop-of-war, and one, he knew, had been sent to cruise after smugglers. From remarks he overheard, he discovered that the lugger was the *Saucy Sally*, commanded by Slippery Rogers. Every moment the gale was increasing, and the surf came rolling with greater and greater force upon the beach. Those on shore threw up a signal to show that landing was impossible, but the fearless crew of the lugger pushed madly on. One instant she appeared with her broad spread of canvas swelling to the gale; the next, surrounded by the fierce waves dashing up madly around her, she lay shattered to fragments on the shingly beach, her crew struggling vainly in the surf. Some few amid the wreck, and casks and bales, which formed her cargo, were washed on shore, but the greater number

were carried out far beyond human reach by the receding waves. Of those who were saved, several were fearfully injured, some breathed their last as they were dragged out of the water. Arthur offered that assistance which the rough men were little able to afford. He had sent off for a surgeon, and having attended to two of the sufferers, hastened to the side of a third, who seemed to have received some severe injuries. As he knelt down he recognised the countenance of his unhappy brother Gilbert, who, opening his eyes, fixed them on his face.

"As he knelt down he recognised the countenance of his unhappy brother Gilbert."

THE BROTHERS.

"We obtained a reprieve," said Arthur. "Why did you escape? you knew I had gone to obtain it."

"I did not trust to the king's mercy; and as I had the opportunity, I determined to avail myself of it," answered Gilbert in a feeble voice.

"Our king is a merciful sovereign; he has ever shown a readiness to forgive when his sense of justice will allow him," answered Arthur. "But oh! how much more merciful is our Father in heaven; and His justice having been amply satisfied by the willing sacrifice of His dear Son, who died for sinners, He is abundantly ready to forgive the sinner who trusts to that full atonement made for his sins! I speak thus, dear Gilbert, for I fear your time on earth is short."

"I know it is," answered Gilbert. "Oh! continue to speak as you have begun. I knew myself to be a guilty, outcast sinner before I left the prison. What you had said to me sunk into my heart. It was for your sake and for Hugh's more than my own that I escaped; and I came back in the lugger resolved not to participate in the profits of the enterprise."

Arthur sighed.

"Those who associate with evil-doers share in their doings," he was compelled to remark, but he dwelt not on that subject.

"My dear brother," he continued, "we are all sinners in the sight of a pure and holy God, who cannot look upon iniquity; but He in His love and mercy has provided a fountain in which all our sins, however black, however foul, can be washed away; and He tells us in His Word that though they be red like crimson, they shall become as white as snow, and though they be as scarlet, they become as wool—that He will put them as far from us as the east is from the west. To that fountain which flowed from the side of Jesus when He hung on the cross, offering himself up as a full and sufficient sacrifice in God's sight for the sins of all who trust in Him, let me urge you to turn your eyes; believe in that loving Saviour that He died for you, as well as for other sinners; that His heart yearns toward you; that He

desires you to come to Him and be saved."

"I remember, Arthur, that you said this to me in prison; but I hardened my heart. I was strong and well, and feared not death," answered Gilbert, with a deep sigh. "I can do nothing to merit heaven—it's too late now, it's too late."

"It is never too late," exclaimed Arthur. "The arms of Jesus are ever ready to receive all who come to Him in simple faith, trusting to His merits alone, and not to any merits of their own, or anything they ever can do to deserve His favour; banish such a thought from your mind. By His free grace He gives us salvation: remember the thief on the cross; he simply turned his dying eye on his crucified Lord, acknowledging that He was the Son of God, and the same answer Jesus gave to him He will give to you if you believe on Him. Remember, too, how the Israelites in the wilderness, bitten by the fiery serpents, were told to look on the serpent of brass, the emblem of healing held up by Moses, and no sooner did they look than they were healed. How merciful, how loving, how gracious, is our Father in heaven, who, knowing the frailty of poor human beings, has thus provided so simple, so easy, and yet so all-sufficient a means by which they may be saved."

Arthur, animated by love for his brother's soul, continued thus to plead with him, for he dreaded lest he might die in the attempt to move him. He would have pleaded, however, in the same way with any other sufferer, for he knew the value of human souls.

At length several of the people assembled round him, and charitably offered to convey the injured man to a cottage at some little distance from the beach.

"Let me be taken there," whispered Gilbert; "there is another I should wish to see, to ask her forgiveness for all the pain and sorrow I have caused her, but do not leave me."

A litter was speedily formed with a couple of spars and a piece of sail, and Gilbert being placed on it, four fishermen conveyed him towards the cottage, Arthur walking by his side, still holding his hand. The men seeing that Arthur was a clergyman, were not surprised at the attention he paid to the dying man, nor did they suspect the relationship.

"I am praying for you," whispered Arthur; "and oh, let me entreat you to pray for yourself."

"I am trying to do so, but I find it hard. My faith is weak—too weak I fear to avail me," gasped the dying man.

"Though it be but like a grain of mustard seed, He has promised that it shall remove mountains," answered Arthur.

The cottage, happily the abode of Christian people, was reached. The sufferer was placed on a bed prepared for him by the good woman of the house, and Arthur immediately sent off a messenger to summon Mary and her husband, as well as a surgeon, in the hopes that his skill might benefit his brother. Anxiously he watched the livelong night by the side of Arthur's couch, and it was with joy unspeakable that towards morning he heard him whisper, "God has answered my prayer; I believe that His Son Jesus Christ died for me, the just for the unjust, and that through His merits my numberless sins are put away." Soon afterwards the surgeon arrived. After examining Gilbert, he took Arthur aside. "The injuries the poor fellow has received are such as I fear no human skill can remedy. I will do my best, but I can give no hopes of his recovery; he is a fitter subject for your care than mine, though these smugglers are such ruffians that I do not suppose you will be able to do much with him."

"We are all by nature rebels to God," answered Arthur, endeavouring to conceal his feelings. "I will, as you advise, remain with the poor man, and follow the directions you give."

The surgeon told Arthur what he advised and took his departure, and Arthur hastened back to his brother. Mary and her husband arrived early in the morning. Gilbert, though too weak to speak, knew his sister, and showed by signs that he understood what she said. He pressed her hand, and a smile lighted up his countenance when she assured him that she had never ceased to pray for him, and to feel the same affection for him as of yore.

"Those prayers have been answered, have they not?" said Arthur bending over his brother, and he repeated the last words Gilbert had uttered, "I believe that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Again a bright look passed across Gilbert's countenance, and holding the hands of the loving ones kneeling by his side, his spirit passed away. One of his last requests had been that he might be buried with his hapless companions who had been rescued from the waves. It was complied with, and no one besides those who were with him at his death knew that the shipwrecked smuggler was Gilbert Maitland.

Oh that the young could see the fearful termination of the broad road they are tempted by Satan to follow, ere they take the first downward step along it!

The End.

Story 4--Chapter I.

STORY IV—THE IVORY TRADER; A TALE OF AFRICA.

To the north of the Cape of Good Hope Colony, beyond the Great Orange River, an extensive level region exists, known as the Kalahara Desert. Here no running streams are found to fertilise the plain, and often for miles and miles together, not a well nor pool is to be discovered, from which the weary traveller can quench his burning thirst. Yet destitute as it is of water, it is in many parts covered with grass, and an immense variety of creeping plants; while in some places large patches of bushes, and even trees, find nourishment in the seeming arid soil, and countless multitudes of wild animals, especially those which require but little water, or can go many days together without

drinking, roam over its trackless wilds.

This region passed, a fertile country is found, thickly populated by dark-skinned tribes, who till of late years have had no intercourse with white men. Here an almost countless number of rivers and streams are found, some flowing into the mighty Zambesi, and others into Lake Ngami.

Notwithstanding the dangers which must be encountered in crossing the vast Kalahara Desert, from the scarcity of water, the intense heat, the wild beasts, the savage people who inhabit its borders, and more than all, from the attacks of the Tsetse fly, whose poisonous bite speedily destroys cattle and horses, white traders from the colony occasionally traverse it, for the purpose of obtaining ivory from the natives.

