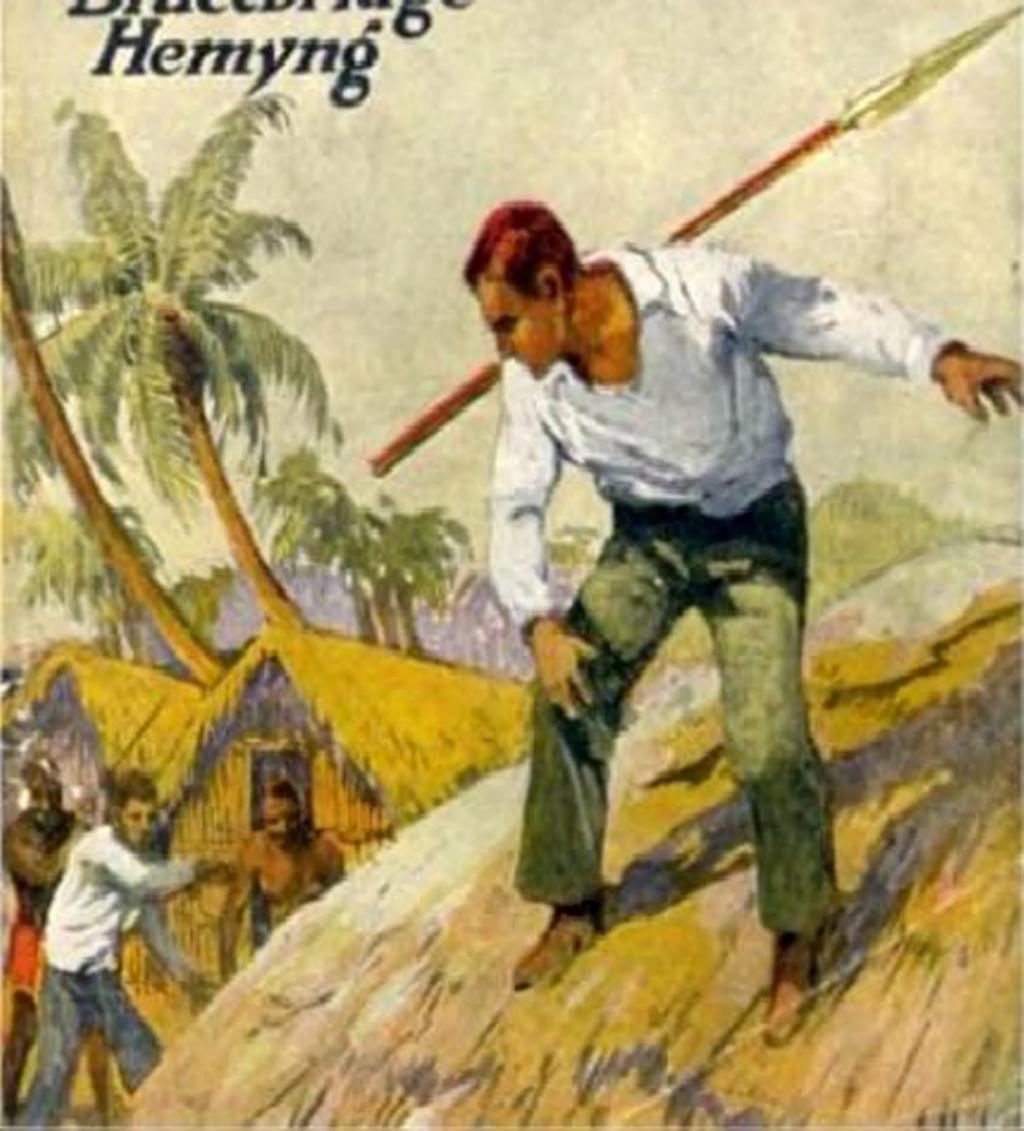




Jack Harkaway Afloat and Ashore

By
*Bracebridge
Hemyng*



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By BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG

Author of the famous Harkaway stories.



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JACK HARKAWAY AFLOAT AND ASHORE.

CHAPTER I.

THE RECEPTION AT LIMBI.

"Monday," said Mr. Mole, ex-schoolmaster and supposed proprietor of a tea garden in China, "if there is a heart capable of thankfulness throbbing beneath your dusky skin let it respond to my feeling of satisfaction at having escaped the savage Pisangs."

Monday looked up and grinned. He had been a savage himself, but since he had become friendly with Jack Harkaway and his party he considered himself in the highest stage of civilization.

He did not understand all Mr. Mole said, but his quick wit enabled him to gather the meaning of the long sentences.

There was, indeed, reason for congratulation.

Jack Harkaway had maneuvered a dramatic escape from the lonely island where they had been beset by Hunston, his deadly enemy, and the Pisangs, a tribe of bloodthirsty savages. Jack and his friends had had a fierce battle with the Pisangs, but had managed to get away in a small but seaworthy boat, laden with provisions.

Jack himself was now asleep, worn out with his

exertions ; his chum, Dick Harvey, lay wounded in the stern. Monday and Mr. Mole had the ship to themselves, and looked out eagerly across the foam to where lay Limbi, the island where they were to find friends.

Monday continued to grin at Mr. Mole for a minute or two ; then he said, in his broken English :

"Me feel same way, umself."

Mr. Mole nodded approval.

"It is a time for celebration, is it not ?" he continued, and, suiting the word to the action, he produced a black bottle and took a deep draught.

"Mist' Mole got um best friend," Monday observed, as Mole hugged the bottle tightly.

"If that observation is intended to apply to this case bottle," replied Mr. Mole, "all I can say is that you are a very rude and impertinent negro."

"No offense, sare ; beg um pardon," said Monday. "Me 'fraid of you, sare, you fight so well."

This compliment mollified the object of it.

"You are right," he said, forgetting for the moment that he was the greatest coward of them all. "By my bravery I have saved you all from a dreadful fate. I hewed mine adversaries in pieces ; but you must not repeat your remarks. In this climate the European requires stimulants to protect himself from the trying effects of the weather. What I take is taken with reluctance, and strictly as medicine."

"Monday not mind a drop of same sort of medsum."

"Not a drop. It is not good for you who are young and strong, and accustomed to the climate."

"Very well, Mist' Mole know best. Monday get him three wife."

"If you suggest such a thing again," cried Mr. Mole,

in a rage, "I'll—I'll wring your neck like—like a sparrow's."

"No wring um poor Monday neck. Monday do what him like in Limbi. His name Matabella, and his father, Lanindyer, great chief, king of island. All obey Monday. If Monday say Mole great chief, him cut off all Pisangs' heads, the woman all love him and he be 'bliged to have one, two, three wife."

"Is your father really the Tuan Biza of Limbi?" asked Mr. Mole.

Monday nodded his head vehemently.

"It's quite right," exclaimed Harvey, who could not sleep through pain, and had been an amused listener to this conversation.

"Is he not joking? I have found him of a facetious tendency."

"No; Monday's a howling swell in his own diggings, ain't you, Mon?" said Harvey.

"Matabella, him show Mist' Mole," answered the black, drawing himself up proudly as he stood in the stern, rudder lines in hand.

"Take the bottle and help yourself, my young and intelligent friend," exclaimed Mr. Mole.

Monday did so with a grin.

"I hope nothing I have said has given you offense," continued Mr. Mole; "I had no idea you were a prince in your own country. But, for Heaven's sake, say no more about the wives."

The conversation dropped, and the boat went on her course, the wind continuing to rise, as if impatient at having been still during the night.

The sun rose high in the heavens, and the heavily

laden craft which carried the boys and their fortunes slowly plowed her way along the deep.

Harvey and Mr. Mole covered themselves with a tarpaulin and sought forgetfulness in slumber.

Monday was alone in command of the boat.

He could not steer and see to the sails as well, and when the force of the wind increased and the sea rose, he thought it advisable to wake Jack.

Nearly five hours had passed since the dispersion of the Pisangs.

Jack had had time to recruit his wasted energies.

The boat made one or two dangerous lurches over, and Monday was afraid she might capsize. Jack started up with alacrity.

"What is it?" he asked.

Monday explained to him, and pointing to a dark ridge visible on the verge of the horizon, added:

"That Limbi."

"Oh, is that Limbi?" asked Jack. "You know your way about in these waters. How shall we land?"

"No land in the surf—not in this boat," answered Monday. "They send out boat when see us, and then we land in our fashion."

"Very well. I leave it all to you," replied Jack, well pleased at the prospect of reaching their journey's end without further danger.

The land was not more than five or six miles distant.

Their voyage would soon be over.

The first sight of Limbi was not a reassuring one.

A straight open beach descended abruptly beneath the sea, so that the high swell never once broke before finding itself suddenly stopped in its rapid course.

The water rose up in one huge wall that rolled for-

ward and fell on the steep shore with a roar like thunder.

Every few moments the water would rebound from the sand until it rose twice and a half as high as the natives standing near it, for several of the islanders had collected at the novel sight of a vessel standing in for their shore.

"My dear Harkaway," said Mr. Mole, who was roused from his sleep by the breaking of the surf, "you surely do not intend to run the risk of landing on such a coast?"

"Monday says he will make it all right," replied Jack.
"We near nuff now," exclaimed Monday, "please take in sail, Mast' Jack."

Jack did so, and the boat ceased her onward career, merely drifting a little with the tide.

Monday put his hands to his mouth, and gave utterance to a peculiarly shrill and piercing cry which he repeated three times.

"That to let them know me come, sare," he observed.
The noise awoke Harvey, who, looking round him in astonishment, said :

"What's that beastly row?"
"It's only Monday," answered Jack.
"I thought it was um Pisangs, as he calls them. I never heard such a din in my life. It was like the boys who sell baked potatoes on the streets of London on a cold night in winter, singing out, 'all 'ot, all 'ot!'"

"That our war cry," explained Monday; "all my people know my voice; they say 'That Matarella,' and my father come out to me in a proa and take us all on shore."

"Your father! Is he on the beach?"

"Yes. Monday see him. Look, look ; he telling them it me, and they shake head. Now he order boat, because they all think me dead—killed, eat up by Pisang. See! father, how um run, Mast' Jack ; how um skip, Mast' Harvey, how um talk, sare."

The black grew quite excited at the prospect of meeting with his father.

In fact, Jack saw that the few natives whom he had at first distinguished on the beach had grown into a crowd, which numbered upwards of two hundred.

An-elderly man moved in their midst, and to him they paid the strictest attention, as if he were entitled to command.

His manner was that of a prince or chief, and it was clear that Monday's peculiar cry had produced a singular effect upon the inhabitants of the island.

For a few minutes it was not evident what the Limbians were about.

They ran to and fro, carrying pieces of wood, and all seemed confusion.

"What are the beggars trying to do?" asked Harvey.

"Blest if I know," replied Jack. "They are like bees in a hive, when they're going to swarm."

The natives did not keep them long in suspense.

They soon made a rude skid or wide ladder with large poles on the sides and small green ones, with the bark torn off, for the rounds.

This was laid down on the beach while the wave was forming, and a heavy boat, with a sort of awning in the middle to keep off the spray, was pushed on to it as the wave broke and a broad sheet of surge partially buoyed her up.

As this wave receded she was successfully launched.

The boat, guided by native hands, reached Jack's boat, and an affectionate greeting passed between Monday and his friends.

His father, the Tuan Biza of Limbi, was a man of commanding stature, but his self-possession was great.

He had given up his son as lost.

When a prisoner falls into the hands of his enemies, he rarely, if ever, escapes.

To see Matabella again was to Lanindyer a resurrection of his son.

Monday threw himself on his neck and kissed him affectionately, but the old man displayed no emotion.

It was evident, though, that he was affected, for tears trembled in his eyes.

When Monday recovered himself he pointed to Jack, Harvey and Mr. Mole, and told them in the native language who they were, and what they had done for him.

In teaching Monday English, Jack and Harvey had, of necessity, learned his language.

So that the conversation between the father and son was intelligible to them.

Mr. Mole also knew the native dialect, which was common to all the tribes about these islands, for he had picked it up during his captivity.

Turning to Jack, the aged chief said:

"Savior of my child, you are welcome to Limbi, and you shall live like a prince among our people."

"Thank you," replied Jack. "It is my pride to be the friend of so great a chief as Lanindyer, who is alike renowned in war and peace."

The Tuan Biza now set his men to work, and all the stores were moved out of Jack's boat into the proa, and

in the latter they all embarked, leaving their own craft to ride at anchor in charge of a native.

Harvey was lifted carefully from one boat to the other, being unable to walk, as his wound was painful in the extreme, and his leg much swollen.

When all was ready, they ran into the shore over the heavy rollers.

Other natives appeared on the shore with a huge coil of rattan an inch or more in diameter.

Two or three of them seized an end, ran down and plunged into a huge wave as coolly and unhesitatingly as a diver would leap from the side of a boat into a quiet bay.

The end of the cord was fastened to the front part of the boat.

The other was carried up a long way on the beach, and the natives ranged themselves in two rows, each grasping it with one hand ready to haul in when the signal was given. A number of heavy seas now rolled in and broke, but the natives on board kept the boat from being swept forward or backward.

A smaller swell now came on.

Every native gave a wild yell, and those on shore hauled in the rattan with all their might.

Away darted the boat on the crest of a wave with the swiftness of an arrow.

Soon the boat was in the midst of the surf.

The next instant it was on the skid, and away it glided with the speed of a locomotive.

Before Jack could realize the fact they were high and dry upon the bank before the next wave came in.

In this way was their landing in Limbi effected.

Monday had not exaggerated his influence with the natives of Limbi.

There were about a thousand in number, living in a town called Tompano, which was built on a hill.

This made it healthy, and afforded some security from attack.

Monday's father had ruled over the inhabitants for some years, as his father had done before him.

He was, in fact, descended from a long line of princes.

The people who lived in the neighboring island of Pisang were the hereditary enemies of the Limbians.

War was almost always going on between them, and with varying success.

The town in which the Pisangs lived was called Palembarg.

A few years ago the Limbians had invaded Pisang, and being victorious, burned Palembarg to the ground.

This made the Pisangs very angry and vindictive.

They had vowed vengeance ever since, and threatened an invasion of Limbi.

Jack's supply of powder, shot and guns was exhibited to the Limbians, and their use explained to them.

They hailed Jack and his friends at once as great chiefs.

A house was given them to live in near the king's palace.

They were delighted at the restoration of Matabella, or Monday, who was much beloved.

These simple people, savage though they were in their habits, were not wanting in gratitude.

Jack got all their fighting men together, and instructed them in the use of firearms.

But he was very sparing with the powder and shot, because when his supply was gone he could get no more.

He knew of what advantage it would be to him and his friends in the event of an invasion of Limbi.

That Hunston, his vindictive enemy, who was now in league with the Pisangs, would carry on the war, he did not doubt.

If, indeed, the Pisangs should be afraid to invade Limbi, he determined to land an army on their island.

For some time everything went on quietly.

The Pisangs did not show themselves.

Monday would not leave Jack.

He might have lived in his father's palace, but his attachment to the boys was so great that he lived in their house and was Jack's bodyguard.

He never allowed him to stir out unless he accompanied him.

"You save my life, and you teach me do what right," he said. "I spend my life with you. It is your life, and Monday still your servant."

"My friend, you mean, Monday," replied Jack.

"You do as you like with me, Mast' Jack," continued the grateful fellow. "You ask me die for you, I do it, because I then give back the life you save."

Both Jack and Harvey were much attached to Monday, and liked to have him near them.

Harvey's leg got well in about six weeks, and he could walk again.

They had plenty of servants, and did not allow Monday to do any menial work, though he was always ready to lend a hand when necessary.

As the Pisangs did not show themselves, Jack planned an invasion of their country on a large scale.

A fleet was provided, and the army, which numbered four hundred men, was drilled every day.

The inhabitants of Pisang and Limbi were about equal in number.

Making an allowance for the women and children, the aged and the infirm, they could put four hundred, or a few more, in the field.

CHAPTER II.

MONDAY'S NEWS.

The white men were an object of attraction to the ladies of Limbi.

Every chief was entitled to have three wives.

It was reported that the strangers had killed their enemies, and, therefore, were, by the laws of the land, able to marry.

Jack and Harvey were too young to indulge in any idea of the sort.

If they had not been, they would not have fallen in love with the Limbian women, who were far from being attractive.

Besides which, Jack was in love with Emily Scratchley, the sweetheart of his schooldays, and his principal reason for wishing the Limbians to attack the Pisangs was to find if she really was on their island, and, if so, rescue her, for he had learned that she had been wrecked with her father on the coast.

Jack found his new friends very idle.

They would fight, hunt and fish, but nothing more.

The women were made to do the principal part of the work on the island.

All were very fond of dancing.

The principal dance was called the minari.

It consisted of men and women arranging themselves in two rows.

They slowly twisted their bodies to the right and left, at the same time moving the extended arms and open hands in circles in opposite directions.

The only motions of the naked feet were to change the weight of the body from the heel to the toe and reverse it.

Monday had two cousins, Alfura and Ambonia.

They expressed a wish to marry the white men, as a mode of showing their gratitude for their having saved Monday's life.

The king summoned a council to discuss the idea.

Monday heard of it.

Alfura and Ambonia were his near relations, and he hastened to tell his masters the news.

Jack and Harvey were together, talking about Emily.

Mr. Mole had gone out for a walk, to think alone about his tea garden in China.

"Mast' Jack," exclaimed Monday, coming into the house, "what you think?"

"I don't know," replied Jack. "Have the Pisangs come after us?"

"No; not them, but the Tuan Biza and all the chiefs met in council to-day."

"What about?"

"Alfura and Ambonia—you know them. They are my father's brother's daughters."

"That's a roundabout way of describing them; but no matter. Go ahead," remarked Harvey.

"They have said they want to marry a white man, and the chiefs are to decide whether they shall or not."

"Scissors!" exclaimed Jack. "Suppose the white man don't see it?"

"Then he must leave the island," replied Monday. "If one of the Tuan Biza's family want to marry and choose a man, and he not have her, then he go."

"Oh, that's it, is it? I wish I'd got a return ticket," Jack remarked.

"If the chiefs say yes, they send for you, and it is our custom to place sometimes seven, eight, nine women together."

"Yes."

"Then you go and pick out one, two, three, if you like; but of course you take those who have asked for you."

"I see; you pick out the ones who have honored you by their preference," replied Jack.

"That is a dodge to spare their blushes if they have any," observed Harvey.

"Yes," said Monday, quickly. "You not supposed to know they ask for you."

"But I don't want to marry," exclaimed Jack.

"Nor I," said Harvey.

"You should have kept us out of this, Monday. It's not kind of you," Jack continued.

Monday grinned.

"What do you stand grinning there for like the ugly baboon you are?" said Jack, in a rage.

"'Scuse me, Mast' Jack. I not grin at you," replied Monday.

"Then you're indulging at my expense," said Harvey. "Where's my crutch? I'll pitch into you, Master Monday, if you were twenty king's sons."

"No pitch in, sare," Monday cried, in alarm. "You say you too young to marry. You wait a year and let Mr. Mole marry Alfura and Ambonia; that my idea—that why I grin, sare."

Jack smiled, and Harvey put down the crutch with which he had walked while his leg was bad.

"That's a rattling good idea, too," said Jack. "It will be a rare spree to see Mole with—how many did you say, Monday?"

"Two at first."

"Oh, yes, two to start with, Alfura and Ambonia. Two beauties they are, too—aren't they, Dick?"

"Stunners," replied Harvey. "Alfura's got a nose like a squashed pumpkin, and her ears stick out like a cow's, while her mouth would enable her to eat mince pies whole."

"And Ambonia's fat and pudgy, with a temper like a wild hyena. I saw her chivey a cove down the street the other day," said Jack.

"What for?"

"Because he bagged something out of her father's garden. She did give it him and no mistake."

"Monday's a genius," said Harvey.

"If they send for me to the council," continued Jack, "I shall treat them to a little ventriloquism, and say that the great spirit does not wish us to marry for a year, as we are too young."

"And that Mole is to have Alfura and Ambonia, or

be cast adrift in a boat without oars, sails, rudder or grub," put in Harvey.

"Exactly."

"That's the ticket," Harvey went on. "You'll fog them beautifully with your ventriloquism."

"Monday," exclaimed Jack.

"Yes, Mast' Jack," replied the black, with his usual respectful manner.

"Don't you let on to anyone about my gift."

"About you talkee in the air?"

"That's it."

"Monday never say nothing."

"Then you say something. 'Never say nothing' isn't grammar, Monday. You ought to go to Crawcour's if ever you reach England with us," observed Harvey.

Monday shook his head.

This speech was beyond him.

But he protested that he never mentioned anything that the boys told him to keep secret.

He had heard Jack ventriloquize once or twice, and the mystery had been explained to him.

Jack and Harvey felt perfectly happy when they saw a way out of the new difficulty which now presented itself.

It was nothing unusual in the archipelago for girls of thirteen to marry boys of sixteen.

The natives arrive at maturity so much earlier in warm climates than we do in our colder latitudes.

To plead that they were too young would have been a poor excuse.

"Mole shall be the victim," said Jack.

"How many wives shall he have?" asked Harvey.

"Monday says he can't have more than three by the

law of the land. I'd give him a dozen if I could work it."

"Let him have Alfura and Ambonia to begin with. Mole hates women, I think. He was never very kind to them, and if he doesn't care about marrying English beauties, he'll faint at the idea of two fullblown niggers," observed Harvey.

"As brave a fo'castle man as ever broke biscuit would steer clear of them."

"And naturally a loblolly boy like Mole will fight shy."

"He's in a narrow channel, and he'd better take soundings," said Jack; "for, if I'm not mistaken, here's a messenger coming up the street to tell me to come to the council."

"That right, sare," replied Monday. "Him de message, sure enuff."

"Then it's all 'u-p' with Mole; for, to get myself out, I must get him into the mess."

It was as Monday had predicted.

Alfura and Ambonia, ladies of high rank, had, in accordance with the custom of the country, expressed themselves willing to bestow their hands and hearts upon the adventurous stranger.

This proposal, owing to their high position, had to be considered by the chiefs in council.

They had come to the determination that the ladies' wish should be granted.

In the event of non-compliance with the desire of the fair ones, expulsion from the island would be the result.

The council consisted of twenty-five members, who sat on mats in a sort of barn.

Room was made for Jack.

The Tuan Biza himself informed Jack that he might have his choice of his relatives, or take them both for his wives if he liked.

Jack coughed and replied that he was, indeed, a fortunate man to be so highly honored.

He shouldn't mind one of the ladies..

With one, however, he would be content, and his friend, Harvey, might have the other.

A murmur of applause arose.

Then Jack, throwing his voice into the center of the apartment, near the ceiling, changed the tone, which became serious, if not awful.

"Forbear!" he said. "I, the spirit of the white men, speak."

A general consternation seized the chiefs in council.

They looked at one another terror-stricken, for, as we have said, they were all very superstitious, and believed in witchcraft.

"Jack and Harvey are your guests," he continued. "They are about to lead you against your enemies, the Pisangs, over whom you shall be victorious. Their customs are not your customs, and they must not marry until one year has passed, for they are too young to have wives."

A murmur of approbation, mingled with astonishment, ran through the council.

"But," continued Jack. "I, the spirit of the white men, do not wish the ladies Alfura and Ambonia to remain single."

As Jack spoke in the native dialect, his words were perfectly intelligible.

"Who, then, O spirit!" asked the king, "is worthy to have their matchless charms?"

"Who but the Tuan Biza of the white men—who but the great chief, Mole, who has qualified himself for marriage by cutting off a head?"

"Good, good," broke from the assembly. "The spirit of the white men speaks the words of wisdom. It is very good."

"Let the Tuan Biza Mole be united to both ladies at once," Jack went on.

"It shall be done, O spirit!" said the council, as with one voice, and bowing their heads.

Jack pretended to be disappointed at this interruption, and said that he had taken a fancy to Alfura.

"We have other beauties," replied the king, "and you shall marry when the year has run, O friend of my soul!"

"I was afraid the spirit would interfere," continued Jack.

"Does he often do so?"

"Always, when we do anything against the laws of our priests."

"And is it unlawful to marry before a certain age?" asked the king.

"Of course it is; that's at the bottom of the mischief," answered Jack.

"Rest easy, O son of my adoption!" replied the king. "You shall do no wrong through us."

Rising, the chief said a few words to his friends, and they dispatched a messenger to fetch Mr. Mole.

"Shall I go, O Tuan Biza, and acquaint my countryman with his good fortune?" asked Jack.

The proposal was accepted, and Jack went in search of Mole.

He left the chiefs in council, holding Jack in higher veneration than ever.

They had not the slightest idea that they had been imposed upon.

To their simple minds the great spirit of the whites had spoken.

His dictates must be obeyed.

Though Jack and Harvey were for a time lost as husbands to their princesses, they had Mole to fall back upon.

For him there was no escape.

Little did he suspect what news was in store for him as he wended his way back to the town of Tompano.

CHAPTER III.

MR. MOLE'S DESPAIR.

When Jack returned to Harvey, who was waiting for him with impatience, he began to laugh heartily.

"I've done it, Dick," he said, when his merriment was over. "We're under the protection of the spirit. Has Mole turned up?"

"Not yet. It's feeding time, though, and Mole is generally pretty punctual at knife-and-fork time. How did you do it?"

"I told the council that you and I were highly honored, and would marry the ladies. There was applause at this. Then I changed my voice, and you should have seen the beggars stare."

"Of course the spirit forbade the banns, and suggested Mole as the bridegroom. Which is he to have?"

"Both of them."

"Both?" repeated Harvey. "My eye, Jack! it will give him fits. He's always going on about women, and saying he shall die as he has lived—a bachelor."

"Will he? We shall see him with a couple of young papooses on his knee. I wonder what color they'll be?"

"Chocolate and cream—half and half."

"Piebald, perhaps. What a lark!" said Jack.

"It's all a spree," remarked Harvey.

At this juncture Mr. Mole entered, looking hot and tired.

He had been botanizing, and carried in his hand some rare specimens of the flora of the island.

"Something more for my collection," he remarked. "I shall have quite a cabinet of curiosities soon."

"I think you will, sir," replied Jack.

"What do you mean? Your observations have a doubtful tendency in them sometimes, Harkaway."

"No doubt about this last start, sir."

"What on earth are you talking of?"

"The council is waiting for you," replied Jack, "and you are destined to a high honor."

"Ah! I suppose they want to make me prime minister or chancellor of the exchequer; very good! I will give these savages a constitution, and bring in an education bill. We must have a school here."

"It isn't that, sir, though that may come afterwards."

"What is it, then?"

"You're to be married, sir."

Mr. Mole gave a high bound.

Harvey sang:

"For I'm mar-ry-ed to a mer-may-ed,
At the bottom of the deep, blue sea."

"You are joking, Harkaway. Do not indulge in merriment at my expense. Explain this to me. No foolishness?" exclaimed Mr. Mole.

"It's quite true, sir. Two ladies have chosen you, and by the law of the land you must marry them, or——"

"Or what?"

"Leave the island in an empty boat—no provisions, no oars, no anything."

"Why, that's certain death!" replied Mole, with a groan, adding:

"Who are the—ahem? the females?"

"Miss Alfura and Ambonia, relatives of the royal family."

"What, those she dragons? I know them," exclaimed Mr. Mole. "Alfura's forty if she's a day, and has lost all her front teeth. Ambonia's got a temper of the old gentleman himself, and squints awfully."

"Consider the honor, sir."

"Honor be—— But no, I will not give way. I will command myself. I shall proceed to the council chamber, and remonstrate with those savages."

Jack laughed.

"What is fun to you is death to me, and if I find that you have got this up for me, I'll—I'll——"

Mr. Mole could not find words dreadful enough for what he would do.

"Go on, sir," said Jack. "Who's afraid?"

"I didn't mean anything," Mole replied. "Come, Harkaway, stand my friend in this matter, and get me out of the mess."

"Can't be done."

"Why not?"

"If you don't at once marry those ladies, you'll be put in the boat."

"I don't know which is the worst prospect," Mr. Mole said. "Confound the natives! Confound everything."

He began to tear his hair, and danced about like a madman.

When he stopped with a handful of hair in each hand, Jack said:

"That's lively, sir. Can't you favor us again?"

"He's as good as a dancing dervish," cried Harvey.

"Jack, dear Jack," said Mr. Mole, "you always were my friend, and a generous fellow; tell me you're only chaffing."

"I'm not, indeed."

"Then I'm a lost man. Two wives! Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!"

"In a month's time you'll be entitled to take a third."

"A third!" cried the wretched Mole. "Tell me, Harkaway—tell me, if you love me, if there are any insane asylums in this beastly country?"

"Not that I know of."

"If not, I shall wander about the island a raving maniac. Oh, Isaac Mole, why were you ever born? Wretched man, what have you done to deserve such a fate?"

Monday, who had been down to the council room again, now came back.

"The council ~~has~~ broke up," he said. "They all gone to bring Alfura and Ambonia here."

"Here! Are the furies coming here?" asked Mr. Mole.

"They not long first."

"But they can't take me until the ceremony is performed."

"We no ceremony. They say they have you, and the council decide. Then it all over. No ceremony, sare. They come take you home."

"Now? Do you mean this instant?"

"In one, two short minutes," replied Monday.

Mr. Mole began to dance again.

"This how it done, Mist' Mole," continued Monday. "They bring p'raps ten women. All stand in a row. You look at them. One by one they come to you and you shake your head to all but Alfura and Ambonia, to whom you kneel. That all the ceremony."

"Never! I'll die first," replied Mr. Mole.

"They put you in boat else," said Monday, grinning.

"Dick, give him some whisky," said Jack.

Harvey poured some brandy into half a cocoanut shell, and Mole quaffed it eagerly.

"You're a gone coon, sir. Better make the best of it," he observed.

Mr. Mole shook his fist in Monday's face, saying:

"You confounded black lump of ugliness, you have done this for me! But I'll have your life!"

Harvey forced him into a seat.

"Let me get at him! I'll do him an injury! I'll have his——"

"Life," he was about to say, when Harvey gravely put in "head," which made Jack burst out laughing.

"Harvey," said Mr. Mole, in a faint tone, "you are low and vulgar. You are raised but little above those poor, benighted savages in the social scale."

"I wouldn't bullyrag them if I were you," replied Harvey. "Remember you are going to marry a couple of the poor benighted."

"Come, sir, don't give way. I'm sure Alfura's got beautiful shiny skin," said Jack.

"And Ambonia's hair is curly and oily," exclaimed Harvey.

"Better not say much," remarked Monday. "They beat you, sare; they scratch, they kick."

"Well, it's only for life, that's one comfort; and I shan't live long under the infliction," answered Mr. Mole, with a moan.

As he spoke, a loud noise was heard in the street.

The procession was approaching.

First came the band, which consisted of a score of men carrying gongs.

The gongs increased regularly in size from one of five or six inches to one of a foot or fifteen inches in diameter.

Each had a round knob or boss in the middle, which was struck with a small stick.

When made to reverberate in this manner, their music was very agreeable.

It resembled closely that made by small bells.

This instrument was called the bonang.

After the bonangs came the chiefs of the town.

Behind these were the nine virgins, Ambonia and Alfura being in the center.

The rear was brought up by a guard of soldiers, and behind these again came the rabble of the town of Tompano, who, like crowds all over the world, had collected to witness what they could of the unusual ceremony.

CHAPTER IV.

TAKING HIM HOME.

When Harvey heard the bonangs, he exclaimed:

"Chingarings and chopsticks! hongs and gongs! That's your sort! Go it, ye cripples! Have some more whisky, sir!"

Mr. Mole began to recover his composure a little.

"I think I will even follow your advice," he answered, "if only to nerve myself for the dreadful ordeal. I want a little something."

"Nothing like a drop of whisky for a nerver," replied Jack.

"That's right, Mist' Mole. Show um pluck, sare," chimed in Monday.

"Very well, my black friend," replied Mr. Mole; "I owe you one—yes, sir, I owe you one—and we'll square accounts some day."

"Keep up your heart. Let them see what stuff you're made of. Don't get scared, sir."

"I hope an Englishman never shows the white feather, Harkaway. Nor will I. No, not even under the most trying circumstances."

"Good again," cried Harvey, who was in an ecstasy of delight at the anticipated fun.

"I will bear myself bravely, like one advancing to the sacrifice. I have before my eyes the gladiators of ancient Rome."

"Who were they, sir?"

"Have you so soon forgotten the lessons of your early youth, Harkaway? I cry shame upon you."

"Set of coves who fought in the arena," observed Harvey.

"You are right," continued Mr. Mole. "But I object to the word 'coves.' However, let it pass. They had their '*Ave Cæsar*,' or 'Hail Cæsar!' and they added '*Morituri te salutamus*,' which, being translated, means 'Being about to die, we salute you.' My fate is worse than death; but I will be brave."

"I have remarked, sir," said Harvey, "that these Limbi ladies have a peculiar scent or odor of their own."

"Smell—odor. Don't be delicate, Harvey. Call it a smell, which is highly suggestive of polecats."

"All right, sir; anything to please you."

"However agreeable it may be to native noses, my English nasal organ revolts at it. They are rank, Harvey, very rank; and all the perfumes in Rimmel's shop would not convince me to the contrary."

"You'll like it, sir, when you're used to it," exclaimed Jack.

Mr. Mole darted a ferocious look at him.

The noise of the bonangs increased, and the hoarse shouts of the multitude grew nearer.

Again the wretched man applied himself to the whisky bottle.

"Go it, sir; nip away," exclaimed Harvey, singing:

"Whisky killed my poor dad;
Whisky drove my mother mad.
Whisky, whisky,
Whisky for my Johnny!"

Fortified with a sort of Dutch courage, Mr. Mole awaited the coming of the procession with the resignation of a lamb going to the slaughter.

"How do you find yourself now, sir?" asked Jack.

"Agonized, my young friend."

"Pity the sorrows of poor old Mole," said Harvey.

Mr. Mole was about to reply when the band halted outside, and, ceasing playing, allowed the members of the deputation to enter.

First came the chiefs of the council chamber, and these were closely followed by the nine virgins.

The soldiers kept guard at the door.

Ranging themselves in a row, the young ladies cast down their eyes and prepared themselves for the ceremony.

The king, addressing Monday, exclaimed:

"Matabella, does the Tuan Biza of the white men know what is required of him by our customs?"

"He does, O king, live forever," answered Monday.

"Is he aware of the high honor the alliance will confer upon him?"

"He is; and feels deeply gratified, O king; may thy victories increase," replied Monday.

"Let the rites commence."

"At once, O king. May you always be victorious in war," said Monday.

He then filled a calabash with whisky, of which spirit the Limbians had learned to be very fond, and handed it round to the company.

All partook of it but the women.

"Now, then, sir," said Jack, to Mr. Mole, "go in and win. All eyes are upon you."

"Faint heart never won fair lady," exclaimed Harvey. "Keep up the honor of old England."

The nine virgins stood apart, and Mr. Mole staggered rather than walked towards them.

Deep groans broke from him.

The perspiration stood in beads upon his forehead.

At a signal from Monday, the band again struck up a quick, jiglike sort of tune.

The nine virgins looked up.

First one left the rank, and walking past Mr. Mole, he shook his head at her, and she took up a position at the other end of the row.

The second did the same, with a like result.

The third was Alfura.

As soon as Mr. Mole saw Alfura, he sank gracefully on one knee before her.

This was the signal of acceptance.

She took a place on his left side.

A loud shout of applause from the assembled spectators rent the air, which was taken up by the mob outside.

Number four now passed Mr. Mole, and was rejected.

The fifth shared a similar fate.

So did six, seven and eight.

Ambonia was the ninth, and before her Mr. Mole bowed as before.

Again the shouts arose as she placed herself on his right side.

Each wife seized an arm, and held him in a tight grip, as if afraid that he was going to run away from them.

