



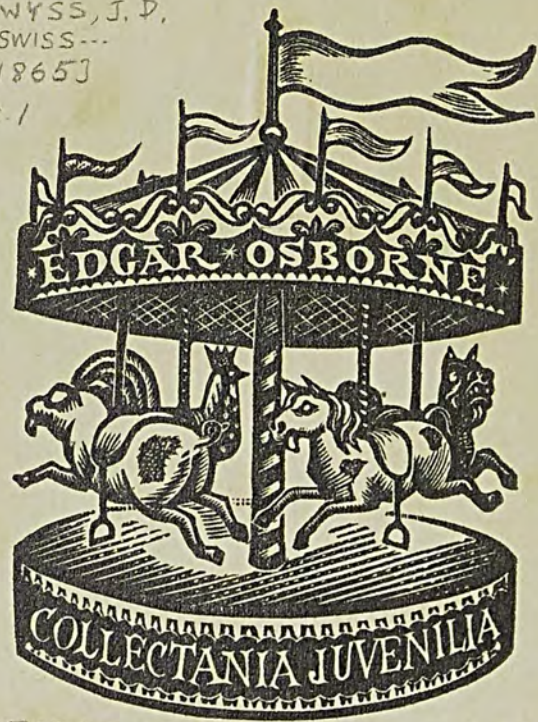
SWISS

FAMILY
ROBINSON



J. N. MACKINLAY.
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Mary Edgar.

J. N. M.
Box
269 S.
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1 Park Lane - London
30th June 1870

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Dear Mr. ...

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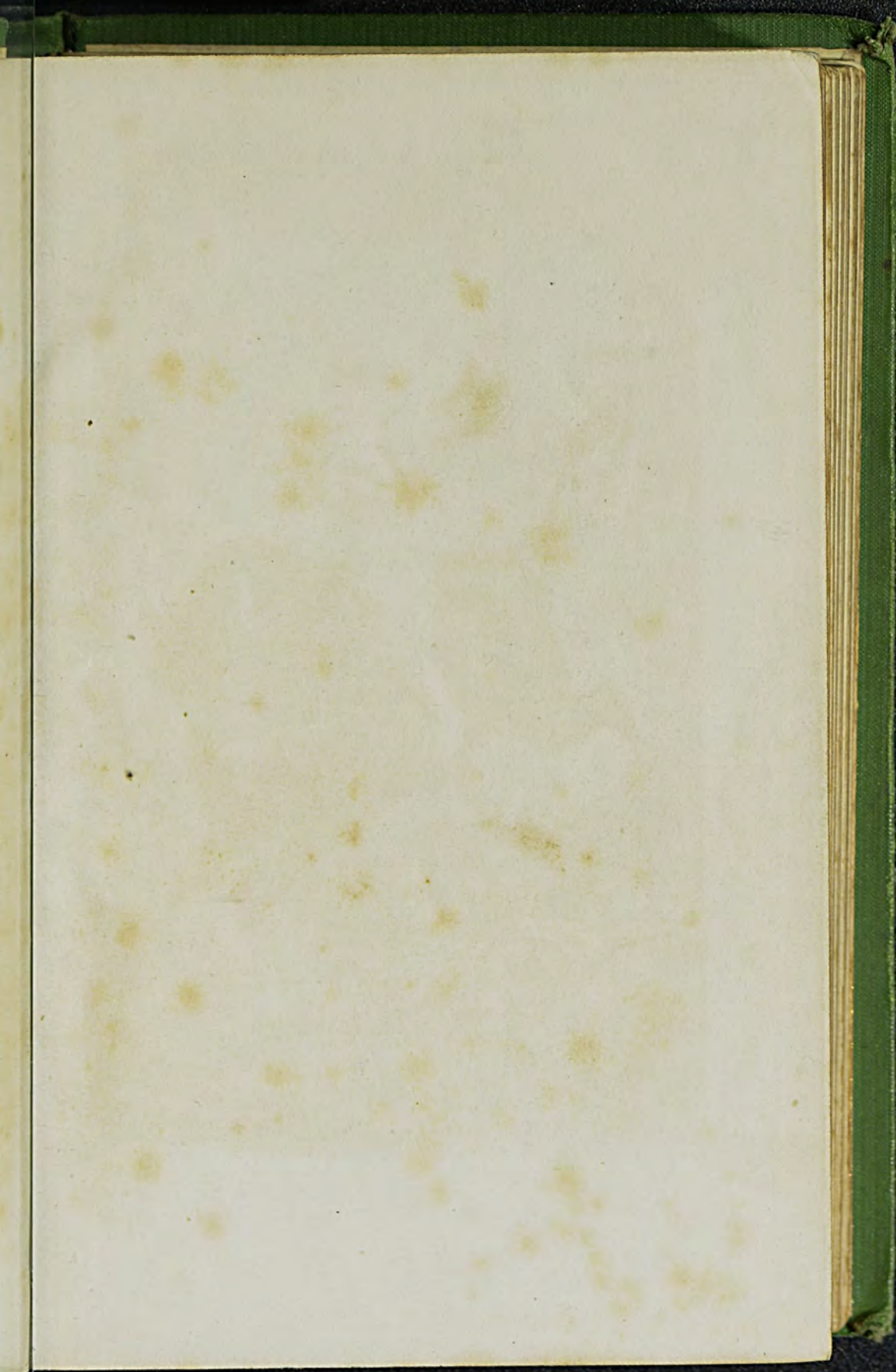
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About an hour after they had started, Jack returned on his buffalo. "Oh, Mr. Horseman!" I said, "it was of the swiftness of your own legs we wanted to judge, not of those of your buffalo.—p. 202.

THE
SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON;

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF A FATHER AND HIS FOUR SONS
ON A DESERT ISLAND.

Four Coloured Engravings on Steel.

GALL & INGLIS.

London :
30 PATERNOSTER ROW.

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THE
SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON.

CHAPTER I.

THE SHIPWRECK.

THE storm had lasted six days, and, far from subsiding, seemed doubly furious. We were driven so far to the south-west, out of our route, that it was impossible to discover in what latitude we were. The ship had lost her masts, and was drawing water on all sides. We each commended our souls to God, praying Him in mercy to show us a way of escape.

“Children,” said I to my four sons, who gathered, weeping, round their mother, “God can still save us, if such is His will, but if He decide otherwise let us be resigned. At the worst, we leave this world only to be re-united in a better.”

My wife, drying her tears, and forcing herself to appear calm, tried to inspire the children with courage and resignation. We knelt down and prayed fervently.

All at once, above the roar of the wind and

waves, I heard, with a thrill of delight, the joyful cry, "Land! land!" At the same moment we felt a shock, followed by a frightful crash; and I knew, from the fixedness of the vessel, and the dead sound of the waves breaking against her, that we had been thrown upon the rocks.

"We are lost—lower the boats!" cried a voice which I recognised as the captain's.

"Lost!" repeated the children, looking towards me with terror.

"Take heart," said I; "do not despair. I will go and see what can be done to secure our safety."

I left the cabin and went on deck. Struck, blinded, thrown down by the waves, it was some time before I could distinguish anything. When at last I had gained the higher part of the vessel, I saw the boats had been launched, and were already overloaded with the crew and passengers, who had eagerly crowded into them. A sailor was just cutting the last rope! They had forgotten us! I shouted to them; but my voice was lost in the noise of the tempest, and I saw, with horror, that we were abandoned with the wreck. At the same time I discovered that the vessel had been cast so high that the stern, in which our cabin was situated, could not be reached by the waves; and notwithstanding the thick rain which fell, I could perceive, at some distance, a shore, which, in spite of its bare and

desolate aspect, awoke some hopes of safety. I returned to my wife and children, and affecting a calmness I was far from feeling, said to them:—

“Take courage; part of the vessel is, thanks to God, firmly fixed. To-morrow the wind and the sea will be calmer, and we may then gain the land.”

The children, with the confiding disposition of their age, brightened up at my words; and their mother, as the evening drew on, hastily prepared a slight repast, of which they partook with a good appetite, and having gone to bed, were soon fast asleep. My wife and I continued all night watching, and passed most of our time in prayer. Towards the morning I began to be conscious that the storm was subsiding. As soon as day dawned I went on deck. The wind was much fallen, the sea was quieter, and the horizon was glowing with the rosy tints of sunrise. Cheered by the changed aspect of the sky, I called my wife and sons. The latter were very much astonished to find that we were the sole occupants of the vessel.

“Where are the sailors?” they cried; “why did they not take us with them? What is to become of us?”

“My children,” I answered, “our companions have acted rashly. They crowded into the boats, and pushed off without giving us a thought; and

I am afraid they have been drowned in the night. However, the sky is now clear, and land is not very far off; we may yet live to thank God that we were left behind; let us, without delay, take means to secure our safety."

"Father," said Fritz, "I have been thinking how we could get to the land. If we had some cork or bladders, we might make floats for my mother and brothers; you and I could swim without any help."

"That is a good idea, my boy," I answered, "only there are neither corks nor bladders in the ship, I fear. We must see if we cannot find some barrels, which will do as well."

Ernest, my second son, an intelligent, but a timid and indolent boy of about twelve, was alarmed at the idea of so precarious a voyage, and suggested that we would be safer on a raft.

"Well, let us make a raft with barrels," I said. "I have no doubt there are plenty in the hold, if we can but reach them." With some difficulty, I succeeded in drawing four of them up to the lower deck, which was nearly on a level with the water. They were made of good strong wood, and clasped with iron hoops. I began our work by sawing them in two, with Fritz's help.

We arranged side by side the eight little tubs thus obtained, leaving sufficient space between them for seats; and finding a few slight planks long enough to join them together, we nailed

them firmly down and fastened them by bolts. We also nailed two planks along the entire length on both sides, bending them at the ends. This accomplished, we found ourselves in possession of a boat, which, at least on a calm sea, would be tolerably secure. We next tried to launch it, but it was so heavy that our united efforts failed to move it.

I called for a lever; and Fritz, who remembered having seen one, went, with his two brothers, to fetch it. With this instrument, I raised our unwieldy contrivance, and when Fritz had placed rollers under it, it was easily moved. The children were amazed at the power of the lever; and I promised to explain to them how it worked at our first leisure hour, if we were spared.

In a few moments afterwards our boat slid from the deck into the sea, and darted away so swiftly, that we should have lost it, had I not taken care to secure it by a strong cable to one of the pins of the vessel. The children, when they saw it afloat, shouted for joy. The raft rested on the water, but in an unstable position for want of ballast. Seeing this, I felt a momentary disappointment, but soon provided a remedy.

I went myself to where I knew the provisions were kept, to take some of them ashore with us for immediate use, and put them in one of the barrels. Fritz, by my directions, went to the ammunition store, from which he brought rifles,

pistols, powder, balls, and shot. Ernest ransacked the carpenter's cabin, and came back loaded with tools and nails. Little Francis, my youngest child, anxious to make himself as useful as the others, produced a box of fish-hooks. Fritz and Ernest laughed at this trophy; but I told them it was not to be despised; it might yet be our only means of support. All these except the last we stowed away in the barrels. As to Jack, my third son, a lively frolicsome boy of ten, he appeared leading by the ears two enormous dogs, which had been shut up in the captain's cabin, and were quite tamed by hunger. My wife reminded me that there was a cow, an ass, two goats, and a pig on board; but these we were unable to take with us. The only discovery which struck me as being of little use was Jack's.

"You have brought us," I told him, "two enormous eaters, which will cost much, and be of little service."

"Father," he answered, "I thought they would help us to hunt when we got ashore."

"You are right," said I, "but we are not yet ashore, and cannot find room for them just now."

We still wanted oars. Ernest found four that the sailors had left behind. Remembering that savages, to preserve the equilibrium of their canoes, use a kind of balance, I determined to follow their example. I took two yards, and joined them to-

gether, so that they could turn freely towards either end of the boat. To each of these poles I tied a small empty barrel, which kept the boat steady.

By the time all was adjusted, it was too late to think of setting sail that day; we must pass another night on the foundered vessel; but my wife consoled us for this disappointment by a good repast.

At length we all retired to rest—having first commended ourselves to God—and slept well, for the day had been a laborious one. That night passed away without any accident.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST DAY ON LAND.

AT break of day we were all awake; hope, like sorrow, sleeps little. Morning prayers over, I said to my children, "With God's help we will now attempt our deliverance. Give the animals provisions for several days; we will return and fetch them if, as I hope, we succeed in saving ourselves."

I took, in addition to what we had collected on the previous day, as being most necessary, a barrel of powder, one or two guns, several pairs of pistols, some balls, along with lead and moulds

to enable us to make more. We were each provided with a bag of provisions. I took a case of portable soup, a box of biscuits, a large pot, some knives, hatchets, saws, pincers, nails, gimlets, and some sailcloth for a tent. We had heaped so many things together, that I was obliged to leave much behind. We were just going on board when we heard the cocks crowing, as if bidding us farewell. My wife thought we had better take them with us, as well as the ducks, geese, and pigeons. Accordingly, we put two cocks and a dozen hens into one of the tubs, which I covered over with a wooden grating. As for the geese, ducks, and pigeons, I set them at liberty, trusting that their own instinct would guide them to land.

The children were already embarked, in the order I had assigned to them, when my wife came from the hold of the vessel carrying a large sack, which she threw into the tub where she had put little Francis. I thought nothing of it at the time, supposing that the careful mother was only providing a more comfortable seat for her child.

When I had seen them all seated, I cut the cable, and we rowed toward the shore. In the first tub was my wife; in the second, Francis. Fritz and I sat upon a rough plank which we had made as a seat, to enable us to row. I gave Ernest one of the oars for a helm. Jack was in the sixth tub.

The dogs being too heavy to be allowed to

embark with us, we left them on the vessel. When they saw that we were gone, they began to howl piteously, but suddenly threw themselves into the water, and soon rejoined us.

The sea swelled gently, the sky was clear, and the sun was bright. We rowed along smoothly, aided by the rising tide. Around us floated boxes and barrels belonging to the wreck. Fritz and I would fain have seized them, but we were too heavily loaded already, and moved very slowly.

We made the passage without accident; but the nearer we drew to the land, the more barren and desolate it appeared. All we could distinguish was a range of naked grey rocks. Fritz, however, thought he discerned clumps of palms. Ernest, naturally fond of luxuries, was delighted with the idea, for, judging from what he had read, coconuts, he thought, were much better than any European nuts.

“How happy I shall be,” cried little Francis.

On this a discussion arose amongst the children about the nature of the trees which Fritz had pointed out to them; and I was regretting that I had not brought the Captain's telescope, when Jack drew from his pocket a small perspective glass he had found in the boatswain's room. I turned towards the shore, and, forgetting the point in question, I tried to discover a convenient landing-place, and spied a creek, towards which

the geese and ducks, having got ahead of us, were directing their course.

“And the cocoas, papa; do you see them?” said Francis.

“Yes,” I replied, smiling, “Fritz’s eyes have not deceived him. I can distinguish trees, even at this distance, very like cocoas.”

“Oh, how delightful,” cried he, clapping his little hands.