A tilted waggon belonging to one of these traders, dragged by a span of fourteen oxen, was slowly moving across the wide-extending plain. On the box sat a Hottentot driver, his whip in hand, with lash of prodigious length, reaching even to the leading animals shouting out at the same time strange sounds to urge them on. A dozen dark-skinned men, some clad in jacket and trousers, and broad-brimmed hats, but others having merely a cloth or kilt round their loins, moved along by the side of the waggon. A few were seated on oxen, and the rest marched on foot, mostly with arms in their hands. Among those on foot was a young lad, whose dark skin showed that he was an African, though his features had somewhat of the Asiatic character. He was dressed more in the English fashion than the other black men, though his firm step and independent air proved that young Kibo was well accustomed to traverse the desert wilds. Ahead of the caravan stalked, with spear in hand, the Bechuana guide Masiko, whose people inhabit the region to the south of the desert, over all parts of which, from his earliest youth, he had wandered. His only garment was a cotton scarf, or plaid of a dark colour, thrown over his shoulders and wound round his waist, so as to form a kilt reaching to his knees, his woolly head and his feet being without covering. Two horses without saddles followed the waggon, secured to it by thongs of hide, and several spare oxen kept pace with the vehicle, ready to supply the places of any of the team which might knock up on the road.

Two white persons mounted on strong horses brought up the rear of the caravan. One Mr Robert Vincent, the owner of the waggon and its varied contents, was a strongly-built man of middle age, his countenance well tanned by African suns; the other a lad of about fifteen years of age apparently, who, from his slightly-built figure, looked scarcely capable of enduring the fatigues, of the journey before him.

The bright sun shining down from the cloudless sky shed a peculiar glare over the whole scene, the atmosphere quivering with heat. Here and there a few bushes rose above the surface, and broke the ocean-like horizon; but so exactly did they resemble one another, that to even the well-practised eye of the trader, they were useless as landmarks to direct his course. He had, therefore, entirely to depend on the guidance of Masiko, to conduct the caravan to the different water-holes and wells on the road across the desert.

Already both men and beasts were suffering greatly from thirst, for at the last halting-place no water had been obtained, and there was a fear that the oxen would break down altogether, unless they should soon reach the wells which the guide assured him would be found ahead.

“Had I supposed we should have found water so scarce on this route, I would have left you at Mr Warden’s station till my return, Martin,” observed Mr Vincent to the lad by his side. “But I wanted to give you an insight into the dealing of the natives, for which no small amount of experience is required, that you may be able to help me in my business, and be competent in a few years to take charge of a trading expedition yourself.”

“I shall be very glad if I can be of assistance to you, father,” answered Martin. “I already feel myself the better for the dry air of the desert. I was very happy with Mr Warden, and should have been content to remain and help him and his wife in the numerous duties they have to perform.”

“He is a good man, no doubt, Martin,” observed the trader; “but his is not a money-making calling, and it is not one I should wish you to follow.”

“If you had not wanted me to help you, father, from what I learned and saw while I was with Mr Warden, I would rather have become a missionary like him than be of any other profession,” answered young Martin.

“Oh! you must put such foolish ideas out of your head, Martin. It is very well for those who are paid for it, and are not fit for anything better, but I want my son to be a man of the world, to make money, and to become some day one of the leading merchants of Cape Town.”

Young Martin made no reply. On his father’s previous journey from the Cape, Martin had accompanied him, but, unaccustomed to travelling, he had fallen sick, and had been left at the Missionary-station of Mr Warden. Though the trader looked upon the illness of his son as a great misfortune, young Martin had good reason soon to believe it the happiest event of his life. He there for the first time became practically acquainted with the glorious truths of the gospel: he learned that man is a sinner, and by nature a rebel against God, and that through the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ can he alone become reconciled to Him.

This truth brought home to his own heart, he at once comprehended the importance of the efforts which Mr Warden, and the missionary-band engaged with him, were making to carry the gospel of love and mercy among the savage hordes by whom they were surrounded; he knew it to be the only means by which their natures could be changed, and they can become not only civilised members of society, but, what is of far more consequence, heirs of eternal life. He therefore, rejoicing in the blessings he had himself received, felt an earnest desire to engage in the glorious work of carrying the same blessings to the dark-skinned races of that land, long so deeply plunged in ignorance.

Though his health had been completely restored, he would therefore far rather have remained with the missionary than have taken the journey to which his father summoned him. But he had learned that obedience to parents is among the first duties of a Christian; and thus, after he had frankly expressed his wish to remain, when his father still

desired his company, he had no longer hesitated to obey his summons.

He was accompanied by Kibo, the son of a chief of one of the tribes to the north of the desert, whom Mr Vincent purposed visiting. Kibo had been carried away from his home into slavery by the great Matabele leader Moselekatse, in one of his marauding expeditions against the territory inhabited by the lad's tribe four or five years before this.

During a visit Mr Warden had paid to Moselekatse, he had seen young Kibo, then apparently on the point of death, and inducing the chief to give him his liberty, had carried him to the Missionary-station, where recovering, he was instructed in the truths of Christianity. The lad became a true and earnest convert, and his heart yearned to visit his parents and friends, and to tell them the good news he had heard. Mr Warden, believing him to be confirmed in the faith, had consented to his accompanying Martin, in the hopes that by his means his tribe might be induced to receive a missionary of the gospel among them.

The trader and his son rode on for some time in silence, the former indeed was beginning to feel too anxious about the chances of finding water at the end of the day's journey to talk much. Already many hours had passed since they had left the last water-holes. Although there was still a sufficient supply in the leathern bottles carried in the waggon to prevent them and their men from feeling much inconvenience from thirst, both horses and oxen were already suffering from want of the moisture so necessary to enable them to swallow their food. They had stopped as usual during the heat of the day; but though there was an abundance of grass, it was so dry that it crumbled in the hand, and the poor animals as they chewed it turned it about in their mouths, in a vain endeavour to get it down their throats.

Robert Vincent had ordered his men to inspan or harness the cattle at an earlier hour than usual, hoping by pushing on to gain the promised pool before nightfall; but the oxen, already fatigued by their previous long journey, were unable to move as fast as usual, in spite of all the efforts of their driver.

The trader, at length losing patience, rode on by the side of the guide, and inquired when they were to reach the pool he had spoken of.

"Not till after the sun has sunk far beyond yonder distant line, unless the oxen move faster than they are now doing," answered the guide, pointing to the western horizon.

The trader shouted to the driver. Again and again he made his huge whip crack, as he struck his team in succession, but without effect; nothing would induce the poor animals to hasten their steps.

"I am much inclined to ride forward, and try and find out the wells myself," said Mr Vincent to his son. "I am not quite sure that our guide is not playing us false. If I thought so, I would shoot him through the head. It is wiser to trust to one's own sagacity than to a treacherous guide."

"O father! do not use violence," exclaimed Martin. "Gentle words and kindness will have more effect in keeping him faithful. I have no fear about him, for he has long been known to Mr Warden, who has perfect confidence in him."

"Why do you think he should have confidence in him, Martin?" asked his father.

"Because, though he was once a fierce savage, he has become a faithful Christian, and as such would be ready to sacrifice his own life rather than risk ours when he has promised to serve us."

"I am afraid the fellows are all much alike," observed Mr Vincent. "The only way of making them faithful is not to pay them till the journey is over. I only hope he and young Kibo will answer your expectations. For my part, I have found the heathen black men as trustworthy as the whites."

"Yes, father," said Martin, "because in too many instances the whites are merely nominal Christians. Mr Warden has shown me the difference between a real and nominal Christian, and it is of the first I speak. All men are fallible, and even in them we cannot hope to find perfection, but still they can be trusted to do their best."

"Well, well, Martin, when you know more of the world, perhaps you will change your opinion," remarked the trader in an indifferent tone. "However, water must be found; and as we have still yearly an hour's daylight, we may even yet reach it if we push on before dark."