The calabash was refilled, and the health of the bridegroom drank heartily.

"Long live the Tuan Biza of the whites!" exclaimed the king, "and may his children people the land."

The chiefs now filed out of the room, and the seven virgins, surrounding Mr. Mole and his wives, followed them.

He was dragged from the apartment, and the procession, led by the band, proceeded down the principal street of Tompano, at the end of which was the house of Alfura and Ambonia.

Mole cast an appealing glance at Jack who was looking out of a window.

"Never say die, sir," cried Jack.

"They'll comb your hair for you, sir," exclaimed Harvey.

A curse not loud but deep burst from the unhappy man, who was soon lost to sight by a bend in the street.

The ceremony was over.

Mr. Mole was a married man, very much married, indeed, and his wives were taking him home to the nuptial board.

It was not until two days had passed that the boys beheld their old friend and instructor.

On the morning of the third day, Mr. Mole paid them a visit.

He looked wistfully around him as he entered, and seemed afraid of being followed.

"Hello, sir!" exclaimed Jack. "How goes it with you?"

"Badly, my dear boy, very badly," replied Mr. Mole.

"How's that? We call you the Great Pasha, the Grand Turk."

"Brigham Young is nearer the mark," said Harvey. "Mole's a Mormonite."

"Bring 'em young, you should say," returned Mr. Mole. "Tempers grow with age, and Ambonia's a perfect fiend. It's too late in life now to correct either of them."

"What's happened, sir? We thought you'd have looked us up before now?"

"So I should have done, but I've been locked in, bolted in, barred, and had the liberty of the subject painfully infringed."

"Bottled up, eh, sir? That's nothing extraordinary in married life, is it?" replied Jack.

"I don't know. It's all new to me."

"You ought to be an authority in these matters. Perhaps it's a custom of the country."

"When you're in Turkey, you must do as the Turks do," remarked Harvey.

"Oh, the life I've led!" continued Mr. Mole, with a sigh. "Alfura's not so bad, but Ambonia is an incarnate fiend. She has boxed my ears, and has threatened me with a bamboo cane."

"So you have come out on the loose, sir?"

"I escaped through the window, and, thinking you

would comfort me with some spirituous liquor, I have sought you."

"It's very wrong to encourage a married man in staying away from his home; but for the sake of old times, you shall have what you like," said Jack, gravely.

"Spoken like yourself, Harkaway. Whisky, if you please, and plenty of it."

Monday supplied his wants, coming in as Harvey clapped his hands, as a signal for him to appear.

He could not help laughing at Mr. Mole, but a sign from Jack caused him to withdraw.

"It's very hard to be jeered and gibed at by a miserable savage like that," observed Mole; "and I think you ought not to encourage him, Harkaway."

"What did he do, sir?" asked Jack.

"Never mind, he is gone; and the memory of his offense shall go with him."

"Have you put your marriage in the paper, sir?" asked Harvey, innocently.

"How could I do so when there are no journals in the island, and the natives are unable to read?"

"Oh, I forgot that."

"I think, sir," Jack remarked, "you might have been content with one wife at a time. It is bad form to have two."

"You know as well as I, Harkaway, that I had no voice in the matter."

"You must have liked the girls in your heart, sir."

"Harkaway," said Mr. Mole, very gravely, "did you ever see a snake?"

"I'm sorry to say I have seen a good many since I have been in this part of the world," replied Jack.

"Did you ever take a fancy to one?"

"I've admired them at a distance, but I can't say I ever thought of cuddling one up in my arms."

"Then don't ask me if I like the Limbi women. Let us talk of something else. I am degraded in my own eyes."

CHAPTER V.

STARTLING NEWS.

"Have you heard the news, sir?" asked Jack, after a pause.

"News," repeated Mr. Mole. "I was not aware that in this wretched country they had anything of the sort."

"You ought to take an interest in anything that is moving, because you have a stake in the country."

"If it will gratify you, Harkaway, I will say that I have a feeling of intense interest in anything that may befall this unhappy land," continued Mr. Mole.

"There's going to be a war," said Jack.

"Going to be. There always is a war, isn't there? The beasts are always fighting."

"He's thinking of his wives," said Harvey.

"Harvey," exclaimed Mr. Mole, in a tone of rebuke, "it is unkind of you to remind me of my misery—let the bottle alone, if you please."

Repeated applications to the bottle of whisky made Mr. Mole's eyes swim in his head.

"A war," he said, to himself. "What do I care for a dozen wars?"

"We are to start to invade Pisang this day week, sir.

and you shall have an independent command," said Jack.

"An independent humbug," answered Mr. Mole.

"What, sir?"

"Humbug, I said," repeated Mr. Mole, who, in spite of his growing inebriety, grew alarmed at the prospect of war. "I said humbug, and I'll stick to it. What have I got to do with war?"

"We are going to fight Hunston."

"Fight him and welcome. Kill him if you like. It is fitting and proper for you to do so. You and Harvey are young. I am—ahem!—I am a married man, settled down, you know, Harkaway, and it would not be right to take me away from my wife."

"Wives, sir."

"I stand corrected," continued Mr. Mole, with a bland smile. "Go, by all means, Harkaway, and fight those despicable Pisangs. I will stop at home and organize the militia, or whatever the reserve forces may be."

"Won't you come with us?"

"No. My place is here in Tompano. I am a family man, Harkaway. No fighting for me, unless it is for hearths and home; then Isaac Mole will be to the fore, and woe to the foe."

"That's a rhyme, sir. You should wish—" said Harvey.

"I do wish. I wish most devotedly that—that there will be an earthquake which will swallow up Ambonia," replied Mole.

"Then you don't mind Alfura?"

"She's ugly, but she's not vicious," said Mr. Mole. "I can put up with Alfura; that is to say, for a time."

"Until you can get to your tea garden in China, sir?" hazarded Jack.

"Precisely, my dear boy."

"You can sing, sir, 'Happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away,'" said Harvey.

"With your usual impulsiveness, you have jumped to a wrong conclusion, Harvey," answered Mr. Mole. "I could not be happy with either, and my only time of peace is when they are fighting among themselves."

"Fighting!"

"Yes, like bulldogs. When they are not throwing stones and vegetable refuse at me, they are engaged in the mild amusement of tearing each other's cheeks, which is a pleasing pastime for a husband to stand and look on at."

"Sorry for you, sir. Knock 'em down and jump on 'em," said Harvey.

"You are a brute," replied Mr. Mole. "A little while ago you exhorted me to keep up the honor of my country, and behave like an Englishman."

"Dick, shut up," said Jack.

"No," Mr. Mole went on, "I will not reduce myself to the level of a Whitechapel costermonger. I will not even floor them. What though Alfura punches me on the nose, and Ambonia hurls a dead cat in my eye."

"That's nothing, sir," exclaimed Jack.

"Nothing! Isn't it? Did you ever have a dead cat settle on your left eye?" cried Mr. Mole, sharply.

"No, sir, and don't want to. But let me tell you the news. It's rather startling."

"What is it, Harkaway?" said Mr. Mole, handling the bottle with an unsteady hand.

"Excuse me a minute, and then I'll tell you." replied

Jack, as Harvey came over and whispered to him: "Make Mole fuddled, and carry him home to his wives."

Jack nodded, and went on:

"Help yourself, sir; don't be afraid of it. There's more where that came from."

"I wish you'd come to your news," said Mr. Mole, snappishly.

"We are going to invade Pisang at once. Harvey and I take the lead. Our fleet is ready; our soldiers number four hundred, and it's either to be victory or Westminster Abbey."

"You told me that before, and I persist in my resolve to patrol the town. I will be governor of Tompano," answered Mr. Mole.

"I thought you imagined I was joking, sir, and did not believe what I said," Jack rejoined.

Mr. Mole got up and staggered towards the door.

"Is your floor straight?" he asked.

"Lie down and try it, sir."

Mr. Mole sat down with an imbecile chuckle, and said:

"Tell Ambonia I'm very jolly. Say we're jol' good flows, ev'ry one. I don't care Ambonia. I'll let 'bonia know if she givesh me any of her nonshensh."

"Here's your health, sir, and death to Hunston and the Pisangs. You'll drink that toast, won't you?" said Harvey.

He tendered him a glass, which Mole tossed off.

It was the finishing stroke, for he rolled backwards, laughing heartily, as if it was a good joke.

"He's a settled member," exclaimed Harvey.

"Collar his legs, Dick; I'll take his head, and we'll cart him off home."

"I pity him when Ambonia gets her fingers nicely twisted in his hair," replied Harvey.

They took him up, and were not long in conveying him into the presence of his wives.

The ladies had wondered what had become of their husband, and had been indulging in a little quarrel on their own account.

Various articles of domestic use lay about the room in some confusion.

There were all the signs of a free fight.

When Mr. Mole was deposited on the floor, the wives guessed what had brought him into that state.

Each abused him in the choicest and most flowery terms which their language allowed them to employ.

The boys turned round and went away leaving them at it lest they might fall in for their share.

"Ambonia's a caution," said Harvey, "isn't she, Jack?"

Jack made no answer.

"You might have the civility to answer me when I speak to you," continued Harvey.

"Excuse me, Dick. I was thinking of something else. Shall we find the king in, do you think, if we call at the palace?" replied Jack.

"Sure to, I should fancy."

"Step up with me, will you? We must arrange all the details of our invasion, and see how the guns are to be given out."

"Every man in Limbi wants a gun, and two-thirds of them would only shoot their nearest neighbors or pot themselves."

"I think I shall give two guns to every five-and-twenty men, and select the best shots."

Harvey agreed with him, and talking of military matters they strolled along.

Suddenly an old woman, fantastically dressed, stepped in front of the boys.

"Who is this?" said Jack.

"Hush!" said Harvey. "Don't anger her."

"Why not?"

"It's Nuratella," said Harvey, under his breath.

"Who is she?" returned Jack, as much in the dark as ever.

"Nuratella is a sort of sorceress, witch, prophetess—what you like. All I know is that the people here think a lot of her," replied Harvey.

Nuratella raised her arms, as if commanding silence.

She did not understand the English they were speaking, but she saw from their faces that they knew who she was, and that her appearance had produced some impression upon them.

CHAPTER VI.

NURATELLA, THE WITCH.

We have already hinted that all the inhabitants of the numerous islands in the East Indian Archipelago were strong believers in witchcraft.

Nuratella was regarded as a prophetess of the highest order.

She ~~was~~ ^{professed} to have the power of divining future

events, and had been known to still the wind when raging at its highest fury.

Perhaps her knowledge of the weather was superior to that of those around her, and she did not attempt the hazardous task of commanding the storm until she saw some indication of a cessation of the tempest.

At all events, she imposed upon the ignorant beings among whom her lot was cast.

Her influence over them was remarkable.

Strange, weird, thrilling stories were told about her.

It was said that in her youth she had met with, and dared to love, an illustrious chief of the Pisangs.

For this offense she was condemned to death by her own countrymen.

It was treason of the worst sort for a woman of Limbi to look favorably upon a Pisang warrior.

On a man, in fact, whose hands were red with the blood of her kindred.

She was led forth to die.

At the moment when the executioner had uplifted the fatal sword, a volume of light shot out from the sky.

The lightning, for such it was, struck the executioner, and killed him on the spot.

This was considered an interposition of Providence on her behalf.

She had called down fire from heaven.

The lurid flame was supposed to be of her own conjuring, and she was liberated in all haste.

Ever after she lived a secluded and wild life, but her influence as a witch was established.

All feared her, if none loved her.

It was suspected by some of the shrewdest among

the Limbians that she was still in correspondence with the Pisangs.

That she could not forget her early love.

Sometimes the Pisangs obtained information of the movements of the people of Limbi in a mysterious manner.

Nuratella was known to set sail in a frail canoe, and be absent for several days.

Who so likely as she to visit Pisang and inform the chiefs there of the plans of their enemies?

She was allowed to attend the councils of her own people, and her advice was much valued.

Yet no one liked to denounce her, nor, had they done so, was there any proof of her guilt!

The boys had often heard of her strange and mysterious power.

They did not believe in her magical gifts, but they did not at the same time think it advisable to slight or offend her.

Far better would it have been for Jack if he had never listened to her.

"Well, mother, what do you want?" exclaimed Jack, addressing Nuratella in her own language.

"Follow me, and you shall quickly learn," she replied.

"Shall I come?" asked Harvey.

"Perhaps I had better ask the old girl," said Jack.

He put the question to Nuratella.

"No," she answered, decisively. "It is you I want. Let your friend return to his home."

"She says no," said Jack, addressing Harvey.

"So I heard. I suppose the old cat means you no

harm," replied Harvey. "They don't speak too well of her, though they all fight shy of her."

"She won't hurt me. What does it matter if she is a witch, and rides on broomsticks? I don't think she'd find me a light weight if I rode behind."

"All right; you know best. Good-by, old fellow."

Harvey shook his head as if he did not half like his friend going away with Nuratella.

But Jack was not to be interfered with when he had made up his mind.

There were few things that frightened him, and as he said to himself, he was not going to be afraid of an old woman.

Nuratella led the way into the country, and walked for about a mile, keeping ahead of Jack, to whom she did not address a word.

Occasionally she turned her head to see if he was following her.

The road was simply a rough path, a few large stones having been removed.

The ragged coral rock everywhere projected so completely through the thin soil that it was a wonder to Jack how his conductor could travel barefoot with such apparent ease.

They soon came to a circular hut, inclosed by a low stone wall.

It was the most wretched abode for a human being that could possibly be imagined.

The walls, instead of being made of boards or flattened bamboos, as in the town of Tompano, were composed of small sticks, about three feet high, driven into the ground.

These supported a conical roof, thatched with palm leaves.

An ugly-looking pig, with long bristles on his back, was raking about this detestable hovel.

Near the hut was a burial place.

A low wall inclosed a small angular plot that was filled with earth.

This contained one or more graves, each of which had for its foot and headstones, small, square, pyramidal blocks of wood, with the apex fixed in the ground.

A pack of wolflike dogs saluted Jack with a fierce yelping and barking as he approached the miserable dwelling.

A word from Nuratella calmed them.

Sitting down upon a rude block of stone outside her dwelling, she motioned Jack to stand before her, which he did.

Perhaps if she had been talking to any of her countrymen, she would have had recourse to some mystic rites.

She rightly judged, however, that on one of Jack's education and sense such conduct would not make much impression.

Nevertheless, there was something weird if not awful about the hag.

"They say she was good-looking once," thought Jack; "if so, it must have been a precious long while ago, and no mistake."

"Young man from the great kingdom over the sea, where the lightning owns the power of your wise men, and machines carry you faster than the bird can fly,

listen to the words of Nuratella, the sorceress of Limbi," she exclaimed.

The speech showed that she had enjoyed some intercourse with white men, and had gained an insight into their civilization.

But when, where, or how it was difficult to say.

"At your service, mother," answered Jack. "Ease her! stop her! go ahead!" he added, in English, as he was unable to put the latter into what he called "understandable" Limbian.

"You are going to place yourself at the head of my people and invade Pisang," she continued.

"It didn't require a witch to tell me that, when all the island knows it," Jack answered.

"And the Pisangs, too. They are prepared for your coming."

"Are they?" Jack replied. "Have you been kind enough to give them information?"

Nuratella raised her arm threateningly.

"What have I to do with the enemies of my country?" she exclaimed. "To me it is given to pierce the future and to know what has happened in the past, as well as what is taking place in the present."

"Do you mean to sit there, calmly, old girl," said Jack, "and tell me that you can prophesy?"

"Put me to the test," she answered. "Ask me anything you like, and as I reply to you, so will I be judged."

Jack thought a moment.

"I'll ask her about Emily," he thought.

Nuratella regarded him with her wild-looking eyes, which seemed to possess the fire of insanity, tempered at times by gleams of reason.

"Can you tell me if there is a white captive in Pisang?" he said.

"There are two," she replied.

"Two! Men or women?"

"One a man, the other a fair-haired girl, barely seventeen."

"Perhaps you've been there and seen them," cried Jack, who guessed at once that she referred to Mr. Scratchley and his daughter, Emily.

Again Nuratella threatened him with her upraised arm.

"Boy," she said, "to whom do you speak? Many leagues divide Limbi from Pisang."

"But you've got a boat of your own."

"I tell you that I know them not. The Pisangs and I never meet."

"Well," said Jack, impatiently; "cut along. What have you brought me here for?"

There was a certain bluntness about Jack which would not be checked by any amount of murmuring.

Nuratella had thought to impress, but she found that she had signally failed.

"You love this fair-haired girl," she exclaimed.

"You're not far wrong there," replied Jack.

"And she loves you."

"That's stale news," replied Jack, imperturbably, "though how you got to know it is a puzzler."

"You must meet again. Emily—that is your darling's name—is in peril," continued Nuratella.

"Of what nature?"

"The persecution of a wicked and bad man."

"Hunston."

The name escaped Jack involuntarily.

"That is he," continued Nuratella. "Hunston wishes to make Emily his wife. She, mindful of you, will not consent."

"Of course not."

"But Hunston is the chief adviser of the Pisangs," Nuratella proceeded. "He is their great chief. What he orders, they do."

"I feared this," said Jack, almost tearfully. "I have been wrong to delay so long. We should have attacked the Pisang brutes long ago, but I'll give them a lesson."

His tone was bitter, and his manner almost ferocious.

"Will you not try to save your Emily?" asked the witch, watching his growing anger with a smile.

"What's the use of asking such a stupid question?" he replied, sharply.

"Would you like to see her?"

"When?" he cried.

"At once. This very night. My power will suffice to bring her here."

"Here? On this island?"

"Yes, here; at this very spot. I will ask the spirits with whom I deal to transport her hither."

"Spirits be blowed!" Jack said, in English. Adding, immediately afterwards, "I don't care how you do it, so long as you get Emily."

"It shall be done. I swear it to you. I, Nuratella, say that you shall meet the girl with the flaxen hair here, when the darkness falls upon the earth."

"I will reward you for it," said Jack.

"No reward does Nuratella want. You will lead their victorious army against the Pisangs, and Limbi will enjoy the blessings of peace."

"I'll do my best for it," Jack answered.

"Come hither at sundown, and you shall clasp your Emily in your arms."

"If you can do this, I shall say you are a very clever old woman, and our fortune tellers are not a patch upon you, but——"

He hesitated.

She interrogated him with her eyes.

"If you trifle with me," he continued, regarding her with a savage look, "I will shoot you with as little compunction as I would knock that bird off his perch."

As he spoke, he raised his gun and fired at a bright-plumaged bird in a thicket.

The creature fell dead almost at his feet.

Nuratella saw that she had made an impression upon her listener by the mention of Emily's name.

She followed up her advantage.

"If I, by my arts, contrive that you shall see Emily," she continued, "you must promise me one thing."

"What is it?" asked Jack.

"Do not mention the circumstance to anyone."

"I generally tell my friend, Harvey, everything," he exclaimed, hesitatingly.

"This time you must not do so."

"I should like him to come with me."

"No, no!" said the witch, imperiously. "You will break the charm, if you do not come unattended."

"What's the odds?" Jack replied.

"You must trust me. Are you afraid of a poor old woman?" said Nuratella, with a scornful smile.

"I'm afraid of nothing and nobody, if it comes to that. You shall have your way. I'll come alone."

"And you will keep your purpose a secret?"

"I will."

"Can I depend on you?" she asked.

"I am not in the habit of breaking my word," replied Jack. "If I say a thing, I mean it; so good-by, mother, for the present. I shall be here at dark."

"For your own sake and that of Emily, mind you, do not fail," she answered, impressively.

Jack turned on his heel, and walked back to the town of Tompano.

His mind was filled with conflicting emotions.

At one moment he was delighted with the expectation of meeting Emily, whom he had believed to be on one of the islands ever since he read the message from the sea; and the next he feared treachery.

Though what shape this danger would take he could not say.

It was a great fact to have ascertained that Emily had really been wrecked, and that he was near her.

His heart warmed towards the little playfellow of his youth.

With the romantic passion of a young man he loved her dearly.

His blood boiled when he thought that she was in the power of Hunston and his associates.

To liberate her he would sacrifice everything

CHAPTER VII.

MRS. MOLE NUMBER TWO.

Jack was very thoughtful when he reached his house in Tompano.

His native servant told him that Harvey had gone to Mr. Mole's habitation.

Having nothing better to do, he strolled down in that direction.

When he neared the house, he heard the sound of crockery being smashed.

An earthenware pan flew through the window near his head.

"That's a close shave," he muttered. "I suppose Ambonia's showing her nasty temper."

Harvey met him at the door.

"Look out, Jack," he said; "Mrs. Mole Number Two is going it in fine style."

"What's the row?" asked Jack.

"Ambonia slipped into Alfura, who has gone to an aunt's somewhere near here, and now Mole's catching it hot."

Jack stepped inside.

Every article of furniture in the room was upset, and Mr. Mole was standing in a corner, in vain striving to stem the storm.

A bucket of water had been thrown over him, which had brought him to his senses, and the effect of the spirit he had drunk was going off.

Ambonia, looking like a fury, held a handful of her

husband's hair in her hand, and occasionally amused herself by throwing about, in various directions, anything she could lay her hands on.

"My dear sir," said Jack, "what is the meaning of this scene? Is Mrs. Mole mad?"

"You may well ask that question, Harkaway," replied Mr. Mole. "I was a little overcome when you brought me home. Alfura took my part, and she has been obliged to fly the house. Mrs. Mole *secundus*, as we used to say at school, is behaving very strangely, but now there is not much more left to break, she will probably calm down soon."

Ambonia was doing a war dance, and she chattered all the time like a monkey in her native language.

Presently the leg of a chair caught Jack on the side of the head.

"Draw it mild," he observed, rubbing the injured part.

"Don't stand it, Harkaway. Resent it," cried Mr. Mole. "I would if I were you."

"It's for you, sir," replied Jack, "to keep order in your own household."

"I can't do it. It's beyond me."

"Shall I put her in the water-butt?" asked Jack.

"We haven't got one. That article of civilization is minus in this establishment——"

Mr. Mole would have said more, but a bunch of ripe cocoanuts hit him on the nose, and he held the injured organ with both hands while he capered about with the pain.

"That's a flop—if you like," said Harvey, grinning.

"Never laugh at a fellow creature in distress. Har-

vey," exclaimed Mr. Mole. "I wish you had my nose. Oh! my nose, my poor, ill-used nose!"

Ambonia advanced with a long, light bamboo, and hit her angry spouse on the head with it.

"One for his nob," remarked Harvey.

Jack advanced, thinking Mr. Mole would be seriously injured, and caught Ambonia in his arms.

He drew her to the window and gave her a kiss.

"Now, my little beauty," said Jack, holding her tightly, "what are you going to do?"

"I shall do nothing, I am calm now," Ambonia replied. "If he would only treat me with kindness, I should not behave like that. He likes Alfura best, and —and—"

"And you're jealous, eh?"

She nodded her head, while she lay passively in Jack's arms.

"Will you promise me not to kick up any more row?" asked Jack.

"It is over now," she sighed.

"Bravo!" cried Harvey. "The way to manage a woman all the world over is to be kind to her."

Mr. Mole emerged from his corner.

He looked very grave.

"Harkaway," he exclaimed, "what are you doing with my wife?"

"Doing, sir?"

"Yes; you have her in your arms."

"You may take her, sir. I am not ambitious of the honor," replied Jack.

Mr. Mole ventured to embrace his spouse, but she no sooner felt him touch her than she began to scream and kick.

He laid her down on the floor, and the screaming and kicking continued.

She was in a fit of violent hysterics.

"Oh, Lord! what shall I do?" cried Mr. Mole.

He stood with his hands upraised, the picture of despair.

Ambonia went on with her hysterical symptoms.

"Holler, boys!" said Harvey; "here's another guy!"

"A pair of 'em," remarked Jack, dryly.

"Ambonia's in high strikes," continued Harvey, "and Mr. Mole's——"

"Silence, Harvey," in anger, cried Mole. "When you speak of my wife, mention her as Mrs. Mole. To me only is she Ambonia."

"All right, sir. Sit down, and take it easy for a spell," replied Harvey. "She'll be a good ten minutes before she comes round, and she'll have worn herself out then and want to go to bed."

"It's a mercy," said Mr. Mole, "for which I am devoutly thankful. Make fast the window, Harvey. I will fasten the door, and we'll adjourn to another apartment. Be sure you fasten the window. I should not like Mrs. Mole to be interrupted."

"No fear, sir; only isn't it rather heartless, not to say brutal, to leave her like this?"

"Harvey," replied Mr. Mole, "I have no hesitation in saying that you're a humbug."

"Say it again, sir," answered Harvey. "We're old friends, and I shan't punch your head."

They left Ambonia in her hysterical fit, and locked the room up.

On a table in another apartment were some very fine shellfish, resembling enormously large oysters.

They had just been brought up from the seashore, and laid open in their shells for Ambonia's refreshment.

"Ah! oysters! Big ones, though," remarked Mr. Mole. "Try one, Harkaway."

Jack looked at the shellfish and took one up.

It was about fifty times the size of one English oyster, and he did not know how to get it into his mouth.

"How am I to do it, sir?" he asked.

"Bolt it," suggested Harvey.

Jack made an effort, and the oyster disappeared.

He gasped for breath, and Harvey patted him on the back with a large board.

"How do you feel?"

"Very thankful it's down; and even now I can't help thinking I've swallowed a small baby," answered Jack.

Harvey laughed, and Jack continued, "Ta, ta, sir; I must toddle."

"Don't leave me, Harkaway. Why go so soon?" said Mr. Mole.

"Urgent private affairs, sir."

"You have rendered me a service. You have soothed the savage breast, Harkaway, and it is the only gleam of sunshine I have yet had in my married life."

"Sorry I can't stay, sir," answered Jack. "You must knock under."

"There she is again," cried Harvey.

As he spoke a furious yelling was heard, and a desperate kicking at the door of the room in which Ambonia was shut.

"I'll leave you to it, sir," exclaimed Jack, with a laugh.

In vain Mr. Mole tried to stop him.

Taking Harvey's arm, he left the house, and the happy couple within it.

CHAPTER VIII.

JACK WON'T TAKE ADVICE.

As Jack and Harvey proceeded towards their own house in Tompano, the latter could not fail to perceive that his friend was full of thought and care.

"Has anything happened?" he asked.

"No," replied Jack, rather more sharply than Harvey liked. "What should happen?"

"You need not snap me up like that. I only asked kindly, but I forgot for the moment that you went away with that old witch hag, and I dare say that has upset your royal highness."

"Suppose it has, what then?"

"You are more of an ass than I took you to be. She is a rank impostor, and is said to be friendly to the Pisangs. Has she advised you not to undertake the invasion, warning you that you would be beaten?"

Jack made no answer.

"Oh! if you have lost your tongue, and don't like to speak, please yourself," said Harvey. "I'll talk to Monday."

"Don't be annoyed, Dick," exclaimed Jack, at last. "I can't tell you what passed between Nuratella and myself."

"Why not?"

"Because I promised I wouldn't."

"That is a pity. Two heads are better than one," said Harvey; "and I might have been able to advise you. Not that I want to know anything out of idle curiosity."

"No; you never did, Dick," said Jack, with a smile.

"That's what I call a nasty snack," replied Harvey.

"Well, you know you were a nice cup of tea at Crawcour's, Dick; and if you could get to the far end of anything, you always did."

"You mean to say that I was a regular old washer-woman. That's not kind, Jack; and I did not expect it from you. If we are to be really friends, there ought to be perfect confidence between us."

"So there should be; and so there shall be. Only wait for to-night," rejoined Jack. "I'll tell you all, then."

He shook Harvey cordially by the hand, and the latter's wounded dignity got better.

"I don't think you meant to worry me," he said. "Still I wish you would take my advice."

"What is it?"

"Don't listen to anything that old hag says."

"Too late. I have made her a distinct promise," replied Jack.

"Are you going to meet her again?"

"Don't ask me any questions, Dick, there's a good fellow, because I can't answer them."

"Very well. I'll dry up," was Harvey's response.

When they reached the house, they found Monday, whose eager face denoted that he had important news to communicate.

"Oh! Mast' Jack," he exclaimed; "there have been um fight: um sea fight."

"Where?" asked Jack.

"Off the island. Two boats Pisangs meet one boat Limbians. They fight quite close here."

"Which licked?" questioned Harvey.

"Um Pisang lick, 'cos they more number; though we kill one, two, three, four."

He counted on his fingers as he spoke.

"Killed four, eh? And the others got off. What did they want cruising round our coast?" said Jack.

"There's mischief brewing," remarked Harvey.

"We'll double the guards round the city to-night," said Jack. "It won't do to be surprised."

"I don't like those fellows being so near us. It doesn't look healthy," observed Harvey.

"Nor I. It isn't rosy, and it is like their cheek to risk it."

"They kill three our men; others come back with news," Monday went on.

"Did they see Hunston with them?" asked Jack.

Monday nodded his head violently, as he always did when excited.

"Yes, they say white man chief—Tuan Biza white face with them," he answered.

Jack walked up and down the room impatiently.

"I don't half like it," he exclaimed, as if talking to himself. "There is something in all this."

After a time, feeling fatigued with the heat, he threw himself down upon a rude bed, telling Harvey that he should be obliged if he would rouse him at sunset.

He was soon asleep.

In a couple of hours the sun sank to rest, and Harvey touched him on the shoulder.

He jumped up, uttering the name "Emily."

"You're dreaming," said Harvey.

"I believe I was," replied Jack, rubbing his eyes. "I thought Emily was by my side."

"Are you going out?" asked Harvey, as he saw him put on his cap.

"Yes; I shan't be long. Don't funk about me."

"I can't help it. You're going to see that witch, Nuratella. It's no use denying it."

"You're welcome to your own opinion, Dick," replied Jack.

"Well," answered Harvey, "God bless you, Jack! I wish you would take my advice, that's all, or——"

"What?"

"You might let me come with you, if there is any danger."

"But there isn't."

"I'm not so sure of that. Nuratella has been suspected before now of playing her own people false. The Pisangs have been seen off the island this very day. Hunston was with them; and, hang it all! if there is any danger, you might let me share it with you."

"You've got a good heart, Dick, and I am very grateful to you. However, don't fret on my account. I shall be all right," replied Jack.

Squeezing his friend's hand, he rushed out of the house, leaving Harvey gazing with pity after him.

He took the direction of the witch's dwelling, and was soon out of sight.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MEETING.

Nuratella was anxiously awaiting his appearance.

Still sitting on the rugged stone, she did not seem to have changed her position since he left her.

"Well, mother," exclaimed Jack, "here I am, like Regulus returning to Carthage—though, as that is a little beyond your comprehension, I will say that I resemble the bad penny which is sure to turn up, whether it's wanted or no."

"Are you alone?" she inquired.

"Yes."

"You have no one within call?"

"Not a soul."

"Good!" exclaimed the old woman, over whose forbidden countenance stole an expression of satisfaction.

The shades of night had fallen with the rapidity peculiar to the tropics after sunset.

It was difficult to discern objects at a few yards' distance.

Nuratella clapped her hands.

Once, twice, three times.

At the third signal a fairylike form stepped out of a thicket of trees to Jack's right, and though the light, airy European garments were torn and travel-stained, he knew that a countrywoman of his own was near.

How his heart throbbed at that moment.

"Emily," he ejaculated.

The form halted when close to him, and then, as if

obedient to an irresistible impulse, she threw herself into his arms.

"Oh, Jack!" she exclaimed; "under what circumstances do we meet again!"

"They're not very lively, certainly," he said. "But I am so delighted at seeing you that hardships vanish, and I seem to be treading on enchanted ground."

"I have so much to tell you," she continued, "though I am afraid I ought not to waste precious time."

"Tell me, at least, how you came here."

"It was decided by the Pisang council that I should be given up to the Limbians, where a man named Hunston informed me that I should meet you."

"That is unlike Hunston. He's not usually so generous," said Jack, musingly.

"And it is unlike the treatment I have received all along from the Pisangs. My father is dying, I fear, from their ill-usage."

"Mr. Scratchley?"

"Yes; and my poor mother went down in the wreck."

"Have you any reason to think there is a plot hatching against us?" asked Jack.

"Indeed, I fear so," returned Emily; "for we came over to Limbi, as they call this island, in two boats, full of armed men."

"And you encountered a hostile boat, which you drove off?"

"We did."

"How were you conducted hither?" asked Jack.

"By Hunston, and one they called Tuan Biza. They brought me here, and left me with this old woman, who told me to remain in the thicket till she clapped her hands."

"What became of your guides?"

"They said good-by, and left me. I cannot understand their generosity; it seems too good to be true. But had we not better fly at once?" said Emily.

"At once. We will talk at our ease. Take my arm, dear Emily. We shall soon be in Tompano. It is not far off. I know every inch of the way; and once among friends, we can enjoy our newly found happiness."

Emily placed a trembling hand on Jack's arm, and without taking any further notice of Nuratella, who, by the way, had disappeared, they turned to make their escape.

Suddenly dark forms appeared behind them.

A voice exclaimed, "Not so fast, my fine fellow. You and I have a score to settle."

Jack's heart leaped in his bosom.

"Betrayed, by Heaven!" he cried.

He faced the foe, but ere he had time to draw weapon in his defense, a heavy blow on the head felled him to the ground, where he fell insensible.

Emily uttered shriek upon shriek.

Her misery was complete when she saw Jack borne off by the Pisangs through the darkness.

It was for her sweet sake that he had ventured into this ambuscade.

The Pisangs, with serpentine cunning, had made her a decoy.

"Stop that noise!" exclaimed the harsh voice of Huston, as he seized her brutally by the arm.

"Oh, do not kill him," she replied.

"Not yet.. I'll make him feel his position and suffer a little first. Come along; you've done your work, and we must get back to Pisang."

Again Emily uttered piercing shrieks.

"Hold that row, miss," exclaimed Hunston, again, "or I shall have to hit you on the head as I did King Harkaway. Be quiet, for your own sake; you will neither do yourself nor your friend any good."

Emily remained silent, and was hurried along a narrow path which led to the coast.

"Did you think," continued Hunston, "that I was such a very innocent baby as to give you up to the only man I hate like poison?"

"I did not know what amount of villainy you were capable of," she answered.

"You'll know in time. You'll find it all out when you're my wife."

"Heaven defend me from such a fate; I would die sooner," she cried horror-stricken.

"You'll have to do one or the other. Death or marriage. Take your choice when the time comes."

Emily shuddered.

"It was not a bad dodge of mine to get Harkaway into our power," he went on, with a loud laugh.

"It was mean and cowardly to use me as a means of entrapping him."

"All's fair in love and war. I knew he'd nibble at the hook if you were the bait at the end of it."

"What will be his fate?" she ventured to ask.

"Death! A cruel, horrible and lingering death, unless——"

"Unless?" she repeated, under her breath, as her companion broke off abruptly.

"Unless you consent to be mine."

His fierce gray eyes seemed to pierce her soul in the darkness

"Then he must die, and I will perish with him," she murmured.

As the words left her lips a feeling of faintness came over her, and she would have fallen had not Hunston caught her.

She lay like a log in his arms.

He carried her insensible form for the remainder of the distance.

The Pisangs were waiting for him.

Springing into the boat which was nearest to him, he gave the word and the sails were set.

One boat contained Harkaway, the other his beloved Emily.

They were both in the power of Hunston, from whose tender mercies they had as much gentleness to expect as the dove receives from the cruel hawk.

It was an infamous stratagem.

But at the same time it was a clever and important capture.

CHAPTER X.

HARVEY GETS UNEASY.

The hours glided by and nothing was seen of Jack. Harvey began to grow uneasy, as did Monday.

"Something happen to Mast' Jack. What um be?" asked the black.

"I more than half suspect that treachery has been at work," replied Harvey.

"Where him go?"

"I am nearly sure that he went to see Nuratella."