Hard rowing soon brought us ashore, and we landed at the mouth of a little stream, where the water was only deep enough to float our raft, and where, the banks being low and shelving, it was easy to leap out. The children sprang lightly ashore, all excepting little Francis, who, in spite of his impatience, could not leave his tub without his mother’s help. The dogs welcomed us by barking and leaping for joy. The ducks and geese, already at home on the banks of the stream, mingled their salutations with the hoarse cries of the penguins perched on the rocks, and the screams of the flamingoes overheard. Francis, in his delight at seeing them, forgot even the cocoas.

Our first care when we landed was to kneel down and thank God, who had so mercifully preserved us, and ask Him to continue to us His protection. I embraced my wife and children; and my wife, with tearful eyes, said, “God is good. He has still left us each other, and our dear children.”

We then began to unload the raft; and although what we had been able to bring with us was inconsiderable, we thought ourselves rich in possessing it. Having chosen a convenient place, we set about erecting our tent. I drove into the ground one of the poles we had used to balance the boat; to the top of this I fastened the second, the other end of which rested in a cleft of the rock. Over this I threw the sailcloth, which I fastened to the ground with stakes, making it more secure by placing upon it our casks of provisions, and other heavy objects. Fritz attached hooks to the opening, so that we could shut ourselves in at night.

I told the children to gather together, for beds, all the dry herbs and moss they could find. While they were thus occupied, I constructed at a little distance from the tent a sort of hearth, to which I carried several armfuls of dry wood from the banks of the stream, and we had soon a bright crackling fire. My wife placed on it a large pot full of water, into which I put some of the portable soup.

"What are you going to glue, papa," said Francis, who mistook the soup in its solid form for glue. His mother, smiling at the question, told him I was making soup.

"Soup made of glue!" said he, making a wry face.

"No, dear," said his mother, "good rich soup made of meat."

“Made of meat!” cried Francis; “then you are going to the butcher’s, mamma?” His mother explained to him that what he had mistaken for glue was the juice of meat reduced to a solid state by cooking. “It is used by sailors,” she said, “instead of fresh meat, which would not keep during long voyages.”

Fritz, who had loaded his gun, went higher up the stream. Ernest wandered in an opposite direction along the shore. Jack amused himself climbing the rocks in search of mussels. I was pulling out of the water the casks we had towed to shore, when I heard Jack screaming. Armed with a hatchet, I ran in the direction in which I heard his voice, and found him up to his knees in the water.

“Papa, papa,” cried he, in a voice in which triumph mingled, “make haste, I have caught a large lobster.”

“Well, bring it here.”

“I cannot, papa; it has got hold of me.”

“I could scarcely help laughing when I saw this would-be conqueror held prisoner by his captive; but there was no time to be lost in going to his rescue. A large lobster held him by the leg, and poor Jack struggled in vain to escape from its pincers. When I waded into the water it let go its hold and tried to make off, but I caught it and brought it ashore. Jack, anxious to show this prize to his mother, seized it with

both hands, but it gave him such a pinch that he quickly let it go, and began to cry. I could not restrain my inclination to laugh any longer; but when I showed him that the best way to secure his prisoner was to seize it by the middle of the body, he was quite consoled, and ran away triumphantly to his mother.

“Mamma! Francis! Ernest! Fritz! Where is Fritz?” he cried, on arriving at the tent; “come, see a lobster! a lobster!”

Ernest, after gravely examining the animal, gave it as his opinion, that it should be put into the pot to improve our soup. His mother, however, not quite persuaded of the excellence of this receipt, preferred to cook it separately. Ernest then told us that he also had made a discovery.

“I saw some shell-fish in the water,” said he, “but I could not reach them without wetting my feet.”

“I saw them, too,” said Jack disdainfully, “but what of that? They were only bad mussels, that no one could eat. They are not to be compared to my lobster.”

“Who knows,” replied Ernest, “that they are not oysters? Indeed I am almost sure they are, from the manner in which they are attached to the rocks, and from the depth of water at which they are found.”

“Well, Mr Nicety,” said I, “if you think they

are oysters, why did you not bring us some? You were afraid of wetting your feet, you say; remember that in our circumstances we must not be too particular."

"I saw, besides," answered Ernest, "some salt in a crevice of the rocks; I suppose it has been formed by sea-water, being dried up by the sun."

"Well," cried I, "you great discoverer, you should have brought a whole sackful of it; go and make amends for your negligence, or we shall have very insipid soup."

Ernest ran off, and soon reappeared with the salt, which, however, was so mixed with sand and earth, that I was on the point of throwing it away, when my wife stopped me. Melting it in some water, she strained the water through a piece of linen and seasoned the soup with it. I told Ernest he should have been more careful in gathering it. The soup was now ready, but Fritz had not yet returned; and, besides, contemplating the large boiling pot, we began to ask how we were to partake of it. Must we lift this great boiling pot to our lips each in turn, or must we lift the soup in our hands? Our circumstances were not unlike those of the fox in the fable, when the stork presented his food in a bottle. Our situation was really laughable.

"If we had only some cocoa-nuts," said Ernest, "we could make them into spoons."

"Yes," said I; "if to wish were to have, we might instantly supply ourselves with beautiful silver spoons. We have not yet discovered Fritz's cocoa trees; the rocks are between us and them; we must think of something within our reach."

"Could we not use oyster-shells?" replied Ernest.

"A very good idea," cried I; "run and get some."

Ernest obeyed; but Jack, more active in his movements, was already in the water when he reached the shore. Jack separated them from the rocks and threw them on the beach to Ernest, who thus did not require to wet his feet. As they returned, Fritz also reappeared. He came forward with one hand behind his back, affecting a dispirited air.

"Have you found nothing?" I asked.

"Nothing at all," he answered. But his brothers, who crowded round him, snouted, "Oh, a guinea-pig! Where did you find it? Let us see it!"

Fritz then produced it proudly. I congratulated him on his success; but at the same time reprimanded him for the untruth he had told, and which he thought was excusable as a joke. He asked my pardon; and then related to us how, when he had crossed to the other side of the stream, he found that the country was much more fertile than where we were. "The vege-

tation there," he said, "is very luxuriant, and besides, on that part of the beach the sea has thrown up a quantity of boxes and casks and other things from the wreck. We must not let all these be lost. Let us go to the vessel and bring the cattle on shore. The milk the cow would give us would make our biscuits much more palatable; and on the other side of the stream there is plenty of fine pasture for her, as well as large trees to shelter us. Let us go over there, and leave this bare desolate shore."

"Patience, patience," said I. "Everything in its right time; to-morrow must follow to-day; and first of all, have you seen any trace of our unhappy companions?"

"No, none. Neither on shore nor on the sea. I saw no living creatures, but a troop of animals like the one I have brought. I think they are guinea-pigs, but they must be of a particular species, for they have feet like hares. They are so tame that I could observe them quite near. They frisk amongst the grass, and sit and eat like squirrels."

Ernest, with his most learned air, examined the animal minutely, and then, on the authority of his book of natural history, declared it to be an agouti.

"Ah!" said Fritz, "listen to the sage who tries to impose upon us; I am sure that is a guinea-pig."

“Do not speak so positively,” I said to Fritz; “I never saw an agouti alive, but the animal you have there answers to the description given of it by naturalists. Besides being too large, its flattened head, little ears, short tail, and thick smooth hair, all forbid the idea of its being a guinea-pig. It is like a large rabbit; and see how sharp and curved its front teeth are. A guinea-pig never had such teeth.”

“Father,” said Ernest, “since the agoutis are so tame, why could we not train them like rabbits, and then we should have game without hunting for it?”

“Yes, that would suit your indolence nicely, my lazy Ernest; try it, if you like; the agouti is not very difficult to tame. But I warn you they will give you much more trouble than rabbits. They are famous gnawers; nothing can resist their teeth, however hard; I have heard of them even gnawing through an iron wire cage. In what kind of prison would you confine yours?”

Jack, while his brothers were listening to this lesson in natural history, was trying hard to open an oyster with a knife, but in spite of all the wry faces he pulled and the great efforts he made, he did not succeed. I showed him, however, that if laid upon hot coals they opened of themselves.

“Now, children,” I said, “this is one of the dainties most prized by gourmands.” So saying,

I ate one; but Fritz and Jack, imitating my example, declared them very bad; Ernest and Francis agreed with them. No one cared to eat any more; so we threw away all but the shells of the others, and used them as spoons.

While we were making a good meal, the dogs, which thought they could not do better than follow our example, discovered Fritz's agouti, and began to attack it. Perceiving this, Fritz was furious, and the first thing he could lay hold of being his gun, he struck them with it so violently as to break it. Then, when they made their escape, he threw stones after them so long as he thought he could reach them.

This was not the first time that Fritz had given way to passion. I reprimanded him severely for this violent outbreak—which grieved me the more as it was a very bad example for his brothers—and showed him that, in the blindness of his rage, he had not only completely destroyed his gun, but also maimed the poor animals which would be of the greatest service to us. He saw the justice of the rebuke, and soon showed that he was sorry for his fault. I pardoned him on condition that he would make his peace with the dogs. He took a bit of biscuit in each hand and set off, soon reappearing with the faithful animals.

“Oh, father,” he said, the tears standing in his eyes, “they licked my hands before taking the

biscuit. How could I be so cruel to such good creatures."

The sun was setting as we finished our repast. The fowls and ducks gathered round us, and my wife got them some corn from the bag I had seen her throw into the tub Francis had occupied. I praised her forethought, but advised that the birds be fed on biscuit crumbs, and that the corn be kept for sowing. The pigeons went to roost in the crevices of the rocks, and the fowls on the top of the tent, while the ducks sought shelter for the night among the rushes at the mouth of the stream. We also made preparations for repose. We loaded our arms and placed them so as to be at hand in case of any alarm; and having offered up our evening prayer, we retired into the tent. To the great surprise of the children, it was dark almost immediately, from which I guessed we were somewhere near the equator, or at least within the tropics.

I looked out once more before retiring to rest, to make sure that all was right, and then closed the entrance to our tent. It was a chill fresh night, and the cold made us draw close together. The children were soon asleep. My wife and I had arranged that I should watch till midnight, and that she should then replace me; but insensibly sleep crept over me, and God alone watched over us during the first night we passed on this land of exile.

CHAPTER III.

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY.

My wife and I were early wakened the next morning by the crowing of the cocks. Our first care was to deliberate on the day's work. She agreed with me that we should first try to discover some trace of our shipmates. We could, at the same time, explore the country, and fix on some spot on which to pitch our tent. It was arranged that Fritz and I should go on this tour of discovery, and that the other boys and their mother should stay near the tent. The latter set about preparing breakfast, while I awoke the children, who were all soon up, not even excepting Ernest. I asked Jack what had become of the lobster. He told me he had hid it in a crevice of the rocks, to save it from the fate of Fritz's agouti.

"Well," said I, "you are not blind to your own interests, and you have learned a lesson from Fritz's experience. Will you let us take its claws for food during the journey we are going to make?"

"Oh, a journey! a journey!" cried all the children at once; "take me, papa, take me!"

"It is impossible to take you all at this time," said I, "we should get on so slowly; and if we

met with any danger, it would be difficult to defend you all. Fritz and I will go alone with Turk, and you will stay with your mother, and keep Flora for protection."

Fritz, reddening, asked me if he might leave his own gun, which he had spoiled, and take another. I gave him permission, without seeming to notice the confusion the remembrance of his fault caused him. I made him take a pair of pistols and a hatchet in his belt, and did the same myself. We filled our bags with powder and shot and provisions, taking, besides, a tin bottle of water. Breakfast was now ready. It consisted of the lobster, which, however, proved so hard that the most of it was left for us to take with us. Fritz advised that we should set out before the heat became very great.

"You are right," said I; "let us go; but stay, we have forgotten something very important."

"What is it?" he asked; "to kiss my mother and brothers?"

"It is to thank God," said Ernest.

"Yes, my dear Ernest, you have guessed right."

I was interrupted by Jack, who, imitating the ringing of a bell, cried, "Ding dong, ding dong! to prayers! to prayers!"

"Naughty child," said I, "thus to ridicule sacred things. Leave us; we will not admit you to worship at all." Jack went away with a full

heart, and knelt by himself. After prayers he came forward and promised me he should never again commit the same fault. I kissed him fondly, glad to pass by his thoughtlessness.

When I had reminded the children to be kind and obedient to their mother, we set out, not without tearful eyes and anxious hearts; for my wife was afraid our adventure might be a dangerous one, and I was anxious about the safety of the dear ones we were leaving. We proceeded at a brisk pace, and before long the noise of the stream drowned the farewells of those we had left behind.

In order to cross the stream, we had to go farther up its course, to a place where the steep overhanging rocks made its bed considerably narrower, and where it formed a waterfall. On the opposite side, the country presented quite a different appearance. We found ourselves first amongst high dry grass, through which we found it very difficult to make our way. We had gone about a hundred steps, when we heard a rustling behind us, and, turning quickly round, we saw that something was moving the grass. Fritz loaded his gun, and held himself ready, with his finger on the trigger, to meet the intruder; but he soon recognised Turk, whom we had forgotten, and who now came to rejoin us. I patted the faithful animal, and praised the presence of mind which Fritz had shown in not being afraid of the

danger, and in not firing hastily before he had distinctly seen who the supposed enemy was.

Continuing our course, we gained the sea shore, which we scanned anxiously to discover some traces of our shipmates; but all in vain. We examined the sand to find, if possible, some footprints; but we could see nothing. Fritz suggested that we might fire our guns once or twice, so that, if any of the castaways were in the neighbourhood, they would be attracted to us.

"That is very well," I answered, "if we were sure the noise would not attract bands of savages, an encounter with whom would be anything but agreeable."

"After all," said he, "I do not see why we should trouble ourselves about those who so heartlessly abandoned us."

"For several reasons," I answered: first, because it is contrary to the golden rule to render good for evil; and, besides, we have as much need of them as they have of us."

"But, father, we are losing time in searching for them, which might be better employed in bringing ashore the cattle we left on the wreck."

"Of the two duties let us attend first to the most important," said I. "The animals have food enough to last them several days, and they are in no danger from the sea, which is very calm."

We left the shore, and after going about two leagues, always keeping a watchful eye around us,

we entered a small wood. Having walked about two hours, and the sun being now high, we rested beside a small stream, which murmured gently, while round us flew, chirped, and warbled, birds of a beautiful bright plumage, quite unknown to us. Fritz thought he saw a monkey amongst the branches of the trees. I thought he was right, for Turk began first to smell about, and then to bark at something in that direction. As Fritz went to see what it was, and walked along looking up at the trees, he stumbled on something round, all bristling with hair. He took it up eagerly and brought it to me, saying that he thought it must be the nest of some large bird.

“Your nest, my dear Fritz,” I said, laughing at his mistake, “is a cocoa-nut.”

Fritz, however, with a self-confident spirit, natural to youth, persisted in his opinion.

“There are many birds,” he said, “that make their nests round like that.”