The trader and his son rode on, though their weary steeds did not move as fast as they wished.

"What is that?" exclaimed the elder Vincent, pointing to an object moving among the dry grass some distance ahead. "A lion; we must put a shot into him, or he will be paying the cattle a visit to-night."

Spurring on his horse, he galloped forward, followed by Martin.

"Don't fire, father!" cried Martin, "it is a human being."

Martin was right. They soon discovered that the object they had seen was an old bushwoman, although, but for the scanty clothing which covered her wretchedly thin and diminutive body, she might have been mistaken for some wild animal. She seemed dreadfully frightened, as if expecting instant death. Martin by speaking to the old woman somewhat reassured her.

"Water must be near, and she will know where to find it," observed his father; "so she must come with us whether she likes it or no, and act as our guide."

The poor creature was soon made to understand what she was required to do, while Martin assured her that she should receive no harm, and should be well rewarded. Still this poor wanderer of the desert, accustomed all her life to

ill-treatment, seemed to doubt the motives of her captors, and turned her head about, as if meditating an escape. Knowing, however, that she could not outstrip the horses, she walked quietly on, every now and then looking up and imploring the strangers not to hurt her. Her husband, her sole companion, she said, was in the neighbourhood, and would be wondering what had become of her.

“Show us the water, and you shall return to him when you wish,” said the elder Vincent.

She replied that it would take nearly an hour to reach it.

“Look out then for the waggon, Martin, or it may pass us; for on this hard ground even Masiko may fail to see our tracks.”

Martin did as he was told, and, greatly to his relief, at length met the caravan.

It moved forward for some time. Martin could nowhere see his father. Masiko made him feel anxious, by hinting that the old woman might, under the pretence of looking for water, have enticed him among a band of her own people, notorious, he said, for their treachery. Martin on this would have ridden forward, had he not received directions to bring on the caravan.

The sun was nearly touching the western horizon, when, to his great relief, he at length caught sight of his father’s horse in the distance. At the same instant the cattle began to move on faster than they had hitherto done.

“Water! water!” shouted the thirsty people, and the whole party rushed forward ahead of the waggon. Martin, who led the way, could see no pool. The old woman, however, was on her knees, scraping the sand from a hole, out of which she began to ladle with a little cup a small quantity of water into three or four ostrich eggs, carried in a net at her back.

“I am afraid our poor oxen will not be much the better for this discovery,” observed Martin when he reached his father.

“Wait a bit, our men will soon dig more wells, though it may be some hours before we shall have water sufficient for the animals,” was the answer.

The men as they came up commenced digging with their hands in the soft sand a number of holes some distance apart.

As soon as the waggon arrived, the order was given to outspann. Fires were lighted, the neighbouring bushes affording sufficient fuel, and all the usual preparations for camping were made.

Martin did not forget the old bushwoman, and with his father’s leave gave her, to her no little astonishment and delight, a piece of meat and a bunch of beads, and two or three other trifling articles.

The people were employed for several hours in cleaning out the sand from the holes, for as fast as they dug, it again rolled down and filled them up. Gradually, however, the water oozed out from the sides, and towards morning there was a sufficient quantity to afford a little to each of the thirsty horses and oxen.

Directly the first streaks of dawn appeared in the sky the oxen were inspanned, and the journey recommenced. On search being made for the old bushwoman, it was discovered that she had decamped. Mean and wretched though she was, she had rendered an essential service to the strangers, but she probably thought them as treacherous as they had supposed her to be.

Story 4--Chapter II.

For several hours the weary oxen dragged on the waggon, slightly refreshed by the limited amount of water they had obtained, and at length they began to show signs of thirst. Masiko confessed that he knew of no pool within the distance of another day’s journey, and as the heat had been excessive, he could not be certain that water would be found in it. It was a question whether the oxen could get as far without drinking. Noon was approaching, and it would have been worse than useless to attempt moving on while the sun was overhead. Again they outspanned. The men sat down to sleep in the limited shade the waggon afforded; but the poor animals had to stand out in the full glare of the hot sun, turning their heads in the direction whence came a light breeze, which prevented the atmosphere being altogether insupportable.

They had halted about a couple of hours, when two objects were seen moving across the boundless plain towards them. They proved to be the little, yellow-skinned, shrivelled old bushwoman, and a man of the same hue, and as scantily dressed as herself. They came without hesitation up to the waggon. Martin hastened forward, and in a kind tone thanked them for coming to the camp, assuring them that they were welcome and would be protected.

“Can you show us where we can find water?” he asked.

Their reply convinced him that Masiko was right, and that there was none to be found nearer than he had said. They, however, told him that if he would accompany them a short distance, they would point out where to obtain what would answer the purpose of water. As his father was asleep in the waggon, Martin did not wish to disturb him, and therefore called Kibo, who had meantime been speaking to the bushman and his wife.

“Do you think they can be trusted, Kibo?” Martin asked.

“Yes, good people; no do harm,” answered the lad in broken English.

“Then we will go with them.”

Martin, saddling his horse, called two of the most trustworthy men to follow on the spare horses, while Kibo mounting another, they set out in company with the little bushman and his wife.

They had proceeded some distance, when the latter pointed out a creeping plant, with long leaves and a thin, delicate stalk, spreading over the ground in various directions. Both the man and his wife had stones in their hands with which they struck the ground at various spots, at about equal distances from the centre of the plant, and then made signs to the people who had accompanied them to dig, setting the example themselves. After throwing out the sand to the depth of a foot and a half they came to a tuber, three or four times as large as an ordinary turnip; and at each spot where they had struck a similar one was procured. On breaking open one of the tubers, it was found to be full of juice.

“These very good, me remember them before,” observed Kibo.

Martin and the Hottentot loaded their horses with as many of the tubers as they could carry, perceiving at once what a rich treat they would prove to the thirsty and starving cattle.

Having first fed their own animals, they quickly returned with their prize to the camp, accompanied by the bushman and his wife. Martin having rewarded them, they expressed their readiness to show where more tubers could be found. The riding oxen having been fed, another party was despatched to obtain a further supply. On their return they were able, as soon as the heat of the day was over, to proceed on to the northward.

“Though I was inclined to look with contempt on those poor little wretches, father, see how useful they have been to us,” observed Martin. “It goes to prove, as Mr Warden says, that none of the human race should be despised; and debased as they may be, they are capable of improvement, and have immortal souls which we should value not less than those of our other fellow-creatures.”

“As to that, my boy, I doubt whether you would ever make anything out of those wretched little bush-people. Well, well! you have got a number of new notions into your head. However, when we reach the Makololo, you will have other things to occupy your thoughts; they are sharp fellows, and we shall have to keep our eyes open when dealing with them.”

Martin knew that it would be his duty to assist his father to the best of his abilities, and he promised to do so.

They moved on till dark, and started again at dawn, no water having been found. Had it not been for the roots which God has caused to grow in this arid desert to supply the wants of His creatures, the oxen must have perished.

Just as they were about to outspann after their morning’s journey, the little bushman beckoned to Martin, and intimated that he could lead them to a place where another production of nature could be found which would assist to sustain the cattle.

Martin, summoning three men to attend him with their oxen, and some large nets used to carry fodder, followed his volunteer guide, who, to show his confidence, left his wife with the waggon.

The country over which they passed was even more barren and arid than any he had yet seen.

At length, after travelling several miles, some large green objects were seen, which, to his surprise and delight, he discovered were a species of water-melon.

The Hottentots immediately rushed at them; the first man cut a huge slice with his axe, but no sooner did he put his mouth to it than he cast it aside with a look of disgust and bitter disappointment. The cattle, however, passing by several, began greedily eating others they came to. Meantime the little guide, after tasting two or three which he threw down, pointed to some which he signified were good. Martin now found that some were intensely bitter, while others were sweet and full of juice; this, however, could only be ascertained by tasting each.

The party having now satisfied their own thirst, collected as many of the sweet melons as their animals could carry, and returned with them to the camp.