"She bad woman, sare," said Monday. "We all much 'fraid Nuratella, because she um witch proph-
etess."

"Wasn't she a friend of the Pisangs once?"

"Yes, one very great friend Tuan Biza, and now she go to their island in um boat."

"Do you know where she hangs out—where she lives, I mean?" asked Harvey.

"Yes, Monday him know."

"All right. Let's lie down till daybreak, and we'll go and look after him. Poor Jack! I shall never forgive myself if anything has befallen him. I ought to have followed with half a dozen rifles, whether he liked it or no."

In spite of Harvey's impatience, nothing could be done in the dark.

He slept little, and he was up as soon as the first rays of light streamed in through the mat-covered windows.

"Now, Mon, look alive!" he said.

"Alive him is, sare," replied Monday, yawning.

They ate a piece of rough bread and drank some water, then they were ready for the start.

It did not take them long to reach the witch's dwelling.

She was nowhere about, and they supposed had not yet arisen.

"What's this?" cried Harvey, casting his eyes on the ground.

The object that attracted his attention was a piece of paper, such as might be torn from the pocketbook of a European.

On it was something written in pencil.

"English, by Jove!" he said, "and in a lady's handwriting, too."

He did not hesitate to read its contents, which ran thus:

"I, Emily Scratchley, having fallen into the hands of the Pisangs, have been liberated by them to-day, and left in concealment in this thicket, until an old woman shall give me a signal that my old friend, Jack Harkaway, who, I hear, is on this island, comes to take me to the chief town of Limbi.

"Feeling doubtful about the good faith of the Pisangs, whom I have since my captivity found cruel and treacherous, I fear some villainy is intended, and write these hurried lines in the hope that some friend may find them, in the event of any foul play taking place."

Harvey set his teeth tightly together.

"I see it all now, Monday," said he.

"What him all 'bout, sare?" asked the black.

"Nuratella has helped the Pisangs to take Jack a prisoner."

"Mast' Jack taken! That bad news. But we go after him and lib'rate him, or we kill and burn all Pisangs."

"Of course we will; but they may kill him before we get there."

"Look here, sare! Mast' Harvey, come here, quick! See um blood on the ground!" cried Monday, excited at the red-looking spots he saw.

Harvey came to his side, and regarded them mournfully.

"It's as clear as daylight," he observed. "Jack's been

taken by surprise, and they've tapped his claret for him. Well, it can't be helped."

"Matabella go to King Lanindyer, and he make Nuratella say all she know," said Monday. "No one like her. All glad her die."

"I'd roast her over a slow fire. Does she live in that kennel?"

He pointed to the hovel as he spoke.

"That where she lives."

"Have her out, Monday. We'll take her back with us to the town, lest she gives us the slip, and goes to join her precious friends, the Pisangs."

Monday hung back.

He could not forget the superstitions of his youth, and the prejudices of his nation.

"What are you afraid of?" asked Harvey, contemptuously.

"She put some charm on me. Nuratella very great witch. She make and unmake storms. She hold the lightning in her hand," replied Monday, trembling.

"Go on, you great fool!" said Harvey. "I'll dig her out, witch or no witch, or I'll burn her den about her ears."

Putting his shoulder against one side of the hut, Harvey gave it a shove, which made it rock like a poplar in a storm.

"Come out, you old cat!" he said, in the native language.

There was no answer.

Not being in a humor to be trifled with, Harvey gave the hovel another shove, and down it went in a heap.

Presently the form of Nuratella appeared from a thicket a few yards off, the same in which Emily had

been concealed, and from whence she had watched the destruction of her house with rising wrath.

"Why do you come to my dwelling and scatter ruin around?" she asked.

"I am quite ready to answer for what I have done to the Tuan Biza of this island and his chiefs assembled in council," replied Harvey.

"Do you not fear my power?" asked Nuratella, still more threateningly.

"No more than that," said Harvey, snapping his fingers.

"I could make the earth open and swallow you up. I could call down the lightning from the sky, and summon wild beasts from the forest, together with venomous serpents, to destroy your life."

"Go ahead, then. Let the music strike up and the show begin," exclaimed Harvey.

Nuratella glared at him with the savageness of a tiger.

"The fact is you are an impostor," continued Harvey. "I repeat that I am ready to answer for what I have done and mean to do, though I don't think you will get off so easily."

"Go, rash boy," she exclaimed. "I have no quarrel with you."

"Oh, it's like that, is it?" Harvey said, derisively. "You find that you can't frighten me, so you slacken sail. Now it's my turn. I don't boast of what I can do; you'll see in time. So come along with me."

He seized her by the arm, and attempted to draw her along.

But she threw herself on the ground and refused to stir.

Like most sailors, Harvey generally had some cord in his pocket.

This he produced, and quickly tied her hands and legs together.

Then he ordered Monday to lift up her head while he took her feet.

In this way they carried her to Tompano, in spite of her cries, struggles and protestations.

They proceeded at once to the king's palace, where the king and his chiefs were assembled in council.

A large crowd followed them, hearing that Nuratella was a prisoner, and that the white chief had mysteriously disappeared.

Harvey demanded an audience, which was granted him.

Leaving the witch in a passage guarded by Monday, he entered the great hall.

All eyes were instantly turned upon him, for alarming rumors had already reached the council.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WITCH'S DOOM.

Both Harvey and Jack possessed great influence over the savages of Limbi.

Cruel and vindictive as they were to their enemies, they nevertheless possessed the invaluable properties of gratitude.

The boys had saved and treated kindly Matabella, the

heir apparent, the son of their Tuan Biza, the Prince of Wales of Limbi.

This was in itself sufficient to make them popular.

In addition to this, they had given them powder and shot; they were going to lead them against their old, old enemies, the Pisangs.

We can fancy the English in the days of their hatred to France, when war was waging, hailing an ally in a similar manner.

Besides this, the boys were not at all haughty in their manner.

They did not show or boast of their superiority in cultivation and the arts of civilization.

On the contrary.

They made friends with the simple islanders, and endeared themselves to one and all.

Mr. Mole, who, no one knew exactly why, was accounted a great chief, had married two princesses.

It was gravely debated whether or not he should have a third wife.

The Limbians thought they could not have afforded him a greater honor.

Mr. Mole thought otherwise.

He had certain domestic reasons of his own for thinking so.

But he had not yet found out the secret of governing a wife.

The Limbians did not hesitate to lay a bamboo cane across the shoulders of their refractory spouses.

Mr. Mole had yet to make that important discovery.

Unlike the chiefs of the red Indians, about whom we have read so much, the inhabitants of the great Indian Archipelago were fond of talking.

They did not confine themselves to the utterance of grunts and the guttural "yah! yah!" with which we have been nauseated.

They were genial, and, what is more, they possessed a good deal of sound common sense.

Harvey told his tale as clearly and shortly as he could.

He had to struggle with and keep down his very natural indignation at the outrage to which his friend, Jack, had been subjected through a Limbian woman.

He translated the letter that Emily had written, alluded to the meeting with Nuratella, and ended by declaring his conviction that she was the authoress of the mischief.

After some consultation the chiefs were of the same opinion.

The religious men, or priests, who were members of the council, had long been patrons of Nuratella.

It was their barbarous custom once a year to sacrifice a human being to the evil spirits.

The time was at hand.

They were searching for a victim.

The custom was, after the harvest of corn and fruits to carry a certain quantity of sugar cane, rice, fowls, eggs, pigs, dogs and a living being to the southeast point of the island.

The wretched creature selected for these rites was left on the shore, bound hand and foot, for the crocodiles to devour.

After the consultation of the council, Nuratella was ordered to be brought in.

She was unbound and surrounded with a strong guard, which rendered her escape impossible.

Some of the chiefs feared her fabled power, but the majority did not evince any emotion.

When the case was stated to her she made no reply.

Harvey stood up and said: "The silence of Nuratella is proof of her guilt. I demand her life shall be taken, as in all probability my poor friend by this time has ceased to exist."

"Confess," exclaimed the king, Lanindyer.

"Of what use would it be for me to make any confession, when you are all hungering for my blood like a pack of wild beasts?" she replied.

"Do you deny the charge which has been brought against you?" asked another chief.

"I do," she replied.

"Let her be put to the torture," said the king.

"No," cried Harvey. "Let her suffer the penalty of her crime, but torture would be barbarous."

"I have said it," answered the king, calmly. "Let the officers do their duty."

Nuratella was dragged into another apartment, and her cries were soon heard at intervals.

She was beaten with bamboos.

Fire was placed under her feet.

Red-hot stones were applied to various parts of her body, and a band of twisted reeds was tied so tightly round her forehead that her eyes threatened to burst from their sockets.

At length her fortitude, great though it was, gave way.

She confessed her intrigue with the Pisangs.

She admitted that she had beguiled Jack to her house on purpose to betray him, and she declared that she alone was to blame in the matter.

When this was made known, the indignant council clamored loudly for her instant death. The cry was taken up by the populace out of doors.

Protected by the soldiers, she was led, accompanied by almost all the inhabitants of Tompano, to the sea-shore.

Near this fatal spot was the mouth of a small river, where the crocodiles were wont to assemble in large numbers.

She was securely bound, and laid upon the beach.

When the procession started, Harvey ran to Mr. Mole's house, and found him looking out at the doorway, while Alfura and Ambonia, who had made friends again, were anxiously looking at the crowd.

Mr. Mole had succeeded in restoring peace, for a time, to his distracted household, and he listened to the alarming rumors with impatience.

He hailed Harvey's arrival with delight.

"I say, sir," cried Harvey, "come along."

"Come where? What is all this? Why fret the angry crowd, as I think my friend, Horace, has it?" replied Mr. Mole.

"Haven't you heard the news?"

"Not I."

"At least if I can't save Harkaway, I will avenge his death!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Dear me! Is Harkaway in danger? Don't say that. With all his faults he was a fine fellow. Don't tell me, Harvey, that he is——"

A tear sprang to Mr. Mole's eyes.

He could not pronounce the word "dead."

"Come with me, sir," said Harvey, "and I will tell you all about it as we go along."

Harvey quickly told Mr. Mole the distressing news.

"The wretch!" exclaimed the latter, when he heard of Nuratella's treachery; "she deserves to die, but I wish they wouldn't do the thing in this cruel way. I think I shall interfere and stop it."

"Stop your grandmother!" replied Harvey.

"But the execution ought to be properly conducted."

Mr. Mole walked along thoughtfully.

They were in the rear of the crowd, but the shouts of the people were distinctly audible.

The doom of the witch had been decreed. Execution was to follow soon upon judgment.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PREY OF THE CROCODILES.

Presently Mr. Mole said:

"Hunston is with these Pisangs, is he not?"

"Yes, and directs their councils," replied Harvey.

"I thought so. Well, surely Harkaway's life will be safe in his hands."

"Will it?"

"Do you mean to tell me that he will not spare an old friend?"

"You know all about the tattooing and how we had to kick him out after he tried to murder us, and how he made an attack on the castle?"

"Yes, I have heard of those things."

"Is it likely, then, that he'll show Jack any mercy?" answered Harvey. "I believe Hunston has become as

ferocious a brute as any one of the Pisangs he is among."

"Do you, indeed?" said Mr. Mole.

"I do, and I think he would not hesitate to eat Jack if the others did."

"That's going a little too far, Harvey," said Mr. Mole, with a half smile.

"By mixing with savages may not a man get savage himself?"

"I hope we are not so."

"I mean a vicious man," replied Harvey.

"Let us hope that Harkaway is in no danger, and that he will soon be restored to us."

"I wish I could think so. I fear, however, we shall only find his head in the house of some chief. At all events, I shall hurry on the expedition for the invasion of Pisang."

"Do so, by all means," rejoined Mr. Mole; "and now I recollect that a short time ago I elected to remain here as governor of the island in the absence of the fighting men."

"That was your wish, sir."

"It is so no longer," continued Mr. Mole. "When one of my companions, one of my dearest friends, I may say, is in danger in a foreign country; a boy whose mind was educated under my own personal supervision, I cannot remain idle."

"Bravo, sir! You're a trump!" cried Harvey.

"Harvey, do you know my motto?"

"No, sir. What is it?"

"It is," replied Mr. Mole, "'death before dishonor.' I may not be a fighting man, but I will hurl spear and draw trigger for Harkaway."

"Good, again, sir! You're made of the right stuff!"

"And I shall get away from my wives," continued Mr. Mole, as if speaking to himself.

"Oh! that's it, sir!" said Harvey, laughing.

"What did I say?" asked Mr. Mole, in some confusion.

"Nothing, sir," replied Harvey. "Here we are."

Mr. Mole looked up, and beheld a vast concourse of people on the seashore.

They pushed their way through the crowd, the soldiers making room for the Tuan Biza of the white men.

A ring of armed men kept the throng back from a certain point.

Nuratella was already lying bound on the sand, the hot tropical sun streaming down mercilessly on her upturned face.

Her youth had been a guilty love.

Her life had been an imposition and a cheat.

Her death was to be an atonement.

The people were at such a distance from the shore that they could only see the dim outlines of the wretched victim.

The chiefs were assembled in a group somewhat nearer.

To these Harvey and Mr. Mole attached themselves.

As the tide rose, the bodies of the crocodiles could be seen rolling sluggishly up and down.

Presently they would scent their victim.

Then her end would draw near.

Not far off was the river of which we have spoken, and which drew the rainfall down from the hills.

As the water began to circle in ripples round Nuratella, the excitement of the onlookers was intense.

Scarcely a word was spoken by the vast assembly.

Occasionally the priests uttered a low, monotonous chant.

At length two crocodiles saw the body and advanced towards it.

There was a snap of the huge jaws, and a series of dreadful shrieks.

Other crocodiles, attracted to the spot, approached. Soon the cries ceased.

The witch was still, and though the cruel fangs of the monsters tore her flesh, she felt them not.

Nuratella was dead.

Turning to Harvey, the king said:

"Are you satisfied?"

Harvey had turned his head away from the sickening sight.

"Yes," he muttered, feebly.

A gong was loudly beaten as a signal that justice had been done.

Loud shouts rent the air, and the crowd, who had just before thrilled to the marrow of their bones, experienced a sense of relief.

"Let us get out of this," said Mr. Mole.

He and Harvey retreated along the shore, and tried to forget what they had seen by listening to the ripple of the waves as they broke on the beach.

"At least she deserved it," remarked Harvey.

"No doubt; but it was horrible for all that. I thought I should have fainted when that first crocodile took off her leg with as much ease as a surgeon at an hospital would amputate a limb."

"I've no pity for her," said Harvey. "I've only got

to think of Jack, and I shouldn't care if she had got to die over again."

"Remember, Harvey, what you said about people living among savages and becoming like them," said Mr. Mole, warningly.

"But isn't it enough to make a fellow wild?" began Harvey, impatiently.

"No, it is not enough," interrupted Mr. Mole. "We are told to forgive our enemies seventy times seven."

"Then you'd better forgive Mrs. Ambonia Mole the next time she goes into her tantrums and tears your hair."

Mr. Mole was silent.

"That's a closure," thought Harvey.

As they neared the city they were met by Monday, who had come out to look for them.

"Well, Monday, old man," exclaimed Harvey, "what's your opinion of things in general?"

"Not up to much, sare. Me miss Mast' Jack. Me grieve much. Monday very bad."

"So am I, and that's the truth."

"The king has decided to start to-night with all men for Pisang. That good news," continued Monday.

"Has he, though? Then your governor's a brick, Monday," cried Harvey, joyfully.

"Yes," said Mr. Mole; "that is, indeed, cheerful intelligence."

"I begin to think," said Harvey, "that Jack won't be a deader just yet. I'll bet a new hat!"

"Which you want badly, Harvey, that I must say," interposed Mr. Mole.

"Ditto, the same to you, sir," said Harvey, laughing;

"not to make any unkind remarks about your continuations."

"What's the matter with my trousers? I hope nothing has gone amiss with them," exclaimed Mr. Mole, in alarm.

"There is only a hole as big as a besom, sir, in the rear."

"Dear me, what an unfortunate thing! Do my coat tails cover it?"

"When the wind doesn't blow. As you're a householder since your marriage, sir, it doesn't matter, because you've got your 'rent' ready!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Ah! well. I suppose we shall have to resort to the garments of our first ancestors, which we have authority for believing were chiefly fig leaves," replied Mr. Mole, with a sigh.

"You interrupted my observation, sir," continued Harvey, "which was, that I'd make a bet Jack fogged the niggers somehow. He's clever."

"I hope sincerely he may. However, we will haste to the rescue. Monday!"

"Yes, Mist' Mole; what up now, sare?"

"See to my pistols, will you? And first take care that my rifle is not overloaded; I have a great horror of a gun that bursts."

"All right, sare! Monday, him see to that."

"You may leave it all to Mon," exclaimed Harvey. "He'll put you straight, and send you out to the fight like a warrior of old, up to the knocker."

"I wish we had armor in these days. It would be a great protection," Mr. Mole observed, wistfully.

"A bold spirit is the only armor a brave man requires," replied Harvey.

"By the way, did your spear wound hurt much?"

"Didn't it?" said Harvey. "I should think it did, just."

"What was it like?"

"Like? Oh! like having all your muscles pulled out one by one by machinery, and then having them put in again."

"Ah! war is a dreadful thing; nevertheless, I will rescue our somewhat rash and foolhardy friend, Harkaway. You shall receive an example from me, Richard."

"Thank you, sir," replied Harvey, dryly.

When they reached the town they were sent for to the council.

The chiefs had decided upon an immediate attack.

After some discussion, it was found that the men could not be got ready, embarked and disembarked on the island of Pisang for a few days.

There was much to be prepared, and it was not advisable to risk defeat by indulging in too much haste.

Even Harvey, impatient to be up and doing, and to strike a blow for his friend, was obliged to admit that.

Mr. Mole accompanied Harvey to his house, and a fresh bottle was produced, for, though the store of liquor was running short, Harvey carefully concealed and took care of what they had left.

In a short time Mr. Mole got what Harvey called "jolly," with his frequent attentions to the bottle, and was only prevented from singing a song by being reminded that Harkaway was in danger.

At length Harvey rose, and said:

"I won't say your room is better than your company, sir, but I must make myself scarce."

"Why break up our little party?" asked Mr. Mole.

"I don't like keeping a married man out, that's one reason; and another is, I have to drill an awkward squad of our soldiers before sunset."

"Ah, duty before all things. I will not detain you, Harvey."

"And, as I don't want my castle stormed, I think you'd better be stepping it, sir, or you'll have the rival beauties after you."

"Mist' Mole should use um stick," observed Monday.

"What's that, my valiant black?" asked Mr. Mole.

Monday brandished a stout bamboo, and replied:

"All Limbi men beat their wives. You beat Ambonias, sare, and then you see."

"Is it so? A good suggestion. I'll follow your advice, Monday, and apply the rod."

Mr. Mole took the stick which Monday offered him, and went away.

"I say, Monday, are you up to your larks with Mole?" asked Harvey, when he was gone.

"Yes. Monday have um lark with him," was the reply.

"Do the Limbians beat their wives?"

"No; only sometimes. Ambonia never beat in her life. Won't Mist' Mole catch it?" cried Monday, grinning.

"Hot and strong, I expect," replied Harvey, who could not help laughing at the prospect which awaited the proprietor of a tea garden in China.

When Mr. Mole reached his house, he found his wives sullenly awaiting him.

Alfura said nothing.

But Ambonia asked him where he had been, and why he stopped away from them.

Mole was just sufficiently tipsy to be valiant, and he replied :

"To see the execution, my dear. Fine thing an execution! Crocodiles fine; Nuratella fine."

"We went also, but we have been back some time," answered Ambonia. "You have been somewhere else."

"Only stayed to crack a bottle with a friend. English custom, my dear."

"And what is that stick for?"

"For you, my pet," replied Mr. Mole.

Ambonia made a dash at him, and attempted to seize the stick.

Mr. Mole brought it down sharply over her naked and unprotected shoulders.

"Must be firm," he muttered. "Monday told me to be firm. I will be firm."

With a wild kind of howl, Ambonia sprang upon him, and grasping the stick broke it in two pieces.

"Playful creature!" exclaimed Mr. Mole, with an imbecile smile.

Ambonia seemed to be determined to let him know whether she was in play or not, for she began to beat him unmercifully with the biggest end of the bamboo which remained in her hand.

Mr. Mole fell on his knees before her, unable to withstand the torrent of blows.

"Ambonia," he said, "be merciful as you are strong; that stick hurts!"

"You have hit a princess of Limbi," she replied.

"It shall not occur again."

Thwack! thwack! descended the stick on his head and back.

"Behold me, Ambonia, on my knees," he said. "I repeat, behold me, for it is a sad sight! I am a great chief who has cut off heads in battle."

Ambonia danced before him in derision.

"And, moreover," he added, "I am going to the wars with the Pisangs. You may never see me again."

This declaration altered the complexion of affairs.

Alfura's tender heart melted, and she endeavored to calm Ambonia.

The Limbian women had a great respect for warriors.

When they were satisfied that their husband was going to fight, they lifted him up, put him on a seat, and sat round him.

"Ambonia will sing the white chief the deeds of her ancestors," she exclaimed.

"Yes, do; that's sensible! By all means let us hear the song," said Mr. Mole, glad to escape so easily.

While Mrs. Mole No. 2 sang to him in a tone of voice, not altogether unpleasing, her husband pillow'd his head in Alfura's lap and soon slept the sleep of the just.

CHAPTER XIII.

MONDAY'S NEW CLOTHES.

Though Harvey was gratified at the just punishment which Nuratella had received at the hands of the Tuan Biza, he was ill at ease.

In vain he tried to sleep.

The night was warm and sultry, but towards morning a heavy storm of rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning, occurred.

This lasted about an hour with all the violence peculiar to such tempests in the tropics.

After this the wind rose and blew in fitful gusts.

Harvey thought he heard the sound of big guns being fired.

From the direction of the sound, he imagined that they came from the sea.

They were discharged at intervals of a minute.

Nothing is more exciting than to hear a ship in distress fire the minute gun at sea.

As soon as day broke, he went into an adjoining apartment and roused Monday.

The black was soon on his feet.

"What um up to, Mast' Harvey?" exclaimed Monday, as Harvey gave him a poke in the ribs to wake him.

"I want you to go down to the shore," replied Harvey.

"What for? Mast' Jack come back?"

"I wish to goodness he had; no such luck. But I fancy some ship has been driven on the rocks. Guns have been firing."

"P'r'aps you dreaming, sare," said Monday.

"No; I haven't been dreaming, either; so you're wrong there," replied Harvey, who had been like a wasp ever since Jack disappeared. "If I didn't go to sleep, I couldn't dream, could I?"

This argument was convincing.

"Monday be off like um shot," cried the black.

"Don't be long! If I am right," said Harvey, "we

will take a boat and go to the wreck, before your countrymen can know anything about it. Some lives may be saved."

Fortunately Monday did not require much dressing, and was ready to start in a little time.

An hour passed, during which Harvey paced the room impatiently.

He reproached himself with being inactive while Jack was in danger.

The Limbians were too slow in their movements to please him.

It appeared that, before they started for the invasion of Pisang, the priests had to go through certain forms and ceremonies, to bless the expedition.

During this delay, Jack might be killed by his enemies.

"I shouldn't care," thought Harvey, "if I could die with him."

It was a relief to his oppressed mind when Monday came back.

The black danced up and down in an extraordinary manner.

"Stop that hanky panky," said Harvey. "What are you cutting all these capers for, just for all the world like a bear on hot bricks?"

"Him one big ship, sare," said Monday; "not far from land, and him stuck on um rock."

"Is there a boat anywhere near?"

"One boat, the one we come from our island in, not far off."

"That will do. Just stay your dancing performance, and come with me. When a ship is wrecked, and people

may be dead or dying, it is no time for larking," said Harvey.

"Monday, him dance, because him think him get things."

"If you touch so much as a ship's biscuit without my permission, I'll skin you. Now, then, lead the way; trot," replied Harvey.

Monday said no more, and they were quickly on the way to the shore.

The firing was over now, and the fate of the crew most likely decided.

With the utmost impatience Harvey hurried on, and getting into the boat, set the sail, steering directly for the wreck of a merchantman, which seemed to be fast lodged in between the rocks about half a mile or more from the beach.

As he cast his eyes back, he saw two dead bodies stretched out upon the sand, looking ghastly white in the reddening sun.

"I'm afraid we're too late, Monday. They're all dead as mutton, I expect," remarked Harvey.

"What's mutton, sare?" asked Monday.

"Sheep."

"If um sheep, why call him mutton?" asked Monday, puzzled.

"I can't explain now! I've something else to think of. You've no sheep in your forsaken country, but if you ever come to England with us, you'll know all about it."

Monday was silent for a while.

Then he said:

"Great, much wonderful place England, Mast' Harvey?"

"Rather! You'll say so, when you get there. But

would you really like to come with us, if we get a passing ship to take us off?"

"Yes, Monday, him come."

"And leave all your friends here?"

"Monday come back some time, and lay him bones in Limbi. Not like die out of his own country," he replied, thoughtfully.

They now reached the wreck, which was a China clipper of moderate tonnage.

The storm had done her fearful damage, and from her appearance she seemed to have been drifting water-logged for some days, so that she must have encountered more than one tempest, and have made bad weather before she was driven out of her track to Limbi.

Making the painter fast, Harvey sprang on board, followed by Monday.

Three corpses lay on the deck, and not a single living soul was to be seen above or below.

Perhaps the majority of the crew had taken to the boats before she struck and had been carried away in an opposite direction, for there were some obstinate currents in the seas.

When Harvey satisfied himself that the crew were beyond his help, he went below and found that the cargo was chiefly tea and silk.

She was the *Johnny Sands* of London, and he could only deplore the fate of the brave fellows who had manned her.

"We may as well load our boat," said Harvey, "with such things as we want. Tea and coffee are luxuries we haven't had for a long time; powder and shot, if we can find any, will be useful, and a case of spirits will

not be a bad present for Mole. Lend a hand, Monday, and let's overhaul the wreck."

Monday willingly complied, and in about an hour a couple of chests of tea, a case of spirits, some wine, a bag of coffee, a keg of powder, and some shot, and various other little articles, none the worse for water, were handed on deck.

Harvey packed the boat as full as it would hold, and made free with some seamen's chests containing clothes, as his own were becoming rather ragged.

When all was ready for a start, he looked round for Monday, who was nowhere to be seen.

"Where's the beggar got to?" he muttered.

Going to the companion ladder, he shouted, "Monday!"

"Coming, sare," replied Monday. "Give him um moment."

"I'll give you a hiding if you keep me waiting," replied Harvey. "What are you doing below there? If I catch you swigging——"

"Monday no swig, sare," replied a voice from the depths of the ship. "Him only rig himself up!"

"Do what?" said Harvey, in surprise.

"Him all right, Mast' Harvey; him right boot not fit. Never mind; one will do. Blow him right boot!"

"What on earth is he talking about?" thought Harvey.

Presently Monday made his appearance, and Harvey could not help laughing at the singular spectacle he presented.

He had seen his young master overhauling the seamen's chests, and the idea occurred to him that he ought to do the same thing.

"Mast' Harvey him dress ; why not Monday ? Him dress also," said Monday to himself.

He tried to put on a pair of white trousers, but tore them in the attempt, and got his left foot into a top boot, which he found in the captain's cabin.

The right one was wet, and wouldn't go on, so he managed to put one with side springs on.

Upon his head he put a white hat with a black band round it, and this was perched a little on one side.

A white shirt was thrown over his shoulders, and tied round his neck by the sleeves.

Finding a paper collar, he had stuck that on with a pin, and tied a black ribbon round it.

"Monday, old man, this won't do," said Harvey, as soon as he could check his laughter at his ridiculous appearance ; "you are a regular swell."

"Sare!" exclaimed the black, drawing himself up.

"You're going it," replied Harvey.

"Monday go to England. When him go him dress. Why not Monday dress now?"

"I don't see any particular reason. You're all the cheese ; 'quite up to the knocker,' as we say."

At this compliment Monday grinned as if he was intensely gratified.

"Monday, him what you call um swell," he said, regarding his only boot with complacency.

"I should think you were a swell," replied Harvey. "Niggers can do it."

"Why you call me nigger, Mast' Harvey?"

"Because you are not white, and you're rather more greasy than you might be, only that's your misfortune and not your fault. You'd do well to sit over the wheel of an engine ; it wouldn't want much train oil."

"Have him dress right?" asked Monday, not understanding Harvey's chaff.

"Slap up!"

"Monday, him feel rather funny."

At this Harvey burst out laughing again.

"You're all right," he said; "don't flurry your fat. You might as well have started two boots while you were about it."

"Him cuss boot not go on," said Monday, in a tone of vexation.

"Don't swear, Monday. Where did you learn that?"

"Mist' Mole, him swar when Ambonia go on at him. He say, 'Cuss the women.' "

"Does he? That's very wrong of him," replied Harvey; "and don't you follow a bad example. Jump into the boat; never mind the other boot. You'll do. You're up to the nines, and would make a sensation in Hyde Park."

"Monday good Englishmans."

"Stunning. I never saw a better," answered Harvey, wishing to gratify his harmless vanity.

"That all right," said Monday, smiling from ear to ear.

"I'll have you presented at court some day. It would read well in the papers. His royal highness, Prince Matabella Monday of Limbi, present on the happy occasion of his finding a top boot and white hat, both rather the worse for wear."

Monday did not understand all this.

"But," he said, "now, Mast' Harvey, you chaff poor Monday."

"Chaff? I'm not chaffing. Ain't you a prince? And haven't you found a top boot and a white hat?"

"Yes, that all right."

"Dry up then, and steer the boat while I look after the sail."

They embarked with their cargo, Harvey congratulating himself upon being first in the field.

Had the natives discovered the wreck first, they would soon have carried away everything that was worth having.

As Harvey looked at Monday the more absurd his appearance seemed.

"Why you laugh, Mast' Harvey?" asked Monday.

"Because I can't help myself, and shall burst if I don't," replied Dick.

"Anything wrong with Monday?"

"I've told you there isn't; you're a toff!"

"Why um laugh, then? Monday think him better dress than you, sare. Him got no tear in him——"

But not knowing the name for shirt, or forgetting it in his excitement, he pointed to his covering.

"Oh! Your shirt's fine," replied Harvey.

"No holes in him?"

"I know mine is more holy than righteous; never mind, Monday, I've got something in those chests, and I'll cut you out. You shan't take the shine out of me like this."

Monday laughed, and was evidently much pleased with himself.

"Him Englishmans now," he said.

"You've done the trick, Monday," answered Harvey; "they'll take you for the British consul, at least, if we get to Singapore."

They ran their boat into a sheltered nook, and left

the contents within it, intending to send down for them when they reached Tompano..

At a short distance from the city they saw a female sitting under a tree.

In her hand she held a bottle of spirits, which Harvey recognized as one he had given Mr. Mole.

She had twined some flowers in her hair, which hung down her back in untidy masses.

"Look, sare!" said Monday, "that Missy Mole."

"So it is. What is she doing, I wonder?" replied Harvey.

Monday put his hand to his mouth, as if to signify that she had been drinking.

Her wild appearance seemed to bear out the truth of his suggestion.

"If she has been imitating her husband, we'd better give her a wide berth," Harvey said.

Mrs. Mole No. 2, however, was too quick for them.

Jumping up, she ran with unsteady steps to Harvey and seized his arm.

"You make my husband drink," she exclaimed. "When he comes to you, he goes home and beat me."

"My dear lady," replied Harvey, "I assure you I do all I can to stop him."

"No, no!" cried Ambonia, raising her voice to a high pitch; "you send him to me with a bamboo and then he beat me."

"I'll swear I didn't."

"To-day," she continued, "I have taken away his spirit, and I have tasted it."

"Is it good?"

Ambonia raised the bottle to her lips and took a deep draught.

"It goes like fire through the blood," she answered; "but it has not taken away my senses. You are my husband's enemy, and thus will I punish you."

As she spoke she aimed a blow at him with the bottle.

He jumped on one side, and narrowly escaped having his head broken.

"I say!" exclaimed Harvey, "stash it. Here, Monday, speak to your amiable countrywoman. This won't do at all."

Ambonia danced round Harvey, and make a snatch at his hair.

She grasped it, and tugged away at it till Harvey danced, too.

"Pull her off, Monday!" he exclaimed. "Look sharp, or I shan't have a hair left."

"Monday come, sare."

Monday seized Ambonia by the waist and dragged her to the ground.

Harvey fell with her.

She loosened her grip, and turned her attention to Monday, whom she abused in fine style.

Harvey soon tied Ambonia's hands behind her.

She kicked and screamed, but was unable to help herself.

"I'll be revenged," she cried, with a hysterical sob. "I'll kill him."

"What we do with her?" asked Monday.

"I'll be hanged if I know."

"I s'pose we carry her home, sare."

"She's heavy," said Harvey.

"Never mind, sare. I take her head, you take her legs; we carry her like that."

If they had not decided to do this, it is doubtful whether Ambonia would have got home.

The whisky she had been taking had got into her head, and she staggered about in a ludicrous manner.

First she ran to Monday, and tried to bite him; then she ran towards Harvey, and tried to kick him; then lost her balance and fell gracefully on her back.

"Now's your time, Monday; lay hold!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Me got her, sare," replied Monday.

"Lay still, mum. It's all right," continued Harvey; "we don't wish to hurt you."

She was a good weight, and it was lucky they had not far to go. It was a ludicrous procession.

Ambonia screeching, struggling and making horrible faces.

Monday fantastically dressed, and grinning like a baboon.

Harvey enjoying the fun, but rather wishing he was out of it.

At length they got her home, and gave her into the charge of Alfura.

Then they made their way to their own home, to which Mr. Mole had previously gone.

The news of the wreck had spread.

Mr. Mole had heard of the wreck, and was looking for Harvey, to know if he would go with him to the stranded vessel.

The Tuan Biza and many chiefs had already started.

A wreck was a great event in those islands, and everyone, from the highest to the lowest, strove to get as much plunder as he could.

Suddenly Harvey and Monday met Mr. Mole.

"Hello, sir!" cried Harvey. "Where are you pelting off to?"

"There is a wreck, Harvey," answered Mr. Mole; "and I am going to see what good I can do for the poor creatures. Won't you come?"

"We've been there, sir."

"Been there!" said Mr. Mole, stopping and drawing his breath quickly. "Are there not some casks of spirit on board?"

"We got a few, sir. You'd better make haste, or you'll be too late for your share."

"I'll stick up for my rights. Share and share alike is English, or at least, Yorkshire. I'll have my rights, or my name is not Isaac Mole; but who in the name of wonder, is this strange-looking animal? Is he some one saved from the wreck?"

He pointed to Monday as he spoke, whom he did not recognize in his strange attire.

"That's the King of the Cannibal Islands," replied Harvey.

"Indeed!"

"Yes; he's eaten more men, considering his size and weight, than any other of his nation in existence."

"What a dreadful creature?"

"Dance, you uncultivated beast!" cried Harvey.

"Show the gentleman what you can do."

And he began to sing:

"Hoky poky, wanky fum,
How do you like your taters done?
The King of the Cannibal Islands."

Monday stood still and obstinately refused to move.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Mole; "he looks, to my imag-

ination, like a wandering Christy minstrel out of work. Fancy his being an anthropophagos, or man-eater, as we should say at school."

"Don't irritate him by looking at him in that way, sir; he might do you an injury," said Harvey. "He's subject to fits."

"Fits! Bless me! Keep him off. I wonder at your fondness for such savage pets, Harvey. There is that wretched Monday, now——"

Monday showed his teeth.

He advanced to Mr. Mole with an angry look, fully entering into Harvey's joke.

"Keep him off, Harvey," cried Mr. Mole, in an agony of apprehension; "I don't want to hurt him."

"Prop him, sir!" said Harvey, delighted. "Don't funk him; prop him in the eye! Give him a domino! I'll see fair play!"