“That is true; but why do you speak so positively. Do you not remember having read that the cocoa-nut is protected by a mass of fibres, which, in their turn, are covered with a thin brittle skin. The one you have found is evidently old; the outer covering has been destroyed by the air; if you lift those hairy fibres you will see the nut.” Fritz did so, and saw that I was right. We then broke the shell, but found the kernel dry and uneatable.

“What,” said Fritz, “is that the fruit that the learned Ernest praised so much? I expected to find a delicious milk in it.”

“You would have done so had this nut not been so perfectly ripe; but as the nut ripens, the milk thickens and forms a kernel, which becomes dry and hardens, unless the fruit falls into a soil where it can germinate, in which case it breaks the shell to give birth to a new tree.”

“What!” said Fritz, very much astonished, “has the kernel power to break through a shell so solid as that is?”

“Yes,” said I; “have you never seen a peach stone open in the same way? yet it is very hard.”

“But peach stones are naturally formed of two parts, which the kernel separates when softened by the moisture.”

I told him he was right, but that the cocoa germinates in a different way. I showed him three little holes near the end of the nut. “These openings,” I said, “are closed, as you will see, by a softer substance than that of which the rest of the shell is composed. It is by these that the germs of the stalk and the roots find there way out.” I was glad to see that my son listened with great interest to these lessons on the wisdom of nature’s laws. We now started afresh on our journey, keeping still across the wood. We were often obliged to cut a road with our hatchets through the luxurious undergrowth which formed

a network on our path. We discovered strange unknown plants and trees at every step. Fritz, who thought every one stranger and more beautiful than another, suddenly exclaimed:—

“Oh! papa! what are those trees with wens on their trunks?”

I recognised the calabash, which, twisting its flexible stem round the trunks of other trees, forms on them a species of excrescence, with a hard dry rind. These gourds are useful for making plates, bowls, bottles, or spoons. I told Fritz that the savages make use of them even for boiling water or cooking food. He was very much astonished that such utensils could stand the fire. I then explained to him that they were not put upon the fire, but that the water was heated by red-hot pebbles, which were thrown into it.

“Oh! is that all?” cried he; “the plan is so simple that I would have found it out with very little reflection.”

“Yes,” said I, “you would have found it out, just as the friends of Columbus discovered how to make an egg stand on end after he had told them. The most simple ideas are often those most difficult to discover.”

While speaking, we had each taken a calabash, and were trying to convert them into some useful utensil. Fritz tried to cut his with his knife, but failing, threw it away impatiently. Tying a cord

round mine, I tightened it gradually till it cut the gourd through, and I had two bowls of equal size.

“I own,” said Fritz, “that I could not have been so ingenious.”

“I do not claim credit for the invention,” I answered; “I have only put into practice what I remember having read the savages, who have no knives, do.”

Fritz wanted to know how the gourds could be made into bottles. “I understand,” he said, “how, when the calabash is dried, the pith may be extracted by a hole; but is there no way of making them into a more convenient shape, and giving them a neck?”

I told him that to form a neck, while the fruit is still young, the upper end of it is bandaged tightly round with linen or bark, which prevents its further growth, while the other part is allowed to grow freely. Fritz took courage from my success, and we made a good many bowls, which I placed in the sun to dry, filling them with sand to prevent them shrivelling up too much; and, marking the spot where we left them, so as to be able again to find it, we went on our way. We tried to manufacture some spoons as we went along; and although they were very clumsy productions, they were a great improvement on the oyster-shells we had used the previous evening.

Fritz leapt with joy: “Plates, cups, and spoons! Ah! how delighted mamma will be!” Then,

thinking of little Francis, he cried, "Let us look out a small calabash; our spoons would hurt his little mouth; I will make him a small one for himself."

One kind thought always gives birth to another; so Fritz also made two large bowls, one for each of the dogs. When they were finished, he made a kind of soup for Turk in one them, of a biscuit and some fresh water. Turk showed his delight by licking Fritz's hand, and doing full justice to the unexpected meal. Having walked about three hours longer, we came to a tongue of land which ran out into the sea; on it rose a hill, which we climbed with difficulty. The view from the top was very extensive, and showed us a beautiful rich country all around; but no trace could we discover of our shipwrecked companions, nor anything to lead us to suppose that the country was inhabited. At our feet lay the calm sea, forming a large bay, the shores of which were covered with a rich vegetation, and which stretched away into the blue distance. This sight would have filled me with joy had not the fate of our companions weighed heavily upon me. Nevertheless, I could not help feeling glad that the fertility of the land promised so well for our comfort.

"Come," said I; "we are destined to be lonely colonists. God has decided thus. Let us submit cheerfully and bravely to his will."

“Bah!” said Fritz, “who knows, if we may not, like the old patriarch of whom the Bible speaks, be the founders of a great nation.”

The idea of an Abraham of fifteen made me smile; and the sun being very hot at the time, I told Fritz to follow me to the shelter of a wood at some distance off. “For,” I said, “my poor Fritz, it would be a pity to allow ourselves to be burnt up before having fulfilled our patriarchal destiny.”

“My dear father,” said Fritz, throwing his arms round my neck, “I only wished to cheer you a little. As for us boys, we have no reason to complain; where you and my mother are, we must be happy. We are growing fast, and will soon be able to relieve you of all trouble.”

The dear child! his heart was older than his years. Claspng him in my arms, I thanked God for having given me such a son.

To get to the wood we had to cross a field of reeds so thick and entangled, that it was with difficulty we got along. Thinking it was a likely place for reptiles to lurk in, I cut one of the reeds, with which to defend us, should we encounter any. As I cut it I felt that my hand was covered with a glutinous liquid; when I had tasted this liquid I was convinced that we were in a natural plantation of sugar-cane. I said nothing of it to Fritz, however, anxious that he should make the discovery for himself. He was walking before

me ; and I told him he had better cut a reed also ; it would be a better defence against serpents than either our pistols or knives. He obeyed, and I soon heard him crying with transport, "Oh ! sugar-canes ! sugar-canes ! what an exquisite juice ! what a delicious syrup ! how delighted my mother and brothers will be ! and Mr Ernest, for once, will want nothing to complete his happiness !" He broke his reed in several places, and sucked the juice eagerly.

"I should like," he said, "to carry some of these to my mother and brothers, as well as a few to refresh ourselves on the way." I advised him not to take too many, for we had still a long way to go ; but he cut a dozen of the largest canes, and stripping them of their leaves, carried them under his arm. We had scarcely entered the palm wood when a troop of monkeys, startled by our footsteps and Turk's barking, rushed up the trees, where they sat grinning and chattering at us. Fritz, without a moment's reflection, threw down his bundle of canes and seized his gun, but I stopped him.

"Why would you kill the animals ?"

"Monkeys," he said, "are wicked, silly animals. Just look how they are showing their teeth at us."

"Yes, but they are enraged, and not without reason. We have intruded upon them ; do not let us unnecessarily kill any creature. It is sad

enough that man is already at war with most of the animals. Leave the monkeys alone ; they may yet be useful to us."

"Useful," repeated Fritz, astonished ; "monkeys useful ! And how, I should like to know ?"

"You will see," I said.

I threw some stones at them, when, obeying their natural imitative impulse, they seized some cocoa-nuts and threw them back in return. Not being very well aimed, we did not find much difficulty in avoiding these missiles. Fritz was very much amused by the success of my ruse. "Thanks, Messrs Monkey," he cried, hiding behind the trees, "many thanks !"

When the shower was over, he gathered as many as he could carry, and we sat down, out of reach of the monkeys, to regale ourselves with them. We first made openings at the softer places near the end of the nuts, by which to drink the milk ; but we were disappointed in the excellence of the liquid. The cream, which we found when we broke the shell, we thought much better. We supped it with our spoons, sweetening it with the juice of the sugar canes. Thanks to this delicious windfall, Fritz threw the remainder of the lobster and our biscuits to Turk, who, however, found it necessary to supplement this poor fare with some canes and cocoa-nuts. Refreshed by our repast, we proceeded on our homeward journey, I carrying a string of cocoa-

nuts tied together by their stalks, and Fritz the remainder of the sugar-canes. Fritz soon tired of his load. He changed it from one shoulder to another, and from one arm to the other. At last he said, impatiently, "Really, I did not think those canes would be so much trouble; still I should like to carry some to the tent to my mother and brothers."

"Have patience," I said; "your bundle may be compared to the panniers of bread that Æsop carried, which became lighter with every step. Yours also will be considerably diminished before we rejoin the others. Let us take one each; they will do equally well as pilgrim-staffs, or as hives of portable honey. Tie the others together, and sling them across your back with your gun." "Remember," I added, "that henceforth we will often have to draw on our imagination to relieve the tedium of this deserted land." As we went along I often tasted my cane, and Fritz, trying to imitate me, found he could not extract any juice whatever. He asked me what was the reason.

"Reflect a little," I said, "and I am sure you will find out."

It soon occurred to him that he must make an opening above the first knot of the cane to let in the air. This done, he found no difficulty in refreshing himself as much as he wished with this delicious beverage. He drew my attention, now

ever, to the fact that, if we continued to use them as we were doing, very few of the canes would reach the tent.

“Do not allow that to distress you,” I said, “for the juice will not keep sweet long, especially when it is exposed to the sun. The heat makes it ferment. As we have still a considerable distance to walk, the probability is that by the time we reach the tent our canes will be full of a very bitter juice.”

“At any rate,” replied Fritz, “they will taste the cocoa milk, for I have taken some in my tin flask.”

“Yes,” said I, “but you must know, that when taken out of the nut it very soon ferments also, and becomes very bitter. You may be disappointed in it also.”

Fritz took out his bottle, but when he removed the cork it escaped by the neck, effervescing like champagne. We tasted it, and found it very delicious. Fritz was so delighted with it, that I warned him to be moderate, lest it should go to his head. Very much refreshed, we walked on more briskly, and soon returned to the place where we had left our calabash dishes. We found them quite dry, and took them with us.

A little farther on Turk ran barking at a troop of monkeys, which had not been aware of our approach. They all made off and escaped but

one, which tried to take its young one with it, but which fell a victim to its maternal care. Fritz ran off to save it, throwing down in his haste his bottle and sugar canes, and losing his hat besides; but he was too late; the poor beast was already dead, and almost half devoured. The young ape, in its fright, had taken refuge in a tuft of grass, and sat contemplating the sad sight, grinding its teeth.

Whenever he saw Fritz, with one bound he seated himself on his shoulders, and clung to him so tightly, that, notwithstanding all his efforts, the poor boy could not disengage himself from its hold. He was sorry for the little innocent thing, who did not intend to hurt him, but only to seek his protection from the dreadful enemy that had made it an orphan. Greatly amused at Fritz's embarrassing position, I petted the little monkey, and soon coaxed it to loosen its hold. It lay in my arms just like a child.

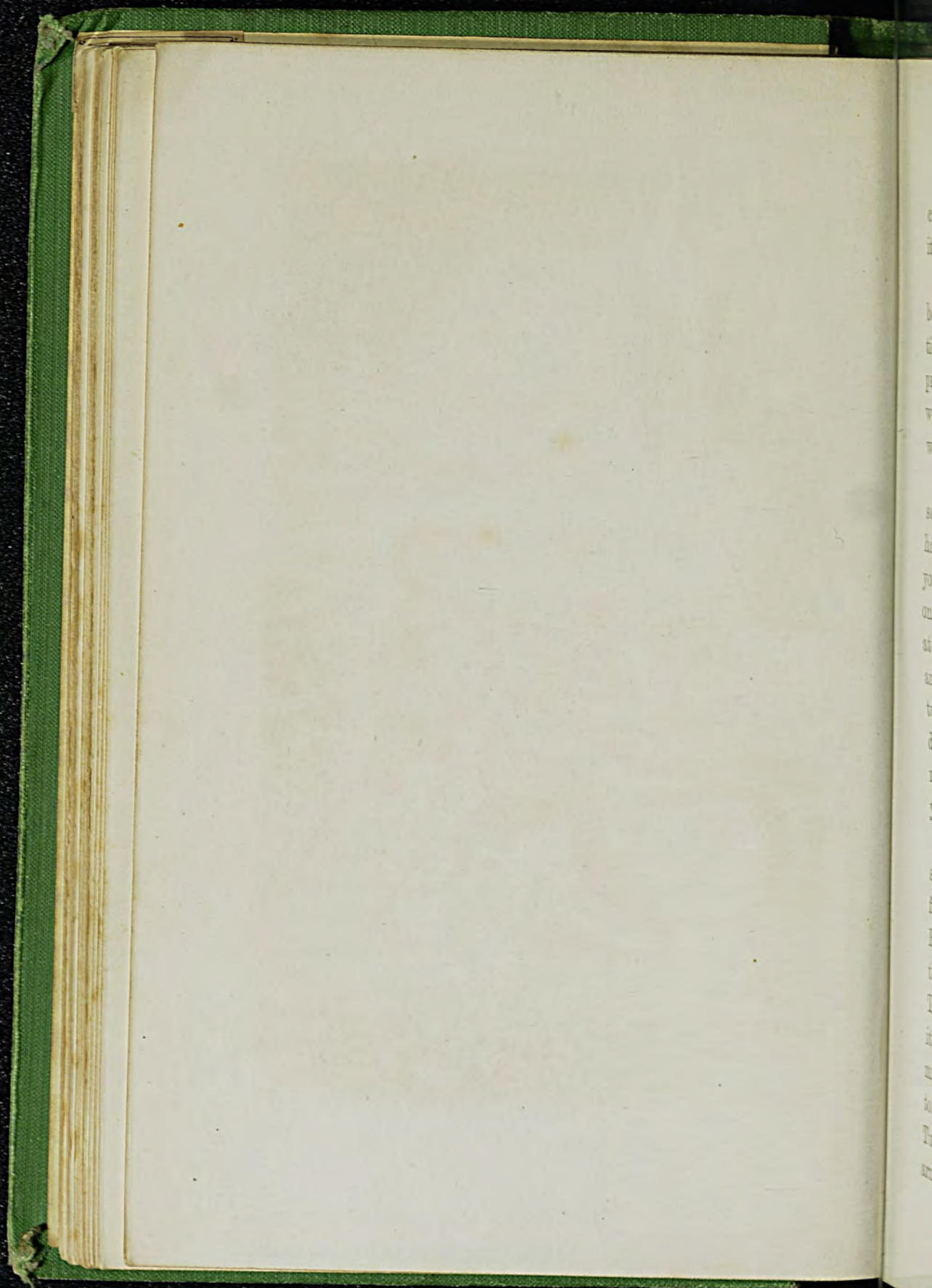
"Poor little creature," I said, "what can we do with you? We must think seriously before adding another useless eater to the number of our family."

But Fritz interrupted me. "Oh, papa, do keep it! pray, do keep it! It will die if we abandoned it. Let me adopt it. I have read that monkeys, guided by their instinct, can distinguish between the fruits that are good to eat and those that are poisonous; if such is the



They all made off and escaped but one which tried to take its
young one with it, but which fell a victim to its maternal care.

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case, we need not hesitate to keep this little one; it will be very useful to us."

"Well, my child, I see you are prompted both by a good heart and by wise considerations. I consent to the adoption of your little protégé; but remember you must train it up well, so that we shall never be forced to part with it."