“That bushman is a serviceable little fellow,” observed Mr Vincent. “I have often seen both the tubers and the melons, but I have never found them before in this part of the desert. The latter seldom last long after the rains, as not only do the natives of the desert collect them, but elephants, and rhinoceroses, and even lions and hyenas, come from a distance to devour them. It was probably in consequence of the arid character of the surrounding desert that the patch to which the bushman took you has escaped a visit from them.”

Martin begged that he might be allowed to reward his guide, who seemed well satisfied with an axe and several other useful articles, as well as some beads which he received.

“You should have waited till they can be of no further use before giving them presents,” observed his father. “Depend upon it, they will be off before long; and it Masiko, as I suspect, has lost his way, we shall be in no small difficulty.”

Martin hoped that their new friends would prove faithful, though as the waggon moved on during the afternoon they said something which made him suspect that their wanderings did not extend much further to the north. They, however, accompanied the caravan to the end of the day’s journey; but when morning broke they were nowhere to be seen, they had gone off, as the old woman had before, without being observed by the watch, who had probably

been slumbering at the time.

Here a whole day was spent, that both men and beasts might obtain that rest they so much required.

Again the caravan was on the move. Masiko urged that they should push on as rapidly as possible, for he could not say when they might next reach water. But a small supply remained in their skin bottles.

The horses and cattle were again suffering greatly. First one of the oxen in the team fell, then another, and another; and though their places were supplied by the spare animals, the waggon continued to move on at an unusually slow pace.

The last drop of water in the skins was exhausted, and even some of the men accustomed to desert travelling declared they could go no further.

The sun was striking down on their heads with intense force. The men's lips were parched, their eyes bloodshot. The animals moved on with open mouths, lowing piteously in their sufferings. The trader began to fear that the whole party would knock up. In that case, his only hope of saving his own life and that of his son would be to abandon them with his waggon and goods, and to gallop forward, on the chance of finding water.

They had ridden some distance ahead of the caravan, when Martin, who was a short way in front of his father, shouted out, "Water! water!" pointing as he spoke to a beautiful lake in the distance, its waters, curled by the breeze, shining with intense lustre in the bright sun. On the further shore trees were seen reflected clearly on the surface, while among them appeared a number of elephants cooling themselves by throwing water over their bodies.

"We need no longer fear losing our animals, for they will have water enough now to drink their fill," observed Martin as his father overtook him.

Mr Vincent did not answer, but anxiously gazed at the sheet of water. "I know of no lake hereabouts, and it is too important an object not to be known to all who have ever travelled across the desert; yet my eyes cannot be deceived," he remarked.

"Shall I ride back and tell the people?" asked Martin.

"Wait till we have ascertained how far off the water is," said his father; "you may only disappoint them."

"Surely it cannot be very far off, or we should not see those elephants so clearly," remarked Martin.

They now put their horses into a trot, the poor animals were too much fatigued to gallop.

Just then the seeming elephants began to move, and suddenly, instead of elephants, a herd of zebras crossed their path, scampering over the ground. The next instant the lake had disappeared, and they found themselves on the borders of an immense expanse of salt, covering the ground as far as the eye could reach to the north and west. On looking behind them, however, they saw both their cattle and men moving rapidly towards the spot, as if they too had been deceived. Bitter was their disappointment when they discovered their mistake. Two of the poor animals dropped and died, now another, and now a fourth; still "Forward! forward!" was the cry. Masiko asserted that water would be at length reached, though it might be some hours' journey ahead. Thus encouraged, even those who had hitherto been most inclined to despair exerted themselves.

"If this is to endure much longer, I fear that I shall be unable to stand it," observed Martin to Kibo, who was riding by his side. "Should I die, you will promise me, Kibo, to remain with my father, and to do your best to serve him, and try and get him back safely to Mr Warden's. Perhaps if I die he will be more ready to listen to him than he was during his last visit, and to think that is a great consolation to me. Oh, how willingly would I give up my life to save his, and much more, to enable him to learn the glorious truths which have brought joy to my heart!"

The sun was rapidly sinking in the west. They had left the salt expanse some way behind; still the country was as dry and inhospitable as ever. Masiko, at Mr Vincent's order, had pushed on ahead of the caravan. Suddenly he was seen to wave his spear, and to point with it to a clump of trees, then to rush forward. Mr Vincent, with Martin and Kibo, followed him eagerly.

Story 4--Chapter III.

Water was found in the bed of what had once been a running river. The men eagerly rushed forward, and lapped up the refreshing liquid, followed by the horses and oxen. It was with difficulty that those yoked to the waggon could be restrained from dragging it in with them, so eager were they to quench their burning thirst.

The party here encamped, for there were all things requisite—water, grass, and wood.

Masiko now knew where he was, and he urged his companions to fill all their water-skins, for this pool would soon be dried up, and they had a wide desert track to traverse before they could reach the country of the Makololo.

The next morning, having secured as much water as they could carry, the party proceeded on their journey.

Day after day they travelled on, often suffering greatly from thirst and hunger, and dreading the loss of more of the cattle.

At length a stream of running water was crossed flowing to the east, and the caravan reached the borders of a dense forest, through which a path had to be cut with axes. Beyond it, far off in the east, hills were seen rising out of the

plain.

Several ruined villages were passed, the plantations near them overrun with weeds and brushwood; while many skeletons of their unhappy inhabitants lay scattered about, telling plainly how they had been attacked by their cruel foes before they had time to escape, and had been remorselessly slaughtered, while the remainder probably had been carried off into slavery.

Such scenes met their sight day after day through what otherwise would have been a smiling country.

Several more of the oxen had died. Scarcely enough survived to drag on the waggon.

Ahead lay a level waste covered by scrub. Masiko urged Mr Vincent to wait till nightfall to cross it. He was afraid, he said, that it might be infested by the tsetse, which does not attack cattle at night. The trader, however, was eager to proceed, as he was now near the termination of his journey, and he thought that Masiko was mistaken. Martin suggested that one of the oxen should be sent on first, and that if that was not bitten the rest should follow. His father, however, seemed to have abandoned his usual caution, and insisted on proceeding.

They had not proceeded far across the scrub when several of the dangerous flies were seen on the animals. It was too late to turn back. They must now push on in the hopes that some might escape, which they might do if not severely bitten. The horses might possibly be saved by galloping on, should the dangerous spot not be of any great extent. Mr Vincent therefore directed Martin and Kibo, with two of the men, to push forward with the horses while he himself remained with the waggon.

It was already late in the day before the scrub was passed. Riding on for some distance, Martin and his companions crossed a small stream and encamped on a grassy spot, where they hoped to be safe from further attacks of the deadly tsetse. Examining the horses, however, they found that all had been bitten, while there was no hope that any of the oxen would have escaped.

The disease caused by the bite might not show itself for several days, and the animals might have strength to drag the waggon to the end of the journey; but if bitten, death would certainly be the consequence.

It was late at night before the waggon arrived. Mr Vincent was much out of spirits, for he anticipated the loss of all his oxen. It was the more important, therefore, that they should push on, and the next morning they were again on their journey.

At length the bank of another large river was reached Several villages were seen on the opposite side, the dwellings composed of conical-shaped reed-thatched huts surrounded by circular clay walls. The inhabitants, on observing the waggon, came across in their canoes to welcome the trader, who had before been to their country. They were clothed with skins of animals round their loins and others thrown loosely over their shoulders.

All were eager to ascertain what Mr Vincent had brought; but he could not commence trading until visited by their chief, who would first claim his own dues and make purchases of such articles as he wanted for himself.

The waggon was soon surrounded by natives, who appeared disposed to be friendly.