"Perhaps he bites!" exclaimed Mr. Mole, drawing back.

Again Monday showed his teeth in a vicious manner.

Mr. Mole got behind Harvey, saying:

"Protect me, Harvey. It is hard to be stopped in this way when I am hastening to the wreck to do Christian work."

"You needn't hurry, sir; the poor fellows are beyond human aid."

"Say you so? Then their belongings are lawful spoil, and that confounded Tuan Biza will——"

"Collar the lot, eh, sir?"

"Just so, Harvey; but I entreat you to protect me from that truculent-looking savage."

Harvey glided away, and Monday approached Mr. Mole, threateningly.

Mole fell on his knees, and lifting up his hands, said : "Good, kind Mr. Cannibal, don't do anything desperate. I'm only a poor schoolmaster. Don't eat me!" "He'll only take a mouthful ; he's not hungry," exclaimed Harvey, who was exploding with laughter. Mr. Mole's distress was ludicrous in the extreme.

CHAPTER XIV.

H A R V E Y ' S R E S O L V E .

Suddenly a gust of wind blew off Monday's white hat, which disconcerted him greatly.

"You've lost your tile," cried Harvey.

"Monday, him soon catch um tile," exclaimed the black, forgetting his assumed part of the King of the Cannibal Islands.

Mr. Mole's eyes were opened.

As soon as he saw Monday without his hat, he recognized him, and rising to his feet, said :

"Why, what sort of a trick is this, Harvey ? Such deception is shameful. That poor creature is Monday."

"I could have told you that, sir," replied Harvey.

"Come here, you black thief," continued Mr. Mole, as Monday approached, having captured his runaway hat. "I'll thrash you within an inch of your life. What do you mean by rigging yourself out like that, and making fun of me?"

"Monday king ; him eat um up, sare," answered Monday, who, however, kept at a respectful distance.

"I'll attend to you afterwards, my jocose friend; at present I am engaged. I shall be late at the wreck."

"There is no occasion to go, sir," said Harvey. "I have secured all that is worth having. She is only a merchantman, laden with tea chiefly, and if you want a cask or two of rum or Hollands, you are welcome to them."

Mr. Mole shook him cordially by the hand.

"My dear Harvey," he replied; "my greatest consolation in this, my exile, is that I have a friend like you so near me. Your words go straight to my heart. Where are the casks?"

"In our boat, sir."

"Is it safe? Will not the Limbian thieves deprive us of our lawful spoil?"

"They've got to find it first."

"Their noses are keen, and their scent sure. I wouldn't trust the descendants of Ham."

"Gammon!" replied Harvey, by way of a joke. "The Tuan Biza would notice anything his people took. First come, first served; that's the law here, and I will say this for them, if their laws are few, they respect what they have got."

"With that assurance I will rest contented. I have over-exerted myself already in the morning sun, for no sooner did I hear the news, than I hastened away—not for what I could get, Harvey, but to do good! Don't think for a moment I went for what I could get."

"Not you, sir. You'd put whisky in a bottle, and throw stones at it."

"Well, I don't know that, exactly," replied Mr. Mole; "but I would not make capital out of the misfortunes of my fellow-creatures."

"Monday," cried Harvey, "cut on to the little village, and get some fellows to bring the stores out of the boat to our house; and look sharp, or I pity you."

"All right, Mast' Harvey," said Monday, adding, "no eat Mr. Mole this time."

"You impudent black slave, begone; or I shall lose my temper, and be tempted to play the part of Moses in Egypt," answered Mr. Mole.

"What that, sare?"

"What that, sir? Why, this, sir," Mr. Mole answered, bringing a bamboo he carried in his hand with some force down upon Monday's posteriors.

Monday uttered a yell, and put his hands behind him, as if to conceal the injured part, and then he started off at a run.

"Must be firm with those fellows, Harvey," said Mr. Mole, complacently. "Give them an inch, they'll take an ell. No foolishness. You see that I have tamed that savage, who, by the way, wouldn't be half so cheeky if you didn't encourage him."

"His hide's tough enough, sir. You didn't hurt him."

"Never mind. I did not wish to inflict any brutalizing punishment. All I wanted was to assert my authority; that done, I am satisfied."

"Walk back with me, sir, will you? I want to have a talk with you," said Harvey.

"Certainly, my boy."

Side by side they retraced their steps towards Tompano.

"You see, sir," began Harvey. "I'm what the sailors call flummoxed."

"And what may that be?"

"Knocked out of time, upset, worried, bothered. I didn't sleep a wink all last night."

"Why is that?" demanded Mr. Mole.

"Because I am so anxious on Jack's account. If I was with him, and could share his danger, I shouldn't care half so much."

"I, too, am deeply grieved at Harkaway's disappearance, but I make bold to hope that no harm has befallen him," replied Mr. Mole, gravely.

"He's in Hunston's power."

"Well! So much the better!"

"So much the worse, you mean, sir. He'd have ten times more chance, if he had to deal with the natives only," answered Harvey.

"I know Hunston to be bad and vindictive. He has little or no feeling. See how he kicked me, Isaac Mole, the proprietor of a tea garden in China."

"And also proprietor of two wives in Limbi."

"Don't, Harvey. If you love me, don't joke on that subject. It is a sore one," said Mr. Mole, with a groan.

"Very well, sir; I won't," replied Harvey. "Something ought to be done to help Jack at once."

"Are we not going in force to rescue him?"

"We are; but by the time we get to Pisang we may only find his dead body."

"Nonsense, Harvey; I cannot believe that Hunston would be such an abandoned wretch as to murder an old schoolfellow in cold blood."

"Wouldn't he? I know the beast better than you do," said Harvey. "That is just why I am funkings."

"The Tuan Biza will be ready to sail in two days from this time."

"Not now."

"Why not now?" asked Mr. Mole.

"Because there is a lot of drink on board the wreck, and the Limbians are not above temptation. They'll be on the spree till it's all gone."

"Do you think so?"

"I'm sure of it. Savages are awful beggars to lush, when they get the chance, and the chiefs will be as drunk as flies for a week. I can see that."

"Perhaps you are right," replied Mr. Mole, moodily.

"They respect us, and they like us," continued Harvey; "the prompt way in which they put Nuratella out of the way is a proof that they want to conciliate us; but, after all, Jack is not one of them, and it does not much matter to them whether he lives or dies."

"Your reasoning is cogent, very cogent. What, then, do you propose to do?"

"This. I am determined to strike a blow for Jack at once, even if I lose my own life in the attempt."

"I commend your pluck, Harvey. Shall I accompany you? Harkaway is a dear fellow, and I will cast in my lot with you, even to the death, as you say," exclaimed Mr. Mole, animated with sudden and unusual valor.

"No; that won't do!" replied Harvey.

"You won't have me?" said Mr. Mole, secretly rejoiced; "and why not? Am I not worthy to fight in a good cause?"

"I want you to stay here, sir!" answered Harvey. "You shall do your share of fighting when the time comes, but the Limbians want some one to keep them bang up to the mark."

"Ah! I perceive."

"They have been badly beaten once or twice lately

by the Pisangs, and they don't like attacking them without a white leader."

"Quite so."

"It may be a month," Harvey continued, "before they would invade Pisang of their own accord."

"Very possible."

"You are accounted a great chief," Harvey went on, "and have influence among them. They respect you, sir."

"And do I not deserve it, Harvey? Have I not always borne myself bravely when there was any fighting to be done?" asked Mr. Mole.

"Certainly, sir. You're a second Agamemnon. You can do it when you like; and I want you to stop here and organize the forces."

"That is just within the scope of my administrative ability. You could not have given me a more congenial task."

"See that they take proper supplies, keep their powder dry, and that every five-and-twenty men have their proper officers."

"And you?"

"I shall leave Limbi, with Monday, in a couple of hours."

"How?"

"In our boat," replied Harvey. "I can't stop here. Pisang is only a few hours' sail, and I may be of some use to dear old Jack."

"The odds are against you."

"Have they not always been against the man who has attempted a daring enterprise, sir?" asked Harvey.

"That is true. History abounds with instances of successful daring."

"Pat me on the back, sir, and tell me to go in and win," said Harvey.

"Of course I will. But here we are at your house. Let us have a glass—a parting glass, to drink success to your expedition!" exclaimed Mr. Mole.

"You are welcome to what you like, sir. As for me, I shall not touch a drop. I never drink when I have anything to do, and keep my head cool," answered Harvey.

"As you please, my boy. My blood is colder than yours, and wants warming. I'll drink your share and my own, too," said Mr. Mole.

Harvey placed a bottle before him, and said:

"Polish it off, sir; there's more where that came from. It's a pure spirit."

"So it is, Harvey, and there isn't a headache in a gallon of pure spirit," replied Mr. Mole, who soon made himself at home.

Harvey went away to look for Monday, and apprise him of the determination he had come to.

He knew that the faithful fellow would follow him to the end of the world if he asked him, and he was also sure that he could not propose any expedition to him which he would like so well as one to rescue Jack.

Monday loved Jack with all his heart.

It would have comforted Jack in his captivity, if he had known how wildly two true hearts were beating on his account.

CHAPTER XV.

AT HUNSTON'S MERCY.

For some time after he was knocked down, Jack did not recover his senses, and when he did, an acute pain at the back of the head informed him that he had received a severe blow.

Gradually the fresh sea air revived him, and the dizziness consequent on his hurt passed away.

The ripple of the waves against the sides of the boat, and the swarthy faces of the Pisangs, visible by the pale moonlight, sufficed to tell him that he was being carried into captivity.

He was furious at the thought of it.

Up to the present time he had been singularly successful in defeating Hunston's designs.

To be in his power and at his mercy, was a reflection akin to madness.

However, Jack liked danger.

At school he always said that the fun of being in a scrape was the getting out of it.

"As long as they don't knock me on the head entirely, I don't care," he said to himself.

Thinking that when the landing was effected, he would be taken to some prison, he determined to give them as much trouble as possible.

If he pretended to be worse than he really was, and did not appear able to walk, they would have to carry him.

It was as he expected.

When they reached the coast of Pisang, he was lifted out of the boat, and placed upon a couple of planks tied together with reeds, and carried by four men.

The town called Palembang was reached before day-break, and Jack found himself deposited in a square-built bamboo house, thatched with palm leaves.

It was strongly built, and no doubt guarded outside.

As soon as he was left to himself, Jack took the bearings of his prison.

He tied his bandanna handkerchief round his head to keep the air and the flies from his wound.

"I don't feel much the worse," he said. "Wonder what they're going to do with me?"

He could see through chinks in the wall that daylight had appeared.

"We used to sing," he remarked, "I shan't go home till morning." It doesn't look like going home at all. Suppose we have a look round."

Getting into a corner, he climbed up the bamboos till he reached the roof of his prison, which was made of sticks, covered with palm leaves.

It did not take him more than five minutes to push a hole through these big enough to get his body through.

Then he climbed on to the roof, and, sitting down, took a survey of the city.

There were few people about, though numbers of houses stretched away in all directions.

At the door of the house, if the one-storied bamboo hut was worthy of the designation, paced two sentries, armed with spears, and bows and arrows.

"It's no good trying to escape," thought Jack. "Not just yet, at least. I should be seen and there would be

a hue and cry. Don't see why I shouldn't have a game, though, with one of those niggers."

Some pieces of rock were laid over a weak part of the thatch, to prevent the wind blowing it away.

Taking up a little bit, he threw it at the head of a drowsy-looking Pisang.

"Morning, old fellow. It's nice and airy up here," he exclaimed.

The soldier rubbed his eyes with astonishment when he saw Jack.

"Go down again," he said.

"I'm in no hurry, thank you," replied Jack.

"You're a prisoner, and it's against the rules."

"Is it? Blow me, I shouldn't have thought it. What time do you breakfast in these parts?"

"You will have something when the other guard comes; but go down. You've no business up there," said the soldier, who wondered at Jack's speaking his language so well.

"Come and fetch me!"

"I'll call the white Tuan Biza," threatened the guard.

"Call him a thundering scoundrel, and you won't be far out," answered Jack.

Giving some orders in a low tone to his fellow soldier, the Pisang went to a house at a little distance, and presently returned with Hunston.

The latter looked very sleepy and very cross; his face, however, was not now disfigured by a single tattoo mark.

The stain was not lasting.

It had faded away.

"Come down off there!" exclaimed Hunston, savagely.

"Shan't!" Jack replied, coolly.

"Won't you? By George! then I shall have to make you."

"Try it on, old son; you're welcome."

"Give me that spear," exclaimed Hunston, to the soldier.

He took it and cast it at Jack, who bobbed to one side, and very cleverly caught it in his hand, as it was whizzing by over the thatch.

"That's one to me," he exclaimed. "Now, look here, if you try to knock me off my perch, I'll give you one for yourself, Mister Hunston."

The latter looked amazed at this cool effrontery.

"Don't you know you're a prisoner?" he replied.

"What of that? It may be your turn soon. By the way, I'm glad to see that ugly mug of yours has improved a little since we last had the pleasure of meeting."

Hunston stifled a curse.

"You shall have an ornamental phiz before I've done with you, and one you'll never get rid of," he said.

"How's that?" asked Jack, unconcernedly.

"Because you'll carry it down to the grave with you in a brace of shakes."

"Thank you; much obliged, I'm sure," replied Jack.
"How's your mother?"

"Come down off there," thundered Hunston.

"Not if I know it. I shall stay here until breakfast's ready, and then I'll descend. Pray, give me something nice; I'm rather hungry."

Hunston foamed at the mouth with rage.

"Fine city, this!" cried Jack, surveying the town with

a critical air. "But not a patch on Tompano. Pity we shall have to burn it about your ears."

"We?" repeated Hunston. "I don't think you'll have much to do with it."

"Don't you? Well, it's only a difference of opinion, and yours isn't worth much. I say, how's the Tuan Biza?"

"He's right enough. Come down!"

"Not by any manner of means. Can't afford it. Can't be done at the price. Lovely prospect. How's Keyali?"

"You know deuced well he's wiped out. We found his body stuck through and through with knives."

"His own fault. He was a plucky fellow, but, like you, a little too headstrong," said Jack.

"Will you come down?" shouted Hunston, who was beside himself with rage.

"Not much; unless you behave like a gentleman, and take my parol."

"What's that?"

"There," said Jack, in a tone of mock compassion, "you see the necessity for learning when one's young. I always thought your education was neglected. You should have made better use of your time. *Didicisse artes*—I forget the rest, but I will ask Mole for your edification; I'll make a note of it."

He took out his pocketbook, and coolly wrote, reading as he put it down:

"Mem.. Ask Mole as to quotation—something—*artes*—to coach up Hunston.

"However," he continued, putting away his book, "I'll explain parol. It means that I will give you my

word of honor not to run away if you will let me walk about the city."

"You haven't got such a thing as honor."

"Don't judge others by yourself, old boy. Never mind; it don't much matter, I'm very jolly where I am. Best part of the day, morning. Nice cool air—breeze—not much sun."

Jack played with the captured spear.

"Fool!" hissed Hunston, through his teeth. "Don't you know you're at my mercy?"

"No, I wasn't aware of the fact," replied Jack, innocently.

Hunston gave the guard some additional orders, and stalked away to his house, unable to contain himself any longer.

CHAPTER XVI.

TRUE TO HIS COLORS.

Having succeeded in annoying Hunston, which was all he wanted to do, Jack crept through the hole and sat down on the floor of his prison.

Presently the guard was changed, and something to eat and drink was brought him.

"Only a loaf of bread and some water!" he muttered. "Well, that's better than nothing; and there is one comfort in it—they don't mean to eat me, or they'd fatten me up a bit first."

A few hours glided by, and he began to feel very miserable.

Suddenly the door opened, and Emily came in.

"This is a gleam of sunshine," he exclaimed. "Emily, you are as welcome as the flowers in May."

"Oh, Jack," she replied, tearfully, "can you ever forgive me for getting you into this trouble?"

"It was my fault. I ought to have been more wide awake. Why, I haven't thought about it since last night."

"But they will kill you!" she answered.

"Will they? When?"

"To-morrow morning. It's all settled. A council has been held."

"How are they going to do it?" asked Jack, feeling curious as to the mode to be adopted in putting him out of the world.

"You are to be hanged at daybreak. I can hardly find courage to utter the dreadful words," said Emily, with a shudder.

Jack put his head on one side, and let his tongue hang out of his mouth, as a pantomimic way of describing the tragedy.

"Oh, don't joke, Jack dear," she replied. "It's too horrible; and to think it is all my fault!"

"All through my love for you, eh, Emmy? Never mind, darling; they won't find me show the white feather," Jack exclaimed, firmly.

"I don't think there is much chance," she said.

"Is there any?" he inquired, regarding her earnestly.

"Ye-es."

"What is it?"

"Hunston says he will spare you, if I—I will marry him," replied the girl, blushing.

"Hang his impudence, Emmy," answered Jack, indignantly. "You marry a sweep like him! Don't you

do it. I won't accept my life on those terms. I thought you cared for me."

"So I do, dear Jack. I love you, very, very much, indeed!"

She threw herself on his breast, and wept bitterly.

"I have no one to think of but you now, since father died," she went on.

"Is Mr. Scratchley dead?"

"Yes; he died yesterday, while I was taken to Limbi; all through Hunston's violence. He struck him, and he never got over it."

"Did he? That's another chalk to Hunston," said Jack, savagely.

"I didn't expect to meet you in these islands, and when I heard you were also wrecked, I thought what a pleasant meeting we should have, but how bitterly I have been deceived."

"I knew you were here, Emmy," said Jack.

"How did you find it out?" she asked, checking her tears and looking up.

He told her about the message from the sea.

"How wonderfully things happen," she exclaimed. "Poor papa got very needy after you left us, and he resolved to emigrate. Fancy our meeting here so many miles away from home!"

"I came over to Limbi principally to rescue you," continued Jack, "for I heard that a white girl was saved from the wreck and a prisoner among the Pisangs. After reading the message, you know, I guessed it was you."

"How can I thank you? But look here, Jack, dear. I have brought you a sharp Malay knife, which I stole from the Tuan Biza's house, where I live."

"Thank you. What shall I do with it—cut my throat and disappoint the Pisangs?" he said, concealing the weapon in his waistcoat.

She smiled sadly, for she knew he was not in earnest.

"You are still the same old Jack," she replied, "fearless in the midst of danger, and ready at all times to laugh at death."

"Why shouldn't I? Being miserable won't mend matters! Shall I sit down and cry? But, tell me, how did you get leave to come and visit me?"

"I begged permission from Hunston, and he wouldn't give it me until—until——"

"Well?"

"I let him have a kiss. I didn't mean to, Jack. It was only a little one, after all; don't be jealous!" she said, bashfully.

Jack set his teeth together.

"That's another chalk to Hunston. I'll have it out of him," he exclaimed.

"It felt like the touch of a snake, Jack, dear," she went on.

"So I should think. The brute, to think that he had a kiss, when I haven't dared to ask for one. May I though, Emmy, may I?"

"You know you may, Jack—a dozen, if you like."

And Jack did like.

He construed this into permission to help himself, and he covered her pretty face with kisses.

"There, Jack," she said, pushing him away; "that will do. Don't be stupid."

"That's a nice thing to say to a fellow, who's got to dance upon nothing to-morrow morning," he rejoined.

"Oh! there's another thing, Jack," exclaimed Emily,

"I forgot to tell you. Hunston is coming here to examine you presently."

"Is he? What about?"

"The plan of the Limbian attack, which they expect soon. The number of men and firearms; and if you tell them, they will promise you your life, though they don't intend to keep their word any the more for that."

"I shouldn't suppose they would. They're all thieves and liars. Don't they wish they may get it. I shan't split on my party, so they wouldn't have got a word out of me, even if you hadn't told me."

"Spoken like yourself, Jack. Be true to your color. I shouldn't like you if you weren't," replied Emily.

"I've got one comfort," continued Jack; "and that is, you will be all safe."

"How?"

"We're sure to lick them, at least Harvey is; he will fight like a Turk for me, and you will be rescued."

"Harvey, who was at school with you at Crawcour's? Is he at Limbi?"

"Rather. Alive and kicking, too, and as good a friend, and as fine a fellow as ever lived," replied Jack.

"But without you—oh! Jack—without you, how could I—how can I live?" sobbed Emily, her fears overcoming her again.

"Don't worry, Emmy, dear!" he replied, kissing away her tears. "The beggars haven't done it yet; they've got to do the trick."

"Can you help yourself?"

"I think so. There is plenty of time between this and to-morrow morning."

"To do what?"

"To cut my stick. If I'm not mistaken, they'll find the cage door open and the bird gone," he said.

"Have you got any plan?" she asked.

"Not yet. I've got to think it over; ideas generally come when I want them. I'm not going to stop here, to be strung up like a dog, that's flat."

"You put new life into me, Jack," replied Emily, joyfully. "Oh! if you only could escape."

"Wouldn't it be a lark?" Jack went on. "Hunston would have a fit, and he wouldn't be able to sleep, night or day, for thinking of the reckoning he'd have to pay me."

A head was put in at the door.

"Time's up," cried the voice of Hunston.

"Good-by, Emily," exclaimed Jack, pressing her hand and giving her a wink which was intended to reassure her, and make her believe that he was quite prepared for anything that might happen.

She returned his farewell, and stepped, with as much bravery as she could summon to her aid, into the open air.

The door closed again.

But Jack was not alone.

Hunston stood leaning against a post, with his arms folded, and regarding Jack with an air of gratified malignity.

CHAPTER XVII.

KEPT IN SUSPENSE.

"I suppose you have come to crow over me," exclaimed Jack, annoyed at his visitor's sullen silence.
"Go on; I can stand it."

"It won't be for long," replied Hunston. "We are going to settle old scores, Harkaway."

"If you'd any generosity, you'd forget and forgive," answered Jack.

"It is not my nature to do either one or the other. You've made me suffer and you shall die to-morrow morning. I'd hang you to-day in sight of all the people, only I want you to think over what I'm going to tell you."

"What's that?"

"You love Emily. Don't deny it. I remember at school that she was your playfellow, and you grew up together."

"I don't mean to deny it," replied Jack.

"It wouldn't help you if you did, for I shouldn't believe you. Well, chance has thrown you both into my power. You shall die, and when you're dead, I will make Emily my wife."

Jack made no reply.

"Do you hear me? My wife!" continued Hunston.
"Think of that!"

The shaft went home.

In the imperfect light which reigned in the bamboo

house, Hunston could see his former companion writhe and bite his lips till he quivered with the pain.

"She shall see your body blackening in the sun, and the birds of prey picking your flesh from the bones."

"You're a cowardly bully, to come and exult over me like this," replied Jack, forgetting his assumed indifference.

"It's a part of my revenge. I knew it would come some day. I've worked and waited for it."

"I was a fool," said Jack, "not to have shot you when I had the chance."

"Perhaps you were. However, you've lost the opportunity, and you're not likely to have another," replied Hunston.

"You might think of one thing," replied Jack, "and that is, I saved you from the Pisangs when you were bound to the stake."

Hunston smiled sardonically.

"You wouldn't have done it if you could have foreseen this day," he said.

"Yes, I would," answered Jack. "I would, upon my word. I could not see a former friend in distress, and not help him. But it's no use talking to you. One might as well speak to a stone of mercy."

"I don't know the word. Still I might be induced to spare your life," remarked Hunston, carelessly.

"On what terms?"

"Tell me the plan of the Limbian attack, for our spies have informed us that you mean to invade Pisang in force."

"You got that from Nuratella."

"Never mind where the intelligence came from. We can rely upon it."

Jack thought of what Emily had told him.

"Nothing would induce me to betray my friends and allies," he exclaimed.

"Nothing? Think a moment. Life is sweet."

"Not on such terms," answered Jack, resisting the voice of the tempter.

"Die, then! Die like a dog, as you deserve!" said Hunston, in a rage; "and think over all I have said to you."

"Get out!" cried Jack, "or, prisoner as I am, I'll punch your head."

Hunston stepped back.

"Touch me!" he exclaimed. "If you dare lay so much as your little finger on me, I will have you seized, and your flesh torn off with jagged stones made red hot."

"Coward!" was all Jack ventured to reply.

"I go," continued Hunston, "but you will see me at your side to-morrow morning, when you are executed, and I hope my presence will add one more drop to your cup of misery."

"Thank you," replied Jack; "I am not afraid to die, and the prospect isn't half so bad as being obliged to be shut up here with such a beast as you."

Saying "to-morrow," Hunston left him alone, and Jack brightened up a bit.

"I can breathe, now that serpent is gone," Jack said to himself. "What a relief. He's worse than a snake to me."

The day passed and they brought him neither provisions or water.

His fate being decided upon, they did not seem to

take any further notice of him, knowing that he was well guarded.

"I'll take a squint round, and see what's going on," thought Jack.

He climbed up the wall, as he had done before, and got on the roof.

In an open space before Hunston's house some men were busily at work with poles.

They were making a huge gallows.

"That's for me," said Jack.

And then he thought what a triumph it would be if he could only get away, join his friends, capture Palembang, and hang Hunston on his own gallows.

Presently he saw the Tuan Biza going by.

"Hi!" he cried. "Tuan Biza, hi!"

The chief looked up in astonishment.

"It's all right," cried Jack. "Hunston said I might take the air; but I'm very thirsty. Chuck us up a cocoanut or something."

Apparently satisfied that Hunston had given him permission to get on the roof, and there was nothing wrong, the Tuan Biza gave orders that he should be supplied with what he wanted.

"They will bring you something presently," he said.

"And some grub. What do you call it in your lingo? 'Prindu'; that's it. Send me a small parrot, or a bit of pork, cold. I see you've got some likely pigs running about loose," continued Jack.

The Tuan Biza nodded, and passed on.

When Jack saw some Pisangs coming with refreshments, he descended again, and began to attack the viands with a good appetite.

"That's something like," he muttered. "I wanted

food. It will set me up for the work I've got to do to-night."

His face assumed a determined expression.

Throwing himself on the ground in a corner, he closed his eyes.

But he did not sleep.

His brain was at work, and he was thinking how he could outwit his enemies.

The gallows he had seen had an ugly look, and the thought of it quickened his perceptions wonderfully.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY.

Harvey had not long to wait for his trusty followers.

He came toiling along, with about a dozen other Lim-bians, heavily laden with the spoil of the wreck.

They brought the packages and cases into the house, and laid them down.

"Excellent," said Mr. Mole, rubbing his hands. "You are a capital caterer, Harvey. Truly my heart rejoices within me at the sight of all these good things."

"Help yourself, sir! You can unpack them when we are gone," replied Harvey.

"I will not fail to do so."

"There is one thing I should like you to do, sir."

"You have but to name it, my young friend."

"There are several bodies of Englishmen, some washed ashore and others on the wreck."

"Yes!"

"Have them brought on shore, and see them decently buried, will you?"

"Certainly, Harvey; a most proper request. I will see the last obsequies paid to my unfortunate countrymen. Their bodies shall be brought up to-night and interred to-morrow," replied Mr. Mole.

"Now, Monday, look alive!" continued Harvey.

"What um Monday do now, sare?" asked the black.

"First of all, take off those togs."

"Take off um beautiful dress? No, sare, not if him die for it!" replied Monday, in alarm.

"But you must! You can keep them for Sunday; that hat will make a splendid Sunday-going beaver. You and I start soon."

"Start for where, Mast' Harvey?"

"To go after Jack. He is in the hands of the Pisangs, and we must see what we can do for him. If you wear those things, you won't have freedom of action on the warpath!"

"Go after Mast' Jack?" cried Monday, delightedly. "That 'nother thing, sare; Monday undress, and get um ready."

"I knew you would. I'd have sworn you'd go like a bird, after Jack."

"Like one, two, three bird, sare. Go anywhere, and do anything for you and Mast' Jack!" said the savage, who, under his dusky skin, had as good a heart as ever beat beneath a white one.

"Get the boat ready at once; put in any dried stuff you can lay your claws on, and bread, with some fresh water, enough, say, to last us a fortnight."

"All right, sare," replied Monday, running off.

Mr. Mole was overhauling what he called the "salvage."

"Glorious salvage, Harvey," he said, opening a case of Hollands. "The Dutchmen know what is good; this is veritable schnapps. I feel I want taking up a peg or two. We must sample this, Harvey."

"Peg away, sir. It's all your own," replied Dick.

"Very good; I will proceed to do so. Splendid fellows, those Dutchmen! They manage to put a true taste of smoke into their whisky, which is what I like. I will drink to the independence of Holland."

Mr. Mole did so, and found the liquor so good that he repeated the experiment.

Harvey busied himself in making up a few packages, and was favored with Mr. Mole's critical approval.

"Be careful," he said, "to take plenty of powder and shot. The only argument these savages understand, is, as we used to say at school, the *argumentum ad hominem*. An ounce of lead is a powerful persuader!"

"I know all that," replied Harvey. "Don't bustle me, sir."

"Reject my advice, if you like. I know I am right, and I have your welfare at heart."

"Coach up those Limbians, then, sir, and come over to Pisang as soon as you can; we shall have hot work, and Jack will want friends."

"Which he shall find."

"I am going to tell the chiefs of my departure, sir, and shall be off in a twinkling. Good-by!" said Harvey.

"Good-by, and God bless you, my brave boy! I will take care of your belongings here," replied Mr. Mole.

They shook hands, and Harvey hurried off.

He had determined to try and save Jack at all hazards.

The Limbians were sorry to lose his leadership, but they promised to obey Mr. Mole, whom they regarded as a great chief.

And they also undertook to start on the expedition as soon as possible.

They had made great progress in their drill, and had proved themselves expert shots.

Joining Monday, Harvey hurried down to the house to get his packages.

"I will see you off!" cried Mr. Mole. "I do not mind walking with you now Monday has taken off his grotesque dress, but if he were disguised as he was a short time back, I should have thought I was walking in the Zoo with the chimpanzee or the ourang-outang's brother."

Harvey began to hum "The O. K. thing at Limbi is walking in the Zoo!"

"Ah!" said Mr. Mole, with a sigh. "What a thing youth is. I wish I had your spirits, Harvey?"

The latter pointed to an empty bottle, and replied:

"I think you have had your share, sir!"

"I mean animal spirits, Harvey. You have mistaken my remark."

Mr. Mole rose as he spoke, and staggered a little on one side.

"Dear me," he said, "this is odd; I appear to have lost my center of gravity!"

"Groggy on your pins, eh, sir?" replied Harvey, laughing.

"Rather so, my juvenile, but still intelligent friend.

There is an inclination in my right leg to go sideways. This is more than odd—it is passing strange."

"Mind the wall, sir," exclaimed Harvey, as the late senior master of Pomona House came into violent collision with the bamboos.

"Your warning came too late, Harvey; I have collided, that is to say, struck, and the effect is painful."

"Which was the hardest, sir; your cocoanut or the wall?"

"Much of a muchness, Harvey," replied Mr. Mole, sitting down on the floor. "I do not think I will go with you, yet I hope you will manage to effect a start without my valuable assistance. I have over-fatigued myself to-day, and exhausted nature must have rest. Fare thee well!"

His head fell back, and he was soon snoring "thirteen to the dozen," as Harvey said.

Harvey and Monday, laden with packages, now made their way to the coast.

It was growing late, and darkness would soon fall.

They got into the boat, and, hoisting the sail, began to leave Limbi behind them.

"Do you think you can manage to steer all serene at night?" asked Harvey.

"Monday know him way, sare," replied the black.

"All right. I leave it to you; but don't run us into any danger."

Night fell, and Monday, looking at the stars, kept the boat's head well before the wind.

They were both armed with revolvers and knives, while rifles lay in the bottom of the boat, ready for use at a moment's notice.

It was clear that if they encountered twenty Pisangs they would not be taken at a disadvantage.

Their firearms would give them a superiority, provided they were not struck by spears or arrows.

In the use of the latter weapons all the natives of those islands were very expert.

The night passed quickly, as it does in those latitudes, and Harvey snatched a few hours' sleep.

He dreamed that he saw Jack hanging on a high gibbet, with his enemies singing war songs around him.

Waking in a fright, he found himself bathed in a cold sweat.

On the verge of the horizon was a dark speck.

"That's land, Monday!" he exclaimed.

There was no answer.

Monday, worn out, had fallen asleep, and the boat had drifted at the mercy of the wind and waves.

It was lucky that the breeze was not a strong one, or they would have been capsized.

They were traveling at a rapid pace towards the land, and it was evident they had been caught in a current, which set in strongly to the shore.

Shaking the black, Harvey succeeded in rousing him.

"Where the dickens are we?" said Harvey.

"Monday go to sleep. That bad. Mast' Harvey, him kick Monday, who much 'shamed," said the black, looking crestfallen.

"Never mind; I suppose you couldn't help it. I shan't bully you, though you deserve a blowing up. Do you know what island that is ahead of us?"

Monday shook his head.

He was out of his reckoning.

"This delay is vexatious," continued Harvey. "Every

moment is precious. Jack's life may hang by a thread, as they say. Why the deuce couldn't you keep your swivel eye open?"

"Monday big stupid donkey; he worse than um child."

"I suppose we'd better run in and see. If it isn't Pisang, we must start again."

"Look!" cried Monday, as they neared a dangerous reef of coral.

"At what?"

"That post, sare. That one flagstaff. This our island; what we call Ship Island, you know. We live there once; that where you save Monday from him enemies."

Harvey looked again, shading his face with his hand.

"You're right," he replied. "That's Mr. Mole's signal station. It is our island. Shall we land?"

"If got time, sare."

"It won't make above an hour or two's difference, and we can take our bearings."

"See um old castle, Mast' Harvey; that much jolly!" cried Monday, in delight.

"Yes, I should like to have a look at the old place."

"Monday, him like it, too. We very happy in um old castle, Mast' Harvey."

"We hadn't much to grumble at, if Hunston and his savages had let us alone. Do you think you could start afresh, now you know where you are?"

"Start from here, sare? Easy."

"And make Pisang?"

"Pisang over there; many, much miles away," replied Monday, pointing to the northwest, after taking his bearings.

"All right, steer steadily. Run her through the reef, and we'll have a squint round," exclaimed Harvey.

They had christened the boat *The Jack Harkaway*, and, riding the waters like a thing of life, she bounded joyously along, as if glad to revisit the old spot that gave her birth.

CHAPTER XIX.

REVISITING THE CASTLE.

There was little difficulty in passing the reef during daylight, and it was with mingled emotions that Harvey stepped on that shore where he and Jack had landed, the latter taking possession of the island in the name of Queen Victoria.

Walking first to the signal station, he saw that the wind had torn the flag to rags, which fluttered feebly if not sadly in the breeze.

He then proceeded to the castle.

Nothing was to be seen but its blackened remains, for the fire kindled by the Pisangs had done its work effectually.

Some of the trees were throwing out tender shoots again, but the trunks were bare and black.

Everything of utility or value had been carried off.

It was a scene of wreck and desolation.

The birds had played havoc with the corn, and other creatures had routed among the potatoes, until the farm was like a wilderness choked up with weeds.

The skeletons of the Pisangs who were killed by the explosion, lay on the ground whitening in the sun.

"Who would think," said Harvey, "that this was once a flourishing little settlement?"

"Him look wild enough now, sare," returned Monday.

Harvey strolled on a little farther.

Before him was Maple's grave.

He remembered how tenderly they had laid the poor, misguided boy in his last resting place, and a tear fell from his eye.

The little mound was overrun with rank grass and weeds.

They had planted flowers upon it, which were choked by the luxuriant growth of the tropics.

The rough, wooden cross, which Jack had in the piety of his heart erected, had fallen on one side.

Stooping down, Harvey took out his knife and cut away the grass and weeds, trimming it round neatly.

Then he replaced the cross, and firmly secured it.

"If ever I see his mother," he thought, "she will ask me about her boy."

He did all he could to pay respect to his memory, though that was little enough.