"Mr Turk," said Fritz, addressing him solemnly, and pointing to the little ape, "you have made this poor little innocent an orphan; you have killed its mother; and I pardon you only because you are without reason. But look at this little monkey, and promise me to love and respect it in future. It is too young, fortunately, to understand all the wrong you have done. If you are honest and repentant, I promise you such good fare as will for ever disgust you with such abominable meals of raw flesh."

Turk lay down at Fritz's feet, as if he understood the gravity of this discourse, and looked from his young master to the little animal that Fritz was caressing, as if to say that henceforth the little monkey would be sacred in his eyes. This done, the little animal again established itself on Fritz's shoulder, and sat there with as much confidence as if it had long been accustomed to it. It was very much afraid whenever Turk came near, and tried to hide in Fritz's arms. Fritz then hit upon a curious idea.

To assure himself of the complete repentance of the guilty dog, he again addressed Turk. "You wicked animal," said he, "make amends for your fault. You have deprived this little orphan of its mother and guardian; it is only just that you should fill its place." Passing a cord round Turk's neck, he made the little monkey, whom he had set down on the dog's back, hold the other end. After a little coaxing, Turk submitted with a tolerably good grace, and the little animal, completely reassured, seemed to find his seat very comfortable.

"Now," said I, "we have all the appearance of jugglers going to a fair. How astonished your brothers will be to see us arrive with this equipage."

"Yes," said Fritz, "and Jack, who likes so much to pull faces, will now have a teacher."

"Do not speak so of your brother," said I; "those who love each other and live together, should not remark on one another's faults. Mutual forbearance is a great help to union and happiness. We have all our share of faults and shortcomings."

Fritz acknowledged that he had spoken without reflection, and hastened to turn the conversation. He was led naturally to speak of the cruelty of the Spaniards, who, when they discovered America, trained dogs to hunt the poor natives, and tear them in pieces as Turk had

done the poor monkey. I then told him all I knew about the habits of monkeys. These conversations helped greatly to shorten the way; and before long we found ourselves in the midst of our friends, who had come to the banks of the stream to meet us. The dogs saluted each other when still some distance off, by barking. The tumult so frightened the poor little monkey, that it again sought refuge on Fritz's shoulder, and could not be persuaded to leave it. When the children saw us, they shouted with joy; but when they saw the little animal which clung trembling to its protector, they cried—

“Oh! a monkey! a monkey! Where did you find it? How did you catch it? How pretty it is!”

Then seeing our provisions: “What are these rods and large balls that papa is carrying?” They so deluged us with questions, that we could not answer one half. When I had had time to take breath, I said, “Yes, thank God, we are returned safe and sound, and have brought you all sorts of good things. But what we went in search of, alas! we have not found. There is not the smallest trace of our companions.” To relieve ourselves, we then distributed our loads among the children.

Ernest took the cocoa-nuts, which, however, he had not yet recognised. Francis carried the calabash utensils, which were greatly admired,

Francis declaring that he liked his little spoon better than his old silver one. Jack took my gun, and his mother my bag. Fritz, distributing his sugar-canes, and replacing his little charge on Turk's back, presented Ernest with his gun. The latter took it, remarking, however, that it was dangerous to carry with such heavy loads. His mother, understanding the hint, relieved him of the cocoa-nuts, and the little procession wound its way back to the tent.

"Ah," said Fritz, "if Ernest only knew what those are that he let mamma take from him, he would not have given them up so willingly. These are cocoa-nuts!"

"Cocoa-nuts!" cried Ernest, "cocoa-nuts! Oh, mamma! give me them back, please, I can carry both the gun and them quite easily."

"No, no," replied his mother, "you complained of their weight, and you cannot have them now."

"I promise you, I will not complain," said Ernest; "besides, I can throw away these long rods, and carry the gun in my hand."

"You had better not," said Fritz, "these rods are nothing less than sugar canes, and I am going to teach you all how to drink the sweet juice they contain."

"Yes, yes," cried all the children at once, "let us taste the sugar canes."

As Fritz and his brothers walked before, dis-

cussing the excellence of this new luxury and the best mode of enjoying it, I satisfied my wife's curiosity about the incidents of our adventure. Nothing we had brought gave her so much pleasure as the dishes we had manufactured from the calabashes. Though very imperfect, there was no doubt they would be really useful to us. When we arrived at the tent, I was glad to see all ready for a comfortable repast. On the fire was the large pot full of savoury soup; at one side was a spit with fish, at the other a goose roasting, the gravy of which was gathered in a large shell; near was a cask of good Dutch cheese; all promised well for the satisfaction of our appetites, which the fruits we had fallen in with on our way had rather staved off than satisfied. I advised, however, that we should let our fowls multiply before beginning to kill any of them.

"Keep yourself easy," said my wife, "our farm-yard has not supplied any part of our meal. The fish were caught by Francis; and the roast was provided by Ernest, who gives to his game a very singular name."

"I gave it its true name," answered the young naturalist, "I call it a stupid penguin. I am sure I am not wrong; the bird let me come close up to it and kill it with a stick. Besides, it has a webbed foot with four toes, and a long, strong, curved beak; all agreeing perfectly with the

description the naturalist Franklin gives of the penguin."

I praised the young philosopher for making so good a use of what he read ; and we all seated ourselves in a circle on the sand, and began our repast, each using a calabash bowl and spoon. While waiting for the soup to cool, the children broke some of the cocoa-nuts, and drank the milk eagerly. After the soup we attacked the fish, which were rather dry, and the penguin had a strong oily taste ; nevertheless, we were thankful for such good cheer. A good appetite makes a good dinner.

The monkey, as was to be expected, was the object of general attention. The children dipped the corners of their handkerchiefs in the cocoa milk, and made him suck it. This he seemed to enjoy very much ; and we thought we should not have much difficulty in bringing him up. We agreed to call him Knips. Fritz asked us to taste his cocoa champagne. "Taste it yourself first," said I, "and see if it is worth offering us."

He did so, but pulled a dreadfully wry face, and cried, "Pooh ! it is as sour as vinegar."

"I warned you of that," said I ; "but never mind ; it's an ill wind brings good to no one ; the vinegar we can take as a sauce to this dry fish."

I showed them an example by taking some on my plate, and we all agreed that the cocoa vinegar was not to be despised. By the time we

finished our repast, the sun was disappearing under the horizon ; so we had evening prayers, and retired to our bed in the tent. Knips was appointed a place between Fritz and Jack, who called him their son, and covered him well in from the cold.

After reconnoitring, as on the previous evening, to be sure there was no enemy lurking near us, I also lay down and slept amongst them. I had not, however, been long asleep, when I was startled by the dogs barking furiously, and by a disturbance amongst the fowls perched on the top of the tent. I sprang to my feet, and went out, followed by my wife, and by Fritz, who was not so sound a sleeper as his brothers. We each seized some kind of weapon. The bright moonlight showed us the dogs fighting desperately against about ten jackals. The brave animals had already stretched three of the jackals dead on the ground, but they must have yielded to superior numbers had we not come to their aid. Fritz and I fired together and killed two of them, and the others, frightened by the report of the guns, made off. Fritz dragged the one he had shot into the tent, to show in the morning to his brothers, whom neither the firing of the guns nor the barking of the dogs had wakened. We lay down once more to sleep, and were not disturbed again that night.

CHAPTER IV.

EXPEDITION TO THE VESSEL.

IN the morning, I consulted my wife as to the best way of spending the day. "My dear," I said, "there are so many important things to be done, that I scarcely know what to do first. One consideration is, that if we wish to save the cattle and a number of other useful things, we must make a voyage to the ship. Then, again, we are in great need of a more comfortable dwelling. We have no want of work."

"Do not distress yourself," she answered; "patience and perseverance will overcome all obstacles. Your own courage, aided by brave children like ours, will accomplish all. I must confess that I cannot see you return to the vessel without anxiety; but if it is necessary—and I think with you that it is—I will not oppose it."

Fritz was the first to appear; and while his brothers were rubbing their eyes, he hastened to drag the dead jackal to the door, so as to see the surprise the sight of it would cause them. He had not, however, thought of the dogs, who, thinking it was alive, pounced upon it; and he had the greatest difficulty in driving them away. This unusual scuffle hastened the appearance of

the little idlers. They came one by one; Jack with Knips on his shoulders, who, however, when he saw the jackal, scampered back into the tent and hid amongst the moss which made up our beds, showing only his little nose.

“A wolf!” cried Jack. “Are there wolves in our island?”

“No,” said Ernest, “it is a fox.”

“No,” said little Francis, “it is a yellow dog.”

“Ah! ah! Mr Ernest,” answered Fritz, in a mocking tone, “you recognised the agouti, but this time your science is at fault. What! you take that for a fox?”

“Yes,” answered Ernest, “I think it is a golden fox.”

“Ah, a golden fox!” cried Fritz, laughing.

Poor Ernest! his pride was hurt, and the tears came into his eyes. “You are unkind,” he said to his brother; “I may be mistaken, but did you know the animal’s name yourself before papa told you?”

“Don’t quarrel about trifles,” said I, “and before you laugh at your brother as in the wrong, allow me to tell you, my dear Fritz, that, according to the naturalists, the jackal partakes of the nature at once of the wolf, the fox, and the dog. It is even pretty generally admitted that the dog may be originally descended from the jackal. Therefore Ernest is not far wrong

in calling it a fox, and neither are Jack and Francis, who took it, the one for a wolf, and the other for a dog."

This dispute settled, I called my children to prayer, reminding them that we should begin the day with God. Our next care was breakfast, for children always rise with an appetite; so we visited the biscuit and cheese barrels. As we were doing so, Ernest had been anxiously examining one of the other casks, and suddenly exclaimed—

"Oh, papa, how much nicer the biscuits would taste, if we could have some butter to them."

"Oh, those eternal 'if's' of yours," said I; "you only tantalize us with speaking of things which there is no possibility of our getting. Can you not be content with good cheese?"

"I do not say I am not content," replied Ernest; "but I wish some one would open this barrel."

"What barrel?"

"This one. I am sure it is full of butter, for there is a kind of greasy substance oozing through it all round, which smells like butter."

Having assured ourselves that Ernest was right, we made an opening with a knife, by which to extract the butter without destroying the barrel. It tasted so well, that our breakfast was greatly improved by it.

The dogs, tired with their battle, slept quietly

beside us. I noticed they had not come quite scatheless through the combat with the jackals, for they had both large wounds in their necks. My wife washed some of the butter in fresh water to remove the salt, and applied it to the wounds. They submitted quietly to have them dressed, and then began to lick one another, which made me hope that before long they would be quite healed.

"It is important," said Fritz, "that, in future, our dogs should be protected by spiked collars."

"Oh!" said Jack, "if mother would help me, I would undertake to make them good strong ones."

"With all my heart," said his mother; "I will put myself entirely at your service; we shall see if your idea is a good one."

"Yes, my child," said I, "bend your mind to it, and if your project is at all a practicable one, we will all help you to work it out. As to you, Fritz, you must get ready to go with me to the vessel. Your mother and I both think we should go to-day."

We soon launched our boat of tubs. Before leaving we arranged that my wife should hoist, as a signal on the shore, a piece of sailcloth on a pole. As a signal of distress, she was to reverse it, and fire three shots. She courageously granted us permission to remain all night on board if we should find it was more convenient

to do so, in which case we were to light lanterns to show that all was well with us. Remembering that there were still some provisions on the wreck, we carried nothing but our arms, and the little monkey, which I allowed Fritz to take with him, that it might have some goat's milk. Having bidden farewell to those left behind, and commended them and ourselves to God's keeping, we set out on our expedition. Fritz rowed vigorously, and I did my best to help by directing our awkward craft. When we had got a little way out to sea, I noticed another streamlet, larger than the one on whose banks we had established ourselves, and also emptying itself into the bay. I conjectured that the stream, on falling into the sea, would create a current, which, if we took advantage of it, might aid us greatly in getting to the vessel. I was not deceived, for we soon found ourselves floating out to our destination almost without effort on our part. A few strokes with our oars brought our voyage to a happy conclusion. We disembarked, and fastened our raft securely to the opening in the ship's side I had made when we first left it.

Fritz's first care was the animals, which welcomed us, each in its own way, and seemed really glad to see us. We gave them some food and fresh water, and then easily procured ourselves a good meal, for the vessel had been stocked for a long voyage.

Fritz brought his little monkey to the goat, and it drank the milk, and seemed to enjoy it much.

“Let us see,” said I. “What shall we do first?”

“I think,” said Fritz, “we should begin by making a sail for our boat.”

I did not at first see that this was a very urgent necessity; but Fritz said that, when making our way over to the vessel, he had remarked a wind blowing against us, which would have hindered us very much had we not been aided by the current, but which might help us very materially by means of a sail, on our return voyage. The difficulty of making our way home, with only our oars to depend upon, would be further increased, he remarked, by the heavy load we should have to carry. Convinced of the importance of these considerations, I set to work, and soon found two poles, one large enough for a mast, and a thinner one for a cross spar; and to these I fastened the sail. Fritz meanwhile nailed a thick plank into one of the tubs, and made a hole in it, in which to fix the mast. I then fixed pulleys to the corners of the sail, to facilitate its management. As a finish, Fritz hoisted a piece of red cloth on the top of the mast, and was very much delighted to see it floating on the wind.

Smiling at his glee, I took out the telescope I had found in the captain's room, and, turning

it towards the land, reassured myself of the safety and welfare of our dear ones. It was already getting late, and it soon became evident that we could not return that night. The rest of the day we employed in removing from the vessel all kinds of useful things, and loading our tubs with them.

In making provision for a long sojourn on this deserted land, I gave the preference to tools, which might aid us in our efforts to make a comfortable home for ourselves, and to firearms, which were necessary for defence.

The vessel, which had been destined to found a colony in some of the South Sea Islands, was more fully provided with useful implements, and with all sorts of provisions, than it would have been for an ordinary voyage; we had only, therefore, to choose amongst a multitude of useful objects. Of these I did not forget spoons, knives, plates, pots and pans, Fritz even taking possession of a service of silver plate, belonging to the captain, as well as some bottles of wine and liqueurs, and a few Westphalian hams. These luxuries, however, did not make us despise sacks of corn, maize, and other grain; and we were glad to possess ourselves of a compass, and some gardening tools, also a few guns and pistols. We took also hammocks, blankets, cord, and sailcloth, and even a small barrel of sulphur, of which to make matches, those we had being pretty nearly

exhausted. I thought our provision was already complete; when Fritz appeared with another package.

“My dear child,” I said, “we shall be obliged to leave that; we have no more room; it is too large, and looks heavy.

“Oh, papa,” said Fritz, “let me take this packet; it is the captain’s books; books of science and natural history; journals of voyages, and a Bible. Ernest and mamma will be so pleased.”

“Dear child,” I said, “you are right; the food of the mind is as necessary as that of the body; your package will be a treasure to us.”