While Mr Vincent was speaking to them they announced that their chief, Kanenge, was coming across the river. In a short time, a tall man, dressed like his people, except that the skins he wore were handsomer and that feathers ornamented the fillet round his head, landed from a canoe and came up to the waggon. Mr Vincent saluted him, shaking hands in the usual fashion. The chief then taking his seat on the ground, they discussed the business which had brought the trader to the country. One had plenty of goods, the other an abundance of ivory. The chief was as eager to trade as any of his people, and appeared incapable just then of thinking of anything else. Every now and then, however, his eye turned towards young Kibo. At length he remarked how like the lad was to his own tribe. Mr Vincent then told him how he had been captured by Moselekatse’s people some years before, and had been redeemed by the missionary. Kanenge listened with intense interest, and calling to the boy, addressed him. As Kibo replied, the chief’s before somewhat stern countenance became animated and eager. He continued putting questions to Kibo, to which the boy replied, and then eagerly asked several in return. At length, with a cry of delight, the chief sprang up, and pressing young Kibo in his arms, exclaimed—

“My heart was moved when I saw him. I knew him to be of my own people, but I dared not believe that he was the child I loved, and whom I had lost so long ago. White man, I will load your waggon with tusks. You shall take them to the good missionary chief who has sent me back my boy; or if he will come here with a waggon himself, he and his people shall be fed as long as they will remain.”

Thus the father endeavoured to express his gratitude to the missionary who had preserved his son, and to those who had brought him back. Mr Vincent, however, did not put full confidence in his promises. He replied that he should be happy to convey his messages to the missionary; but that as he had come to trade, he must purchase tusks for himself, though he would carry as many as he had room for, if sent as a present.

The chief offered to convey the trader’s goods over the river, and to float the waggon across it, while the cattle and horses would pass over by swimming, to his village. This was accomplished the next day. Kanenge appropriated several huts for the accommodation of his visitors, in one of which they took up their residence, in another their goods were stored, while their attendants inhabited the remainder.

Trade was now commenced, and everything appeared to be going on prosperously. Scarcely, however, had these arrangements been made than Masiko and their driver came with the intelligence that several of the oxen were sickening from the effects of the tsetse-bites. No cure was known. The most healthy had already perished. In a few days it was found that all the cattle, as well as the horses, had been bitten by the deadly insect.

Martin tried to console his father by pointing out how much worse it would have been had they perished on the journey, in which case the waggon and its contents must have been deserted, and they themselves would in all probability have lost their lives. The trader, however, was inclined to look at things in a gloomy light.

Though fresh oxen might be procured in the country, it would require some time to break them in, while their cost would swallow up a considerable portion of his profits.

Mr Vincent himself was ill, and in a few days he was attacked with fever, while several of his men were suffering from the same complaint.

Martin now felt thankful that he had accompanied his father, and while he attended him with the most devoted care, he did his utmost to take his place in carrying on trade with the natives. His father appeared well pleased with the way he transacted business, when he each day reported the progress he had made, and gradually their store-hut became filled with elephant-tusks.

“Ah, Martin, you will become a first-rate trader,” he observed; “and I hope we shall soon recover our losses. As soon as I am well we must push further to the eastward, where I hear there are large supplies of ivory. In the meantime we must get fresh oxen broken in.”

“I am thankful to be able to assist you, father,” answered Martin; “but I must not pride myself on my dealings with the natives. We are now with a friendly chief who treats us fairly, but I understand the people among whom you propose going are likely to behave in a very different way; besides which, the country is exposed to the inroads of hostile tribes, and should they hear that such a prize as our waggon full of goods is in the neighbourhood, they will attack us in the hopes of carrying it off.”

“We need not be afraid of them; we have a dozen muskets, besides our rifles and pistols, and may keep a whole host of enemies at bay,” observed Mr Vincent. “Kanenge will send a party of his men, and probably, if I ask him, come himself to assist us.”

Martin had now to tell his father that two of their own people were already dead, and that several others were so ill that there was little hope of their recovery.

Kibo came every day to the hut, and brought presents of provisions from his father. Martin asked him if he felt happy at being once more among his relations and own people. Kibo shook his head.

“No, very sorry,” he answered, speaking partly in broken English and partly in his native tongue. “My father is kind and glad to have me with him; but he knows nothing of the true God, and wants me to follow the bad ways of my people, which he thinks right ways. I tell him that God wishes men to be happy, and to live at peace, and to do good to each other and not harm, and to love their enemies, and to trust to Him, and to worship Him only; and that all men are bad by nature and constantly doing wrong, and that it is only by trusting to Jesus Christ, who was punished instead of them, that God will forgive them their sins and put them away out of His sight. My father says he cannot understand how this can be, and that now I have come to live among my people, I must believe what they do, and live as they do. I tell him I cannot believe the lies Satan has invented to deceive them, and that I must not follow their ways, which are the bad ways Satan has taught them; and so I have asked my father to let me go back with you and try to persuade Mr Warden to come here, or to send another missionary to teach the people about Jesus Christ, and how He wishes men to live.”

Martin was truly glad to hear Kibo say this, and he urged him to persevere in trying to obtain leave to return, promising to beg Mr Vincent to assist him.

Story 4--Chapter IV.

Two months had passed by, the waggon was half loaded with ivory, and Mr Vincent had partly recovered from his fever; but all his oxen were dead, and so were nearly half the men he had brought with him. Many of the natives had also died, and great numbers were suffering. It was evident that the low-lying region now occupied by Kanenge and his tribe, intersected as it was by numerous rivers, with swamps in all directions, was very unhealthy. Martin was thankful when his father proposed moving eastward to a higher region.

Kanenge had supplied oxen, which the trader’s surviving followers had been engaged for some time in breaking in. The chief also, confiding in the firearms with which he and his people were to be furnished, agreed to accompany him.

The waggon and goods were transported across the river, and accompanied by Kanenge, with nearly a hundred men, the trader’s party commenced their journey in the proposed direction. Mr Vincent being too weak to walk, was carried in a sort of palanquin, while the rest of the party marched on foot.

After travelling for upwards of a week, the country greatly improving in appearance, they reached a steep hill, up which the waggon was slowly dragged, till at length they found themselves on a wide extent of elevated ground, high above the plain, which stretched away to the southward. Here the air felt pure and comparatively bracing, and Martin at first hoped that his father would recover his strength.

Still, after some days had passed, observing how weak and ill he remained, he could not help fearing that his days were numbered. Should his father die, he would indeed have been in a forlorn condition had he not learned to trust to One who rules all things for the best. He was, therefore, far more anxious about his father than about himself. Each evening, when they encamped, he sat by his side, and having read a portion of Scripture, he endeavoured to turn his father’s thoughts to a future state of existence.

“What, do you think I am likely to die?” asked Mr Vincent one day. “Why do you talk so much about heaven?”

“We have seen many of our companions die, my dear father, and we know how uncertain life is in this country, as it is indeed in all parts of the world, and at all events we should live prepared to quit this life at any moment. Christ has said that we must enter the kingdom of heaven here, we must become His subjects while we are on earth, we must be reconciled to God now, we must be born again; and therefore it is that I am so anxious you should accept His gracious offers, though at the same time I pray that you may be restored to health and strength.”

At first Mr Vincent turned a deaf ear to what his son said, but by degrees his hard heart softened, he saw how earnest and affectionate that son was, and he could not help being aware of his own increasing weakness.

Although he at first thought himself getting better, the disease had taken too strong a hold of him to be thrown off. Martin at length had the infinite satisfaction of finding that his father now listened with deep attention to God’s Word when he read it.

“My dear boy,” he said one day, “I now know myself to be a rebel to God, and grievously to have sinned against His pure and holy laws; and I earnestly desire to accept the gracious offer of mercy which He holds out through the atoning blood of Christ, according to His plan of salvation, which you have so clearly explained to me. I do not know whether I shall live or die, but I pray for grace that I may ever continue faithful to Him who has redeemed me with His precious blood.”

Martin burst into tears on hearing his father thus express himself—they were tears of joy—and he felt the great load which had hitherto oppressed him removed from his heart.

The natives came in to trade, but Mr Vincent was utterly unable to do anything. Had it not been for Martin, who was assisted by Kibo and Masiko, no trade could have been carried on.