He was engaged in a perilous and desperate enterprise, and he did not know how soon he might be in a similar position.

Stricken down in his youth, and laid low in the cold, unsympathizing ground, with no kind hands to deck his grave and shed a tear to his memory.

It is in times of danger, and in the hour of solitude, that the thought of death affects us most.

Who shall say that death does not lose half its terrors when we know that weeping friends are round us, and

that sincere mourners will bear our body reverently to the grave?

Sinking on his knees, Harvey prayed shortly but fervently.

He prayed that the poor, dead boy's sins might not be remembered against him.

He supplicated that he might be forgiven for his bad faith, and his desire to injure those who had endeavored to be kind to him.

When he rose to his feet and returned to the ruins of the castle, his face was wet with tears that he could not suppress.

Monday had been watching him, and he said: "Why you cry, Mast' Harvey?"

Harvey made him no reply.

"Why you let fall tears, sare? Why you kneel down there, and put your face in your hand?" continued Monday.

"You don't understand our religion, Monday," replied Harvey. "That is a grave!"

"Some one dead lie there, sare?"

"Yes, a friend of mine; not much younger than I am."

"How him come to die, sare?"

"Perhaps I killed him. I know not. It was either Jack or myself, but we were fighting in self-defense. It is a sad story, Monday," said Harvey. "We won't dwell upon it. Let us get back to the boat, and go on with the work we have in hand."

Monday held his head down, as if he wished to sympathize with his master's grief, and they slowly retraced their steps to the seaside.

Suddenly they heard a sound like the growling of a mastiff.

Though Harvey had been some months in the archipelago, he did not understand noises made by animals half so well as Monday, who had been bred and born among them.

He was about to advance, when Monday laid his hand upon his arm.

"What in thunder is the row now?" asked Harvey, annoyed at the interruption.

Monday pointed to a clump of trees at one side of them.

"Tiger!" he answered, with an evidence of terror he could not conceal.

"Oh, Jerusalem!" replied Harvey. "I fancy I could whip my weight in wild cats, but tigers are pussies of another color."

They both drew back.

The growling increased in intensity.

Placing his mouth near the ground, the monster's noise reverberated around, until the dreadful roar could be heard for miles.

When the king of the forest is in a passion, every living thing within hearing is stricken with terror, even the birds ceased singing.

No other sound broke the stillness of the air.

Presently the beast emerged from her cover, and Monday declared she could smell human flesh.

She was a magnificent tigress, about four years old, and Harvey could not help admiring her beautifully marked skin, as she walked up and down under a tree, lashing her striped sides with her long tail, which she sometimes threw right over her back.

"I have seen them do that in the Zoo," said Harvey, in a whisper, as if speaking to himself. "That's just how they go on before feeding time. She's getting excited. Softly, my pretty dear; I'm coming."

All at once she stooped the fore part of her body, put her ears back and opened her huge, cavernous mouth.

"Stand close, Monday," cried Harvey.

He leveled his rifle, for he thought she was going to spring.

Monday trembled too much to allow his fire to be of any use.

With his quick eye Harvey saw this, and continued:

"Don't shoot. Hold your gun ready for me, if I don't stop her."

Monday could only nod his head, and Harvey heard his teeth chatter.

He had no time to say more.

Away she flew, making a splendid bound of many feet, eyes flashing, jaws open, paws outstretched.

Harvey took steady aim, and let her have his one barrel full in the chest.

Monday now recovered his presence of mind, and violently pulled his young master on one side.

It was lucky he did so, for the shot did not stop her.

Had he remained where he was, she would have alighted straight upon him, so well had she calculated the distance and her own power of springing.

Seizing Monday's gun, which, unlike the rifle, had two barrels, and was a breech-loader, Harvey fired twice quickly, not daring to take regular aim, and make a "pot shot" of it from the shoulder.

He had dropped his own piece, and the infuriated

creature fell upon it with a plunge, growling over it like a cat with a mouse.

She laid hold of it with her massive teeth, and twisting it as if it had been a straw, broke it in half.

Then she jumped up, staggered a few feet towards Harvey, and fell down dead.

He waited a minute or so, to see if she was really done for, and feeling satisfied that she was past further mischief, walked up to her and fired a revolver into her head.

"That will make sure," he said.

Monday also came up, and began to make faces at the dead tiger, just as if she could understand him.

He danced before her, spit at her, kicked her in the side, and pulled her ears in childish spite.

"What's the caper, now?" asked Harvey. "The beast's dead."

"Tigers, sare, kill many Limbi people," replied Monday. "That's why me frighten. Now I tell her what I think of her."

And he began to abuse her and all her family, especially her father and mother, and her children or her cubs if she had any.

"You're a neat thing, in niggers, to go on like that," exclaimed Harvey, laughing.

"We believe," replied Monday, "that the tiger spirit listen to us. Ah!" he continued, "you old wretch, how many Limbis you eaten—how many Pisang? Your father is a coward, he fly away from a monkey; your mother never fight fair, and your family not worth one pig."

"Shut up," said Harvey. "You can't be such an ass as to think that the tiger can hear you. I thought you

had thrown off your old superstitions. Try and be more sensible."

Monday did not speak any more, but he shook his head, as if he had his own opinion about things in general, and that in particular.

"I should like that skin," continued Harvey. "Set to work and skin the beggar, and look slippery over it."

Monday produced his knife, and soon had the creature's handsome skin off.

He rubbed it with sand to clean it, and Harvey hung it over the side of the boat to dry in the sun.

"If ever we get back safe to Limbi, I'll keep that as a trophy. *Spolia opina*, as Mole would say," remarked Harvey.

Having embarked, they set sail, and by dint of tacking against the wind made fair progress.

Monday declared that he knew his way and that they would reach Pisang before night.

"If you go to sleep again I'll pound you," said Harvey.

"No sleep any more, till land in Pisang, Mast' Harvey," replied Monday.

"Mind you don't, that's all!"

Harvey was dreadfully nervous about Jack.

He feared he was in great peril, for he knew Huston's character, and his influence over the Pisangs.

Jack was an enemy to be got rid of for various reasons.

Nuratella had told the Pisangs that an invasion was thought of, and that Jack was the heart and soul of the Limbians.

Therefore, to kill him and get him out of the way was half the battle.

"Only let me have a slap at them, and I'll give them what for," said Harvey, between his teeth.

The adventure he had embarked in, however, was more hazardous than even he imagined.

It is one of the advantages of being young—or, shall we say, one of the disadvantages—that we do not stop to consider consequences.

Young people usually act upon impulse, and impulsive actions are very often successful.

Monday was right as to the duration of the voyage.

It was not longer than seven hours, and they reached as island, which he declared to be Pisang, before night fell.

Running the boat ashore, Harvey jumped out, and said :

"What's to be done, now?"

Monday did not know.

"I leave all to Mast' Harvey," he said. "Where him go, Monday follow."

"There is such a thing as going into the lion's den, and I don't mean to do that," answered Harvey.

"They have one big town like us," continued Monday; "it call Palembang. Once we have small towns."

"Villages?"

"Yes; but when war come all villages burn, now we all live together. Our town call Tompano, their town Palembang."

"Then there is not much chance of finding anyone in the wilds. Shall we camp in the open, and keep watch and watch, or sleep in the boat?" said Harvey.

Monday could not offer an opinion.

He was not at any time very brilliant, and was rather formed for obeying than leading.

He had come to rescue Harkaway, and would fight for him, but how to set about rescuing him he knew no more than a baby.

"I think," said Harvey, after some reflection, "that we had best camp in the woods, and work our way up to Palembang in the morning. You speak the same language as they do, you are all a species of Malay. Can't you get into the town, and find out what's going on?"

"Yes, sare; Monday do that, though they cut um throat if they catch him."

"But you mustn't allow yourself to be caught; we can't spare you, Monday."

"When um go? Now?" asked the worthy fellow.

"On consideration, no," replied Harvey. "We'll wait for morning, which will come in a few hours, and then we will work our way into the interior."

Hiding the boat as well as they could, they took a good supply of arms and ammunition, and made a camp in the woods, formed of the boughs of trees which they tore down.

"You slept last night; it is my turn now. Though, in fact, we were both in fault," exclaimed Harvey.

"Monday take first watch, sare."

"All right. Keep your weather eye open, and kick me at the slightest sound."

Harvey was soon asleep.

Monday stood with his gun tightly clasped, listening for the least noise with an eagerness that the danger of their position rendered necessary.

He was sorry for his fault the night before, and wished to make amends.

They were in the enemies' country, and the least cessation in vigilance might cost them their lives.

"Monday near eaten once," he said to himself; "no catch and try eat him second time."

They were about two miles inland, and, though they did not know it, they were not more than half a dozen miles from Palembang.

During the day the preparations for hanging Jack were finished.

On the morrow he was to die.

CHAPTER XX.

THE ESCAPE.

We must leave Harvey and his faithful follower in their rude camp, while we return to Harkaway.

The position in which we saw him last was not a pleasant one.

But he had kept up his spirits.

From a short distance the sounds of revelry reached him, and he concluded that the Pisangs were making merry at his approaching death.

Rude songs were being sung, and the sound of musical instruments could be distinguished at intervals.

"They are making a night of it. I should like to have a look at them," he thought. "There is time yet."

Climbing up to the roof, as he had done before, he saw his guard standing in front of his prison door.

Lamps trimmed with palm oil illuminated a large, barnlike building near Hunston's house.

It was from this erection that the noise proceeded.

Jack rightly supposed this to be the council chamber, for it was very similar to the one in Limbi, where the chiefs assembled for the discussion of public business.

One of his guards he recognized as Buru, who had accompanied the Tuan Biza on his first expedition to the island.

The other he had heard addressed as Padang.

Throwing his voice in the direction of the council chamber, he imitated Hunston, and said :

"Buru, it is our wish that you bring the white prisoner before us."

Buru was not at all astonished at this command, and at once proceeded to put it in execution.

Opening the door of the prison, he exclaimed :

"Come with me. You must appear before the council."

"All right," answered Jack. "What is going on?"

"All the chiefs in Pisang sing the song of triumph, because the white man is in their power."

"And a jolly noise they make. Will they give me anything to drink?" asked Jack.

"They have the palm spirit of Pisang, but water is the fare of the condemned," answered Buru.

The guards put themselves on the side of Jack, and conducted him to the council.

He passed through an open door, and found himself in the presence of about fifty chiefs, who were sitting on mats, placed round the side of the hall.

Hunston was at one end, and the Tuan Biza at the other.

Both of them occupied a seat slightly raised above the others, as a token of high rank and precedence.

"How is this?" asked the Tuan Biza.

Hunston was about to ask the same question, when Jack made him say:

"I sent for him, O chief, to make sport of him."

An old chief rose and said:

"It is cowardly to insult the fallen."

"If it is the pleasure of our white friend, why do you, O Wahar, fly in his face?" inquired the Tuan Biza.

The old chief was about to protest that he had not intended to offend, when Jack, imitating his voice, said:

"The white chief is not worthy to be one of us. Let us hang him to-morrow instead of the prisoner."

An indescribable confusion arose at this suggestion, and another chief rose.

But before he could open his mouth, Jack made him exclaim:

"The proposal is good. Let us hang him, and dance over his grave."

The uproar increased.

Making Hunston speak, Jack said:

"The Tuan Biza and his chiefs are old women. What care I for them? I will fight them all single-handed, and give their bodies to the birds, and their wives shall lament them in vain."

"What?" cried the Tuan Biza. "Do you attack me, O Hunstani?" for so they had altered his name. "You dare not come to me and say that I am a woman!"

"Daren't I?" Jack caused Hunston to answer. "You are worse than the timid deer, and your soul is as a reed."

"I have slain my foes in battle," replied the Tuan Biza. "You speak bitterly, O Hunstani, but I have the power to make you eat your words!"

"I laugh at your beard," said Jack, still making Hunston speak. "You shall die, and your grave shall be defiled!"

"This is too much! Give me my spear?" shouted the Tuan Biza.

Changing his tone, Jack threw his voice close to Buru, and made him say:

"The white chief will eat you, O Tuan Biza, for he says truly that your soul is as a reed."

"Oh!" replied the Tuan Biza, "you are against me also? Take that!"

He had seized his spear by this time, and dealt Buru a heavy blow over the head with it.

Now Buru was also a great chief in his own estimation, and he did not like this sort of treatment.

So he retaliated and gave the Tuan Biza a blow with a sort of mallet he carried, and hit him under the ear.

This caused him to roll over and over, uttering dismal cries.

Some friends of the Tuan Biza resented this, and attacked Buru. He was supported by Padang, his companion, and they returned the blows with interest.

Jack jumped on a rude table, and surveyed the scene with satisfaction.

Several chiefs, thinking Hunston the cause of all the mischief, made a charge at him, against which he defended himself with difficulty.

Seeing he was getting roughly handled, Jack made his way to that end of the room, and pulled him into a corner.

The fight had now become general, and the Pisangs were engaged in a hard hand-to-hand fight among themselves.

The jealousy existing at all times among those distinguished warriors was easily excited, and they were only too glad of a quarrel.

During a disturbance of this sort they could pay off old scores.

They had been drinking their palm spirit, and were more or less excited by the songs they had been singing.

Hunston had been disarmed in the conflict, and looked sullenly at Jack, who held before his eyes the knife which Emily had supplied him with.

"You have got this up," said Hunston, "but you cannot escape."

"That's all you know about it," replied Jack; "but don't tremble; I'm not a coward. I might kill you in a stand-up fight, but I shall not harm you now."

CHAPTER XXI.

"NEVER SAY DIE!"

"What did you want to upset the council for? They don't understand your ventriloquism," continued Hunston.

"I was getting dull in that shed place where you shut me up—awfully slow, in fact; and when I heard you fellows enjoying yourselves, and having a bit of a barney, I thought I'd join in, and sing you 'Rule Britannia,' or something lively."

"I shall never have the same influence over the Pisangs again. Look how they are fighting!"

"The Kilkenny cats are nothing to them," Jack remarked.

"Say something and stop them; you can do it!" exclaimed Hunston.

"And get taken back to be hanged. Thank you, no!" replied Jack.

"I'll promise you your life."

"Will you?"

"Yes, I will, indeed."

"What is your promise worth, do you think?" answered Jack, derisively. "You'd tell a bushel of lies for a dollar."

"You must trust me for old acquaintance' sake. Stop the row, and give them a specimen of your ventriloquial powers. It will put them in a good humor."

"You're very kind," Jack said. "Perhaps they'd enjoy the entertainment very much, especially as the show wouldn't cost them anything. But I'm sorry I can't stop."

"Can't stop? What do you mean?" said Hunston, laying his hand on his arm.

"Paws off, Pompey!" cried Jack, angrily. "If you want a domino, just say which eye you would prefer to be temporarily darkened."

"But I say you can't go. You must stop. You're a prisoner," continued Hunston.

Jack's knife flashed before his eyes, and he retreated farther into the corner.

Taking up a lamp which stood near, Jack looked at it.

The wick, made of a bit of dry pitch, floated in the half of a cocoanut filled with oil.

"It will do," he said.

"Do!" repeated Hunston. "Do for what?"

“You’ll see if you live long enough. Thought you were going to hang me, didn’t you?” replied Jack, laughing.

He held the lamp to one side of the council chamber.

It was built entirely of bamboo, which, being as dry as tinder, was exceedingly inflammable.

“You’ll set the place on fire!” exclaimed Hunston, in alarm.

“Just what occurred to me, my pippin; and as the wind is rather high, I shouldn’t wonder if all Palembang was to go to blazes before morning,” Jack answered.

“Help! here, he’s——” began Hunston, when the point of Jack’s knife penetrated the clothes he wore and pricked his breast.

“Do you want to go to kingdom come?” said Jack.

“No,” muttered Hunston, sullenly.

“Then shut up. I don’t want to kill you now; but necessity has no law, and if you utter a sound I will kill you.”

The bamboo framework had by this time caught fire, and the flames began to spread with a loud crackling noise.

Those Pisangs who had been fighting were getting tired of the amusement.

The elder chiefs, who had been trying to pacify the combatants, were beginning to succeed in their efforts.

“Good-by,” said Jack.

“You shan’t go! I’ll——”

Jack looked for a moment as if he was going to use his knife.

But he put it in his belt, and, clinching his fists, let Hunston have what he called “one, two.”

Hunston fell back half-stunned before Jack's sledge-hammer fists.

His hat fell off, and Jack took it up and put it on. It was made of straw and it had a conical shape.

“Rummy sort of tile,” mused Jack, “but I suppose it is a badge of distinction, or something. I'll sport it, and they may take me for him; not that I shall be flattered at the mistake, only it may help me to make tracks.”

The flames had made incredible progress in the few minutes that had elapsed since Jack set fire to the bamboo framework with the lamp.

“They'd better call out the engines and send for the fire escape,” Jack said to himself, indulging in that dry humor which he could not resist even in the hour of extreme danger.

The thick smoke and the crackling of the fire alarmed everyone.

In an instant the din ceased, the uproar had subsided, and the men who had been struggling together in a sort of Irish row, looked blankly at one another.

Jack passed quickly among the crowd.

They raised a cry of “Fire! fire!” and ran hither and thither wildly.

A panic had seized them.

Suddenly Hunston, who had picked himself up, shouted, in a commanding voice, which trembled with rage:

“Guard the door! The prisoner has done this! Let him not escape!”

Cries of “Guard the door!” “The white prisoner!” “Death to the prisoner!” arose on all sides.

"It's getting hot," said Jack to himself. "I wasted precious time with that beast, Hunston."

The smoke grew thicker, and obscured the feeble light of the oil lamps, many of which had been extinguished in the scuffle.

This dimness was much in his favor.

It was at the door itself where the real peril lay.

There Buru and some others, including the Tuan Biza, whose faces presented the appearance of so many crushed tomatoes, had congregated.

"Now for it!" exclaimed Jack, as he was within a few paces of the door. "Never say die!"

CHAPTER XXII.

A C R O S S T H E B R I D G E .

It had not been Jack's hope or intention to escape when he determined to visit the council.

The idea was suggested by his natural daring and love of fun.

He thought it would create a sensation of some sort, and give him an opportunity; which it had done.

How he would be able to avail himself of that opportunity was another thing.

So far he had succeeded beyond his expectations.

He had got up ill blood between Hunston and his savage friends.

The Tuan Biza and the other chiefs had engaged in a dreadful riot, which had resulted in more than one broken head.

Hunston had been "chaffed and punched," as Jack said, when he was reckoning up the damage afterwards.

And to crowd all, the council chamber was in flames, the chiefs in frantic terror, and only a few cool hands guarding the door in obedience to Hunston's ill-timed summons.

Such was the situation of affairs.

Up to the present time Jack had decidedly the best of it.

One of Buru's eyes was rapidly closing, and the other wasn't of much use.

But he had heard Hunston's voice, and with native cunning guessed that the prisoner had set the place on fire, hoping to escape in the inevitable hubbub that would ensue.

"If," he argued, "Hunston is at one end of the council chamber, he can't be at the other."

He did not believe that even a white chief, clever though he might be, could be in two places at one time.

So Jack's conical hat did not impose upon him.

Imitating Hunston's voice again, Jack said, as he reached the door :

"Let me out, my good Buru. I am Hunston, the white chief."

"You are the prisoner," replied Buru. "Yield yourself to me."

Jack's only reply was to draw his knife, and plunge it up to the hilt in his body.

Buru fell without a sound.

The Pisangs saw the deed committed and were silent for a moment through terror and amazement.

But an instant afterwards a dozen spears were leveled

at him, and half as many ugly-looking clubs aimed at his head.

Cutting right and left with his knife, he backed through the crowd.

He reached the burning portion of the apartment, which was fringed by an eager knot of spectators.

The wall was nearly burned through, and the roof had fallen in.

Fierce cries assailed him, and if he hesitated he was lost.

Hunston made a snatch at him, hoping to hold him fast till he could get assistance.

But Jack threw him off, saying, "You didn't do it that time, old boy!" and dashed boldly into the burning space and falling timber.

With a wild plunge he dashed through the hole in the wall, and, half-blinded, half-suffocated, found himself outside.

The air was cool and refreshing.

At present the alarm of the fire had not spread, and the inhabitants of Palembang were sleeping in fancied security.

His hair was singed, and his hat was on fire.

This he cast from him as a useless encumbrance, and taking one look at the burning building, ran at full speed up the street.

When his enemies had recovered from their surprise, they rushed through the open door, and gave chase.

Hunston was at their head.

"After him!" he cried. "He will take to the woods. After him! He cannot escape. Brave will be the chief who takes his head, and all the women of Palembang will smile upon him."

Jack's form could be clearly seen in the moonlight.

The pursuers halted at the extremity of the town, satisfied that they knew the direction the fugitive had taken.

They held a brief conversation, which resulted in twelve chiefs, with Hunston in command, being told off to pursue the runaway.

The rest returned to the burning council chamber, to assist in putting out the fire, which had assumed formidable dimensions.

No sooner had Jack reached the open ground than he turned round, and skirted the town to throw the Pisangs off the scent.

They would imagine that he would go straight on, and he might gain a secure shelter in the woods.

As he moderated his pace and went round the town, he could hear the cries of the affrighted populace.

Gongs were beaten in every direction.

Dense clouds of smoke and bright flashes of flame showed him that the fire, driven by the wind, had seized on other dwellings, and was making great havoc and devastation.

"It's as good as burning out a wasp's nest," he remarked.

For more than two hours he ran without halting.

It was his impression that when those who followed him found themselves at fault they would return to the burning town.

Three separate parties of explorers would be formed, and dispatched in various directions.

When day broke, he had reached a dense forest, and feeling tired, he climbed into a tree to enjoy a little rest.

Lashing himself with his handkerchief to a bough, he closed his eyes.

For some time he could not go to sleep, owing to the sharp hiss of the serpents and the dread cries of the wild beasts.

He thought with horror of Sinbad the Sailor when in a similar position.

Sinbad had two companions with him, and they were lower down in a tree.

On the first night a huge snake climbed up, and dragged down one of the men.

Would the snakes of this island attempt to gratify their appetites in a similar manner?

"No serpent shall land me," he said to himself. "I'll sleep with one eye open."

But at length exhausted nature had its way, and he slept soundly.

Not for long, however.

He was awake before the sun had acquired any considerable power, and unlapping himself, he descended the tree.

All nature was smiling under the grateful night dew and the cheering sun's rays.

He pushed on slowly through the forest, not daring to retrace his steps.

His only hope was to subsist in the jungle as best he might until his friends from Limbi had come over and captured the island, if they could succeed in doing so.

He felt sure that Harvey was doing his utmost for him.

But he did not suspect the length to which Harvey's devotion had led him.

Nor did he even faintly imagine that he and Monday were at that very time on the island.

"Dick won't desert me," he thought. "Dick will stick to me like a leech. That's one comfort."

He was in high spirits as he slowly trudged along through the dense underwood.

To have outwitted the Pisangs, bearded Hunston among his friends, and set the town of Palembang on fire was no slight achievement.

Suddenly he felt a peculiar smarting and itching sensation at the ankle.

Looking down, he found his socks stained with blood.

Turning them down, he saw both ankles perfectly fringed with little insects like leeches, which had filled themselves till they were ready to burst.

Some of the bloodsuckers had even crawled down to his foot, and made an incision which allowed the blood to trickle through his shoe.

Jack had heard of these annoying and disquieting pests from Monday.

Sometimes the stinging worms would drop from the leaves of the trees upon the heads and into the necks of those who pass under them.

It was almost unendurable to think that they were lancing him and sucking out his blood.

However, he knocked them off as well as he could, and traveled onwards.

At length he came to a river which ran through a ravine, the rocky bottom of which churned its impetuous waters into foam.

Cautiously making his way by the side of the rocky channel, Jack pushed along in a listless manner.

He wished to find a cave in which he could rest, with

a few palms in the vicinity to supply him with cocoanuts.

He had not gone far before he came to a hanging bridge, which was thrown across the ravine.

On each side was a road, if an ordinary clearing in the forest might be dignified with that name.

It was a suspension bridge of rattan; at the middle it rested on the tops of tall trees, which grew up from a small island in the torrent below.

It was constructed by stretching across these large rattans.

On these narrow slips of board were placed and fastened at each end; other rattans starting from the ground on the bank, passed above the branches of high camphor trees that grew on the edge of the chasm in which the torrent flowed; descending from these branches in a sharp curve, they rose again steeply at the farther end of the bridge.

From these rattans were fastened other rattans below them, just as in our own suspension bridges, and thus all parts were made to aid in supporting the weight.

As it was so light, it vibrated and shook terribly when anyone ventured to cross it.

Jack had been told of these bridges, of which there are several in the islands, and had been cautioned against grasping the side, lest it might swing over and cast him in the abyss.

The difficulty in crossing this bridge, which was flexible as a manila rope, was so great because it oscillated from left to right, and its whole floor did not move in one piece, but like a series of rolling waves.

"I don't think I'll venture across that," said Jack.

"But I'll go down the rocks if I can manage it, and have a drink of water."

As he was speaking, he heard a loud shout behind him.

The next moment an arrow buried itself in a tree close to him.

He looked round, and saw a party of Pisangs, probably forming one of the divisions that had been sent out to search for him.

Now he blamed himself for his folly in not remaining hidden.

He could not have acted more foolishly than exposing himself to view on one of the few public roads in the island.

To retreat into the forest, was to court instant death or capture.

The road was blocked.

The sides of the ravine were just there almost perpendicular, and impossible of descent.

If he would escape, there was nothing for it but a bold attempt to cross the dangerous bridge.

Without any further hesitation, he got on the bridge, with a hurried walk, which he hoped would break up the rolling motion.

It was nearly four hundred feet long.

Having got halfway across the first span, he saw that one of the crossboards, on which he was in the act of placing his foot, had become loose, and slipped on to one side.

He drew back, for had he gone on carelessly, he must have fallen through, and been dashed to pieces on the rocks below.

Stopping instantly, he stood still, and the bridge swung to and fro, as if it was being purposely shaken.

The Pisangs continued to fire arrows at him, but the motion of the bridge interfered with the correctness of their aim.

Going on again, he reached the center, and reconnoitered his enemies.

One Pisang, more adventurous than the rest, was following him.

"Wait a bit!" said Jack, between his teeth.

He had gained confidence now, and crossed the remaining half at a quick run, hiding himself behind a tree when on land.

The Pisangs shouted to one another, and flattered themselves that their prey was not far off.

When the whole five were together, on the second half, Jack slashed away with his knife at the supports of rattan.

Three or four parted, and the remaining ones, unable to support the weight, snapped with a loud, sharp crack, like the report of a pistol.

The large rattans that supported the sides, and went over the high branches of the camphor trees, had parted.

Then the bridge gave a fearful lurch, and finally the whole structure fell with a crash into the boiling torrent.

Fearful cries arose from the poor wretches thus hurled into eternity, but Jack smiled grimly, for it was their lives or his, and again he had triumphed.

His exultation was premature, however.

Straight in front of him he saw five more Pisangs, who were attracted by the cries of their countrymen.

They hurried forward, but all was still.

Probably the party had divided, one half crossing the bridge, the other, which had perished, remaining behind.

They peered down the sides of the ravine, and talked hurriedly among themselves.

One, more curious than the rest, examined the rat-tans, and saw that they had been cut with a knife.

He pointed this out to his companions.

Yells of fury arose, and Jack, who was gently stealing off along the road, was perceived.

Instantly a hue and cry was raised.

"Now for it!" thought Jack, as he scuttled along the road. "I must step out, or make up my mind to be cooked for dinner, and eaten without salt."

He had a slight start, but it was a question whether or not he would keep it.

His pursuers made the woods echo again with their savage outcries.

Jack's training in hare-and-hounds, at Mr. Crawcour's academy for young gentlemen, stood him in good stead now.

It was a race for life.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE RACE FOR LIFE.

As the Pisangs knew the road and the country so much better than he did, Jack was afraid to take refuge in the forest again.

He ran on at the top of his speed, not daring to turn

round to look how the chase progressed, lest he should lose time.

No arrows were fired at him; no spears thrown.

Either the Pisangs had received orders to bring him back alive, or they would not stop to adjust their bows, or hurl their spears.

It scarcely could be that they had regard for his life, or an arrow would not have been shot at him when he was bent on his perilous journey across the bridge.

Good runnet as he was, he had not gone more than three or four miles before he felt his strength failing him.

Jack's head grew dizzy, and his legs seemed to drag one after the other.

The wound inflicted upon him when captured had caused him to lose blood.

This would create weakness, and even vertigo, if compelled to undergo unwonted exertion.

For some hours he had not had anything to eat and drink.

He was also running under a hot sun, which made the perspiration pour from him in streams. All this told against him.

The Pisangs had nothing to impede the free exercise of their limbs.

He had.

Therefore he was at an additional disadvantage.

"I'm coppered," was Jack's mental exclamation.

He turned round and saw the pursuers had him well in hand—three in front, two behind.

They had never once lost sight of him.

On they came; bodies a little inclined forward, elbows pressed into the side, legs going like machines.

"They've got the wind of a bellows," Jack said, with a groan. "I shouldn't care if I had anything to fight with."

Like the stag, hunted to the extremity of his endurance, he turned round, faced his pursuers, and stood at bay.

"I'll die with my eyes open," he exclaimed; "at least I'll see what kills me, and how it's done. It'll be a comfort to know the *modus operandi*."

When the Pisangs saw that he did not run any farther, they halted, also.

The foremost made signs that they wanted to speak, and Jack said that he was listening.

"Are you armed?" asked the Pisang.

"No; you can see I'm not. I shouldn't have cut and run if I had had anything to fight with," exclaimed Jack. "That was why I heaved anchor."

"O white chief," continued the Pisang, "come back with us to the ruins of our city, for Palembang is now in ashes."

"That's a blessing, only it will make the beggars more savage," said Jack.

"You must die the death that has been decided on; I can hold out no hope of mercy, but I doubt not you will die like a brave man."

"That depends upon circumstances. What is this particularly pleasant death?"

"It is the punishment of the stake. Every warrior in Pisang will be entitled to cut off a piece of your flesh, about an inch square in size, till all the flesh is gone and nothing but bones remain."

"Thank you, then I shan't come," said Jack, in his usual careless manner.

The Pisang raised his bow.

"You can tell them I am much obliged for their kind invitation, but I have a previous appointment in another direction. I hope to enjoy the pleasure another time."

"The white chief cannot escape; his Pisang enemy will shoot him down and carry him wounded to the city," replied the warrior.

"Let fly," exclaimed Jack, impatiently; "perhaps I can dodge you, after all."

He remembered his knife, and prepared to dash forward and close with his assailants, so as to perish, as it were, sword in hand.

The Pisang did not waste any further time in talk.

He drew his bow to its utmost capacity of tension.

The arrow quivered on the string.

Suddenly there was a loud report, and the Pisang, struck with a leaden messenger of death, fell heavily forward on his face.

Three other reports made themselves heard, and as many Pisangs fell; and the fifth, stricken with a deadly terror, plunged into the tangled depths of the forest and was seen no more.

Jack could scarcely bring himself to believe in the evidence of his senses.

Guns in Pisang, and people to fire them; and what is more, to fire them on his behalf!

The age of miracles was come back again.

"If that isn't Dick's doings," he muttered, "it must be something that rhymes with Dick, and that's Old Nick."

Just then two forms emerged from some dense brushwood.

One was Harvey, and the other Monday.

Advancing towards Jack, they shook him cordially by the hand.

Monday danced and capered about in the wildest glee.

Jack was too much affected to be able to speak for some seconds.

"Well, my cockalorum, how goes it?" exclaimed Harvey.

"Dick," replied Harkaway, "how you managed it I don't know, but you came up just in time to save my life, and I'm deeply grateful for it."

"Don't say anything about that, old fellow," answered Harvey. "I'm modestly inclined, and don't like to be praised."

"I was dead beat; a four-mile run in this climate is a pipe-opener, I can tell you, and it was six to four on the niggers."

"I knew you'd want me, and that's why I came."

"Have you landed in force?" asked Jack.

"No; Monday and I are alone."

"Have you ventured, all by yourselves, into the enemies' country for my sake?" asked Jack, deeply moved.

"Why not? You don't think we came to explore the beauties of Pisang, in the interests of high art, do you?"

"Not exactly; but it is more than I had a right to expect."

"It is not. You had a right to expect that we should do everything we could for you," returned Harvey; "and as the bloated old Limbi chief wasn't ready, we put on steam and started. If you'd sent us a telegram we should have made a move sooner."

"There is such a thing as electricity of the heart, Dick; and I think our hearts spoke to one another," said Jack Harkaway.

"Very likely; I dreamed about you, and I thought you wanted me. Didn't I, Mon?" said Harvey.

"Yes, sare. You say 'Go to Mast' Jack. He in much big danger,' and so we come," replied the black.

"You arrived in the nick of time. I was done up—regularly licked."

"Tell us all about it. What have you done?"

"I've seen Emily, and made it all square with her," replied Jack. "I've cheeked Hunston, and got up a small Donnybrook Fair in the council chamber. I've been the death of six Pisangs and I've burnt Palembang to the ground."

"By George, Jack, you're a wonder! Explain all this to me," said Harvey, in astonishment.

"I will directly. It was more of a fluke, after all, than anything else; but just now I'm like a parched pea. Can you lay your hands on any civilized or uncivilized sort of grub?"

"Certainly we can. Our boat is hidden not far off, and we have a few odds and ends in her. I'm not exactly a French *chef*, or a sea-cook, but I can rig you up a good breakfast."

"Fire away, then. If it's boiled snake, I'm on, like a hundred bricks," replied Jack.

Harvey gave Jack his arm, for he trembled violently and needed support.

They walked to the shore, where the boat was concealed, and were quickly engaged in discussing an excellent breakfast, when we consider the materials they had to work with.

A kettle was boiled and some tea made from some of the Hyson found on board the wreck.

This was very grateful and cheering.

After he had satisfied his appetite and gained the strength he stood so much in need of Jack related his adventures to Harvey.

"By Jove!" replied the latter, "you had a closer shave than even I imagined."

"I saw Hunston meant it," answered Jack, "and that put me more on my mettle."

"You are all right now, thank goodness; and the best thing we can do is to jump on board and set sail for Limbi," remarked Harvey.

"No," replied Jack, shortly.

"What!" cried Harvey, in astonishment; "do you want to stop here?"

"That's precisely what I mean to do."

"Are you mad?"

"I don't think so. All I want from you, Dick, is a rifle and a few charges of powder and shot."

"But, think a bit; the Pisangs will have you, it's a moral. You've burnt their city, and they'll swarm all over the place after you."

"I'll chance it. We can but die once."

Harvey reflected a moment.

"The Limbians won't be here for a day or two. You know what slow coaches they are as well as I do," he exclaimed.

"I've got work to do here, Dick."

"What work?"

"Can't you guess?" asked Jack.

"No, hang me if I can!" replied Harvey.

"Then I will tell you. But, first of all, give me an-

other half-cocoanutful of that Souchong, or whatever it is."

Harvey did so, and Jack proceeded to drink the tea with calm enjoyment.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE STRATAGEM.

The sun was now rising high in the heavens.

Jack began to get merry.

"I'll trouble you, Mr. Monday," he said, "for another of those dried fish. They're not equal to bloaters, but they're not bad."

"Um dried fish, sare? Yes, sare, very fine," replied Monday.

"I didn't ask you for your opinion; the fish is quite sufficient. You can dry up," answered Jack.

Harvey was dying with impatience to know what Jack's intentions were, though the latter did not show any signs of being in a hurry to gratify his curiosity.

"Fine day," said Jack, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, in the absence of a pocket handkerchief.

"What's the use of telling a fellow that, when it always is fine here?" answered Harvey.

"Don't ruffle your feathers, Dick! As I'm going to stop in the island, I like to study the signs of the weather."

"What are you going to stay for?"