Our boat was now so loaded that the water was washing up to the edge; had the sea not been so perfectly calm, I should have been obliged to lighten it. As it was, we secured ourselves against accident by tying on some cork floats we had found. Night was already coming on. A large fire blazing on the shore assured us that all was right with our friends. In answer to this signal, we suspended three lighted lamps to the stern of the vessel; and the report of a gun let us know that our signal also was observed. Our preparations were soon made for passing the night in our tubs. We did not think it safe to remain on the vessel, for the slightest breeze might at any moment break it up and place us in danger of our lives. Fritz was soon asleep, in spite of the discomforts of his temporary bed.

As for myself, I did not shut an eye; anxiety about those we had left on land, as well as for our own safety, kept me wakeful.

As soon as the day dawned, I mounted the deck of the vessel, and turned my telescope towards the shore. I saw my wife come out of the tent, and gaze towards the vessel. I hoisted a flag on the mast, and, to show that she understood my signal, she raised and lowered her flag three times. "God be praised," I cried; "all our dear ones are safe. Now for the best way to get our cattle safely ashore."

"Let us make a raft," said Fritz.

I showed him the trouble such a piece of work would cost us, and the difficulty, not to say impossibility, of guiding it in the water.

"Well," he said, "if the animals are thrown into the water, they will swim ashore. The pig, especially, with its great fat body, will have no difficulty in keeping afloat."

"Yes, but I would more willingly sacrifice it than any of the others. How do you think the ass, the cow, the goat, and the sheep, would come on?"

"But," replied Fritz, "why could we not make floats for them as we have for ourselves? It would be delightful to see them all swimming ashore with their help."

"Bravo! my boy; your suggestion, though droll, is yet practicable. Let us go to work immediately, and try one of the animals."

We took one of the sheep, and tying round its body a pair of floats, threw it into the sea. The poor trembling thing disappeared below the water, but soon rose to the surface, and, reassured by feeling the support of the floats, ceased struggling, and we were glad to see could swim with perfect ease. Quite satisfied of the excellence of this arrangement, for the smaller animals we made floats of cork, but the ass and cow, being much heavier, we supported by an empty barrel, tied at each side with cords and bands of linen.

All our animals being thus provided, we fixed a cord to the horns or the body of each, the other end of which we intended to fasten to our boat of tubs. They were soon all in the water, the ass, with its proverbial obstinacy, being the only one which gave us much trouble. It struggled very much at first, but, once fairly afloat, set off and swam in a most exemplary manner. We then went on board our boat, and having loosened the rope, the wind filled our sail, and we glided towards the shore. Fritz, overjoyed at the success of our expedition, played with Knips, and looked proudly at the red flag waving at our mast-head. My eyes and my thoughts were with the loved ones on land, whom, with the help of the telescope, I could see leave the tent and run down to the shore to meet us. Suddenly, Fritz exclaimed—

“ Oh, father, there is an enormous fish coming towards us.”

“ Have your gun ready,” I answered. Our guns were loaded, and as the creature came nearer we recognised it as an immense shark.

“ Let us fire both at once,” said I, as the monster, which was swimming near the surface, opened its huge jaws to devour one of our sheep. Our shot took effect, and the monster disappeared; but a long line of blood assured us that we had rid ourselves of that enemy. I made Fritz keep his gun loaded, in case the shark might not have been alone; but we had no further encounters, and a few minutes brought us to the shore.

My wife and the three children were awaiting us, and we threw them the rope, by which they fastened our raft securely. The animals, which were already ashore, we relieved of their floats. The ass careered about on the sand in great glee, and at last gave expression to its joy on being once more on terra firma, in a hearty, not to say musical bray. After exchanging mutual congratulations on our safe re-union after such a perilous separation, we all adjourned to the banks of our little stream, where we seated ourselves on the grass, and I recounted the incidents of our expedition, giving Fritz the high praise he deserved for the help he had rendered me.

CHAPTER V.

AN ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED DURING
OUR ABSENCE.

FRITZ'S invention for transporting the animals ashore was the subject of general admiration; and we set about unloading the tubs. Jack, leaving that work to the others, turned his attention to the live stock, and jumping on the ass's back, which had not yet been relieved of its barrels, he rode towards us majestically. This comic equipage was too much for our gravity; but our amusement was changed to surprise, when we saw that he wore round his waist a hairy girdle, in which he had stuck a brace of pistols.

"Where did you find that brigand-like costume?" I said.

"All this is our own manufacture," he said, at the same time pointing to the two dogs, which were each armed with a collar bristling with nails.

"Bravo! my son," I said, "is this your own invention?"

"Mamma did what sewing was necessary," he replied.

"But where did you get the skin, and the thread and needle?" I asked, turning to my wife.

"Fritz's jackal furnished the skin; as for the rest," she added, smiling, "a good housewife should always have a stock of them."

I saw that Fritz was only half pleased with this cool appropriation of the skin of his jackal; but disguising his ill humour, he went up to Jack, pulling a wry face, and saying, "Faugh! what a disagreeable smell!"

"It is the skin of my girdle," replied Jack quietly; "when it is quite dry it will lose it."

"You must keep to our leeward, so that the wind won't waft the disgusting odour to us," said Fritz.

"Yes," cried all the children, laughing, "keep to the leeward, Jack."

The little man himself did not seem in the least annoyed at the disagreeable perfume he carried with him, but strutted proudly about, displaying his pistols. Knowing that it was near supper-time, I asked my wife if she had anything for us. "Here are some turtle's eggs," she said, "and with the frying-pan you have brought, I will make an omelette, which will not want even butter."

"Turtle's eggs," said Ernest, always glad to display his knowledge, "are easily recognised by their roundness, their membranous shell, parchment-like and damp; and, besides, it is only turtles which lay their eggs in the sand of the sea-shore."

"How did you discover them?" I asked.

“That belongs to the account of our day’s history,” said our good housewife; “and before beginning that we must think about our supper.”

“You are right,” I answered; “get the omelette ready; we will keep the recital till we sit down; meantime the children and I will see about getting the cargo we brought over to some safe place, and try to find some shelter where the cattle may go for the night.”

We accordingly set off towards the shore, and had just finished our work there, when my wife called us to come and do honour to her supper. It wanted for nothing—omelette, cheese, and biscuit, all were excellent; and the table service we had found contributed not a little to our comfort. Francis alone, faithful to his calabash dinner-set, would not avail himself of the more elegant silver ones.

The dogs, the fowls, goats, and sheep stood round about us like a circle of interested spectators. As for the ducks and geese, I left them to find their own supper, with which arrangement they seemed to agree perfectly, quite reveling in the quantity of worms and small crabs they found at the marshy mouth of the stream. Supper over, I bade my wife give us her account of the day’s proceedings.

“It is well,” she said, laughing, “that my turn is at last come, to record my high achievements. I must first tell you about Jack and his

collars. The morning after you left, Jack appeared with two stripes cut out of the jackal's hide, and began to clean them as best he could. This done, he stuck them full of long nails, and then with a piece of sailcloth lined the inside of his work, and asked me to sew the leather and the lining firmly together, so as to cover the heads of the nails. I did as he wished, notwithstanding the disagreeable odour of the skin. He was proceeding to line another band for a girdle to himself, when I showed him, that as it was not yet dry, it would probably shrink and make all his work useless. Ernest, laughing, advised him to nail it on a plank, and then lay it in the sun to dry; and Jack, not seeing through the joke, went and put the advice in practice, gravely bringing his plank to the sunshine.

“I then told my sons of a plan I had thought of for the day, with which they were very much delighted. It was to try and discover a more suitable place for an encampment. In a very short time, they had collected all the arms and provisions we considered necessary. I took a bottle of water and a hatchet, and we set off, accompanied by the dogs.

“Turk, who had been over the road before, preceded us, and acted as our guide. My two sons marched resolutely forward, proud of carrying arms, and feeling all the importance of their situation; for I told them that our safety de-

ended on their courage and address. I then appreciated more than ever the wisdom of your teaching our children the management of fire-arms, so that they might be able to avert or to meet danger. It was no easy matter to cross the stream on the wet, slippery stones. Ernest crossed first, without any accident; Jack relieved me of the hatchet and the bottle of water, and I took Francis on my back. I had great difficulty in preserving my balance, for the dear little thing threw his arms round my neck and clung to my shoulders with all his strength. However, I got safely over; and when we climbed the hill from which you had discovered the beautiful country beyond, my heart yielded, for the first time since our shipwreck, to feelings of pleasure and hope. Then we started afresh, and entered a green shady valley.

“ We saw a wood at some distance off, and made for it; but first we had to traverse an extent of reeds, so close and high, that the children were almost buried. At last, Jack found a path, which we concluded was the one you had made. Following it, we soon arrived at the wood. All at once we heard a rustling amongst the leaves; and a large bird rose and flew away. Each of my little men got ready his gun, but the bird was already beyond reach.

“ ‘What a pity,’ said Ernest, ‘that I had not my small gun; if the bird had not made off

so fast, I would have been sure to bring it down.'

" 'Yes,' I answered, 'you would be a good shot, if the game would only make known its intention of flying off a quarter of an hour beforehand.'

" 'But I could not tell,' replied he, 'that a bird would rise so near us.'

" 'It is just such surprises that make successful shooting a difficulty; and not only is a correct eye necessary, but also presence of mind.'

" 'What could the large bird be?' asked Jack.

" 'An eagle, I am sure,' said Francis; 'it had such large wings.'

" 'That does not prove it,' said Ernest; 'all birds with large wings are not eagles.'

" 'I suppose,' said I, 'that it flew away from its nest when we disturbed it; if we could find the nest, perhaps it would enlighten us as to the kind of bird.'

" Thoughtless Jack sprang instantly towards the spot from which the bird had risen, when suddenly another bird like the first flew off, dealing the brave little intruder such a heavy stroke with one of its great wings, that he stood very much amazed and almost frightened. The other children, not less astonished, did not attempt to shoot this second bird.

" 'What poor hunters,' I said to them; 'is it

possible you have learned so little from the lesson you had a minute or two ago? I see you must still have some lessons from your father.'

"Ernest looked vexed; as for Jack, making a mock salaam to the fugitive, now only a speck against the sky, he cried, 'Farewell, Mr Bird; we may meet again; till then I remain your obedient servant.' Ernest soon discovered the nest we were searching for. It was roughly built, and only contained a few broken egg shells. We concluded from this that the fledglings had left it shortly before.

" 'These birds cannot be eagles,' said Ernest, 'eaglets could not run so soon after being hatched, like domestic fowls or other birds of the same species. They are bustards, I believe. Their plumage is white underneath, mixed with black and red on the back; and besides, that last one has on his beak the long thin feathers which mark the male bird.'

" 'Instead of examining it thus,' said I to my little 'savan,' who was refreshing himself after having finished his learned lecture, 'you would have done better by securing it, and thus gaining an opportunity of examining it more closely.'

"In returning, we came upon a little wood. A crowd of birds unknown to us filled the branches and produced quite a concert of sound. The children prepared to take aim; but I drew their attention to the great height of the trees, which

would make their shots quite useless. The form and extraordinary size of these giant trees surprised us greatly. The immense trunks were sustained by roots spread over a great space on the surface of the ground. Jack climbed on one of the roots to measure with a cord the thickness of the trunk. Ernest thought the circumference could not be less than forty feet, and the height eighty. The arched roots, sixty in number, formed a wonderful vault. Nothing ever astonished me so much as this splendid vegetation. Ten or twelve great trees formed what we had taken for a wood. The branches spread themselves far out, and the foliage, resembling that of our European walnut trees, cast a delightful shade. Underneath, the ground was carpeted with soft green grass, on which we rested. Our basket of provisions was opened, and we had no lack of appetite. The streamlet close by supplied us with clear cold water, and the vocal concert over our heads turned our simple meal quite into a fête.

“Our dogs had been absent for some time, but now returned, and to our surprise, lay down quickly and went to sleep, without begging anything to eat. They had evidently had some refreshment in their absence.

“This spot seemed to me so desirable, that I thought we need not go farther in search of a place to settle. I resolved, therefore, to return and

then go to the coast and recover anything that the sea might have cast up from the ship. Before starting, Jack besought me to sew for him the straps and band of skin, which he had carried the whole way, and which were now quite dry. This done, he put on his belt, and, quite proud, sticking his pistols into it, marched away to meet you. We had often to quicken our steps to keep him in sight.

“On arriving at the shore, we did not find much to bring away, things we would have liked being too heavy to carry. I noticed our dogs busy catching small crabs, and feasting upon them. ‘See, my children,’ said I, ‘how hunger makes them industrious;’ we need take no thought about the feeding of our dogs, nor fear their devouring us, so long as the sea provides so liberally for them. On leaving the shore, Flora scratched up a large ball, and swallowed it greedily.

“‘I suppose that was a turtle’s egg,’ said Ernest. ‘A turtle’s egg,’ said Francis; ‘are turtles fowls, then?’ You may imagine the amusement of Jack and Ernest at this question.

“‘Let us profit by Flora’s discovery,’ said I, ‘for I have heard these eggs are very good to eat.’ It was no easy task to drive away Flora from this repast, which she found very much to her taste; but we succeeded in rescuing twenty of the eggs, which we placed in our provision

bags. Looking towards the sea, we saw the sail of your boat. Francis feared it might be savages coming to kill us; but Ernest was sure it was your boat; and he was right, for a few moments after you landed.

“Such, my dear, are our adventures. I searched for a better place for our house. I have found a delightful spot; and if you agree with me, we will go to-morrow and establish ourselves under these magnificent trees; the view from them is exquisite. We can construct tents between the branches of these trees. Have you not seen the same thing in Europe? Do you not remember in our own country that lime tree with a pavilion upon it, called ‘Robinson’s Tree?’”

“All right,” said I; “but it is already late, and we must have a good night’s rest before entering on this formidable undertaking.”

Night had set in, but our interesting conversation had made us forget how time was flying. We had evening prayers all together; and, glad to be once more re-united, we fell asleep, and were only wakened by the sun’s first rays.

CHAPTER VI.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

"I HAVE been considering your plan," I said to my wife next morning, "and I think we ought not to be too hasty in changing our abode. First of all, I do not know if we are justified in leaving the place Providence has chosen for us, and which is so conveniently situated. Besides, here we are protected on one side by the sea, and on the other by the rocks, which also would help us to fortify the banks of the stream, in case of danger. And, most important of all, here we are within reach of the ship, still quite a mine of wealth, which we would be forced to abandon should we remove to a distance."

"Your reasons are certainly strong," answered my wife, "but you do not know how unbearable the noon-day heat is here. During your excursion with Fritz, you were sheltered from the greatest heat by the cool shade of the trees, and were refreshed by delicious fruits; but here, the only refuge we have is the tent, where the heat is so suffocating as to make me anxious about the children's health, and our only refreshment the mussels and oysters we gather on the shore, which are not very tempting. As for the safety

of this retreat, it seems to me that the jackals had not much difficulty in finding us out, and I don't think lions and tigers would have more. The treasures the vessel contains are not to be despised, I know; but I would renounce them all gladly to be spared the anxiety your sea voyages cause me."