At length most of the tusks in the neighbourhood were bought up, and as Mr Vincent had still some goods remaining, he wished to move further on. He was, however, still so ill that he agreed, at the suggestion of his son, to entrust the goods to Kanenge, who promised faithfully to take care of them till his return. He accordingly determined to set out at once, hoping that the air of the desert would restore him to health, and the preparations for the journey being completed, the waggon, with its valuable load of ivory, descended to the plain. Kanenge, with most of his men, escorted it; while Martin and Kibo remained with Mr Vincent, who, should he feel stronger, was to follow the next day on a litter.

Martin’s spirits now revived, and he began to hope that, the journey being commenced, his father would ultimately recover. His chief sorrow was with regard to Kibo. The Makololo chief positively refused to allow him to return. Martin entreated him to remain true to his faith, instead of falling into the ways of his tribe. “Try and instruct them, my dear Kibo,” he said. “Young as you are you may be the means of spreading the glorious truths of the Gospel among them.”

“You pray for me then,” said Kibo. “I poor boy, I very weak, I do nothing by myself.”

“We are all very weak and helpless in God’s work,” said Martin. “If you seek the aid of the Holy Spirit, you will have strength given you.”

“Ah, yes,” said Kibo; “I no trust to myself, and then I strong and do much.”

This conversation took place at the door of the hut.

Martin thought he heard his father call to him. He ran to the side of his couch. Mr Vincent put forth his hand to take that of his son.

“Bless you, my boy,” he whispered; “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.”

Martin put his arm under his father’s head. The trader’s eyes fixed to the last on his boy, the film of death stole over them, and ere a few minutes had passed he had ceased to breathe.

Kibo left his friend for a time to indulge his grief alone, while he sent off a message to inform Kanenge of Mr Vincent’s death.

Towards evening the next day, instead of the chief, who was expected, Masiko made his appearance. Martin was thankful to have a Christian at such a time with him.

Martin had chosen a spot under a wide-spreading tree for his father’s grave, and Masiko, who had brought some presents to repay the natives, had it dug.

Here the white trader was buried by his orphan son and his two dark-skinned Christian friends.

Kibo had gone back to the village to order Kanenge’s people to prepare for their departure that night, he having received intelligence that a party of their enemies were on the move and approaching the neighbourhood.

Darkness had set in, yet Martin was unwilling to leave the spot till, assisted by Masiko, he had covered the grave over with a thick roof of branches to prevent its being disturbed by savage animals.

He was thus engaged when loud shrieks and cries from the village reached their ears. His impulse was to hasten towards it to find Kibo, that they might, if the placed was attacked, escape together.

“Don’t go,” exclaimed Masiko, grasping Martin’s hand; “you cannot help him, and will be killed or taken prisoner with

the rest.”

At that instant several figures were observed rushing towards them.

“Come,” exclaimed Masiko, dragging Martin forward in the direction the waggon had taken. “The enemy will not dare to attack our party armed with guns, and if we can reach them we shall be safe.”

Martin, though anxious to discover his friend, could not help feeling that it would be unwise to return to the village, probably already in the hands of the enemy. He therefore hastened on with his faithful companion, trusting that they would outstrip the foe. He could only hope that Kibo had made his escape, and that he would rejoin them at the waggon. This it was probably the object of the marauding party to have surprised.

They had many miles of rough country to traverse; but, though weary, Martin was unwilling to stop and rest, as it was important to warn Kanenge of what had occurred, that he might move the waggon to a greater distance, or if his force was sufficient, pursue the enemy.

Story 4--Chapter V.

Just as day broke, Martin and his companion approached the camp. The chief, observing Martin’s clothes torn, and his and Masiko’s limbs scratched by the bushes through which they had passed, inquired in an anxious tone why they had come without his son and the rest of his people. Masiko then briefly described what had occurred, and said that they had hurried on to warn him of the threatened danger.

“I know that you would not willingly have deserted your friend,” said the chief to Martin.

“No, indeed, I would not,” answered Martin; “and had not Masiko prevented me, I would have returned at all risks to the village to try and discover him. I was in hopes that he might have escaped, and would have followed us. If he does not appear, I am even now ready to return to try and find him.”

The chief uttered an exclamation which showed his grief, and said—

“Too probably he and all with him were surrounded by the enemy, and were either killed or were carried off as prisoners. If there were a possibility of his being alive, I would follow him; but our enemies would not have attacked the place unless with a very large number of fighting men, against whom my people would have no chance of success. I also promised your father to defend the waggon and his property with my life, and if I pursue the enemy I shall leave that defenceless.”

“I will sacrifice the waggon and all its contents rather than allow Kibo to be carried away into slavery,” exclaimed Martin.

“I know your friendship for my son, but it would be useless,” said Kanenge. “If the enemy were to see a party outnumbering them approaching, they would put their captives to death and take to flight. I am better acquainted with the ways of my country than you are. Our first business is to take the waggon to a place where it will be safer than here, and I will at the same time send out scouts to learn what has happened.”

Kanenge now gave orders to have the oxen yoked to the waggon and the march to begin. He had one of the oxen saddled for Martin to ride, who, wearied with his long run, more than once dropping asleep, nearly fell of.

After travelling some distance, a broad stream was reached, with an island in the centre and a village on the opposite side. Signals being made, the natives came across with several canoes. The waggon was quickly unloaded, when it and the goods were carried over to the island.

Kanenge assured Martin that they would be perfectly safe, as the enemy, having no canoes, could not attack them.

Shortly afterwards the scouts who had been sent out arrived, accompanied by one of the men who had been left in the village, and who was bleeding from several wounds. He had a sad account to give. The enemy, numbering upwards of a thousand men, had secretly approached the village, and almost surrounding it before they were discovered, had rushed upon the defenceless inhabitants, killing, as usual, all who opposed them, and making the rest prisoners. The man confessed that he and his companions had been completely surprised, but that they had all fought bravely; and not till he had seen Kibo surrounded by enemies and carried off, and he himself had been wounded, did he take to flight. All the rest had been shot down.

Martin had eagerly listened to what the man said, and hoping from the account he heard that Kibo was alive, he resolved to attempt his release. He proposed, therefore, as soon as he had rested, to follow the enemy; and should he overtake them, to go boldly into their camp, and to try and redeem his friend. They might possibly be content to receive in exchange the remainder of the goods in the waggon, and if not, he should be ready to offer as many tusks as they might demand. He could not devote them to a more satisfactory purpose. He should like to have returned to Mr Warden with a waggon full of tusks, that he might for the future be no cost to him, but he would willingly sacrifice the whole could he regain his friend.

On explaining his plan to Kanenge, the chief replied that though he and Masiko, being strangers, might be allowed to enter the enemy’s camp, should any of the Makololo go, they would be immediately killed.

Masiko, though well aware of the risk that he would run by putting himself in the power of the cruel savages bent on making slaves of all they could capture, without hesitation agreed to accompany Martin.

“God will take care of us, we are doing what is right, we must leave the rest to Him,” he observed.

After a short sleep, Martin and Masiko got ready to set out.

Kanenge selected twelve of his most tried warriors to escort them till they should reach the neighbourhood of the enemy’s camp. The Makololo were then to remain in ambush, to assist in any way which might be found practicable.

Among the stores was an English flag which Mr Vincent had been accustomed to hoist on a high pole above his waggon when prepared to trade with the natives. This Martin fixed to a staff with the intention of unfurling it on approaching the enemy.

Martin and his companions were some distance on their journey before daybreak. They hurried on till fatigue and hunger compelled them to halt. After breakfasting and taking a short rest they again proceeded. In vain they endeavoured to obtain information as to the movements of the enemy. No inhabitants were to be seen.

They passed, however, several villages which had been burned, and saw numerous bodies of men, women, and even of children, shot down while attempting to escape. Some of the men also had evidently been killed while fighting for their homes.

Masiko told Martin that the object of this raid, as well as of numberless others, had been solely to procure slaves to sell to the slave-dealers, who sent up parties many miles to the interior from the east coast.