"Can't you guess?"

"I've told you I can't, once," replied Harvey. "I never was good at riddles as a kid."

"But you're not a kid now, and you ought to have improved. Why does a miller wear a white hat?"

"To keep his head warm, I suppose."

"Exactly," replied Jack. "That shows you're not quite a Simple Simon."

Harvey looked angry, and, pressing his lips together, remained silent.

"Dick, you've lost something," exclaimed Jack, quickly.

"Have I? What?" asked Harvey.

"Only your tongue, that's all. You're sulking because I won't speak fast enough for you. Did they tease the poor old boy?" cried Jack, coaxingly.

"Go on; I don't mind," replied Harvey.

"Forgive me, Dick. I feel so jolly at getting away from those Pisangs that I must chaff or die," exclaimed Jack, in a good-natured voice. "You would if you were me."

"So I should, Jack. I'm not angry."

"It's so freezingly delightful—that's the phrase out here—to have licked the skunks that I can't help exuberating."

"That's a big word," said Harvey, smiling.

"Big word suits the occasion," answered Jack; "and now I'll tell you why I want to stay here. Emily is in the hands of the Pisangs; and, what is worse, in the power of that brute Hunston, who is a Pisang double distilled."

"I see. Don't say any more, Jack. I was an unfeeling wretch not to think of that before," Harvey hastened to say.

"I don't want you to stay," continued Jack. "We may be Damon and Pythias, but it would be too much to ask you to play the part of Pythias to empty boxes."

"No, it wouldn't; and the boxes wouldn't be empty, for my heart and my conscience are big enough to fill the house."

"Close the show," exclaimed Jack. "You're a good sort; you're a trump, and you shall help me to rescue Emily."

"Or die in the attempt."

"Good again, Dick; they've got to kill us, though, now we have these little popguns," and Jack handled the rifle and revolver which Monday had given him, looking at them affectionately.

"Monday help, too, rescue Missey Em'ly," cried Monday.

"So you shall. All hands are welcome," replied Jack.

"You should have seen Monday's get-up before we left Linibi; there was a wreck—all the crew dead, and we had the first overhaul," exclaimed Harvey.

"What did he do?" asked Jack.

"Togged himself out till he was quite nobby, didn't you, Mon?"

"Never mind," replied Monday; "me show Mast' Jack one of these days. All very fine, make fun of poor Monday; him know what him do know."

"Don't be riled, Prince Matabella," continued Harvey; "you shall sport your things when we get back again."

Monday retired to pack up the remains of the breakfast, and from the way in which he talked to himself in his own language, he did not seem very well pleased

at the ridicule Harvey cast upon his newly acquired European clothes.

To him, his attire was simply perfect.

It whipped that of his young masters altogether, and threw Mr. Mole's rather shabby dress quite into the shade.

"You say you have seen Emily?" observed Harvey.

"Yes, I did enjoy that happiness, but not for long, and under very trying circumstances," replied Jack.

"I should have liked to see you stir up the chiefs in Palembang; what a lark it must have been."

"It wasn't all fun. I must confess I was in a dismal mood all the time."

"What do you think of doing about Emily?" asked Harvey.

"I fancy," replied Jack, "that, as the city is burned down, they will all be up a tree—that is to say, camped out anywhere, and in the confusion we might make a dash."

"Just like a man-of-war's boat cutting out an armed vessel in harbor."

"Something of that sort," answered Jack.

"When shall you try it on?"

"To-morrow. I'm so knocked out of time that I must sleep all day."

"I'll join you. Suppose we sleep under this tree and leave Monday to watch?" said Harvey.

"That's the idea," replied Jack. "Call him; I'm so beastly tired, and can't raise my voice."

"Monday," cried Harvey. "You're wanted."

"What um want him for, Mast' Harvey?" asked Monday.

"We're going to recruit exhausted nature; in other

words, to sleep, and you must keep a good lookout. If you don't——”

“What then, sare?”

“We'll get some chemical stuff and turn you white.”

“He! he!” laughed Monday. “You have um joke, Mast' Harvey.”

“You'll find it no joke when you're all cream and no chocolate. So keep your eyes open and stick something under your eyelids.”

Monday promised to exercise the greatest vigilance, and there was some necessity for it.

The Pisangs were evidently swarming about the island in pursuit of Jack.

A party might discover them, and if no watch was kept they would be surprised before they could use their guns.

In a very short time Jack and Harvey were fast asleep.

They had every confidence in Monday.

The latter stood near the trunk of the tree, rifle in hand, revolver in his belt, and looked searchingly by turns in every direction.

“Monday like to see um Pisang take him in,” he muttered. “Monday smell um Pisang mile off.”

A couple of hours passed, and the heat of the day was at its height.

Monday, like all the other natives of the islands, owned the power of the sun at this particular time.

He felt drowsy, and had the greatest difficulty in keeping himself awake.

His eyes closed, and he was aroused in a short time by a slight noise.

A large monkey of the ourang-outang species had

crept up, and was hurrying off with his rifle, which he had placed against a tree.

He did not like to take Jack's or Harvey's, for they had put them under their heads, to be ready at a moment's notice.

If he touched them he should wake them.

So he followed the monkey.

It went slowly into the forest, and Monday, not caring to go into the jungle after it, drew a revolver from his belt and fired.

The monkey threw up his ungainly arms and fell upon its back.

Monday advanced to gain possession of his rifle, and was astonished to find the skin fall off.

A full-grown Pisang was revealed to his view.

It was a disguise.

As he stooped to take possession of his rifle half a dozen strong hands seized him.

He had fallen into a trap.

The Pisang who had assumed the disguise had paid the penalty with his life.

But he had enabled his companions to succeed in their enterprise.

Almost before he could realize the fact Monday was strongly bound.

He cast his eyes towards Jack and Harvey, and found that a score of dusky figures were busily engaged in securing them.

They had been surprised while they slept.

"Hullo," cried Jack, as he felt himself strongly grasped. "What's this?"

"Monday—Monday!" cried Harvey.

"You may go through all the days in the week, and it won't help you," said a voice in his ear.

He looked up.

"Hunston!" he ejaculated.

"Yes, my boy. We've been one too many for you," said Hunston, with a malevolent laugh.

Monday was marched up to the spot where his young masters were safely bound.

He hung down his head and was ashamed to speak.

"This is your fault," said Harvey, angrily.

"They come one dodge over Monday, Mast' Harvey. Him think it um monkey and shoot, but then it too late," replied Monday.

"It's no good howling," said Jack. "We're copped, and there's an end of it."

"I'm glad to see you bear it with resignation," rejoined Hunston. "When I set out after you I did not expect to make such a haul as this."

"Didn't it burn well? It was a proper flare-up. I mean Palembang," said Jack, smiling.

"You'll suffer all the more for it, and we can make another gallows, big enough for the three of you," answered Hunston.

Jack laughed again.

"You'll laugh on the wrong side of your face soon," said Hunston.

"Not I," answered Jack; "I haven't got a wrong side. I leave that sort of thing to you. I can't help laughing when I see you."

"Let them laugh who win," replied Hunston, savagely.

He spoke a few words to his attendants, and the

Pisangs placed themselves in a triple line round the captives.

Their legs were free, though their arms were tightly bound behind their backs.

Hunston took their revolvers from them and placed them in his own belt.

The rifle he told the Pisangs to carry.

"March!" he cried.

The party moved forward, going towards the interior.

"Cheer up, Dick," said Harkaway.

"I'm all right," said Harvey. "Only I can't help thinking that Monday——"

"Don't bully the poor beggar. They had him just as they might have had you or me. It was a dodge," interrupted Jack.

"Silence, there! No talking," cried Hunston.

"Who are you when you're at home?" asked Jack, with his usual impudence.

Hunston, delighted to have a pistol again, flourished it in his face.

"Shut up," he said, "or I'll let you know."

"Will you?"

"Yes, and I'll pistol the first who disobeys my orders. Silence! March!"

The prisoners moved on again, and not a word was spoken.

"Don't rile him," whispered Harvey. "It is as well to bide our time."

Jack made no reply, but his pale face and compressed lips showed that evil thoughts were passing through his mind.

He regretted now that he had not killed Hunston the night before, when he had the chance.

But the chance was gone.

It was too late to think of that now.

CHAPTER XXV.

GRIN AND BEAR IT.

The captives were placed in the midst of a guard, and the procession, if such it can be called, started for the ruins of Palembang.

Jack, Harvey and Monday were together, their arms being bound behind them.

"It's all your fault, Monday," said Jack, with just the least tinge of anger in his tone.

"How on earth he could be such an ass I don't know," said Harvey.

"Monday one fool," said the black. "Him deserve to be eaten."

"Perhaps they'll do it," replied Harvey; "only they may prefer white meat first, worst luck!"

"I don't know how the deuce to get out of this scrape," remarked Jack. "I shouldn't care so much for myself. It's you and Monday I am worrying about. If you could get away, Dick——"

"Leave thee, leave thee, lad;
I'll never leave thee,"

said Harvey, quoting the words of an old Scotch song.

"I know you're a brick, and you'll stand to your

guns as long as anybody," said Jack. "But hang me if I can help being riled at this turn-up. It oughtn't to have happened."

Hunston was not far off, and, hearing voices, he came up to the captives.

"No talking there," he said. "I don't permit it."

"You can't well stop it unless you gag us," answered Jack.

"Can't I? We'll see about that. What do you suppose you are going to do?"

"Grin and bear it," said Jack, with a laugh.

"That's what you'll have to do, until you're strung up," said Hunston.

"You said that before, and yet you didn't do it."

Hunston gnashed his teeth with rage.

"Perhaps I shall have better luck next time," he said. "I've got you safe enough now."

"Didn't Palembang burn finely, and didn't I set your chiefs milling like steam?"

"Don't cheek me. If you do, you'll find yourself in the wrong box, I can tell you," said Hunston, angrily.

"You can tie my arms, but you can't stop my tongue, unless you've got a gag," said Jack.

"Can't I! What does that taste like?" was Hunston's answer.

He hit Harkaway in the face with all his might, and, as Jack could not use his arms to steady himself, he fell backwards.

The blood streamed from his nose, and he was a good deal hurt.

"That's plucky," he said.

"Do you want another?" asked Hunston.

"You can pitch in as long as you like to be coward."

enough. I can't stop you," replied Jack. "But just untie my arms, and I'll give you toko for yam, my boy!"

"Get up."

"I shan't. You knocked me down, and you may pick me up, or ask some of your niggers to do it."

"Not likely," said Hunston. "If you don't get up, I'll kick you till you do. How would you like a toe in the ribs?"

He suited the action to the word, and Jack contrived in some way to get on his feet.

"All right, Mister Tuan Biza Hunston," he said. "I'll be one with you before long."

"You won't have the chance," said Hunston.

"You can't tell that. I've spared you once or twice, but the next time—if ever it does come—it will be a case of a tombstone, with something written on it."

"What?"

"Oh, something like this: 'Here lies Harry Hunston, the biggest blackguard who ever disgraced the name of Englishman.' "

"You dare to say this to me?" cried Hunston, frantically.

"Why shouldn't I? Do you want to give me another nose-ender? Do it if you like; you are cock now, and I'm only a hen."

"Wait till you dance on nothing, and then you'll alter your tone."

"Think so?" said Jack, beginning to whistle "The Night Before Larry Was Stretched."

Going up to Harvey, Hunston said:

"Walk on with me. I want to talk to you."

"All right," said Harvey.

They separated themselves from the other prisoners and went on a little ahead.

"I've no particular ill feeling towards you," continued Hunston, in a slightly embarrassed manner, "though you were always a friend of Harkaway's."

"I'm not ashamed of it. Jack and I are like brothers," said Harvey.

"You won't be long, for Harkaway will be as dead as a doornail before this time to-morrow."

"And I?"

"Your fate depends upon yourself. I am all-powerful with the Pisangs, though I do not think my influence would suffice to save Harkaway, even were I disposed to try."

"Why not?" asked Harvey.

"The chiefs are so ashamed of being humbugged by him last night, and they are enraged as well at the burning of Palembang. He set the place on fire, and there is scarcely a house left standing. All the people are camped out."

"Can't they be generous to an enemy?"

"They don't understand the word," replied Hunston, "but you I can save. They will be content with torturing and hanging Harkaway and that black Limbian thief of a servant you've got."

"Monday?"

"I do not know what you call him."

"Oh! he's harmless enough. Show yourself a man for once, Hunston, and let us all go free. We will undertake not to molest you any more."

"Can't be done at the price, my boy. There is an old score between Harkaway and myself, which must

be rubbed out this time, and I would not spare him if I could."

"If that is all you have to tell me, you might have saved me the pain of listening to it," said Harvey, in a tone of disgust.

"It is not all."

"Let me go back to Jack. I don't care about the society of a butcher."

"Who's a butcher?"

"You are, and an inhuman brute into the bargain. I will say it, if you kill me for it. You are not so good as a butcher, by a long chalk."

"Take care," exclaimed Hunston, with a savage, vindictive glance in his snake-like eye. "I repeat that I don't wish to harm you. Listen to me. I feel rather lonely among the Pisangs, having no one to talk to, except Emily."

"And her father?"

"He is dead."

"How was that?"

"She swears I did it; but I didn't want the fool to kick the bucket. He insulted me, and I had him publicly flogged with bamboos, and I suppose his constitution couldn't stand it, though I only ordered him to receive two hundred strokes."

"Why, it's barbarous!" said Harvey.

"At all events," resumed Hunston, "it knocked old Scratchley off his perch, and Emily hates me like bricks for it. So, you see, I want a chum."

"You've got your Pisang chief," said Harvey.

"No good at all. I could cut a better chum out of a cocoanut than any of them would make. You be my friend, Harvey, and you shall not die."

"What!" replied Dick, with a feeling of loathing and horror. "I chum with you?"

"Why not?"

"After what you've just told me—after your vindictive hatred to Jack—your flogging old Scratchley to death—and your determination to make the daughter marry the murderer of her father, whether she will or not?"

"You put it rather strongly," said Hunston, cowering beneath the withering look Harvey gave him.

"Not a bit too strong," answered Harvey.

"Do you consent?"

"Consent? I should think not; indeed, I'd die a thousand deaths first. You won't catch me buying my life at such a price. I'd rather chum with a burglar. The most desperate convict is a greater gentleman than you."

"Die, then!" replied Hunston, savagely. "You're a bigger fool than I took you to be."

"If I had my hands loose I'd punch your ugly head for insulting me by such an offer," cried Harvey.

"Don't provoke me too far," said Hunston, "or I'll serve you as I did Scratchley."

Harvey turned round and walked away without giving him any answer.

Hunston was mad with rage.

Speaking in the native language, he cried: "Halt!"

Instantly the Phangs stopped and looked to their leader for orders.

"Two of you seize that fellow," Hunston went on; "strip him and tie him to a palm tree. Two more of you break off a couple of long bamboos and give him

twenty cuts as hard as you can lay them on. Twenty from each of you."

In an instant Harvey was seized and tightly bound with thick rattans, his jacket and shirt stripped off and his back laid bare.

"I'll teach you to cheek me, my hearty," said Hunston, smiling bitterly. "I'm king here, and you shall know it."

Harvey made no answer, feeling that it would be of no use to appeal to his tormentor.

There was nothing for it, as Jack had said, but to "grin and bear it."

Nevertheless, he gnashed his teeth angrily and waited with a sinking feeling at his heart for the first strokes of the supple bamboos.

He was not kept long in suspense.

"Whish! whish!" They came with a sound like a hiss through the yielding air, and his back felt as if some one was stripping off the skin with a sharp knife.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MONDAY'S DODGE.

If Hunston expected to have the triumph of hearing his victim howl and cry for mercy, he was disappointed.

He bore the infliction bravely.

At times low wailing moans escaped him, which were wrung from him by the severity of the pain.

But that was all; and when they cast him loose, after giving him the last cut, he trembled violently, while they

dressed him again, and then rejoined Jack, who, powerless to help him, had looked on with frantic rage.

"Did I bear it well?" asked Harvey, in a whisper.

"Like a trump. Never mind, Dick; I hope it's only lent. We'll pay him back again before long. What was it for?"

"He offered me my life if I'd be his friend, and I told him to go to Jericho," answered Harvey.

"Did he say anything about me?"

"Yes. You're a gone coon. Your case is past praying for; but now we're both tarred with the same brush, and I suppose the cowardly brute will have it all his own way."

"Perhaps Mole and the Limbians will come soon."

"They will come," replied Harvey; "of that I'm certain; but the mischief is, they may come too late. How my back burns!"

"I should think so. I'll ask Hunston if his fellows have got any oil," said Jack, who added, aloud: "Hunston!"

"What is it?" was the reply.

"May your men rub some oil on Harvey's back?"

"Not a drop."

"You are torturing him," said Jack, whose face flushed angrily.

"Just what I want to do. You don't suppose I had him flogged for nothing, do you? And you'd best shut up, or I'll give you a dose of it. Tell him he'll be out of his misery to-morrow," answered Hunston, with a laugh.

Jack was about to make some reply, when Harvey touched his sleeve.

"Don't," he said; "it's no use. You might as well

talk to a stone wall; and I shouldn't like you to get it as well as me."

Much against his will, Harkaway remained silent.

"You're right. We must bide our time, though I should like to have five minutes' play with my fists with him in the open. He might tie one hand behind me if he liked, and then I'd back myself to lick him."

"He's a nice pup, but we'll make him yelp before we've done with him," replied Harvey, smarting with pain.

In a short time a halt was ordered, and, a guard being established, the Pisangs threw themselves down to rest.

The heat of the sun had been great, which made the march very fatiguing.

Glad to follow their example, the captives sank on the hard ground.

Presently Monday looked round him; all was still.

"You sleep, Mast' Jack?" he whispered.

"No," replied Harkaway, "for my mind is so full of disagreeable thoughts that I'm not likely to be."

"Lie still. Monday use um teeth."

"What for?"

"Cut in two the rattans; then Mast' Jack make a dive for the woods and get off," continued Monday.

"It's not a bad dodge, but I'd rather you did it for Harvey. I can take care of myself; something always turns up for me," answered Jack.

"Very well," replied Monday.

He rolled over a little and got nearer to Harvey, to whom he communicated his plan, and soon his teeth were at work.

In ten minutes Harvey was free.

"Run, Dick, for your life," whispered Jack, "and go zigzag, so that they won't be able to hit you if they fire. There is only Hunston who knows how to use a gun, and the lazy beggar is snoring."

"Aren't you coming, too?" asked Harvey.

"No. Monday and I will stop. We can't all hope to get away."

"I can't leave you."

"But you must. Think how much you can do for me. There are arms in the boat, and you can come and rescue me. Whether you are successful or not, you must try to get away. I got you into this mess by asking you to stop to help me to carry off Emily from Hunston. Poor Emily!"

Jack sighed.

"If anything should go wrong with me, Dick," he continued, "promise me you'll be a brother to Emily. She mustn't marry Hunston."

"She shan't if I can help it."

"I may be dead by this time to-morrow; there's no telling."

"Well, I'll go, in the hope of being of use to you," said Harvey. "Good-by."

"Good-by, old flick," replied Jack, trying to be jocular once more.

"God bless you!" said Harvey.

The next minute he was crawling on his stomach towards a dense jungle.

He had reached it, and was just about to plunge into it, when a Pisang saw him.

Uttering a fierce yell, he discharged the gun Hunston had given him.

So bad was his aim that, instead of hitting Harvey, he shot a comrade who stood near him.

The native fell to the ground with a groan.

Hunston sprang up.

"You blundering fool!" he exclaimed. "What's the matter?"

The Pisang explained that one of the white chiefs had escaped.

"Which one?" cried Hunston.

He ran to the spot where he had left the prisoners.

Jack and Monday pretended to be fast asleep.

Kicking them in the ribs, he exclaimed: "Get up. Where's Harvey?"

"You needn't kick a fellow like that, in the middle of his first sleep," replied Jack, in a tone of remonstrance. "It's very hard a man can't have a nap for a few minutes."

He rubbed his eyes and yawned drowsily.

"Where's Harvey?" thundered Hunston.

"How should I know? Don't I tell you I've been nodding?" replied Jack.

Turning to the Pisangs, Hunston said: "After him! I'll have all your lives if you don't catch him."

By this time, however, the fugitive had got a good start, and, though the Pisangs ran hither and thither, they could not find him.

Hunston foamed at the mouth with rage.

"Now, that's what I call a shabby trick," remarked Jack. "He didn't appreciate your kindness at all. You were going to hang him to-morrow, and he's stepped off. Dick ought to be ashamed of himself!"

Jack's broad grin irritated Hunston.

"What do you want to work me up for?" he ex-

claimed. "I'll treat you as I did him, and make a cat scratch your back."

"Don't get wild. Dick's a very good fellow, but he shouldn't have taken his hook without saying he was going," replied Jack.

Hunston turned away and himself assisted in the pursuit of Harvey.

It was fruitless, however.

He had got safely away.

Then the order to resume the march was given, and, leaving the body of the dead Pisang, they continued their way to the town of Palembang, or, more strictly, what remained of it.

Hunston was more sullen than ever, but he comforted himself with the reflection that Jack and Monday were still in his power.

They reached the smoking ruins of the town about nightfall, weary and foot-sore.

The people had made themselves rude shelters of boughs and grass.

Loud were the lamentations over their burnt property and their household utensils, for only a few had saved even the necessary implements of domestic use.

The fire, occurring in the night time, had taken all by surprise.

Owing to the high wind prevailing, its progress had been very rapid.

Jack and Monday were placed in one of the few houses, which, owing to their isolated position, the flames had not reached.

The door was shut, and they were left to brood over their coming fate.

"Well, Mast' Jack," said Monday, "how um like it now?"

"Oh, tol lol; I'm pretty bobbish," replied Jack. "I think if I was going to be hanged in five minutes I should sing my prayers instead of saying them."

"It what you call possum up um gum tree now, sare."

"And a very tall gum tree, too," said Jack.

"P'raps Mist' Mole come in night and walk into um Pisang."

"No such luck, I'm afraid."

There was a great noise outside, and, looking through a crack in the wall, Jack saw the Pisang warriors beating back the crowd.

They had heard that Jack was the cause of the destruction of their city, and they wanted to get at him and tear him in pieces.

But Hunston reserved him for public execution, and the wild, untamed mob was driven back.

"Want to lynch us," remarked Jack. "Amiable beings, these Pisangs. I wish my hands were not tied."

"Suppose Monday try um teeth, sare; and then you untie Monday when you free!"

"Stunning," said Jack. "Cut along, old chocolate and cream. You've got some sense in your noddle."

Monday set to work, as he had done in Harvey's case, resembling the mouse which had liberated the lion, by gnawing the meshes of the net in which he was caught.

"Bravo!" cried Jack, springing up in a short time and stretching himself.

"That all right, sare?" asked Monday.

"Ripping! I don't know if my grinders are so sharp as yours, but I'll have a go in."

By dint of biting and pulling he contrived to liberate Monday.

"Now um fight before they take us to die," said the black, proudly.

Just then there was a crash, and something fell through the frail roof.

"Hullo!" said Jack, "who's chucking bricks?"

"What that, sare?" asked Monday.

"I don't know. It's so beastly dark I can't see, but it looks to me as if one of somebody's teeth had dropped out."

"Oh! Mast' Jack, how you make um poor Monday laugh! Why him do it, when there so much misery?" said Monday, chuckling.

"That's the time to laugh, ugly mug," answered Jack, groping about in the dark.

Presently he stumbled upon a heavy stone.

"Lucky," he said, "that this little pebble didn't light on my nut. I know which is the hardest."

"Ah! de debble!" cried Monday, in a voice of pain.

"What's up now?" said Jack.

"Mosquito bite him on the nose," answered Monday, ruefully. "How um sting!"

"Squash him, then," cried Jack. "I thought I heard one of the beggars buzzing about. I say, Monday, this stone didn't come here by accident."

"How him know that, sare?"

"Because I can feel a bit of paper tied to it."

"Paper?"

"Yes, and I shouldn't wonder if there was something written on it. Blow the darkness! It's no good asking you if you've got a match in your pocket. One

could in a civilized country; and as we're not cats—we can't see in the dark," said Jack.

"The moon him shine through that crack, sare."

"By Jove! That will do. There are more ways of killing a dog than hanging him, Monday," Jack said, in great glee.

He knelt down near the crack, and saw that the bit of paper, a very small one, had been written on with a pencil. The writing was that of a woman.

"Emily, for a hundred!" he muttered.

With some difficulty he contrived to read:

"Dearest Jack—"

"Dearest!" he said. "I like that."

Then he went on:

"I took a walk near the coast to-day, and saw a quantity of boats lying off near the shore, hidden partly by the rock. They must be your friends the Limbians.

"Keep up your spirits. I was deeply grieved to hear you were recaptured; but I expect a night attack will be made, and, if so, rest assured I will open the door of your prison before they can come and kill you.

"Ever your own loving
"EMILY."

"She's a brick!" said Jack, in great exultation.

"What that, sare?" asked Monday, who was all curiosity.

"A friend has sent this letter attached to a stone. The Limbians are off the island."

"My people. That jolly! Then they not hang um, after all," said Monday, joyfully.

"I never thought they would, though it looked uncommonly black an hour ago. Hurrah, Monday! You weren't born to be hanged, you scoundrel!" said Jack.

"Mist' Mole come and fight like um tiger, sare. Monday like to see Mole fighting."

"I think Mole will be like the Frenchman, who said to his men: 'Fight till all your powder is gone, and then run away; ' and, as I'm rather lame, I'll start now, before the enemy comes up," said Jack, laughing.

"Ha! ha! him brave man," exclaimed Monday, also laughing.

"Hunston will be sold this time."

The door suddenly opened, and a voice said: "Will he?"

It was Hunston.

"You're rather too fast, Harkaway; and you shouldn't talk so loud," he exclaimed. "These walls are not very thick, and you didn't think I was listening."

A diabolical smile played round the corners of Hunston's mouth in the moonlight.

Jack's heart fell within him, and Monday would have turned pale if his skin had permitted him.

Here was a disastrous interruption to their plan.

Their hopes were crushed in the bud.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE NIGHT ATTACK.

"So," continued Hunston, "the Limbian fleet is off our shore?"

"That can't be very pleasing intelligence to you," replied Jack, who began to recover himself.

"We have a traitor in the camp, it appears, and it is lucky for her she is a woman whom I love, or she should share your fate."

"Emily, you mean?"

"Yes, your correspondent. It was a clever idea to write you a letter and fasten it to a stone. But you forget the old saying that 'walls have ears.' "

"I forgot that you were such a cad you wouldn't mind listening," answered Jack.

"You'll forget more than that soon, for I mean to order you out for instant execution—instant death, you and your black friend here. Do you understand that?"

"I've one comfort," replied Jack, "and that is, I'm not afraid to die. Don't you wish you could say the same thing?"

"Never mind. I meant to have had you tortured, but there isn't time for that. It will be torture enough to know that Emily is in my power."

Jack fretted inwardly, but outwardly he remained calm.

"Heaven will protect her," he said.

"Will it?" answered Hunston. "Why doesn't Heaven interfere for you."

"Perhaps it may. I'm not dead yet, and while I have life there is hope, you know, old boy," Jack said, cheerily.

"Not much hope for you. I could pistol you where you stand. I don't know why I shouldn't do it and make sure of you. I wouldn't lose you for ten years of my life. Perhaps you are reckoning on your friends?"

Jack made no answer.

He had a faint hope that Mr. Mole might come up in time to save him.

Hunston saw this gleam of hope in his eyes.

"If they were at this door now I'd shoot you through the head," he said.

"You're quite capable of it," was Jack's cool answer.

Suddenly there arose a great shouting outside.

Jack's heart leaped in his bosom.

Shots were fired, and then he knew that the Limbians had arrived.

A loud, clear voice was heard exclaiming :

"Fire away, my lads. No quarter. Give it them hot and strong."

Hunston turned pale.

He saw his prey escaping from his murderous clutches, just when it was within his grasp.

"Harvey's voice, by jingo!" cried Jack. "I must have a cut in."

He dashed his fist in Hunston's face, just being able to see him in the moonlight that streamed in through the open door.

Hunston stepped back, and the blow grazed his temple.

"Curse you," he cried ; "I'll have one life at least."

Raising his pistol—the one he had taken from Harvey, he fired it point-blank at Jack.

Our hero's days were nearly numbered.

Monday, however, saw the action, and quick as thought, jerked Hunston's arm so that the ball went through the roof, and the pistol fell from his hand.

"Touch and go," said Jack, calmly.

Hunston turned and dashed through the open door, seeing that all was lost.

"After him, Monday," said Jack ; "he's gone to Emily. Now's our time ; we must save her."

But Hunston was too quick for him.

The ground outside was filled with frightened Pisangs.

They lost sight of him in the crowd, which was panic stricken.

The night attack had taken them all by surprise, and they were ill able to cope with their well-armed assailants.

A dropping musketry fire continued at intervals, and Pisangs fell on every side.

At last they began to run.

Men, women and children, helter-skelter, sought the shelter of the woods.

Monday and Jack stood a chance of being shot by their own friends, and got separated in the confusion.

Dreadful cries arose on all sides.

It was not a defeat, simply.

It was more than a rout, for it became a massacre.

Jack ran he knew not whither, seeking for Emily and found her not.

No one took any notice of him, for all were intent upon securing their own safety.

At length Monday rested under a tree upon the outskirts of what had once been the thriving town of Palembang.

The moon, which had been partially hidden by drifting clouds, now shone out brilliantly.

He heard groans, and was at a loss to know where the sounds came from.

Looking up, he saw a man perched on one of the lower branches of a tree.

"You come down out of that," exclaimed Monday, in his own language.

"Ah! my good Pisang," replied the trembling voice of Mr. Mole; "I mean you no harm. I was forced to take part in this expedition, much against my will."

Monday laughed quietly to himself, and determined to have some fun.

"I am a Pisang chief," he said; "and I want the head of the Tuan Biza of the palefaces."

"What a bother, I left my gun on the ground," Mr. Mole muttered. "That infernal arrow frightened me so when it grazed the calf of my leg, as I was leading the brave fellows to the battle, that I sought the friendly shelter of the first tree in a scamper."

"Will the white chief come down," continued Monday; "or must the Pisang warrior shoot him like a bird?"

"Don't shoot, my good Pisang; for Heaven's sake don't shoot!" said Mr. Mole in a terrified tone.

"Come down, then."

"I would gladly do so if I could, but I fear I cannot. How on earth I contrived to get up here is a mystery to me."

"The white chief is a coward, and he must die," said Monday. "All the Limbians are conquered, and our young men are crying loudly for heads."

"What a fool I was to come here," said Mr. Mole to himself. "I wish I'd stayed with Ambonia and Alfura. This is out of the frying pan into the fire. Dear me! I think I should have remained with the boats; if that impetuous boy Harvey had not suddenly joined us, and insisted upon my marching with him."

Taking up a stone, Monday threw it near Mr. Mole,

causing a rustling in the leaves and a sharp hiss through the air.

"Is that an arrow?" cried Mr. Mole, in abject terror. "I say, you Pisang fellow, don't do that. I'll come down, at least I'll try. Oh, Lord! oh, Lord! why did my uncle die and leave me a tea-garden in China."

"Make haste! the Pisang wants the white chief's head."

"Won't anything else content you?" replied Mr. Mole. "My head isn't worth much, and I'm getting dreadfully bald. Oh! why did I leave England? Deuce take these beastly boughs; I can't get down."

Monday threw up another stone, and hit Mr. Mole on the leg.

"Oh, Lord!" exclaimed Mr. Mole; "I knew he'd do it. I'm wounded. Oh! my poor shin. The arrow's gone right through my leg. I can feel the pain up to my knee already."

In his fright he let go his hold, and tumbled rather ungracefully to the ground.

The distance was not great, so that the fall only shook him a little; but he lay quite still.

"I'll sham dead," he thought; "and then the blood-thirsty savage may let me alone."

Monday grinned, and altering his voice, as he spoke English, said:

"Mist' Mole not know um poor Monday."

The effect was magical upon Mr. Mole when he heard this speech.

He opened his eyes, took a look at the well-known features which he had been too much alarmed to notice closely before, and sprang up.

His former terror vanished, and with his countenance radiant with delight, he said :

"You rascally black thief, if I wasn't so pleased, I do think I should be tempted to kick you!"

"Take care, sare. Pisang have um head."

"You mustn't play those tricks with me. However, I forgive you. Yes, out of the generous emotions of my heart, which bubble up from—from—confound it, I can't collect my ideas!"

"You have snug place up there, sare," said Monday, pointing to the tree.

"Ah! I crept up there to rest. See how I have been fighting. Seventeen Pisangs fell by my hand alone."

Monday looked as if he didn't believe him.

"You and I have always been good friends, Monday," said Mr. Mole; "and you must promise me one thing. That is, not to say anything about finding me up that tree."

"Not tell Mast' Jack, sare; not tell Mast' Harvey?"

"Precisely. They have an unfortunate habit of making fun of people, which they call chaffing. I detest and abominate the practice; and what I want to impress upon your uncultivated mind is that my courage is up to the average; I may say, beyond it."

"Monday keep um secret."

"That's right. Mum's the word, and you and I will be fast friends. I still hear the sound of firing, and the shrieks of the dying. Is it safe to venture far away?"

"Monday have a lark with you, sare," replied the black. "Fighting nearly all over. Pisangs all beat; they fly 'way or dead."

"And Harkaway? I trust he is safe, and will thank

me for the generous effort I have made to effect his liberation."

"Not know exactly, sare," replied Monday. "Mast' Jack him gone somewhere after Missy Em'ly."

"Ah! I have heard that he is much attached in that quarter. There's my gun; take it up, and mind, it is loaded. Walk in front; you shall have the post of honor. I will follow close behind you," exclaimed Mr. Mole.

"We go and find Mast' Jack, eh, sare?" replied Monday.

"We will endeavor to do so. I long to shake him by the hand, and receive his thanks; for I assure you, Monday, that I have risen in my own estimation by the prodigies of valor I have performed during this night's work; twenty-seven Pisangs did I kill."

"You say seventeen just now, sare?"

"Nonsense. I am like an old war-horse," cried Mr. Mole, after applying himself to the contents of a pocket-flask; "I smell the battle afar off."

"You great fighting man, sare."

"Rather, my young friend. I don't know how I did it, but my spirit carries me on. Seven and thirty Pisangs did I slay with my own hand."

"That ten more," muttered Monday.

"I laid about me with an old ship's cutlass, and the warriors fell before my prowess like leaves in autumn. Forty-seven Pisangs dead by my——"

Monday burst out laughing; he could not stand Mr. Mole's exaggeration any longer.

"Irreverent negro; I'll talk no more to you. When I again recount my exploits, you may tell me of it," exclaimed Mr. Mole, in high dudgeon.

"Come on, sare. This way. Quick march!" cried Monday, with military precision.

They walked cautiously towards the town, near which the sounds of the battle were dying away, though in the distance there was a noise as of furious pursuit.

The Limbian warriors were exacting a terrible account from their old enemies, the Pisangs.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DEATH OF THE KING.

The morning broke serene and cloudless, as it almost always did in those regions.

On the part of the Limbians, the loss was slight, for their guns had given them a great advantage over the surprised and terror-stricken enemy.

Harkaway had joined the pursuing party, but he could not contrive to find any trace of Hunston.

Nor was he more fortunate with regard to Emily.

Both of them had disappeared as completely as if the ground had opened and swallowed them up.

In the morning he returned, jaded and weary, to find Harvey, Mr. Mole and Monday preparing breakfast, by means of a fire they had kindled.

The Limbians were assembled in little parties, and all did their own foraging.

Great was the rejoicing of the friends at being together safe and sound.

"I owe my life," said Jack, "to you, Dick, and our faithful Monday."