"Come," I said, "you defend your opinions so warmly, that I feel forced to yield to you; but I think we can make a compromise. I will consent to change our residence to the wood, on condition that we retain this settlement as a provision store, and as a sort of fortress to which we can retire in time of danger. We will leave between the rocks our stock of powder, which is very useful to us, but which it would not be safe to keep in our immediate neighbourhood. If this plan be adopted, our first care must be to throw a bridge across the stream, so as to make constant communication between the two places quite easy."

"Do you think so?" cried my wife. "The construction of a bridge will be long and tedious. Could we not load the ass and the cow with our baggage?" I assured her that she was exaggerating the difficulty of the work, and the obstacles that stood in our way. "In that case, let us all set to work without further delay," she said; "I am anxious to leave this place as soon as possible."

Thus was settled the question of our change of abode. The children, when we awoke them and told them our project, were overjoyed. They immediately named the little wood, "The Land of Promise," and were very anxious to lose no time in setting about the construction of the bridge. Morning prayers over, each one improvised a breakfast as best he could. Fritz did not forget his little monkey, but brought it to the goat for its morning meal. Jack, thinking the example a good one, first tried to milk the cow into his hat; but not succeeding, he set to drink like the monkey, the gentle creature standing quite quiet all the time.

"Francis," he cried, while taking breath, "Francis, come here; you can have such a delightful warm drink." His brothers, seeing him in this singular position, ridiculed him much; they called him the little calf—a name which stuck to him for some time. His mother reproved him for his greediness, and, proceeding to milk the cow, showed him there was no need for such an awkward way of procuring the milk. She filled a cup for each, and then proceeded to put some into a pan to be boiled with biscuits, which made a very palatable dish.

Meantime I got our boat in readiness, to go over to the vessel for the pieces of timber and planks I knew we should require. Knowing we would need help, I determined to take Ernest.

We pushed out to sea, and soon fell in with the current of the stream we had already found so useful. As we passed an islet at the entrance of the bay, we saw quite a cloud of gulls, albatrosses, and other sea birds, hovering over a spot on the shore, and screeching so shrilly that we were glad to stop our ears. Fritz prepared to fire amongst them, but I forbade him. I knew so extraordinary a gathering must be caused by something unusual, and I wished to find out what it was. I hoisted the sail, and a slight breeze soon brought us close to the islet. Fritz kept his eyes fixed on a spot towards which the birds seemed to be crowding.

“Oh,” he cried at last, “they are discussing some sea monster, and have not invited us to their feast.”

He was not wrong. Having landed, we secured our boat, and stood near enough to look on without disturbing the birds, which we found were dissecting an enormous fish, and were so absorbed in their feast that they did not observe our approach. Fritz wondered how we did not notice the fish the previous day.

“Will it not be the shark you killed yesterday?” said Ernest.

“Ernest is right,” said I; “this is just our pirate of yesterday. Look at its terrible jaws, and its skin, which is so coarse, that it is used to polish iron and wood. It is certainly a large

specimen of its class, for it measures at least fifteen feet. We cannot be too thankful to God, who delivered us from such an enemy. Let the gulls take what they want of its flesh; but I think we should carry away some stripes of the skin; they may be useful to us. Ernest took the ramrod of his gun and went amongst the birds, striking right and left. He killed some, and the others took to flight. Fritz then cut off some of the shark's skin, and we returned to the boat. As we were about to wade over to it, I thought I perceived, at some little distance along the shore of the islet, some rafters and planks that the waves had thrown up; so that it was no longer necessary to continue our voyage. I chose from the debris, what I thought would be serviceable to us, and made a sort of raft, which we tied behind our boat, and set sail towards our own island. The wind favoured us; so we did not need to use our oars; it was only necessary for me to steer. Fritz nailed the pieces of skin to the mast, so that the sun might dry them, while Ernest examined minutely the birds he had killed.

He asked me a great many questions about them, which I answered to the best of my ability. Then he wished to know what I intended to do with the shark's skin; and I satisfied him by saying that I meant to manufacture some files. Having landed, we were surprised to find no

trace of the others. When we shouted, however, they came running; Francis with a fishing-rod over his shoulder, and Jack with a handkerchief carefully closed, which, when he came up to us, he opened, and showed us a number of large lobsters.

"It was I, father, it was I who discovered them!" cried Francis, proudly.

"Yes," said Jack, "but I fished them up. I waded up to my knees in the river to catch them. I would have caught more if you had not called me away."

"We have a great many more than we can use," said I; "I think it would even be wise to throw the small ones back into the sea again, to let them grow."

"But," cried he, "there are millions more; the river is swarming with them."

"No matter," I answered; "we must not waste the good things God sends us."

Turning in the direction of the stream, he asked me to come with him, for he thought he had found the most suitable place for the erection of the bridge. "I am glad," said I, "that you have for once thrown off your habitual carelessness, and thought of the good of the colony. I am anxious to see if you have made a wise choice; if you have, we will immediately set about bringing up the planks, while your mother prepares our repast." Jack led the way to the

spot he had fixed upon; and I thought we could not have a better; so we began by transporting our materials from the shore, making use, for this purpose, of the ass and the cow. Of course we had no harness for them; but we passed ropes round the animals' necks, the other ends of which were tied to the pieces of timber. This transportation being accomplished, we proceeded to the construction of the bridge. At the point Jack had chosen, the stream was much narrower than at other parts of its course, and its banks were of an equal height, besides having trees at each side, to which we could fasten the beams.

"Now," said I, when we were all ready to begin, "the first thing to be done is to measure the breadth of the stream, and find out if our planks are long enough."

"Nothing is easier," said Ernest; "we have only to tie a stone to the end of a cord, throw it over to the other side, and, drawing it to the edge of the bank, measure with the cord the distance between the two banks."

By this simple but ingenious plan, Ernest calculated the stream to be eighteen feet wide. So, as the principal beams would need to rest three feet at least on each bank, we chose three, twenty-four or twenty-five feet long. The greatest difficulty was still to be overcome, which was how to get the ends of these immense logs passed over to the other side. I told the boys to try and

think of some plan during our meal, which we had kept waiting some time; and my wife was getting impatient, for the lobsters had long been ready. She showed us some carrying sacks she had made for the ass and cow. We praised her patience, and admired it still more, when we learned that, having no large strong needles, she was obliged to pierce every hole with a nail.

We did not linger over our repast, all being anxious to return to work. Though the children suggested many plans of getting the ends of the planks over the stream, none of them were practicable. But I had thought of a plan myself, which I proceeded to work out as soon as we returned to the scene of our labours. One end of a large beam I tied to a tree; to the other end I tied a long rope which I carried with me, and, crossing the stream, passed it over a pulley fastened to a tree on the opposite bank. Then returning, I tied the end of the rope round the necks of the ass and cow, and made them both pull. The beam turned round the trunk it was tied to, and soon rested on the other side. The children sprang on to it, clapping their hands, and shouting for joy. The most difficult part of our work was over. Two other beams were soon placed beside the first, and it only remained to nail on a few cross planks to finish our bridge. Before night our task was accomplished, and we went to bed pretty much

fatigued with our hard day's work, and slept more soundly than we had yet done since we landed from the wrecked vessel.

CHAPTER VII.

THE REMOVAL.

I AWOKE the children when day broke, as I wished to give them some directions about our emigration. "We are going," I said, "to a part of the country which is new to us. See that none of you wander away alone. You may get into danger as well by going on before as by lingering behind. Keep as much as possible all together, and if we meet an enemy, let me direct the attack or the defence."

Prayers and breakfast over, we prepared to depart. The cavalcade was assembled; the ass and the cow carried the bags my wife had made, filled with a number of indispensables. We took care not to forget the captain's stock of wine, and a barrel of butter. As I was going to load the animals with our hammocks and blankets, my wife interposed and claimed a place for little Francis, and for the sack she called her magic bag. Then she showed me the absolute necessity of taking with us the fowls and pigeons, which,

if they were left behind, would be scattered and lost. I saw she was right. A comfortable seat was found for Francis on the ass's back, between the two bags, with his mother's magic bag to lean his back upon. We had still to get hold of our fowls and pigeons. The children set off to chase them, but returned unsuccessful, and were persuaded by their mother to remain where they were, while she undertook the capture of the startled birds.

"We shall see, we shall see," cried the little blunderers. "You shall see," replied their mother. By means of a handful of corn scattered on the ground, the birds were tempted within the tent, where they were easily caught.

"Skill works better than violence, you see, gentlemen," said she, closing the entrance to our tent, through which Jack crept, and handed us one by one our feathered prisoners, whose feet we bound, and then placed them upon the back of the cow. This done, we covered them with a cloth, and thus, plunged in darkness, they ceased to annoy us by their cries. All the things that we left, that could have suffered from exposure, were laid up in the tent, which was well barricaded with stakes and boxes, both full and empty. We were all well armed, and each carried a bag for provisions and ammunition. Every one seemed in good spirits.

Fritz, with his gun under his arm, marched

first ; behind him, his mother drove the ass and cow, side by side ; on the ass rode little Francis, amusing us all by his simple remarks ; third from the front came Jack, with the goat ; fourthly, Ernest, with the sheep ; while I myself brought up the rear. Our dogs kept running here and there, barking and scenting. This caravan moved along slowly, and was really quite picturesque ; so much so, indeed, that I could not help calling to my eldest son—

“ Well, Fritz, here is your idea carried out, for something after this fashion Abraham must have travelled. How do you like it, my little patriarch ?” Ernest answered for his brother : “ I, papa, think it is delightful.”

“ True,” said I, “ but it is not God’s will that we should long be reduced to wander about like this. You would soon tire of it, and I trust this may be our last pilgrimage.”

“ So do I,” said my wife. “ I hope that our new abode will please us, and that we shall be able to remain in it. If not, the responsibility is mine.”

“ Wherever you lead,” replied I, “ we shall be willing to follow.”

As we approached the bridge, the pig, which had at first appeared very loath to accompany us, now joined the procession, grunting loud remonstrances against this long walk ; but its ill humour did not meet with much sympathy from the rest of the party.

The passage of the stream was effected without accident; but the luxuriant vegetation on the other side did not fail to retard our march considerably. The rich grass, such as they had never before seen, was a temptation too great to be resisted by our cow and ass. It was only by the aid of our dogs, who barked and snapped at their heels, that we could get them to move on. To avoid such hindrances in future, I changed our course, going with the stream towards the sea, hoping to reach the well known road by the shore, where there was nothing to impede our progress.

We had scarcely started in that direction, when our dogs bounded into the thick grass, growling as if they were on the track of some fierce animal. Fritz, with his gun loaded, and his finger on the trigger, advanced resolutely. Ernest, terrified, drew near his mother, having at the same time loaded his gun. Jack courageously followed his elder brother, and I hurried to his assistance, lest he should run into danger. Suddenly I heard him cry, "Oh, papa, come quick, a porcupine, a monster porcupine."

I quickened my steps, and soon came in sight of the porcupine, which, however, was not so large as Jack had led me to believe. The dogs barked furiously round the animal, which they could not attack without paying dearly for it. The porcupine turned his back to his enemies,

lowered his head between his two fore paws, and marched backwards, his bristles erect like so many swords. Every time the dogs attempted to charge, they came off bleeding and wounded. Fritz and I were watching for the moment when we might fire without injuring the dogs. Jack, all impatience, and not understanding our hesitation, discharged one of his pistols, and killed the porcupine on the spot. Fritz, a little spiteful at his brother's success, said hastily—

“Imprudent boy; you might have killed the dogs, or wounded us, in firing so near.”

“Wound you, indeed!” repeated Jack, proudly; “do you think no one can manage a gun but yourself?”

Seeing that Fritz was going to reply, I hastened to interfere. “It is true,” I said to my eldest son, “that Jack might have acted more prudently; but you must admit that he has shewn great skill. You must learn to praise others when they deserve it.”

Jack, meanwhile, without thinking, had laid hold of the animal with his hands, and was severely wounded.

“Go and get a rope,” I said to him, “and Fritz and you can carry it with the help of a stick between you.”

But, impatient to show his prize to his mother and brothers, Jack tied his handkerchief round the animal's neck, and drew it after him to the

place where we had left the caravan. "See, mamma," he cried, "see, Ernest, see, Francis, the great animal I have killed. Yes, I killed it; I was not afraid of a hundred thousand lances; I went up to it and killed it with one shot; and it is excellent eating; papa says so."

His mother congratulated him on his courage and skill. Ernest examined the animal in his usual cool manner, observing that he had in each jaw two long incisors like those of the hare and squirrel, and that his ears were short and rounded like a man's. My wife and I sat down and began pulling out the bristles from the muzzles of our dogs.

"Jack," said I, "were you not afraid that the porcupine would send its quills into your body? It is said the animal has that power."

"I never thought of it," he replied, "but I think that statement must be a fable."

"You see, however," said I, "that the dogs have not been spared."

"It is true," he answered; "but they threw themselves on the animal; if they had kept at a distance, they would not have been hurt."

"You are right, my son," I said, "and I am glad to see you can defend your opinions. The porcupine has not the power of shooting out its quills; his losing some in a fight has probably given rise to the story."

Determined to carry home the porcupine, I

covered him with a thick coat of grass, rolled him in a cover, and placed him on the ass behind Francis. We had not gone far, however, when the ass escaped from my wife, who held the bridle, and ran on before us, jumping and cutting a number of grotesque capers that would have amused us very much, had we not all feared for Francis. Fritz ran after him, and aided by the dogs, soon got the better of him. Searching for the cause of this sudden change in the conduct of the usually quiet animal, I found that the bristles of the porcupine had come through the grass and covering in which he was wrapped; so I placed the carcass on the enchanted bag, and counselled Francis not to lean upon it. Fritz kept at some distance from the caravan, doubtless with the intention of taking his revenge, if an occasion presented itself.

“Wonderful!” exclaimed Ernest, when he saw the large trees we were approaching, “what gigantic vegetation! the steeple of Strasbourg is not higher; how luxuriant nature is here. It was a good idea of mamma’s to leave the desolate country in which we were, for a place like this.” He asked me if I knew the name of the trees.

“I have never seen them described, and we are probably the first Europeans who have seen them,” said I; “but I defy the most agile bear to reach us at the top of these enormous trunks,

when we shall have succeeded in establishing ourselves there."

"Well," said my wife, "what do you think of our trees?"

"I understand your admiration, and approve of your choice," said I.

When we halted, our first care was to unload the ass and cow, which, with the sheep and goats, we allowed to graze round us, taking the precaution, however, to shackle their fore legs. The sow only was allowed perfect freedom. We also set the fowls and pigeons at liberty. The fowls kept near us, scraping and picking up what they could get. The pigeons perched themselves on the branches of the trees, from which elevation, however, they descended when the first handful of corn was thrown down.

While we rested on the soft thick grass with which the ground was carpeted, we deliberated as to the best means of erecting our house on the branches of one of the giant trees. As it was not likely we could get comfortably installed that night, I was somewhat anxious about our safety during the night, which we should be forced to pass in the open air, exposed to the damp and quite unprotected against the attacks of wild animals. I called Fritz, believing him to be close at hand, to tell him it would be absolutely necessary for our safety to try and climb the largest tree. He did not answer, but two gun-shots, one

after the other, at some distance off, announced to us that he was not idle. He soon appeared, carrying by the hind legs a most beautiful tiger-cat, which, as he advanced, he held up for our admiration.