“Unless the Christian people of your country and others unite to put a stop to the cruel traffic, there will be no peace or happiness for poor Africa,” he observed.

At length a spot where a village had lately stood was reached. The remains of the huts were still smouldering, and it was evident that the enemy had not long quitted it. Numerous dead bodies lay about, shot through by bullets, showing that the enemy had firearms supplied by the white slave-dealers to enable them to carry out their nefarious undertaking. One man was found still breathing. The Makololo showed very little feeling for his sufferings, but Masiko stooping down, poured some water from his leathern bottle into his mouth, which somewhat revived him. The wounded man then told Masiko that the village having been surprised at night, most of the inhabitants had been carried off, and he supposed that the enemy could not be many miles off.

The sufferer’s life was ebbing fast, and in a few minutes he ceased to breathe. Most of those killed were old men and old women, not considered worth carrying off as slaves; or, sadder still, several infants, who, incapable of enduring the fatigues of the journey, had been torn from their mother’s arms and dashed lifeless on the ground.

Martin, unaccustomed to such scenes, felt sick at heart as he contemplated the spectacle, though the Makololo warriors regarded it with indifference. Too often, probably, they had treated their enemies in a similar manner.

The party now proceeded with the greatest caution, as it was difficult to ascertain how far off the enemy might have got. At any moment they might overtake them. Not a single native could be seen from whom they could gain intelligence.

No guide, however, was required to show them the way, as it was too clear by the dead bodies of men and women who had been wounded in the attack, and had sunk down from loss of blood, and frequently by those of very young children, whose weight had prevented their mothers from walking as fast as their cruel captors required.

Martin was anxious as soon as possible to overtake the enemy, that he might have a less distance to send back for the ransom which might be demanded for Kibo. He was therefore much disappointed when night again came on, and his party were compelled to encamp. They were fortunate in finding a spot near a pool, with high rocks and trees round it, where they could venture to light a fire and cook their provisions without the risk of being seen by the enemy.

The usual sounds heard at sunset in an African forest had ceased, and were succeeded by the silence which reigns at night. Martin’s companions too, who had hitherto been talking to each other, had thrown themselves on the ground to sleep. He was about to follow their example, when a cry, which seemed to come from a distance, reached his ears. He listened attentively. It was repeated. He asked Masiko if he had heard anything. Masiko said that he had, but that it was the cry of a wild beast. Martin was almost sure it was a human voice, and that it came from the direction the enemy had taken. Anxious to ascertain if they were in their neighbourhood, Martin begged Masiko to accompany him. Taking their guns, they made their way through the wood, the light from the moon enabling them to do so.

After passing through the wood, they ascended a slight elevation, whence they could distinguish in the distance the light of several fires, while a murmur, proceeding from a large number of human voices, reached their ears. There could be no longer any doubt that they were close to the enemy’s camp, and that the cry they had heard was that of some unfortunate captive being beaten, or perhaps put to death.

On this Martin and Masiko returned to their companions, resolved to set out by daybreak, and to try and reach the marauders’ camp before the march was commenced. Martin was so occupied with the thoughts of what he had to do in the morning that it was long before he could go to sleep. On one thing he was resolved, that he would not allow Masiko to run the risk of being seized by the robbers or carried off with the rest of their captives. Masiko, though very unwilling to let him go alone, at length consented to remain with the rest in their place of concealment till Martin’s return.

Story 4--Chapter VI.

Before daybreak Martin and Masiko set out, the latter insisting on accompanying him as far as he could venture without the risk of being discovered.

The sounds which proceeded from the camp showed that the people were already astir, and Martin leaving his gun with Masiko, who remained concealed behind a thick clump of trees, proceeded alone, taking only the slender staff round which his flag was rolled.

He kept himself, as he proceeded, as much as possible under shelter, as his object was to get as far as he could into the camp without being discovered. As the people were engaged in their various occupations—some collecting cattle, others lighting fires to cook their food, while many had not yet even risen from the ground—he succeeded better than he had anticipated. Seeing some huts before him, he guessed that they were occupied by the chief of the band and his attendants. Though a number of people began to press round him, he advanced boldly forward till he got in front of the largest of the huts, when, unfurling his flag, he stood quietly waiting to see what would happen. No one in the meantime attempted to interfere with him, while the countenances of the people exhibited astonishment rather than anger. He had not long to wait before the chief made his appearance at the door of one of the huts, evidently too much surprised at what he saw to utter a word. Martin, taking advantage of his silence, pointed to the flag and inquired if he knew to what nation it belonged. The chief made no reply.

“I must tell you then,” said Martin. “It is that of a great people who have more power than all the tribes of Africa put together; yet powerful as they are, they wish to be friends with all people, and to do them good. You will understand, therefore, that I come to you as a friend, and as such I wish to talk to you, and to arrange a matter which has brought me here.”

The chief, at length recovering a little from his surprise, put out his hand and told Martin that though he had never seen that flag before, nor did he know the nation of whom he spoke, he was welcome. “Probably,” he added, “some of the people in the camp who have travelled to the sea may have heard of the great nation.” Just then a man came forward and addressed the chief in a low tone. Martin did not hear what was said. The chief seemed somewhat agitated, and at length inquired of Martin whether any of the big canoes of his countrymen were in the neighbourhood, and what force he had with him. Martin did not say that no English ships were likely to be in the interior of Africa, nor that probably he was the only Englishman within many hundred miles of him, but he replied cautiously that he had come on an embassy of peace, and that he could not suppose the chief would refuse him the simple request he had to make.

“My countrymen,” he added, “are, as I have said, powerful, and lovers of peace, and yet when they are compelled to go to war they never reduce to slavery those they conquer, but wish them to be as free as they are themselves. Yet they know how to punish those who ill-treat the helpless.”

“Your countrymen may be a great people, but they seem to have very different notions to mine,” observed the chief. “As yet, however, I do not understand your object in paying me a visit.”

“That is the point I am coming to,” answered Martin in as firm a tone of voice as he could command. “You and your people have lately attacked a village in which were some of my friends, and have carried them off to sell as slaves. One of them is an especial friend of mine. He is also of my religion, and understands my language, and I cannot allow him to be carried away to live among strangers. As I told you, I came here on a peaceable errand, and all I demand is that you should set a price on my friend, and if you will allow him to accompany me I will send you the goods you demand.”

The chief, on hearing this speech, looked greatly relieved, and after consulting with several of his headmen, asked Martin to point out the friend of whom he spoke.

Martin replied that he would, and was forthwith conducted to the part of the camp where the unfortunate slaves, who had by this time got ready to commence their march, were assembled. The men were generally chained in parties of six together, with heavy manacles on their hands; while the women were secured two and two with ropes round their waists, they having often to carry loads in addition to their children, who clung to their backs. The boys were manacled in the same way as the men; while the younger girls, though fastened together to prevent their running away, were allowed to travel without loads, not from any feeling of mercy on the part of their captives, but that they might appear to better advantage on their arrival at the slave-market. Some of the men who had apparently been refractory were secured by having their necks fixed in forks at the end of heavy poles, the fork being secured by iron pins bolted in at the broader end so as to prevent them from slipping out their necks. Two or three dozen of the stronger men were thus fastened together two and two, some having also chains round their wrists. A number of men —some armed with spears and swords, and others with muskets—stood ready to prevent the possibility of the captives escaping.

Martin hurried to the spot where the boys were collected, eagerly scanning the faces of the young captives. He had passed by a number, among whom he in vain searched for Kibo. There was one more group a little further on, still sitting or lying down. The reason of this was at once apparent. One of the poor lads being unable to rise, his companions in misfortune were kicking and pinching him to make him get up, with the exception of one, who was endeavouring to protect him from their cruelty. In that one, though deprived of his English clothes and naked like the rest, Martin recognised his friend Kibo. He was so engaged in his generous efforts to protect the sufferer that he did not at first observe Martin approaching. Kibo, at length seeing Martin, uttering a cry of joy, endeavoured to spring forward, but his chain quickly checked him. The other lads on this ceased tormenting their companion, and gazed with astonishment at the stranger and his flag. Martin, speaking in English, told Kibo why he had come to the camp, and advised him not to say who he was lest the chief should increase the amount he might demand for his ransom.