"And me," continued Mr. Mole. "May I not claim some share in the good work?"

"Of course," answered Jack; "we haven't forgotten you, sir; and you shall have a medal or a statue, whichever takes your fancy most."

"I think I should prefer a medal," replied Mr. Mole, after a moment's reflection.

"What shall we put on it, sir?" asked Harvey.

"Let me see. Two natives fighting, and trying to kill a white man—myself——"

"Up a tree, sare?" put in Monday, with a grin.

Mr. Mole gave him a warning look.

"Behind one, if you like, firing at them, and underneath the words, 'In token of bravery and devotion'; while, on the reverse, you may put my portrait, and write, 'Isaac Mole, a tried friend, and a fierce soldier.' "

"It shall be done, sir," replied Jack, who could scarcely refrain from laughing at Mr. Mole's vanity.

Taking Harvey on one side, Jack informed him of his vain search for Emily.

"I, too, have looked for her," replied Harvey. "You know, when I left you, I ran to the coast, and found the Limbians under Mole and the king landing?"

"Yes."

"They were delighted to see me, and I hurried their movements, because you were in danger. When we reached Palembang I did all I could to discover you and Emily," continued Harvey.

"Hunston's got a hiding place somewhere," said Jack, thoughtfully.

"We'll unearth the fox."

"I fully intend to do so, but the task will be difficult."

These islands abound with rocks, mountains and caverns, to which the natives have taken themselves."

"So Monday's been telling me," replied Harvey.

"I mean to stop here, Dick, till I've found her," continued Jack.

"You won't get the Limbians to stay, I'm thinking."

"Never mind them. They've done their work, and they've beaten the enemy. So it is only natural that they should want to get back to their homes, and celebrate their rites and customs."

"I told them we'd have no head-hunting or eating captives," said Harvey.

"What did they say?"

"The king did not like it; but he gave orders that no prisoners were to be taken, so that has made the battle more bloody."

"I expect there are an awful lot of the poor Pisang beggars killed?"

"Awful! Over a hundred, I expect," replied Harvey.

"They won't get over this walloping in a hurry," Jack said. "And now I'll tell you what we'll do. The Limbians may go home."

"Yes."

"We'll go and look out for a cave near the coast, so as to have an open front to prevent a surprise, if the disorganized band of Pisangs should try to have another go-in."

"And you and I, with Mole and Monday, form the garrison. I see," replied Harvey.

"Exactly. That's the ticket to a T," Jack answered.

"I've got stores in my boat; and Mole brought over a lot of grub, and powder, and things," continued Harvey.

"We shan't hurt. And now let's have some breakfast."

Mr. Mole's voice was heard exclaiming:

"Now, then, Harkaway, and you, Harvey, come and join me in a cup of tea. Who says bacon, and who'll have parrot?"

"I'll leave the cockatoo to you, sir, and go in for a slice of pig," replied Jack.

Monday handed some tea to his young masters, but in doing so stumbled, and let the calabash fall.

"Hold up!" cried Jack. "You're as awkward as a Newf'un'land pup; not half so clever, and twice as ugly."

Monday apologized, and the breakfast proceeded.

Presently an old chief named Madura came up, and beckoned to Jack, who went out to meet him.

"Anything happened?" asked Jack in the native language.

"Bad news for Matabella," replied Madura.

"Indeed!"

"During the battle King Lanindyer received a wound, from which he has just died."

"Monday's father dead?" cried Jack. "By Jove! I'm sorry for that."

The old chief had wished to break the news gently to Monday, but Jack's loud exclamation reached his ears: he instantly stopped eating, and ran away to the camp.

Madura and Jack followed him.

They found him kneeling by the side of the dead body, which he kissed repeatedly, uttering wild lamentations the while.

The king had fallen fighting bravely, pierced through the heart by an arrow.

All the Limbians were profoundly grieved, and they talked together in whispers.

The ruined city was close by.

Great numbers of dead bodies lay on all sides, as yet unburied.

The distant mountains, in which the defeated Pisangs had taken refuge, were lying like a blue cloud on the western horizon.

A dizzy light played over the surface of the land.

The sun looked like a shield of red-hot iron, and the hot earth scorched the feet.

Madura took Monday by the arm, and led him away, saying :

"You are called to the throne of your fathers; but though your destiny is high, remember that he who gazeth on the sky may stumble on the earth."

"Oh! my father!" replied Monday. "Why are you taken away from me?"

"Recollect," said Jack, "that you have plenty of friends, and you are now king."

"No, no!" cried Monday, "I will not be the Tuan Biza of my people. I will remain with you. Do not send me away. Monday will die if he be not with you."

Touched by the poor fellow's devotion, which was expressed by a piteous look, Jack replied :

"I like to have you with me; but who is to reign over Limbi?"

"My Uncle Selim. O Madura, make Selim your king. He is a great chief. Let him reign."

"He who can neither save himself nor hunt his enemies?" replied Madura. "What is he but a broken spear, and a blunted sword?"

"Never mind," said Monday. "The man who has

health, strength and courage, has three parts that will not turn white in the fire."

"Stay with your people and rule over them, O Mata-bella!" said Madura, sternly. "What are the white men, that they should rob us of our king? Has it not been said that the unpurposed man makes his meal of the clouds?"

"I will not leave my friends, the white men," answered Monday, determinedly. "Call upon Selim, O Madura, he will make a wise and good king."

"Young man," replied Madura, angry at being baffled, "for six things is a fool known—Wrath without cause, change without reason, inquiries without object, putting trust in strangers, and wanting the power to know a friend from a foe; and let me add, that long experience maketh large wit."

"I'm very sorry for you, Monday," said Jack; "very much so, indeed. It is a great blow, and I thank you for wishing to stay with us. Think the matter over. Listen to this old swell."

"Monday go with you, Mast' Jack. Go anywhere—to end of the world."

"Don't be in a hurry to decide. I'll leave you to fight it out with your chief; and if you want my advice, give me a hail."

He walked away, and Harvey, with Mr. Mole, asked him what had happened.

"Monday's governor has burst up," exclaimed Jack.

"Done what?" said Mr. Mole, looking puzzled.

"Bust up. Croaked. Got knocked on the head in the scrimmage last night."

"'Bust' is not English, at least not grammatical English," said Mr. Mole, "and I did not understand you;

though now I take your meaning. Is the young savage much affected?"

"Frightfully cut up," said Jack.

"Dear me! It is a bad job; but one savage the less is no loss to civilization. Finish your breakfast."

"I can't eat," said Jack. "I haven't had a wink all night. I'm more tired than an elephant at noon. So if one of you will kindly fan away the beastly flies, I'll seek the arms of—of— Who was that ancient swell whom they called the god of sleep?"

"I was never the cheese at classics," answered Harvey.

"You mean Morpheus," said Mr. Mole, "who, with Somnus—"

"Thank you, sir. Won't it keep till I wake up?" said Jack. "I know it was Morpheus, or one of the family."

Jack found a retired spot, and was soon asleep.

Harvey followed his example, and Mr. Mole, applying himself to his flask, said:

"What a wrong-headed creature is a boy. They waste their opportunities when young, and as they grow up they have neither time or inclination to learn."

CHAPTER XXIX.

BEN BLUNT, THE BO'SUN.

Monday's Uncle Selim was very glad of the chance of becoming king of Limbi.

Being a wise and good chief, he was not unacceptable to, or unpopular with, the leaders of the little nation.

Still Madura was not willing that Monday should lose his right of succeeding to the throne.

A council was held.

It was decided that Monday should be able to assume the kingship whenever he liked, and that Selim should only reign in his absence.

"Oh, my son," said Madura, "never give up that which is within your grasp. The pearls in their beds are as thick as stars, but wishing never brought up one of them from the bottom of the sea!"

"Selim will make a better king than I should," replied Monday. "Matabella is young, but Selim has the wisdom of age."

"The wise men have said," answered Madura, "that the deer is swift on the plains, but a child leads him in the streets. You are young, and you must learn, and I would teach you, for the proverb is true which says 'The lamp may be made of diamonds, but it dies without oil.'"

Monday was glad when it was all settled, and Selim made king.

He could go away then, and mourn over his dead father, whom he loved dearly.

Selim at once assumed the position which the unanimous vote of the council gave him.

He decided that the Limbians should return immediately in their boats, and bury the late king with all the pomp usual on such occasions.

Monday said he would not leave his father's body till it was in the grave.

Therefore he returned with his followers.

"Good-by, Monday," said Jack, when he heard what

had been arranged. "I hope we shall see you again soon; but don't stand in your own light."

"Monday live and die with you, Mast' Jack," he replied. "If you live in Limbi with me, then I be king; if you go, I go."

"Then we shall see you soon after the funeral?"

"I come back in boat."

"All right. I won't say how grieved I am at your heavy loss, Monday. You know what I feel," cried Jack.

He squeezed Monday's hand as he spoke, and the black returned the affectionate pressure.

"Give us your fist, Mon," cried Harvey; "and here's fortune to you in a cup of cold tea—that is to say, half a cocoanutful."

Mr. Mole sidled up to Monday as he was going away.

"Monday, will you do me a favor?" he said.

"What that, Mist' Mole?" asked Monday.

"Tell my wives I'm dead, will you?"

"Dead!"

"Killed in battle. Dead and buried."

In spite of his engrossing sorrow, Monday could not help grinning faintly.

"What! Tell um lie, sare? No; Monday never tell um lie," he answered.

"It won't hurt either Ambonia or Alfura; they'll marry again. Think of it, my good friend," urged Mr. Mole.

"No, sare! Monday have him conscience, and he not let him tell um lie," replied the black.

"Deuce take the beast," said Mr. Mole, as Monday walked away. "I suppose I shall have those beauties

coming over here to take me home in a boat. A nice lookout that would be. Heigho!"

"What's that, sir?" asked Harvey, who had overheard the conversation.

"Oblige me by minding your own business, Harvey," said Mr. Mole.

"Didn't I hear you mention the names of Alfura and Ambonia, sir?"

"If I did, what then?"

"Nothing, sir. I thought you'd fret. What is it Moore says:

"I never loved a sweet gazelle,
To glad me with its sweet blue eye,
Than when it grew to be a swell,
It always used to fight me shy;

and married a market-gardener——"

"How shamefully you misquote," cried Mr. Mole, indignantly. "Moore is my favorite author, and you murder him."

"Very sorry, I'm sure, sir."

Jack called Harvey away to take a walk with him in the country.

They were well armed, and intended to look for a cave where they could locate themselves while they remained on the island.

They went to the seashore, and soon found what they wanted.

All their stores were removed into this harbor of refuge, and they returned for Mr. Mole.

"The Limbians have gone, my dear Harkaway," cried Mr. Mole; "and you have left me alone here at the mercy of the enemy, as I may say."

"You've got your gun, sir. Besides, your reputation is so great that no one would think of attacking you," replied Jack.

"Is it, indeed? Do you think that those benighted savages have heard of me?"

"I'm sure of it."

"What are we going to do?" continued Mr. Mole.

"Dwell in a cave, sir. Harvey and I have pitched upon a stunning place. Nice and dry—no snakes; not too big; close to the sea—and we have put our stores out of the boat there."

"This is foolhardy, Harkaway," said Mr. Mole, gravely. "But you shall not say I deserted you. I will cast in my lot with you."

"What's wrong now, sir?"

"You are stopping here to rescue a chit of a girl, who would make Hunston as good a wife as she would you."

Jack ground his teeth.

"Don't excite me, sir," he said.

"Bless me! How like a Pisang you look," cried Mr. Mole. "I didn't know you were so deeply smitten."

"Jack's very hard hit, sir," said Harvey. "You don't know how spoony he is."

"I wish he had enjoyed my brief experience of matrimony, that's all," replied Mr. Mole.

"Emily is not Ambonia or Alfura, either," put in Jack. "And letting temper alone—though I'm sure she's the sweetest-tempered darling in the world—wouldn't it be cowardly to leave her in that scoundrel Hunston's power, as long as we can lift a finger to get her out of it?"

"So it would, Harkaway," answered Mr. Mole. "You appeal to my feelings as an Englishman there. I feel

them gushing and bubbling up from the fountain of my heart. You have touched a mine of sentiment in my breast, and you shall have my support."

"Thank you for nothing," said Jack, who was getting angry.

Mr. Mole thought it prudent not to hear this remark.

The guns were presently shouldered, and they marched to their new home.

When they reached it, they found it very comfortable.

Leaves and grass made good beds, and they had such provisions as they stood in need of.

A watch was set, it being arranged that two should sleep while one watched.

Harvey and Mr. Mole entered the cavern, while Jack, who was almost always foremost when there was anything to be done, remained outside.

An oil lamp, such as we have previously described, was lighted.

Mr. Mole had his cocoanut shell and his whisky bottle.

He ate some dry bread, made of roughly-beaten unleavened maize flour, and began to imbibe.

"Now," said he, "this is what I call jolly. A sensible man ought to live in the present hour. What is ambition to me? I am happy now. Why should I disquiet myself about the future?"

"I wish you wouldn't disquiet me, sir. I want to go to sleep," said Harvey.

"Laziness—sheer laziness," answered Mr. Mole. "I had some hope of you boys at Pomona House, but—This whisky is not bad; it has a grateful flavor."

Harvey closed his eyes, and let Mr. Mole have all the talking to himself.

He was ill and feverish.

The punishment Hunston had subjected him to, and the following excitement of attacking the Pisangs, had fatigued him dreadfully.

Mr. Mole filled his half-cocoanut again, and emptied it.

"If I crook my elbow a little too much," he murmured, "it is excusable under the circumstances. I have no respectability here to keep up, and I want to forget. I will seek oblivion in the flowing bowl. Let the landlord fill the bowl, until it does run over; for to-night I mean to be merry, and to-morrow I hope I shan't have a headache."

While Mr. Mole was amusing himself in his own peculiar fashion inside the cave, Jack was keeping a sharp lookout.

It was within an hour of sunset—a time when the dying away of nature in the tropics—if one may use the phrase—is most apt to attack and lull the senses.

His eyes almost closed.

He leaned against the entrance to the cave, and felt dreamy.

Suddenly a loud voice exclaimed :

"What cheer, my hearty?"

Jack started as if he had been shot.

A British voice!

A British sailor's voice in that lone island!

That such a thing could happen, at such a time, in such a place, he scarcely thought possible.

"Who goes there?" he cried.

"Who goes there?" repeated the voice. "Why, who do you suppose but Ben Blunt, the bo'sun?"

Jack looked up and saw a stranger before him.

But as he was unarmed, apparently, he did not feel alarmed.

The stranger was dressed like a sailor, and had a bluff, hearty, good-natured face.

"Was he friend or foe?"

That was the question.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE MUTINEERS.

The newcomer was unarmed, and did not seem to be in the least dangerous.

But Jack proceeded to act cautiously.

Raising his gun, he said :

"Don't come any nearer, until you have given an account of yourself."

"Right you are, cap'n," replied Ben Blunt. "I'm no sea-lawyer, and shan't spin you any yarns."

"What's your ship?"

"Haven't got one, though this time yesterday I was first mate of as good a ship as ever sailed the sea."

"I thought you said just now you were a boatswain?" exclaimed Jack, suspiciously.

"Look'ee here, my hearty, that's right enough. You see, I was bo'sun on board the *Rattlesnake* when I was in the R. N.; but I've left the navy and gone into the merchant service. I'm mate. Forge ahead. What are your next soundings?"

"Why have you left your vessel? Wrecked, eh?"

"No, I'm not wrecked, either. It's this way," replied

Ben Blunt, hitching up his trousers, and rolling his quid over in his mouth; "I shipped aboard the *Sea-horse* from London to Shanghai, and we were on the return voyage, when Sam Parsons—may the old un keelhaul him!—turned mutineer."

"A mutiny, eh?" exclaimed Jack, begining to understand.

"May I never eat salt junk again if I'm telling you a word of a lie, cap'n!"

"Go on!"

Jack was much interested in the recital.

"Well, you see, sir, they killed the skipper and all the officers, bar me. I was a bit of a favorite with the lads, you see, and they didn't make me go to Davy Jones. But when that mutinous dog, Sam Parsons, who's what we should call in the navy an A. E., asked me to join 'em, 'No,' says I; 'I'll see you jolly well hanged first, my hearty, and then I won't.'"

"Case of 'not to-day, baker,'" remarked Jack, smiling.

"It was so, sir. 'Not to-day, baker; call to-morrow with a crusty cottage,'" answered Ben Blunt.

"You were quite right," said Jack; "and your experience of discipline in the navy did you good service."

"Well, look'ee here, cap'n," continued Ben. "I'm Blunt by name and blunt by nature. You may douse my daylights, but I'll stand true to my flag. So they talked among themselves, and then they shoved me into a boat and landed me on this here island."

"How long ago?"

"A matter of maybe two or three hours, and I've been boxing the compass, as ye may say, and taking an observation as to how to steer my course."

"The mutineers are in command of the ship, I suppose?" said Jack.

"Devil a doubt about that, cap'n! They've got her, and a beauty she is. Look! there she rides at anchor round that point."

Jack looked in the direction indicated, and saw a vessel, dimly visible, of about eight hundred tons register.

This was the *Sea-horse*.

"I didn't think to meet an European, let alone a countryman, on this outlandish bit o' ground," said Ben. "And now, sir, you've overhauled me, are my papers correct?"

"Quite. I'm satisfied, Ben; and I feel as if I'd known you for a score of years already," answered Jack.

His confidence was fully established in the man, who spoke with a genuineness that carried conviction with it.

"Thank you kindly, sir; and now, if so be as I may ask, how did you come to drop anchor in these parts?"

Jack told him how he had been wrecked with his friends; how the Pisangs had been defeated; and how he was stopping to rescue a beautiful young lady, a captive in the hands of Hunston, formerly a friend, and now an enemy.

"This Hunston's gone mutinous," remarked Ben Blunt. "String him up to the yardarm, cap'n."

"I've got to catch him first," said Jack. "But what will your men with Sam Parsons do?"

"They daren't go back into our waters. They'll have to potter about these coasts, sir," replied Ben.

"I wish we could help you to get back the *Sea-horse*; she'd take us all back to England," said Jack, thoughtfully.

"And that's a true saying," answered Ben. "What I'm thinking is, cap'n, that if you'll let me sail along of you I'll sign articles and go ahead this minute."

"You want to join us?"

"Heart and soul, sir. We'll get back the beautiful young lady of whom you was a-speaking. We'll hang our mutineers, or take 'em in irons to the first port where there's a British Consul, and we'll sail her back to old England."

"A stunning idea. But there's a lot to be done first," answered Jack. "However, I gladly accept your offer of friendship, Ben. You shall be one of us."

"That's done me more good than I expected, when the muzzle of your gun brought me up all standing just now. Thank you kindly, cap'n. I'm true blue, and you wouldn't find a dog more faithful than Ben Blunt to those he takes to."

"We've got some stores inside the cave. Will you eat something?"

"I could stow away a chunk of beef and bread, cap'n for my belly cries cupboard. But I say, sir."

"What?"

"Let's give one cheer for old England. I'm so happy I'm fit to bust, and all along of meeting you. Just now I thought I should die of starvation, or snakes, or tigers or niggers, or some of the varmint that grows here and now I'm up to the masthead again. Just a little ur for old England, sir."

"I'm with you," cried Jack. "Go it, my old sea-horse. Hurrah for Old England! Hurrah! Hurrah!"

Ben Blunt joined in, and their ringing cheers woke up the echoes in the island.

They did more.

They woke up Mr. Mole, who came out of the cave in a bad temper, to ascertain the cause of the disturbance.

"What is the meaning of this unseemly riot, Harkaway?" said Mr. Mole. "It is hard I cannot enjoy my natural rest. And who is this stranger?"

"Ben Blunt the bo'sun, sir, at your honor's service," replied that individual.

"I am in a fog. Explain the mystery to me, Harkaway."

Jack did so.

"You see, sir," added Ben, "I cut down the top hamper, and took in all sail under stress of weather; but I'm drifted into port, after all."

"And we're going to recapture the ship, and hang the mutineers, sir," said Jack. "That's why we're cheering."

"Mind you are not cackling over an addled egg, my young friend," said Mr. Mole. "However, I'm glad to see our new friend Ben, and cheerfully hold out the hand of welcome."

"The more the merrier, sir."

"And now I'll turn in again," said Mr. Mole, sleepily.

"Going to bye-bye again, sir? Don't do that. We're going to have a can of grog to celebrate Ben's arrival. Come and join us; don't be a hen, sir."

"A hen, Harkaway?"

"Yes, sir; be a cock for once."

"Grog is not to be lightly refused. You have put a different complexion on the case, and I will condescend to join you," replied Mr. Mole. "Arouse that lazy slumberer Harvey with a poke in the ribs."

Going into the cave, which somewhat resembled the

abode of the robbers in "Gil Blas," Jack woke up Harvey.

"Turn out, Dick," he exclaimed.

"What for?" asked Harvey.

"There's a gentleman from England come to see you."

"Go on," said Harvey, "you're having larks."

"I'm not," answered Jack. "You go outside and see."

Harvey did so, and was at once introduced to Mr. Benjamin Blunt, otherwise Ben Blunt the bo'sun.

He was much astonished at hearing his story, but, like Mr. Mole and Jack, delighted to have such an addition to their little party.

"Axing your pardon, sir," said Ben, pointing into the cave, "are there any more of them to come out?"

"No; that's the lot."

"Then I'll take this mossal of victuals we was speak-ing of—that is, by your leave, cap'n," said Ben.

A dinner was hastily provided, and the cup that cheers passed round.

Ben became a favorite in less than no time.

He took his turn in watching and went out to scour the country with Jack to find some trace of Hunston, but in vain.

Days passed, and Jack grew sick at heart with his want of success.

They met isolated bands of Pisangs occasionally, but the poor fellows ran away like hunted hares.

Their city was burned, the flower of their warriors killed, and they were no longer a great nation.

A week had elapsed, during which Jack's exertions on behalf of Emily had been unremitting.

"I'd give my life to save her," he kept on saying to himself.

One morning Ben the bo'sun was on the lookout.

Suddenly he exclaimed :

"Sail on the larboard bow, sir."

Jack was dozing under a tree, and thinking of Emily.

"Where away?" he asked, springing up.

Ben Blunt pointed it out, and Jack saw a small boat approaching.

Taking up a telescope he distinctly made out one man in her.

As she got nearer he recognized Monday.

"It's our native, whom we call Monday," said he by way of explanation. "The faithful fellow has kept his word, and is coming back."

In less than an hour, guided by a signal flag, Monday made the island, and was shaking hands in true British fashion with his young master.

"Well, Monday, what's the news?" asked Jack.

"Who that man?" inquired Monday, pointing to Ben.

Jack told him all about the new arrival, but Monday did not seem to take kindly to him.

"You asked what news, sare," he continued. "Nothing much to tell. The funeral over and now all Limbi very gay celebrating victory. It all one big drink and war dance. You found Miss Em'ly?"

"No; I wish I had."

"Some one come for Mr. Mole soon," exclaimed Monday.

"What! his wives are coming?"

"That it, sare. Alfura and Ambonia tell me they sail over."

"We can't have them here. There is no room for a

parcel of women. He'll have to look out for a cave of his own."

"Mist' Mole not like that much, sare," replied Monday. Adding: "Oh, sare, here he is. He heard all we say."

Mr. Mole had indeed come out of the cave, and was looking the picture of blank despair.

"Harkaway," he said, in a sepulchral voice, "is this true?"

"What, sir?"

"About my--ahem!—my wives coming over here!"

"Monday says so, sir."

Mr. Mole made a rush toward the sea, and Jack, becoming alarmed, ran after him.

"What are you going to do, sir?" he cried, as he held him back.

"Let me go!" replied Mr. Mole. "I will commit suicide. Let me go, I say! The awful prospect of Ambonia's presence is more than I can bear."

"Don't be silly, sir," Jack replied. "If they do come we'll protect you. But perhaps we shall be gone away before that time."

Mr. Mole stepped on to dry land again, and heaved a deep sigh of relief.

"You have put new life into me, my young friend," he replied. "I will live. Oh, that I had the wings of a bird. I'd like to be a bird, Harkaway."

"Have a drink, sir, and pull yourself together. We can't spare you."

"What's that the gentleman says?" asked Ben Blunt.

"He's afraid his wives are coming to fetch him, Ben," replied Jack.

"There's only one enemy, sir, a sailor knocks under to, and that's woman. He's not a true sailor if he doesn't strike his flag to a petticoat," replied Ben with a laugh.

"My good, amiable and worthy tar," replied Mr. Mole, "oblige me by not indulging your merriment at my expense. My domestic troubles are my own."

"Belay, sir! I'll put a stopper on my tongue, though there was no offense meant," answered Ben.

Mr. Mole retired into the cave, and was not seen again all day, though when Jack looked for him at night he found him lying on his back snoring hard, with an empty bottle on each side.

When he was gone Ben Blunt said :

"May I make bold to ask how many wives the gentleman has got, sir?"

"Only two," replied Jack.

"Oh, that's one for week days and an extra partner for Sundays; still, the ship's not short-handed with two. I've got one at home, and stop my grog if she isn't one too many sometimes!"

Old Ben laughed heartily, and Jack, taking Monday with him, went out as usual to search for Emily.

They had not gone far before they saw a Pisang asleep under a bush.

"Look, sare, look!" he cried.

"Don't kill him, Monday; catch him alive," Jack replied, hastily. "Creep up slowly. He may give us some valuable information."

Monday glided up through the long grass to where the sleeping Pisang lay.

The latter was unsuspicuous of the presence of an enemy.

Jack looked on with his rifle at full cock, to be ready for any emergency.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE BIRD HAS FLOWN.

"Hold him tight, Monday," cried Jack.

This advice was not altogether unnecessary, for as soon as Monday fell upon the sleeping Pisang he awoke, and began to writhe and wriggle like an eel.

"You come help, sare," exclaimed Monday out o breath. "How um beast kick."

"He's as slippery as an eel," said Jack, coming up; "but we'll fix him. Soho! gently there. No kicking over the traces, my boy, or I shall have to take the curb up a hole or two."

In a few minutes the Pisang was sitting on the ground with his hands tied behind him with a piece of rattan.

His face evinced the utmost astonishment, mixed with fear.

That he was doomed to lose his life in some cruel manner, he did not doubt for a single moment.

"I'm going to ask you some questions," said Jack.

The Pisang stared sullenly at him.

"If you answer truthfully I will spare your life; if you trifle with me you'll have an ounce of lead showing the daylight the way into your ugly carcass. Will you speak the truth?"

"Ya, ya, Tuan," answered the captive, his eyes brightening.

This was equivalent to "Yes, yes, chief," and it was clear that if he had any information to give he would not withhold it.

"You know the Tuan Biza whom you call Hunstani. Where is he now?"

"On the island still."

"Do you mean that he intends to go away?"

"Ya, all go soon," replied the captive. "Several chiefs, with women and children, have gone already. We are not going to remain in Pisang, since you have burned the city and killed our best warriors."

"Where are you going to?" asked Jack.

"Long, long way; to the city of the Golden Towers," answered the man.

Jack inquired where that was, but the fellow could not tell him.

All he knew was that it was a long way off, and that it was reached in boats which sailed across the sea.

"Have you seen a white woman, who was wrecked on your coast?" continued Jack.

His voice trembled a little as he put this question, because it would let him know something about Emily's movements, if faithfully answered.

"Ya, Tuan."

"Is she with Hunstani?"

"No," the Pisang answered; "she has gone away with the others to the city of the Golden Towers."

Something like a groan broke from Jack.

"Gone," he repeated. "Hurstion has outwitted me again. Just when I think I have got him into a corner he bests me."

He paced up and down impatiently.

"Any more thing to ask him, sare?"

"No."

"Monday let um go?"

"You may as well. I promised him his life, and I have no reason to think he has been humbugging me," said Jack.

Untying the rattan, Monday gave him a friendly kick to start him.

"You go 'long," he said; "you no good, you can't fight. Go home to the old women, and say you've seen your master."

The Pisang did not stay to reply, he was too glad to get away; and, running with the speed of the wind, was soon lost to sight.

Jack lay down under a tree, which happened to be a palm, and fretted and fumed at the news he had just heard.

The sudden and unexpected emigration of the Pisangs was very annoying.

He had fancied that they could not get away, and that sooner or later he would discover the hiding place where Hunston kept Emily.

Monday was thirsty, and wanted some cocoanuts, so, without thinking of his young master, he began to throw sticks up at the palm tree.

For a time he was unsuccessful.

Then he cut off a large, ripe cluster.

Jack at that moment started up, crying:

"It's a case of no thoroughfare. The way's blocked, and I'm floored, by Jove!"

He had scarcely spoken the words than the cluster

of cocoanuts hit him on the back, which was slightly bent, after grazing his head.

The force of the blow brought him on his knees, and looking round, he exclaimed :

"Bless your eyes, Monday, what foolishness are you up to now?"

"Monday him dry, sare, and knock down nut."

"You needn't upset my apple-cart, if you are thirsty. I beg leave to observe that my head is not made of cast iron."

Monday laughed and began to suck a cocoanut.

"Halves!" continued Jack. "I think I deserve some of the milk."

When they had satisfied their thirst they prepared to return to the cave.

"I am glad," said Jack, "I know what the Pisangs are doing, though I did not expect they would leave the island. That beggar told the truth, I suppose?"

"Yes, sare," answered Monday; "him speak um truth safe enough. He too much funk to tell a lie."

"Did you ever hear of the city of the Golden Towers?"

"Yes; Monday hear of him."

"Where is it?" asked Jack.

"Great way off over the sea. Go in boat."

"Who lives there?"

"Malay. All fierce, cruel Malay. They have ships, and go and take other ships, either kill all on board, or carry them home and make slave."

"You mean they are pirates."

"That it, sare," replied Monday, with a sagacious nod.

"Is the city made of gold; or is that only a tale of the natives?"

"Once a Limbi man was taken prisoner by the Malay, he escape and come back, and tell us it one fine city full of towers and palaces, all made of gold."

"It must be a fine place, though I don't believe in its being all gold. That is a stretch beyond my imagination," said Jack, thoughtfully.

"Oh! it right enough, Mast' Jack, all built of gold! Very fine, grand city," exclaimed Monday.

"Well, we shall have a chance of judging soon, for I mean to go there."

"How go there, sare?"

"You have heard Ben Blunt speak of his ship, the *Sea-horse*, which the mutineers have got possession of?"

"Yes; Monday hear him talk of um."

"I mean to have that ship."

"That jolly, Mast' Jack. Fine thing to have ship of one's own, and sail 'bout anywhere," said Monday. "But how it to be done?"

"You leave that to me; we'll work it somehow," Jack answered, confidently.

It was now noon, and the heat of the sun was so intense that they were glad to regain the cool precincts of the cave.

No one was to be seen outside, but when Jack whistled Mr. Mole came out.

"Don't think, Harkaway, that I am neglectful of my duty," said he; "I was on the alert."

"The guard should be outside, sir!" exclaimed Jack; "there are Pisangs about."

"Have you seen any?"

"Yes, we caught one; but what were you doing in the cave?" asked Jack.

"You'll laugh at me," replied Mr. Mole; "but I fancy there is a Pisang concealed there."

"Nonsense, sir; what makes you think that?"

"You know that Harvey slung up some boards to the top of the cave, to make a sort of shelf to put things on?"

"Yes."

"Well," continued Mr. Mole, "I was sitting down under that shelf, when I heard a curious noise and rustling overhead, as if some heavy animal was moving about."

"I won't say that a Pisang wouldn't be up to any low dodge," said Jack; "at all events we'll go and see what it is."

Monday and Jack entered the cave, which was only imperfectly lighted.

Having come out of the garish and blinding sunshine, it was some time before they could accustom their eyes to the semi-darkness of the cavern.

At length, looking up, Jack clearly saw a large mass of something overhead.

Gazing more carefully, he could distinguish yellow and black marks, like tortoise shell.

"Oh, sare," cried Monday, "what um lark! It um big snake. Oh, my! such a whopper, sare!"

"You are right, Mon. It is a snake, and as well as I make out, far and away the biggest I ever saw," said Jack.

As he continued to gaze, the indistinct mass resolved itself into a huge serpent compactly coiled up into a kind of knot.

He could detect his head and his bright eyes in the very center of its folds.

The sound which had alarmed and puzzled Mr. Mole was now explained.

During the night the snake must have crawled into the cave, and taken up a comfortable position on Harvey's shelf.

Perhaps the cave was its regular dwelling place, and it had no idea of being turned out by the newcomers.

"What is to be done?" asked Jack.

He had tackled the python on board the vessel he came out in, but he did not care about another encounter of the same kind.

His voice aroused Harvey and Ben Blunt, who were equally alarmed.

Mr. Mole actually shook in his shoes.

"I can't stand them pesky varmint," said Ben Blunt. "Never could abide the critters."

"And I was just under him," cried Mr. Mole, with a shudder. "It's a mercy he let me alone."

"Monday have um out!"

"You!" exclaimed Jack.

"Yes; me kill much big snake in our country. All you go out of the cave, and stand ready with guns and axes. Monday show how to do the trick."

Monday's instructions were obeyed, and he went to work immediately in a business-like manner.

He made a strong noose of rope, and, taking up a long pole in his disengaged hand, began to poke at the snake.

The reptile began to slowly unfold itself.

By a clever throw he got the noose over the reptile's head, and tightened it about its body.

Then he began to drag it down.

The serpent resisted with all its might, coiling around anything it could lay hold of.

Strong though Monday was, the snake gave him plenty of work to do.

First he got the advantage, then the serpent won a yard or two.

It was "pull devil, pull baker."

The boys laughed at the singular contest till the tears ran down their cheeks.

Monday jabbered away at the snake, and perspired at every pore.

"You black thief," cried Monday, "come out dat, or I'll give you something. Oh, you beast; go in 'gain, will you? Come out that, I say, won't you? Then Monday have your head, you old villain."

"This is extremely comical," observed Mr. Mole, who being at a safe distance, had recovered his presence of mind.

"Haul on the rope, lad. Never let him cast anchor!" cried Ben Blunt, who enjoyed the scene as much as any one.

"Go it, Monday! I'll bet on Monday. Who'll take the odds?" exclaimed Jack.

"Done with you for a tenner," replied Harvey. "Just for the fun of the thing I'll lay the snake gets off through some hole or other."

"And I'll bet he don't," answered Jack.

They watched the varying contest with increasing interest, and it was clear from the loudness of Monday's tone that he was losing his temper.

CHAPTER XXXII.

HUNSTON'S NEW FRIENDS.

The snake was certainly a formidable antagonist.

It was fully twelve feet long and very thick.

Such reptiles were common in these islands, and had been known to do much mischief, as they frequently swallowed a little child.

Suddenly Monday dropped the rope, and quick as lightning he caught hold of the creature's tail.

He ran out of the cave so quickly, still holding on, that the reptile seemed quite confounded, and did not know what to do.

"Look out, sare," cried Monday. "Now him come. Mist' Mole, mind um eye."

Directly he had dragged the snake out of the cave, Monday swung it round with all his strength, intending to knock its head against a tree.

Mr. Mole, however, was in the way.

The snake hit him on the head, and he fell down sprawling on the ground and howling dismally.

Monday was obliged to let go, and the reptile crept under the boat which had been drawn up near the cave.

It was difficult to say which was the most frightened, Mr. Mole or the snake.

"Poke um out, sare. Now we got him," cried Monday, who was fairly excited by this time.

Jack took up the pole which Monday had dropped and began to poke under the boat.

"There it goes! Tally ho! Stole away!" exclaimed

Harvey, who saw the reptile gliding out at the other side.

Monday was after it like a shot.

He cleverly grasped its tail again, and with a quick jerk swung it round.

This time its head struck against a tree, and it fell confused and hurt to the ground.

Ben Blunt and Jack now fell upon it with hatchets, and it was quickly dispatched.