“Bravo! my young huntsman,” I said; “you have really rendered a service to our feathered flock, in ridding them of such an enemy as that, which could follow them even to the tops of the trees. If you should see any more in our neighbourhood, I entreat you to give them no quarter.”

“Why,” said Ernest; “if God created the animals, He surely did so for some useful end; and I do not think we should declare against them such a merciless war.”

“It would be presumptuous,” answered I, “to interrogate the Creator on the design of His works; but we are allowed to hazard some conjectures. I believe, then, that the animals which we call, no doubt wrongfully, destructive, have been created to maintain a certain equality between the creatures. Fritz will now tell us where and how he discovered this animal.”

“I found it quite near,” answered the hunter; “I saw something moving amongst the leaves of a tree; and creeping noiselessly to the foot of it, I fired, and the animal fell at my feet. As I was going to take it up, I saw it move; so I despatched it with my pistol.”

“You may be glad it did not spring upon

you when it was only wounded; for, although those animals are small, they are very terrible when fighting for life. I can assure you, you have made a happy escape; all the more, that I see this is not an ordinary tiger-cat, but a margay, a species common in South America, and notorious for its fierceness and rapacity.

"Whatever it may be," said Fritz, "look at the beautiful stains of black and brown on a gold ground. I hope that Jack will not cut up the skin of my margay, as he did that of my jackal."

"Never fear. If you warn Jack, he will not meddle with it. But what do you intend to do with the skin?"

"Nay, it is I who should ask you that," he answered; "I will follow your advice; I do not want to retain it for my sole use."

"Well answered, my son; and now that we have no need for clothing, you can make cases of it, in which to keep our table service; and you can have the tail for a hunting belt to hold your knife and pistols."

"And I, father," asked Jack, "what shall I do with the skin of my porcupine?"

"When we have taken out as many quills as we want for needles, and for arrow points, I believe we could make the skin into a sort of cuirass for one of the dogs, to defend it in encounters with wild animals."

"Oh, capital!" cried Jack, "I long to see Flora

or Turk harnessed like that;" and he gave me no rest till I set about skinning his porcupine. This I managed easily by tying the animal to a branch by its hind feet. Fritz watched my progress, doing the same with his margay. The two skins were afterwards nailed to a tree to dry; part of the porcupine's flesh was cooked for our dinner, and the remainder was put aside to be salted.

As Ernest was working by me, making a hearth with large stones, he asked if I did not think the trees under which we were, were mangolias. I said it was very probable, but I could not say positively, without consulting the captain's library.

"Ah! those dear books," said he; "when shall we be able to read and re-read them at our leisure!"

"Patience, my boy; let us first see to matters that are indispensable; there are better days coming, I hope."

Francis, whom his mother had commissioned to gather fire-wood, came back dragging some branches behind him, and greedily eating some fruit he had found.

"You foolish child!" cried his mother, running towards him; "how do you know that fruit is not poisonous? It might kill you. Show it to me."

"Kill me!" he repeated, terrified, putting out what he was just about to swallow. "Oh no, I don't want to die, mamma."

Dropping the branches he carried, he pulled from his pocket two or three little figs, and gave them to me. I was reassured; for I had never heard of any kind of figs being poisonous. I asked Francis where he had found them.

"Just under one of those trees," he answered; "there are a great many more. I thought I might eat them when I saw the sow and the fowls devouring them in such numbers."

"That is not a sufficient guarantee," I said; "for some fruits that are wholesome for animals are not so for man, and *vice versa*. The monkey however has a physical constitution resembling that of a man, and besides has a natural instinct about the nature of fruits; so I advise you always to consult it about anything of which you are in doubt."

I had scarcely said so when Francis ran to the foot of a tree where the monkey was seated, and offered it some of the figs with which his pockets were filled. The little animal took one in its hands, looked at it, smelled it, and then began to eat it.

"Hurrah!" cried Francis, quite reassured, and again beginning to eat the fruit, which he very much liked.

"Then these trees," said Ernest, "are fig-trees?"

"Yes," I replied, "but not dwarf trees, like those that grow in our country. These belong

rather, as you supposed, to the genus of the mangolia, and to the species called the yellow mangolia, whose roots, as you see here, form arches or vaults."

Thus conversing, and while Francis helped his mother to prepare dinner, I tried to manufacture needles from the spikes of the porcupine. The point, of course, was already there; all I had to do was to make a hole in the other end, which I did with a red hot nail. In a short time, I had an assortment of needles, of which our good housewife was very glad. The children, still astonished at the great height of the trees on which we proposed to erect our dwelling, set about trying to discover some way of climbing them. I was, at first, as much at a loss as they were; still, after a little reflection, an idea struck me, but I determined to defer its execution.

Our dinner being now ready, we seated ourselves in a circle; the porcupine's flesh and the soup made from it were both highly praised; for dessert, we had biscuit, with Dutch cheese and butter. When we were sufficiently refreshed, I determined that we should be busy during the remaining hours of daylight. I asked my wife to make the leather straps which were necessary to yoke our beasts of burden to the pieces of timber to be brought from the shore. She immediately set to her task.

The next thing to be done was to suspend our

hammocks to the branches of the tree. Over them we spread sailcloth, and fastened it in at the sides, to protect us from the dew and mosquitoes. That done, Fritz, Ernest, and I went to the shore to search for pieces of wood, strong and straight enough to serve as steps to the rope ladder I had resolved to make. Ernest discovered on the borders of a small marsh a number of bamboos, half buried in the mud. We pulled them out, and cut them with a hatchet into lengths of three or four feet, putting them into three bundles, one for each. A short distance farther on, and a little way into the marsh, I saw a tuft of reeds, towards which I went, intending to cut some for arrows. Flora, which was at my side, suddenly sprang forward, barking, when a whole troop of beautiful flamingoes flew away with an amazing rapidity. Fritz, who seemed never to be taken by surprise, got ready his gun, and fired before they were out of reach. Two of them fell; one quite dead, the other only wounded in the wing. The wounded bird would probably have escaped, if Flora had not pursued and seized it; the brave dog held it by the wing till I came up. When I brought my captive to the children they were overjoyed, and entreated that the bird might be kept alive and tamed.

“How beautiful its bright red plumage will be among the other fowls,” said Fritz.

Ernest was astonished to see that the feet of

the flamingo were equally well adapted for running or swimming; but I told him many other kinds of birds were as well off. I then cut some of the longest reeds, telling the boys as I did so, that I wished, by their aid, to measure the exact height of the tree we were to inhabit.

"Oh!" they cried incredulously, "you will need a great number to measure even to the beginning of the branches."

"Have patience," I replied; "you have forgotten the lesson you learned from your mother's way of catching the fowls. Before pronouncing your opinion, you must see what I do."

We returned loaded with the bamboos and reeds, and the dead and living birds. Jack and Francis welcomed the flamingo with shouts of joy, but their mother looked grave when she saw another mouth added to the number of our domestic animals. Not at all alarmed on that score, I examined the poor bird's wounds. I saw that the extremities of both wings were fractured, the one by the shot, and the other by Flora's teeth. I dressed them with a kind of ointment composed of butter, salt, and wine, and then tied it by the leg to a stake near the stream, where, left to itself, it put its head under its wing, and, standing on one long leg, fell asleep.

While I had been thus occupied, the children had tied a number of the reeds together, and were trying to measure the height of one of the

trees. They could hardly reach to where the branches joined the trunk, and I heard them again speak doubtfully of the success of my plan, which, however, I had not yet explained to them. Smiling at their incredulity, I proceeded to convert some of the canes into arrows, by sharpening one end, and garnishing the other with the feathers of the dead flamingo, using a flexible bamboo for a bow. Jack and Fritz had been watching the operation, and now exclaimed, "Oh, a bow! a bow and arrows! Let me try it, papa; you will see how expert I am!"

"Wait a moment," I said; "I have had all the trouble of making them, and I must have the honour of trying them first. I did not make them for play, however; I had an end in view, which I will show you immediately." I asked my wife if she could find me a clew of strong thread.

"I will consult my magic bag," she said, smiling; "this is what you want, is it not?" she added, promptly satisfying my want.

"It is no great mystery," said Jack, "to find in a bag what you put into it."

"It is no mystery, certainly," I answered; "but it shows a presence of mind in your mother, of which none of the rest of us were capable, to remember, in a moment of danger—such as that which preceded our departure from the vessel—so many small things, useful to us all."

Now Jack had the best heart in the world ; so, throwing himself into his mother's arms, he said, 'I deserve to be sewed into your bag, and never to be let out again.'

Unrolling the greater part of the clew, I tied one end of the thread to one of the arrows, which I shot up amongst the branches of the trees. The arrow passed over one of the branches, and, falling on the other side, left the thread resting on it. We easily ascertained by this means what height it would be necessary to make our ladder, deciding on fifty feet. Measuring, then, one hundred feet of strong rope, and halving it, I stretched the two lengths parallel on the grass, and told Fritz to cut the bamboos into pieces two feet long ; and these again Ernest and Jack helped me to fasten to the ropes by knots and nails, to prevent them slipping. In less than an hour and a half our ladder was completed ; and to hoist it, the same means were used as I had employed to discover the height of the tree. I took another arrow, and a triple cord, to ensure its being strong enough. To the end of the cord we attached the ladder, which was soon securely fixed.

Jack and Fritz disputed which should mount first. I gave the preference to Jack, as being the lightest, and as agile as a squirrel. I warned him to make sure of the strength of every step before venturing on to it, and to hurry down if he saw the least danger of the ladder giving way. He

set off, paying very little heed to my warning—reached the first branch safely, and seating himself on it, shouted, “Victory, Victory!” Fritz mounted after him, and fastened the ladder more securely, when I followed them, and examined the tree, to decide on the best mode of erecting our dwelling. Night soon set in, and the last piece of work I did, namely, fixing a strong pulley, preparatory to commencing operations on the following morning, had to be concluded by moonlight.

I turned to descend, and was surprised to find the boys had disappeared. I had just made up my mind they must have gone down, when I heard above me two clear young voices singing an evening hymn. I did not think it right to interrupt their song of praise; and their voices sounded so sweetly, it seemed to me almost like the presage of a blessing on our new habitation. When they had finished, we all descended together; and my wife, who had meanwhile milked the cow and goat, set before us some milk, and slices of the porcupine which remained from dinner. We tied the cattle for the night near our hammocks, to the roots of our tree, and made a large fire of dry wood as a protection against beasts of prey.

Our prayer offered, my wife and children went into their hammocks, and slept soundly. I watched by the fire, kept wide awake during the

first hours of the night by anxiety, and starting at every slight noise I heard ; but gradually I was overcome by fatigue, and towards morning fell asleep, only awaking when all the rest of the family were astir.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONSTRUCTION OF OUR HOUSE.

AFTER breakfast, my wife told Jack and Ernest to put the harness she had made on the cow and ass, and prepare to accompany Francis and her to the shore, to fetch the wood necessary for our house. I was afraid this kind of work, to which she was not accustomed, would be too heavy for her.

“Do not distress yourself,” she said ; “this farm life suits me very well. I think we should only rest when we have earned it by the sweat of our brow ; I like to feel I am fulfilling that commandment of God. I have become quite attached to our animals, and I think they are fond of me ; our ducks, and fowls, and dogs, our cow, and our poor ass—are they not all friends, and the most faithful we have ever had, so humble, patient, and grateful ? If we ever leave this island, what an instructive and salutary school it will have

been to me, to the children, and to yourself." My wife spoke golden words, for they were words of courage and truth.

I let her go, and, strengthened by her example, proceeded to my part of the work with a light heart. Fritz and I mounted the tree, and with hatchets and saws prepared a place for our habitation. The first horizontal branches served as a foundation to our floor; we cut off the others, excepting one or two, at an elevation of about six feet, to which we could suspend our hammocks, and a few higher up, to support our roof of sailcloth. While we were occupied with these preliminaries, difficult enough of accomplishment, the timber and planks arrived from the shore, and, hoisting them by the help of the pulley, the floor was soon laid, and a balustrade erected all round it. So absorbed were we in our labour, that the middle of the day arrived before we thought of eating anything. We took only a slight repast, and returned to our task. We found the spreading of the sailcloth roof a matter of some difficulty. Letting it hang over at the ends, we fastened it to the balustrade, thus making two sides of our dwelling; the trunk of the tree itself formed the third, securely closed. The fourth we left open for the present, though I intended to close it by and by, with a kind of blind, which could be drawn up or down at pleasure. When we had suspended our ham-

mocks to the branches we left for the purpose, our house was ready for our reception.

Fritz and I descended from the tree; and although the sun was already low, and we were very tired, we erected a table and forms, placing them under the roots where we had spent the previous night, a spot I thought very convenient for our dining-room. This last work accomplished, I said to my wife, as I threw myself on one of the forms, "I have worked to-day like a negro, and to-morrow I shall take a holiday, and rest." "You not only can," replied she, "but you ought; we have not had one day of rest since we were cast upon this shore."

My wife went to call the boys to table. As they were seating themselves, she brought from the fire a large pot, from which she lifted, with a fork, the flamingo killed the previous evening. "I had intended to roast it," said she, "but Ernest dissuaded me, saying it was an old bird, and would be tough. You shall judge for yourselves if I have done well." Our doctor was a little teased about his knowledge of cookery, but we all thought his advice had been good, for the flamingo was very savoury, and we picked the very bones. While we were dining, we were delighted to see our living flamingo moving with a friendly air among our fowls, picking up crumbs near us. He had been walking solemnly back and forward all afternoon, like one absorbed in

profound meditation. As he began to look a little more animated, we threw him some pieces of bread, which he snapped up very cleverly, to the great discomfiture of the fowls, who were not half sharp enough to get any share of what was going. The monkey, also, became more and more familiar, even to impudence. It jumped from one shoulder to another, cutting all manner of capers ; and to its share fell most of the dainties. Finally, the pig, which we had not seen since the night before, arrived in time for dessert. It seemed to grunt out its satisfaction at having found us again. My wife gave it a dish of milk, which it drank eagerly : I thought this liberality rather extravagant, and said so to my wife, but she had her answer ready : " Seeing that we have not the utensils necessary to make our milk into butter and cheese, how could we do better than give it to the animals, as a means of attaching them to us, and also of saving our corn and salt, which are all but finished ? "

" True, my dear wife," said I, " and we shall go soon to the rocks for more salt, and take care to bring plenty of corn with us the next time we go to the vessel."

" Ah," said she, " that vessel ! I wish it were at the bottom of the sea."

" I understand your fears," said I ; " but you know we only go in very calm weather ; and you must admit that it would be foolish to give way

to our fears so far as to abandon the ship whilst it contains so much that would be useful to us."

As we were talking, the children had lit a large fire of branches to frighten away wild animals from attacking our cattle. Then we climbed into our tree. Fritz, Jack, and Ernest mounted first, like three cats. Their mother followed cautiously, and I came last, with Francis on my back. I got to the top without accident; and when I had drawn up the ladder, the boys thought we were like a company of ancient cavaliers, in a secure refuge from all our enemies.