“There is my friend,” he then said, turning to the headman who had accompanied him. “You see, as I told you, that he speaks my language, and you will now believe that everything else I have told you about him is true. Set him at

once at liberty, and I will send the goods as soon as I return to the camp."

Greatly to his joy, Martin saw Kibo's manacles knocked off, and they stood together grasping each other's hands. Kibo, however, did not move from the spot, but casting his eyes towards the poor lad on the ground, he said, "Can you get him set free too? he is sick already, and will die if made to travel with the rest. I have been telling him about Jesus Christ, and he says how much he wishes to know Him better, and that he would come to this country and teach people to be happy. Oh, how grieved I should be if he were to die and not know more about Him!"

Martin at once pointed out the sick lad to the headmen, and told them that if they would knock off his chains and carry him to their chief, he would pay a ransom for him as well as for his friend. As the savages saw that this would be a clear gain, well knowing that the lad would die if compelled to march with the rest, they at once complied; and Martin grasping Kibo by the hand, followed by a couple of men carrying the poor lad, returned to the hut, in front of which the chief was seated smoking his pipe, and surrounded by several persons. One of these, though his skin was as brown as that of the rest, had European features, and was dressed in shirt and trousers, and Martin rightly conjectured that he was an agent of the slave-dealers on the coast, and had instigated the raid which had unhappily been so successfully carried out. Martin had brought a list of his remaining goods, and the chief appeared satisfied with those he offered in exchange for Kibo and the other lad. He was in hopes that the matter would quickly be settled, when the white man advised the chief to refuse the articles offered and to insist on having tusks instead. Martin had been too long accustomed to deal with the natives to yield at once, or to acknowledge that he had any tusks.

"I tell you truly that I offer you all my remaining goods," he answered. "If you will send messengers to receive them, I promise to send them to you as soon as I can get back to my camp."

The chief, instigated by the slave-dealer, insisted on having tusks, finally agreeing, however, to receive twelve for Kibo and two for the poor sick lad, who, he remarked, was not likely to be of much use to any one. He would probably not have allowed his captives to go free until he had received the tusks, but when Martin promised on the faith of his flag to send them, even the slave-dealer advised him to consent, observing that Englishmen, though he hated them from his heart, always fulfilled their promises. Martin, thankful that his enterprise had thus far succeeded, set out with Kibo, accompanied by fourteen men, who were to go a part of the distance and there to wait till the arrival of the tusks. On consideration of receiving payment, they agreed to carry the poor lad whose freedom Martin had obtained. As they approached the spot where he had left his companions, he and Kibo hurried forward to give them warning. Their joy at seeing their chief's son was very great, and they declared that Martin ought to be made a chief himself. Martin, committing the two rescued lads to the charge of the Makololo, urged them to hasten on to Kanenge, while he followed with Masiko, as he was anxious to separate the hostile natives as soon as possible, fearing that either one or the other might be guilty of some act of treachery. He advised those who had come from the camp to remain at the spot where he left them till his return. The men begged that he would leave his flag, as no one, they observed, would then venture to attack them, and it would be an additional proof that he intended to fulfil his promise. This he gladly agreed to do. He then set out with Masiko, and travelled on with all speed, supported by the feeling that he had succeeded in his undertaking, and by his wish to fulfil his promise. For many miles the country was desolate, and no food was to be obtained. In the evening, however, they overtook their companions, who had sufficient for their wants. Kibo gave a good report of his friend Telo, who by his directions had been carried on a litter.

"I have promised that you, Martin, will take him with you to the missionary, who will instruct him in the religion of which I have been telling him. He says that as all his friends have been killed or carried off as slaves he will gladly go with you."

"But I must get you also to go with me, if your father will let you," said Martin. "You will then learn English, and obtain more knowledge of the Bible; and you may some day return to this country with a white missionary, to whom you may act as interpreter, and be able to instruct your people in the truths of the Gospel."

Kibo, who had not been attracted by the examples of savage life he had witnessed, gladly promised to try and obtain his father's leave to return with Martin. He did this more willingly as he found with regret that Kanenge was in no way disposed to listen to him when he tried to explain the Gospel, and he hoped that a missionary would be more successful. The discussion of their plans for the future occupied them during the remainder of their journey. Kanenge received his son with joy, and expressed his warmest gratitude to Martin for bringing him back. Though he confessed that a very high price had been demanded for his liberation, he seemed rather flattered than otherwise by it, and insisted on replacing the tusks taken from Martin's store. He showed, however, that he was still the savage by observing that Martin had been over-generous in rescuing poor Telo, who was not worth the two tusks he had promised. Martin did not consider it necessary to argue the point, merely replying that he would give them from his own store.

As soon as he had rested, leaving Kibo with Kanenge to look after Telo, he and Masiko set out, attended by several men carrying the tusks he had promised as a ransom for the two young blacks. He also selected a number of articles to distribute among the party who had escorted him from the camp. He found them anxiously waiting his return, and in fear of being attacked on their march to overtake the rest of their party. No sooner had they received the tusks and presents than they hurried off, and Martin and Masiko returned in safety to Kanenge's camp. In a short time Kanenge managed to obtain as many tusks as Martin had paid for his son's ransom, with several in addition, which he presented as a gift. Martin having thus, greatly to his satisfaction, rescued Kibo from slavery, was anxious to rejoin Mr Warden as soon as possible.

Still, eager as he was to set out, he determined not to go, if possible, without his friend. He had frequent conversations with Kibo on the subject.

Martin went to the chief, who again expressed his gratitude to him for rescuing his son.

“Yes,” said Martin, “I, it is true, redeemed him from slavery, but that was only the slavery which binds the body; you wish to bring back his soul into slavery, which is ten thousand times worse than that from which I saved him. If he remains with you, and follows your customs, he will be Satan’s slave. Allow him to return with me, and in a few years I trust that he will come back and be able to show you and your people how you may be free indeed, and enjoy the blessings which my religion can alone give you. You acknowledge that I have been the means of rescuing him from your enemies; I have a right, therefore, to entreat that you will allow him to accompany me.”

For a considerable time Kanenge did not speak. A great struggle was taking place within him. At length he answered —

“He shall go with you, my son. You have said what is true; only, remember your promise, that he is to return here to see me ere I die.”

Martin again assured Kanenge that should God spare his life, Kibo would return with a white missionary to instruct him and his people, and then hastened away to communicate to his friend the joyful intelligence.

Preparations for their departure were now made, and the waggon being well loaded, Martin and his two young companions, with Masiko as conductor, set out on his journey southward across the desert. The Hottentot driver and four of his men survived, while several of the Makololo gladly undertook to fill the places of the others and to form the necessary escort. Kanenge accompanied them for a couple of days on their journey, urging Martin to come back with Kibo, and promising to give him a warm reception.

The journey across the desert was performed without an accident. Martin had no intention of following the life of a trader, having far higher aims in view. He without difficulty disposed of his waggon and its valuable cargo, and with Mr Warden’s assistance, invested the proceeds, which were sufficient not only to supply his very moderate wants for the present but for the future. He at once began diligently to prepare himself for the important duties of a missionary, Kibo and Telo following his example. The three young men were in the course of a few years fitted to go forth on their destined work, and were the means of bringing many in that long-benighted region out of Nature’s darkness into the glorious light of the Gospel.

The End.

Story 1 Chapter 1		Story 1 Chapter 2		Story 1 Chapter 3		Story 1 Chapter 4		Story 1 Chapter 5		Story 1 Chapter 6		Story 1 Chapter 7
Story 2 Chapter 1		Story 2 Chapter 2		Story 2 Chapter 3		Story 2 Chapter 4		Story 2 Chapter 5		Story 2 Chapter 6		Story 2 Chapter 7
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