"That's the way we kill um snake, sare," said Monday, standing in triumph over the quivering body.

"Bravo! You can do it," exclaimed Jack; adding, "Where's Mr. Mole?"

This gentleman had crept under a bush, and his voice was heard faintly exclaiming:

"Is it dead? Have you killed the brute?"

"Dead as a doornail, sir," replied Jack.

Mr. Mole came out into the open air.

"I hope you did not think I was afraid," said he. "That would be a misconception I should be very sorry for you to put on my conduct."

"If you didn't hoist the white flag in token of surrender," observed Ben Blunt, "why, I never saw anything so much like it."

"Man," replied Mr. Mole, "it is unbecoming for a common seaman like you to pass judgment upon me."

"On the likes of you," said Ben, with a hearty laugh. "We're all equal in the forecastle, mate. So tip us your flapper. There are no bones broke."

"I distinctly refuse to place myself on a footing of familiarity with you," answered Mr. Mole.

"Jack's as good as his master," remarked Ben. "But I don't want to run my ship where she's not required."

"Ben didn't mean any offense," said Jack. "It's only his way, sir."

"Then it's a very nasty, disagreeable habit, Harkaway," answered Mr. Mole. "I stopped the snake very cleverly. If it had not been for me, he might have crushed that poor black fellow to death. I don't like Mr. Blunt's jeers. I will not be mocked by him."

"Avast there, sir," said Ben. "I'll say you killed the varmint, if that will please you."

"It will not please me, because it would be untrue," Mr. Mole replied. "But I assert, and will maintain, that without me the reptile would not have come to so sudden an end."

No one contradicting this assertion, Mr. Mole looked grandly around him, and went to examine the dead monster.

During the day Jack had the snake buried, as its remaining in the sun would have created an unpleasant smell so near the cave.

Then he took Harvey on one side, and told him what he had heard respecting Emily.

"She's gone, Dick, and what am I to do?" said Jack.

"I don't believe in this golden city," replied Harvey. "It is most likely a rich and luxurious place where the pirates live."

"So I think. It is a comfort to know that Emily is removed from Hunston, if only for a short time."

"Of course he means to join her as soon as possible, and imagines you will never find her."

"He's mistaken if he does," answered Jack, with his old look of determination. "I'll never rest till I have found her."

"It wouldn't be a bad dodge to capture Hunston and make him take us to her," said Harvey.

"If we could; but there is no telling where he is hiding. He's got a cave like ours, I expect; look how I've hunted for him."

"Let's have another try; shall we? Have you been round the coast?"

"No; inland chiefly."

"It's cool, now. Come for a stroll about the beach," continued Harvey. "I should think Hunston is more likely to be near the sea, so as to have access to his boats and be able to cut it, if hard pressed."

"You're right, by gum," said Jack. "I feel there is sense in what you say. Come on."

They took up their arms, saw that the caps were all right, and started on their journey.

After traveling about three or four miles, they saw a handsome ship not very far from land.

She lowered a boat, and a party of men got into her and pulled for the shore.

"I say, Dick, I'll bet a new hat that's the *Sea-horse*," exclaimed Jack.

"Ben Blunt's ship?"

"Yes; the one the mutineers have taken possession of, after murdering their officers."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Harvey. "But what a precious set of rascals they must be."

"This Sam Parsons, from all accounts, is a beauty. If all Ben says of him is true, he's a caution. What shall we do?"

"Perhaps," replied Jack, "they're coming on shore for water, or to have a spree. They don't expect to find white men here. Let's get as close to where they are

likely to land, as we can without being seen, and fog them."

"All right. Creep along behind these bushes, they will hide us," said Harvey.

The boys made their way cautiously along, and whenever they looked up they could see that the boat was coming nearer.

At last they could hear the measured sound of the oars in the rowlocks.

"Let's pitch here," said Jack, deeming it prudent to call a halt.

He pointed as he spoke to a clump of trees that afforded excellent shelter, at the same time giving them a capital view of the sandy shore.

There were fifteen men in the boat.

Two remained in her when she was beached, and the others landed.

Some carried small casks, so that it was evident that they were in search of water as Jack had surmised.

These started in various directions, and half a dozen stayed under a clump of trees, throwing themselves down and beginning to smoke and drink.

Suddenly a form emerged from behind a rock, and advanced to the men.

All sprang to their feet and grasped their arms.

"Look, Dick, that's Hunston," whispered Jack.

"So it is. What's his game?"

"Stand close. We shall see directly," replied Jack.

Hunston, for it was he, stopped, and the leader of the sailors exclaimed:

"Who goes there?"

"A friend," replied Hunston.

"Are you alone?"

"Yes, with the exception of a few friendly natives. Who are you?"

"My name is Sam Parsons," was the answer; "and I'm the captain of that ship you see riding in the offing. Now, who and what are you?"

"I was wrecked on one of these islands with some companions, but we've had a split," replied Hunston.

"Where are the others?" asked Parsons.

"On this island, too. We've had a fight, and they've beaten us."

"Are they armed?"

"They are," answered Hunston; "but if you'd join me, we'd soon settle their hash."

"You seem a free and easy sort of chap," said Sam Parsons; "and if you like to turn pirate, you're welcome to a berth with us."

"Pirate?" repeated Hunston.

"Yes. Is there anything wonderful in that?" answered the mutineer. "We didn't like our officers, so we——"

He drew his hand significantly across his throat.

"Gave them a free passage to the other world, eh?" said Hunston, with a grim smile. "That's just my style, and if you'll have me, I'll cut and hang with the best of you."

"Well said, my hearty!" exclaimed Sam Parsons. "You're made of the right stuff, and a man of better kidney never sailed under the black flag, I can see. Come and join us in a glass of grog."

"That I'll do with pleasure, for I've tasted nothing stronger than water this many a long day," said Hunston.

The men dropped their arms, and they were soon pledging each other.

They seemed to consider Hunston an acquisition, and crowded round him to hear the story which he recounted.

"So you want to have a slap at your old friends?" said Sam Parsons.

"That's my pious intention. I wasn't strong enough without you, but with you we can easily do it."

"Where are they?"

"About four or five miles up along the coast. They've got a cave, and are well armed; still we might surprise them at night."

"How many are there of them?" continued the mutineer.

"Two youngsters, a middle-aged man, a native, and a sailor-looking sort of chap who has only just joined them," replied Hunston.

"How do you know this?"

"Because I watched them this morning, one of my natives having met them. He pretended to run away from them, but turned back and tracked them to their lair. He took me close to them afterwards, so I know it's all right."

"What's this sailor like?"

"He's a bluff sort of fellow, and they call him Ben Blunt," answered Hunston.

"Why, it's Ben Blunt, the bo'sun!" cried Sam Parsons.

"And who may he be?"

"Why, he was in our ship's company, and being the only officer we liked, we spared his life and put him ashore. So he's joined the enemy!"

"Yes, that's the lot."

"Oh, by the Lord Harry," continued the mutineer, "we must have a slap at Ben. He may get off the island with his new mates, and he knows enough to send a man-of-war after us, and get the lot of us strung up."

A savage smile lighted up Hunston's countenance.

"You're with me, then?" he said. "Let us attack them in the gray dawn of to-morrow morning."

"Right you are, my hearty! What do you say, lads?"

"Ay, ay," responded the mutineers, in answer to Sam Parsons' appeal.

Harvey grasped Jack's hand.

"It's lucky we came out," he said, in a low tone.

"Yes," replied Jack. "Now we're warned we shall be a match for them, though if they'd surprised us and killed our sentry we should have been shot like parrots as we came out of the cave."

"Shall we go back now and fortify ourselves?"

"I think so. Those fellows who are out for water may see us if we stop," replied Jack.

With the same caution they had exercised in advancing, they beat a retreat.

They were disgusted with Hunston's constant enmity, and feared they would have no peace while he lived.

Mr. Mole and Monday had been preparing dinner, and having been successful in killing a hog that had escaped from its pen when Palembang was burned, a very savory smell of roast pork greeted them as they approached.

"Come along, Harkaway," exclaimed Mr. Mole. "We've got a spread fit for a king."

"All right, sir; pitch in," replied Jack. "I've got

some startling news for you, but it shan't take away my appetite."

"Anything new?" asked Ben Blunt.

"The *Sea-horse* is anchored off the shore, a few miles away, and our old enemy, Hunston, has met with and joined the mutineers."

"Is Sam Parsons ashore?"

"That he is," replied Jack. "He and his confederates have hoisted the black flag, and they mean to attack us to-morrow morning."

"The deuce they do!" said Mr. Mole, who was in the act of conveying a savory piece of pork to his mouth.

"The villains!" replied Ben Blunt. "It's all that Sam Parsons, though I could manage the rest of the crew, if it wasn't for him."

"It's you they want, Ben," continued Jack. "They are afraid of you since Hunston has told them you are with us. They say you can hang them."

"That's true enough, but hanging at the yardarm is too good for Sam Parsons."

"Never mind; we won't give you up, Ben; we'll fight for you."

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Ben Blunt; "I'll challenge Sam to fight me in single combat with cutlasses, and let the best man win. That'll save bloodshed."

"Bravo!" cried Jack. "I like a fair, stand-up fight."

"Will he consent?" asked Mr. Mole.

"Oh, Sam's plucky enough. He'll fight."

"And you mean to propose that if you beat him they shall let us alone, and we won't interfere with him," said Jack.

"That's just the idea," answered Ben.

"I've got an amendment to propose," said Harvey.

"What's that?" asked Jack.

"Only this: When the fight is over, whichever way it goes, get up a big drink; you and I will steal away, get into a boat and board the ship."

"They'll have men on guard," said Ben.

"Of course they will, but you forget that where there are no officers there is no discipline. The men will be drunk or asleep. I know what sailors are, well enough."

"Let me go with you, Harvey. I should like to share in that glorious enterprise," said Mr. Mole.

"More by token, the gentleman would not like to be left with Sam Parsons and his mutineers," replied Ben, with a grin.

"Silence, my good fellow," answered Mr. Mole. "My bravery has been tried often and often in the hour of danger. We have got to see what you can do."

"Let us all go," said Jack.

"Better still," Mr. Mole continued. "If our friend Ben here is victorious, he will be of service, and when we have made friends with the mutineers, and they are all intoxicated, we will sail for the vessel."

"Monday know a plant which make um all sleep till this time next week," exclaimed the black.

"Do you propose to drug them?"

"That it, Mist' Mole. Put something in one big stone bottle, that for them; put nothing but rum in another, that for us."

"Excellent! The thanks of the meeting are, I think, due to Harvey and Monday for two excellent ideas. Eat up your pig, Monday, and go in search of the drug," said Mr. Mole.

"If it all comes off, it will be ripping," exclaimed Jack.

"We'll do our little worst, anyhow," remarked Harvey.

After dinner the cave was strengthened by the erection of some mounds of earth which protected the entrance.

Each defender could crouch behind one of those little hills and fire at the enemy, without being exposed himself.

Monday procured the herb he wanted and put large quantities of it into a big bottle of rum.

The guns were all loaded.

Each member of the little board took up a position assigned him by Jack.

The oars were put in the boat, which was moored near the shore, so as to be ready at a moment's notice.

Anxiously the moments glided by.

Each heart beat quickly, for the coming day was pregnant with events of importance.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SENDING THE CHALLENGE.

The excitement attendant upon the expected attack of the mutineers prevented any of the party from sleeping.

They sat outside the cave, with their arms ready to their hands, and Monday walked up and down with a loaded rifle.

Mr. Mole had a bottle of rum, and dispensed the grog with a liberality which won the heart of Ben Blunt.

"You're a gentleman, every inch of you, sir," he exclaimed. "I can see by the way you handle the liquor."

"No personal allusions, if you please, my worthy friend," replied Mr. Mole.

"I can't help it, cap'n. What I've got in my mind must come out. Now, if it isn't a rude question, what do you think it cost you to color your nose? It must have been a tidy sum, but you can make a rough guess."

It was a fact that Mr. Mole's nose had assumed a rosy hue of late, and shone like a fiery beacon on a dark night.

"Nonsense, my good fellow!" he exclaimed. "It's the hot sun of these infernal regions. You're mistaken when you ascribe the effect to intemperance. It's nothing of the sort. Pass the bottle."

"Right, sir. B'ilers require water; quite nat'ral."

"Now, then," said Jack, "don't you two get sparing."

Mr. Mole had sprung up, as if he intended to correct Ben Blunt by striking him.

But Jack pushed him back again.

Putting one hand on his head and the other on Ben's, he said, in an unctuous voice, like that of a clergyman:

"Bless you! ber-less you, my children! Kiss and be friends."

"Remove your hand from my head instantly, Hark-away!" cried Mr. Mole. "It's a liberty I allow no man to take!"

"Kiss and be friends, then," said Jack. "We can't have you fighting. Wait for the mutineers."

"You're becoming very impertinent," continued Mr. Mole. "Both you and Harvey seem to have lost the respect you ought to entertain for me. Don't take any more liberties with me, Harkaway, or you'll hear more of it."

"Hullo!" cried Jack. "What's the matter? You're out of order, sir. Whose pills do you take?"

"Never mind; I will keep my place as leader of this party and protector of you poor, defenseless boys. You keep yours. It is my province to command, yours to obey."

Jack smiled and winked at Harvey.

"If so be as the gentleman wants a turn up on the grass, man to man, a fair field and no favor, I'm ready for him," remarked Ben Blunt.

"I do not fight," replied Mr. Mole. "Such low and blackguard practices may suit Whitechapel roughs."

"Hang me if I know how to take him. I'm game. I was never sick or sorry an hour in my life, and if he means fitting, why, I'll fit," said Ben.

"Don't you make any mistake, Ben," replied Jack. "Mr. Mole is as game as a pebble, and would come up fresh as a daisy after the fiftieth round. Don't you provoke him."

"What's he keep snacking at me for?"

"It's not for a boatswain, or whatever you call yourself, to insult a man of education like myself, understand that," exclaimed Mr. Mole, proudly.

"The likes of you! And what be I?"

"An indifferent cross, I should say, between an idiot

and a sea-cow," replied Mr. Mole, who was rapidly drinking more than he ought to.

Jack and Harvey roared with laughter at this sally.

Mr. Mole smiled blandly at this token of their approval.

"That's good. I flatter myself that's good, eh, Harkaway?" he said.

"Stunning, sir. You've spotted him to a T."

"He asked me my candid opinion, and I gave it him."

"Well, I'm blowed, gents!" exclaimed Ben Blunt, getting as red as a turkeycock. "He's a-giving it me a rum un all round the hoop. Cross between a hidiot and a sea-cow. Blow me tight! That's a nice thing to say about a respectable cove, whose father fought with Nelson in the *Victory* and whose mother took in officers' washing at Portsmouth. I'll spoil his figure-head!"

"Harvey, hold that misguided man while I hit him on the head with a stick," exclaimed Mr. Mole, adding, in a whisper: "Harkaway, what shall I do?"

"Cheek it out, sir."

"Mutinous dog, forbear!" continued Mr. Mole. "You were the companion of mutineers. I will put you in chains and convey you to your native land, there to await the judgment of your outraged countrymen."

Harvey had great difficulty in restraining Ben, who was speechless with rage and indignation.

"I think I've settled him," said Mr. Mole, with a hiccup. "What was it that broke the thingamy's back, Harkaway?"

"Straw, sir. Last straw broke the camel's back."

"Precisely. Turn to your natural history, and you find that the camel is a native of Bactria."

Mr. Mole took Ben's quiet attitude for cowardice. His courage rose accordingly.

"You need not hold the poor wretch any longer, Harvey. Let him go," he said. "I think I have snuffed him out."

"He's in a mortal funk, sir. I don't know what it is, but there's something about you which knocks them all over," replied Harvey.

"It's my bearing, Harvey, my majestic bearing."

Suddenly Ben found his tongue and sprang to his feet.

"I'll give him something!" he gasped. "When I've finished with him he shall have a cockeye and a game leg. There won't be much what d'ye call—bearing about that. Sink me, if there will."

"My word, sir," whispered Jack; "his monkey's up. You'd better cut and run."

"Run, Harkaway! I'd scorn to. But do you really think he means it? I thought I'd cowed him."

"Cut into the cave, sir. I'll square it in two minutes."

Ben Blunt was coming on at full speed, like an iron-clad ram with the steam full on.

Mr. Mole made a clean bolt into the cave, and began to barricade the entrance with some wood and bits of rock.

Jack stopped Ben Blunt and exclaimed:

"Steady, Ben; steady!"

"Steady she is, sir," replied Ben, who was too good a sailor not to pull up when spoken to by one whom he considered his superior officer.

"Drop anchor, Ben."

"Lower away, my lads," replied Ben; adding, as he sat down:

"She's swung round to her moorings, sir."

"Right, Ben. Now, listen to me. We make allowance for Mr. Mole. He is our senior, and we take no notice of what he says. He's privileged, Ben."

"That's all well enough, sir," cried Ben. "I'm no scholard, but it's hard to be called sea-cows and cussed hidiotis, ain't it, now?"

"All chaff, Ben. Nothing but empty chaff. I'll take my oath he didn't mean it. He's a good sort when you know him."

"Then may I be wrecked on a lee shore if I want to know him."

"Step aft, Ben, and say there's no bad blood between you. He's the bung on board this ship, and will stop your grog if you ain't civil."

"Will he 'pologize for the sea-cow, sir, think ye?" asked Ben, scratching his head, dubiously.

"Avast there, Ben. He's your superior officer. Never strike your flag, Ben, but always doff your hat to the ward room."

"You're right, sir. Tell him to come out. I won't hurt him," answered Ben Blunt, who was a good-natured fellow and easily pacified.

Jack went to the cave and said:

"It's supper time, sir; come and join us."

"Is—is that wild sailor fellow inclined to make peace, Harkaway?" asked Mr. Mole, looking cautiously through a hole in his barricade.

"He's like a lamb, sir."

"Is he? Then I'll venture out. I don't like mutineers, as a rule. Not that I am afraid of any man living, but directly I recollect he was a mutineer I

thought it best to get out of the dog's way," answered Mr. Mole.

"Now, then, Dick," cried Jack, "wake up! See what there is in the larder and put on the feed."

"There's cold venison and some bird stuff or other—parrot, I think," answered Harvey.

"All right; put it on. We'll make a night of it, and fight the enemy all the better when they come."

Mr. Mole emerged from the cave, and was induced to shake hands with Ben, who showed no further ill feeling.

The "feed," as Jack called it, was put "on," and a very pleasant evening passed.

In a short time the daylight came, and everybody was very valiant, especially Mr. Mole and Ben Blunt.

"Sam Parsons knows me well enough," exclaimed Ben, "and I don't believe that he'll show up."

"I've got an idea, Ben," said Jack.

"Bully for you, sir," replied the boatswain.

"Suppose you send Sam Parsons a challenge?"

"I'm game to do that, sir, and fight him as long as I can stand, with cutlasses or pistols, or both."

"Very well; Monday shall take the challenge, but it must be written."

"I'm no scholard, sir, as I said before," answered Ben, "but if so be that your honor will write it out I'll put my mark to it."

"I've got a pencil and a bit of paper," said Harvey

"Fork it out, then," replied Jack.

Harvey gave him the pencil and paper, and Jack spread the latter out on his knee.

"What shall I say, Ben?" he asked.

Ben scratched his head, and looked up at the reddening sky and then down upon the ground.

"It'll run somehow in this way," remarked Ben: "'I, Ben Blunt, late bo'sun of the *Sea-horse*, bound from Shanghai to the port of London.' Got that, sir?"

"Yes; 'port of London.' Go ahead."

"'Challenge Sam Parsons, also of the *Sea-horse*, and mutineer, to single combat.' Got that, sir?"

"All right; 'single combat.' Cut along."

"'And the said Ben Blunt will fight with cutlashes or pistols, and——' Got pistols, sir?"

"Yes, 'pistols.' "

"'And him as is whopped will have to bury the other, if so be as his lights is put out forever.' "

"That's lovely! I like the last bit," observed Harvey.

"We'll avenge you, Ben, if you fall," said Jack.

"P'raps Mr. Mole will have a turn at him, sir, if so be as I'm beat," observed Ben.

"Do you think I'd condescend to fight your battle, you son of a sea-cook?" exclaimed Mr. Mole, angrily.

"Gents," said Ben, "he's at me again."

"Never mind him; it's his way," answered Jack. "It pleases him and don't hurt you."

"Right, sir," replied Ben. "I only clap on sail when there's a capful of wind; it's when I feel a tempest coming that I take in canvas."

"Vulgar seaman!" said Mr. Mole.

"Well, sir?" inquired Ben.

"Peace, common fellow—peace!" continued Mr. Mole, waving his hand.

"Beg your honor's pardon," said Ben, speaking to Jack; "is that in the articles of war?"

"Yes; hold your noise."

"But sea-cows, and sea-cooks, and vulgar seamen,
and common fellows! Why, hang me, if I was a por-
poise I couldn't stand it much longer."

"Polish off Sam Parsons first, and then you shall have
a go at Mole."

"You promise me that, sir?"

"Religiously."

"Right. I'm dumb as an oyster, and then he'd better
batten down his hatch, or I'll walk into his hold,"
said Ben.

Jack got up and dispatched Monday, with a white
flag, to seek out the mutineers.

"Give them this," he said, "and bring us their an-
swer."

"All serene, Mast' Jack; Monday him do it," replied
the black.

But he hadn't gone half a dozen yards before he ran
back in a great state of agitation, crying:

"Here they come, sare, such a lot of 'em! Oh,
my, Mast' Jack! look out, sare!"

Each member of the party firmly grasped his weapon
and stood on the defensive.

The mutineers of the *Sea-horse* were advancing in
force.

It was a critical moment.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE SINGLE COMBAT.

"Harvey," said Mr. Mole, "don't get behind me. Show yourself a man, as I mean to do."

Dick was only kneeling to load his extra rifle, and took no notice of the admonition.

"You, Harvey, are a fine specimen of the *vitulus Britannicus*," continued Mr. Mole.

"Who's he, sir, when he's at home?" answered Harvey, getting up when he had finished loading.

"The British calf. *Vitulus Brit*—oh! get out of my way, Harvey. I will make for the cave. A bullet whistled past my head, and I thought there was only to be a single combat."

As Mr. Mole spoke a couple of shots hurtled past and buried themselves in the walls of the cave.

The mutineers had commenced the attack.

"This is getting hot," remarked Harvey.

"Getting hot?" replied Jack. "It's boiling hot already. Monday, hoist the white flag, as a sign we want to parley with them."

Monday did so.

The white flag was simply a bit of an old shirt stuck on the end of a bamboo.

"Hold your fire, Sam Parsons," cried Jack. "Here's a letter I want to show you from an old messmate. Stay where you are. Don't advance another step, or we fire."

Hunston at this moment came to the front.

"You haven't taken us by surprise, old fellow," continued Jack.

"Let them have it!" cried Hunston, angrily.

"Hold hard, governor," said Sam Parsons. "If so be as my old shipmate, Ben Blunt——"

"That's me," interposed Ben.

"I can see your old hull," continued Sam. "Well, as I was a-saying, if so be as Ben wants a bit of palaver, I ain't a-going to forget old times, and shan't say nary word against it."

"That's righteous, that is, Sam, and, though we ain't cousins, blow me if I don't sort of admire your style!" answered Ben.

"Shoot them all down, you fool; you'll lose your chance!" exclaimed Hunston, more furious than ever.

"Belay, there! It's a truce, Ben, isn't it?" said Sam Parsons.

"Truce it is, Sam."

"Look here, Hunston," exclaimed Jack, "I know you to be a coward and a villain, and so I've covered you with my rifle. If——"

"You wouldn't break the truce?" said Hunston, hastily, fearing Jack meant to kill him.

"No, I shan't to that, but I shall keep my eye on the bead and my finger on the trigger, and if you so much as move half an inch or open your ugly mouth again, I take my Dick I'll pot you!"

Hunston turned ghastly pale.

But as he looked at Jack he saw that he had his rifle to his shoulder, and that he could make "dead meat" of him in no time.

So he was obliged to be quiet.

"Ben!" exclaimed the mutineer.

"Here, lad," answered Ben.

"Where's this bit o' writin' you spoke about?"

"Monday!" said Jack.

"Yes, sare," replied the black.

"Deliver the challenge."

Monday advanced to Sam Parsons with the piece of paper on which the challenge was written, and Sam took it up, reading it with difficulty.

Some of his companions crowded round him and helped to make out its contents.

Turning to his lieutenant, Jimmy Clark, Sam said:

"What shall I do, Jim?"

"Do?" repeated Jimmy. "Why, fight him like a man. It's a fair challenge, and if he beats, we'll shake hands all round and let 'em alone."

"Well, if I beat?"

"Why, if you beats, we'll shake hands all round, too, and after a good liquor-up we'll up anchor and part friends," said Jimmy.

"Is that business, Jim?" asked Sam Parsons.

Jimmy had been a clerk somewhere, at some time or the other, and they called him the sea-lawyer.

If anything difficult had to be decided they always said:

"Go and ask Jimmy Clark; he's our sea-lawyer, and be hanged to him!"

Thus it happened that Jimmy had great influence over his lawless companions.

A little learning is a dangerous thing, and Jimmy hadn't much, but what little he had he made do double duty.

"Of course, it's business," replied Jimmy. "If Antony

had sent a challenge to Cæsar to meet him in the Campus Martius, wouldn't Cæsar have accepted it?"

"Then we must fight?"

"You and Ben must fight, that's about the size of it, and I'll bet a demi-quid on you, Sam."

"Right you are, Jimmy," said Sam Parsons. "I'm a plucked one."

"You have the choice of weapons, being the challenged party," continued Jimmy. "What will you have?"

"Cutlashes for me," exclaimed Ben.

"You dry up, old whale," exclaimed Jimmy. "It's for my man to choose. What do you want to spout for?"

"Well," said Sam, "cutlashes be it. I never liked to crab a pal, and if Ben Blunt says cutlashes, I'm on with cutlashes."

Two of the mutineers stepped forward and gave each of the intending combatants a cutlass.

They took the weapons and faced one another.

Both sides made a circle round the principals.

Jack, however, did not lower his rifle, and never took his eye off Hunston.

The single combat was about to begin.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE RESULT OF THE FIGHT.

The two old salts stood opposite one another and flourished their weapons, which glittered in the sunshine.

"Tip us your flapper, Ben," said Sam Parsons.

"Done with you, Sam," replied Ben Blunt. "I've no particular ill will against you, though you didn't behave quite friendly."

"It's understood, lads," said Jimmy Clark, "that, whoever licks, we makes friends and each party goes its own way."

Everyone assented.

"We'll stand the liquor," remarked Harvey, "and all shall be agreeable as far as we can make it."

"All right," replied Jimmy; "I'll back up Sam, and that gentleman with the clerical mug on him will, perhaps, do the same for Ben."

He pointed to Mr. Mole.

"Did you allude to me?" asked Mr. Mole.

"You're the cove. Step out here and we'll see fair play."

"I can have no possible objection to seconding the champion of our party, but I strongly object to being called the cove with the clerical—what did you say?"

"Mug," replied Jimmy.

"I think I understand your meaning, though I must protest against the vulgarity of your language. However, let that pass. I will do my duty," replied Mr. Mole.

Jimmy Clark took his place behind Sam Parsons.

Mr. Mole took his behind Ben Blunt.

"Make ready," said Jimmy.

The cutlasses described circles in the air.

"At the word 'three' strike," continued Jimmy.

There was a momentary pause.

Then Jimmy exclaimed:

"One, two, three!"

In an instant the blades crossed and struck fire.

Sam Parsons, was a tall, active fellow, but Ben was the stronger of the two.

Perhaps he was not so active as his opponent, though he seemed to understand the sword exercise.

The spectators applauded their respective champions, taking the utmost interest in the contest.

"Lay on, Sam," cried the mutineers. "Stick to him, lad; let him have it!"

While Jack and Harvey said:

"Cut him down, Ben—that's your sort! Be careful, old man. Now you have him."

Sam Parsons had the honor of dealing the first cut that drew blood.

It was an ugly blow on the left shoulder, but it did not disable his opponent.

The pain it caused him made him more furious than ever.

Hunston looked on and gnashed his teeth, for this affair was so different to what he had anticipated.

He intended to have massacred all his own friends, and his plans were spoiled by the chivalrous combat that was taking place.

Of course, he was safe with the mutineers, and did not fear being taken prisoner.

They would protect him.

At length Ben, by a lucky stroke, brought Sam Parsons on one knee, having cut through the tendons of his left leg.

"Good again, Ben! Cut him down!" cried Jack.

"Curse the luck!" gasped the mutineer, still dealing blows with his cutlass.

Ben Blunt was excited, and, encouraged by the cries of his party, rushed forward, raised his weapon with both hands and brought it down on the defenseless head of his enemy.

There was a groan.

Sam Parsons fell forward on his face, his head being cleft in two to the chin.

The mutineer's last hour had come.

There was a faint gurgle in his throat, a sort of death-rattle, and he gave up the ghost.

With the utmost composure the mutineers removed the body out of sight.

Then Jimmy Clark went up to Ben and said:

"I guess you're best man, and Sammy's gone home."

"And you're cap'n of the *Sea-horse*," replied Ben.

"That's right enough. However, we'll keep our compact. No more fighting. You've done the trick, Ben, and so we'll claim your promise. Bring out the liquor."

Jack was horrified at the careless indifference of those men at the loss of their companion.

A moment's reflection showed him that a ship's crew who had risen against and killed their officers were not likely to give way to tender emotions.

Nor had he any time to waste in a melting mood.

"Monday," he exclaimed.

"Yes, sare," replied the black.

"Bring out the stone bottle—you know which one," he added, in the native language, in a low tone.

Monday nodded his head in a significant manner and entered the cave.

He returned with a large stone bottle containing rum.

The contents had been drugged with the peculiar herb of which he had spoken.

Harvey and Mr. Mole were attending to Ben Blunt's hurt, which they bound up.

"Now, my lads, bring yourselves to an anchor," exclaimed Jack. "We shan't charge you any more for sitting. Here are some cups, such as we use ourselves, and here's the stuff."

With this he distributed some half-cocoanut shells, which could not be set down until they were empty, the bottom being round.

The men began to pour out the liquor, and Jack spoke to Hunston, saying:

"Are you going to join your new friends?"

"No, I'm not," replied Hunston. "I'm going to take my hook. The sight of you makes me feel ill."

"Does it?" answered Jack, with a sneer. "Then take that with you to remind you of me."

As he spoke he kicked him as hard as he could, just as he turned his back.

"You dare—" cried Hunston, in a rage.

Jack leveled a pistol barrel at him.

"Sheer off," he exclaimed, "or I'll settle accounts with you and wipe out all I have got against you."

"A time will come," said Hunston, burning with rage.

The next instant he had darted away and was lost to sight in the dense jungle.

Returning to the mutineers, Jack saw that they had all drunk.

Then he gave the stone bottle to Monday, saying:

"This is empty; go and get another."

"Ah, that's right," exclaimed Jimmy. "You'll join us. I thought you weren't going to leave us all alone. When we've had this drinking bout out and the truce is over we shall be at liberty to fight again."

"Oh, yes; I quite understand that," replied Jack.

"You know, we ain't going to let Ben Blunt crow over us."

"Of course not."

"We arranged that poor Sammy and Ben should fight it out and that there should be a truce," continued Jimmy. "Now we're drinking to our noble selves, but when we leave you here and get out of sight the war begins again."

"We're ready for you," said Jack.

Mr. Mole approached.

"I think, Harkaway, that I should not be showing the loving kindness of my nature if I did not drink the health of these fine fellows."

"Fire away, sir," answered Jack, handing him a cup full of rum.

Harvey, Ben and Monday now came in for their share, and they all fraternized.

"Ben, you old lubber," said Jimmy, "come and join us, lad, and we'll make you our cap'n."

"Not if I know it, Jimmy," answered Ben.

"You won't? Then to-morrow will see you as low as poor Sam Parsons, and we shall have lost the two best men in our crew."

"I'll never be a mutineer," replied Ben. "Scuttle me first."

"Come, gentlemen," exclaimed Jack, fearing a quarrel, "let the merry jest go round. We're friends now, whatever we may be to-morrow."

"That's right," answered Jimmy. "Who'll favor us with a song? Will you, sir?"

This request was addressed to Mr. Mole.

"I—I sing?" said Mr. Mole, in surprise. "I never did such a thing in my life. It is totally out of keeping with my character."

"Go on, sir," said Jack. "You can tip them a stave if you like."

"Harkaway, I protest."

"It's no use protesting, sir. You're knocked down for a song, and sing you must. It will be your call afterwards."

Harvey clapped his hands.

"Silence, gentlemen," he said; "silence, please, for Mr. Mole's song."

There was a dead silence, and everybody looked at Mr. Mole.

The unhappy gentleman bestowed a supplicating look upon Jack, who kept his eyes fixed on the ground.

"The penalty for not singing is being ducked in the sea, I believe," remarked Harvey.

Thus stimulated, Mr. Mole sighed and said:

"If I must I must, though I can only give you a ~~dimly~~ remembered trifle of my childhood."

Clearing his throat, he sang, in a cracked voice:

"Did you ever, ever, ever see a whale?
Did you ever, ever, ever see a whale?
Did you——"

"Blame me," interrupted Ben Blunt, "if I didn't once see a lovely spermaceti whale off the coast——".

"Order, Ben; shut up," cried Jack. "You're interrupting the harmony."

"Beg pardon, sir. Thought he was speaking to me,acos he looked——"

"Will you dry up?"

Ben collapsed, and Mr. Mole continued:

"Did you ever, ever, ever see a whale?
No, I never, never, never;
No, I never, never, never saw a whale,
But I've often, often, often;
But I've often, often, often seen a cow."

How much longer Mr. Mole might have gone on with his song it is difficult to say.

His voice, however, was drowned in a rude burst of loud laughter, in which everyone joined.

This was followed by hurrahs and bravos, and it became quite a word afterwards with everyone to say, "Did you ever see a whale?" and the reply would be, "No, but I've seen a cow."

Mr. Mole sat down and solaced himself with a little refreshment.

"I flatter myself I did that well, Harkaway," remarked Mr. Mole. "I was greeted with applause, and came off with flying colors."

"Certainly, sir," replied Jack. Adding, "Dick, did you ever see a whale?"

At this there was another roar, in which Mr. Mole joined.

"The fact is, Harkaway," continued Mr. Mole, "that it isn't everybody who could sing that song."

"So I should think, sir."

"The words are so simple——"

"Very simple, sir," said Jack, with a grin.

"So simple, I say," continued Mr. Mole, "that a great deal depends on the way it is sung."

Jack now remarked that some of the mutineers were lying on their sides.

The drug was beginning to take effect.

"Hullo! dowse my daylights," exclaimed Jimmy Clark, "but this is a rummy go. I've come over wonderfully sleepy all of a minute."

"Pitch on the ground, then," replied Ben Blunt. "Nobody won't eat you."

Unable to resist the influence of the drug that Monday had mixed with the liquor, the leader sank gently forward.

Directly afterwards he was fast asleep.

One by one the mutineers dropped off, and, springing to his feet, Jack exclaimed:

"Now, my boys, are you all armed?"

There was a general chorus in the affirmative.

"Does the boat float, Monday?"

"Yes, sare, him float safe enough," replied Monday.

"Slip your cable, then, and away to the *Sea-horse*. She is ours if we do our duty."

"Hur——" began Harvey.

"Silence, Dick. No halloaing till we're out of the wood. That thief Hunston's slinking about somewhere. We've our work cut out for us yet," interrupted Jack.

They did not know how many men had been left on-board the ship.

But their enterprise had succeeded so well, as far as it had gone, that they ran down the beach flushed with hope and jumped into the boat.

When they were all seated, the sail bellied to the breeze, and away they went.

THE END.

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