Notwithstanding all this, I loaded our pieces, to be ready against the approach of any intruder of which our dogs might warn us. We then all got to bed, and slept soundly.

CHAPTER IX.

A HOLIDAY.

"Good morning! What shall we do to-day?" asked the children.

"Nothing, absolutely nothing," said I.

"Oh! you are making fun of us," said Fritz.

"No," said I, "we are going to have a holiday."

"A holiday! a holiday!" shouted Jack, "I

shall go to walk, and hunt, and fish, and do what I like." He then begged my bow, and tried to point some arrows with porcupine quills. As he proceeded he found some difficulty in fixing them. "I wish I had some glue," said he.

I advised him to melt a cake of portable soup. He did so, and soon had a number of arrows, which would have been quite dangerous in the hands of a good archer. I thought it was desirable my sons should practise archery; for our store of powder, though large, was not inexhaustible, and we must be as economical as possible. While meditating on future arrangements, I was startled out of my reverie by the report of fire-arms, and by a fall at my feet of half-a-dozen birds, which I picked up, and which proved to be ortolans. Our philosopher had climbed into a tree, and seeing a flock of birds, had fired upon them. "Hurra!" cried he from the platform; "have I not aimed well? am I not a good shot?"

This little incident showed me that game of the most delicate kind abounded near us. These ortolans were feasting in great numbers on the fruit of the fig-trees around us; and knowing that, prepared in a certain way, they were considered a great delicacy, I determined to bring down some of them. Meanwhile, my wife plucked and set about cooking the six Ernest had killed.

Fritz, coming to consult me about how to

curry the skin of his margay, I advised him to rub it with cinders and sand, and to soften it with the yokes of eggs and butter. While he was thus occupied, Francis, who had a small bow and arrows for himself, came and entreated me to make him a quiver to sling over his shoulder and hold his arrows. I made him one with four large pieces of bark, equipped in which he seemed quite proud of his appearance. Ernest seated himself at the foot of the tree with the Bible on his knee, and was soon profoundly absorbed in what he was reading. My wife now called us to dinner; the ortolans were voted by all to be delicious.

"I want you to help me," I said to my sons while at dinner, "to give names to the different parts of our island; it would aid us much in understanding one another. We need only, however, give names to the inland parts, for some Europeans may already have named the coasts, and we must respect what they have done."

"What a capital idea," cried all the children at once; "let us look for names at once."

"I think we should choose extraordinary names, such as Coromandel, Chandernagor, Zangnebar, Nonomotapa," said Jack.

"But if we could not remember them, we would be the first to suffer, little hare-brain," replied I.

"Then what names will you give them?" he asked.

"The answer is simple," I said. "Let us name each spot after some event that has happened there."

"That will be the best way," said Ernest; "and, to begin with the bay where we landed, I think we should call it Safety Bay."

"I would like it called Lobster Bay," said Jack; "for it was there one of these wicked animals pinched my leg so terribly."

"Then," said his mother, smiling at her boy's egotism, "I think it might be as appropriately called the Bay of Cries. I agree with Ernest that we ought to name it Safety Bay; our gratitude to God demands it."

This was passed unanimously, and the other parts of our domain were soon named respectively:—Tent House, our first settlement; Shark Island, the small islet at the entrance to the bay; Flamingo Marsh, and Jackal River. Our new dwelling we called Falcon's Nest, because, as I explained to my sons, they were as active and adventurous as young falcons, and as much inclined to pillage the surrounding territory. The promontory from which Fritz and I had vainly hoped to discover some trace of our unfortunate companions, was called Cape Disappointment.

Dinner over, we each resumed our various occupations. Fritz proceeded with the manufacture of the cases for our silver plate, by cover-

ing wooden boxes with the skin of his margay. Jack asked me to help him to make the prickly skin of the porcupine into a coat of mail for Turk. This we did by cleaning the skin as Fritz had done that of the margay, and then fastening it on to the dog with straps. This warlike dress gave him a very formidable appearance. He did not seem to find it at all inconvenient; but it was different with Flora, for when she came to play with him, as she often did, she got very much hurt. It was, at last, deemed advisable that master Turk should only wear his coat of mail when going on important expeditions. The remainder of the skin Jack made into a military cap for himself, with which he intended to frighten the savages, if we should encounter any.

Ernest and Francis tried the bow and arrow, and I was glad to see were not so awkward as I had feared they would be. The sun being now pretty low, and the heat not so great, I proposed a walk, which, it was decided, should be in the direction of Tent House, that we might bring away provisions and other requisites from our stores there. Fritz and Jack wanted powder and shot, my wife wanted butter, and Ernest thought we should bring away a pair of ducks, which would find food in abundance on the banks of the stream.

“ Well, let us be off,” said I; “ and you must

be prepared for a little fatigue, for we are going by a longer road than the way we came."

We set off; the three boys and myself with our guns, and Fritz and Jack armed besides, the one with a girdle of jackal's skin, the other with his famous porcupine hat. Even little Francis carried his bow and quiver. My wife alone was unarmed. The little monkey, anxious to accompany us, jumped as usual on Turk's back; but hurting itself on the coat of mail in which he was still accoutred, ran away making hideous grimaces, and took refuge on Flora, who consented benevolently to carry the impudent little cavalier. Our flamingo also followed us when he saw us all set off, looking very comical on his stilts, with his long waving neck. Keeping along the bank of the stream, we had a beautiful road. My wife and I walked behind leisurely, the children running before. At last Ernest came, holding up to us what seemed a twig, with some little green balls hanging to it, and crying—

"Potatoes, papa, potatoes!"

I saw he was right, and praised his observation, which had made such an invaluable discovery. Ernest, delighted, urged us to make haste to come with him to his potato field, for he said that the country where he had found those was covered with them. We hastened to see this natural plantation. Jack, throwing himself on

his knees, began to scratch them out of the earth with his hands. Knips imitated his example, and Francis gathered them in a heap as they threw them on the ground. We filled our sacks and game bags, and went on our way, after carefully marking the whereabouts of the field, to which we determined to return.

We crossed the stream at the foot of some rocks, over which the water fell, forming a cascade. From this spot, the view was both extensive and beautiful. We could have imagined ourselves in some greenhouse in Europe, with this difference, that, instead of flower-pots and cases with rare shrubs and flowers, the interstices of the rocks were filled with the most beautiful and luxuriant vegetation. Grasses abounded in great variety; as also the Indian fig, the aloe, the cactus, with its prickly leaves and bright flowers; the grass plantain, with long trailing branches; and above all, the pine-apple, the most delicious of fruits, which the children recognised at once, and ate with an eagerness I was obliged to check, fearing they would do themselves an injury. Amongst those plants, I recognised the karatas, a sort of aloe; and pulling some, I showed it to the boys, saying, "I have found something much more important than the pine-apples you have devoured so greedily."

"What!" said Jack, with his mouth still full, "those ugly tufts of prickly leaves? It is im-

possible; there is nothing finer than the pineapple; it is a splendid fruit."

"You young gourmand," said I, interrupting his panegyric, in which the others by their looks plainly joined, "you must learn not to judge by appearances. Here, Ernest, you are the most serious; take my steel and flint, and light me a fire."

"But, father," answered my young savant, very much perplexed, "I have no tinder."

"Well, do the best you can, for we must have fire, by all means."

"Come," said Jack, "we will rub two pieces of wood together, as the savages do."

"A very wearisome way for those not accustomed to it," I answered; "and besides, my boy, you may rub a whole day without getting one spark."

"Then," said Ernest, "we must look for the tinder tree."

"That is unnecessary," I said, taking some of the pith from a dry twig of the karatas. Placing it on the flint, I struck the flint with the steel, and the first spark set it on fire.

"Bravo! bravo!" shouted all the children; "hurrah for the tinder-tree."

"You have not yet seen all the uses of the karatas," I answered. So saying, I took a leaf and pulled from it several very fine but strong threads.

"I confess," said Fritz, "that the karatas is a

most useful plant; but I would like to know what use we could make of those other thorny shrubs which are so numerous here."

"They are far from useless," I answered; "the juice of the aloe, for instance, is an invaluable medicine; the Indian fig is not to be despised either, for it grows in the most arid deserts, where people would often die of starvation were it not for its excellent fruit."

Jack, in his haste to test the excellence of the fruit, ran to pull some, but got his hands so pricked with the thorns that he returned crying, and looking very angrily at the tree. His mother extracted the thorns, which gave him great pain, while I showed his brothers how to gather the fruit without coming into contact with them. Having pointed a piece of wood, I fixed a fig on the point, and easily pulled out its thorns with my penknife. Ernest, who had been anxiously examining a fig, announced that it was covered with a multitude of small red insects, which were feasting on the juice of the fruit.

"Look, father," he said, "tell me what those animals are, if you can, before I guess."

Recognising the cochineal, I cried, "We have really made some extraordinary discoveries today; this last would be a very precious one to us if we could traffic in it with Europeans, who buy it at a very high price, for the sake of the scarlet dye it yields."

"Whatever it is," said Ernest, "it is the second plant we have found superior to the pineapple we praised so much."

"Yes," I answered, "you are right, and to prove it, I will show you another use of the Indian fig-tree. Its thick prickly branches, formed into a hedge, are a very secure protection against wild animals."

"What," cried Jack, "those leaves form a barrier against wild animals! I could soon break down a hedge of that with my knife or a stick." Accordingly, he set vigorously to work to hack the branches of a very fine fig-tree; but one of the leaves striking his leg, the sharp thorns made him cry out. "Well," I said, "do you understand now, why such a hedge would be a defence against half-naked savages, or beasts of prey?"

"We would need it all round our dwelling," said Ernest.

"I think we should take some of the cochineal; we might find it ornamental, if not useful," said Fritz.

"It will be wise to load ourselves only with what is useful, in the meantime," I answered. "The ornamental can be thought of afterwards, master Fritz."

As we continued our conversation, it turned on more serious subjects, and I was often astonished at the judicious remarks Ernest made. His great thirst for knowledge often led him to ask

questions which I was forced to confess I could not answer. I had not yet looked over the captain's books; they were all shut up in a case, except one or two which I thought would best suit the children's age. Ernest had often entreated me to let him have the key, but I thought we should first attend to the comfort and safety of our establishment.

After crossing Jackal River, a few minutes' walk brought us to Tent House, where we found all exactly as we had left it. Fritz carried away an abundant supply of powder and shot, and my wife filled a large tin jar full of butter. The younger boys ran after the ducks, which, having become wild, were not easily caught. Ernest employed rather an original means of capturing them. Tying a piece of cheese to the end of a cord, he let it float on the water till one of the birds swallowed it, and then pulling it gently, brought it to the shore. By this means they soon made them all prisoners, and, tying them each in separate handkerchiefs, we put them in our game bags.

We took also a supply of salt, and being already heavily laden, we were even obliged to take off Turk's coat of mail, and make him carry his part of the burden; besides, we had to leave our arms behind us. "Fire-arms are like soldiers," said Ernest; "in time of peace, they are of little use." The jokes and remarks on the

comic appearance of our caravan relieved very much the monotony of our way home; it was not till we sat down to rest that we felt tired. Our good housekeeper, however, prepared us a substantial repast of potatoes and milk, which revived us very much. Supper over, the children hastened to their hammocks, and their mother went to help them. She returned smiling, and said to me, "Do you know what Francis has added to his prayer? I want you to guess."

"Tell me yourself," I answered, "and as quickly as possible, for I am just falling asleep."

"Well, here it is," she said: "Good God, I thank Thee for planting such good potatoes in our island for little Francis, and large pine-apples for Jack."

"Be assured," said I, bidding her good night, "that God listens to the simplest prayer of the child. Our Lord has taught us to say, 'Give us this day our daily bread.'"

CHAPTER X.

THE SLEDGE.

DURING our walk the previous evening, I had noticed, scattered along the shore, a quantity of timber, which I thought would be useful in mak-

ing a hurdle for transporting from one place to another, burdens too heavy for our animals to carry on their backs. Waking Ernest at dawn, we got ready the ass, and yoked it to a large branch of a tree I thought we should require. I took Ernest, because I thought a morning walk would help to cure the indolence into which his meditative disposition was apt to degenerate.

“Are you not rather contradictory,” said I to my son, as we went along, “in having risen sooner than usual from your bed where you slept so soundly? and do you not regret being deprived of the pleasure of shooting and all the rest of it with your brothers in a morning?”

“Oh! now that I am up, I like it very well,” said he; “and as for the shooting, I dare say there will be some birds left for me, for I believe they will frighten more than they will catch.”

“How so?” asked I.

“Because they will be sure either to forget to load their pieces with small shot instead of ball, or they will fire from the ground, forgetting that the height of the trees is so great.”

“You say well, my boy; but it would only have been amiable to warn your brothers of all this: there is a time for acting, as well as for meditating and reflecting.”

Talking thus, we arrived at the shore, and found a good many logs, &c., cast up by the

waves. These we placed on the tree branch, which formed a sort of primitive sledge. I also found among the rubbish a case, which I opened as soon as we got to Falcon's Nest. It contained sailors' clothes, drenched with sea water. The report of fire-arms, as we approached Falcon's Nest, announced the whereabouts of the sportsmen; and, as we came into view, the whole family ran joyfully toward us. After apologising to my wife for leaving her without saying where we were going, we sat down to breakfast. The boys had shot four dozen birds, thrushes and ortolans, few in proportion to the quantity of powder spent. After breakfast, I showed my little poachers how to preserve the game till we should want it for use, by hanging it in a tree by a thread of the karatas. While Jack and Francis attended to this, Fritz and Ernest helped me to make the hurdle.

We had been busy for some little time, when we were startled by a great disturbance amongst our fowls, and the cock crowing at the pitch of his voice. My wife went to see if the appearance of some wild beast was the cause of the commotion; but all she saw was the little ape, running to the roots of the fig-tree, under which he disappeared. Suspecting some mischief, she followed him, and caught him in the act of breaking an egg, preparatory to eating it. Searching under the neighbouring roots, Ernest found quite

a store of eggs master Knips had laid by in reserve, his greediness having tempted him to steal the eggs as they were laid.

"This explains," said my wife, "how I have often heard the hens cackling as if they had laid, and yet when I looked for the eggs, there were hardly ever any to be had."

We decided to punish the young thief by keeping him a prisoner during the hours that the hens generally laid; at the same time it occurred to us he might be useful to us in finding out the eggs that were not laid in the ordinary nests. When Jack, who had been up in the tree, spreading snares for the birds, came down, he announced that the pigeons we had brought from the vessel had built a nest in the branches. I was glad to hear it, and forbade the children to fire into the tree, for fear of hurting or disturbing them. I was sorry I had suggested setting the snares. Little Francis came to me, with the simplicity natural to him, to ask if it would not be possible to sow powder in a field, which he promised he would look after himself, so that his brothers could shoot as much as they pleased. The idea, which amused us very much, showed as much kindness of heart as ignorance.

"My dear Francis," said Ernest, "powder is not a thing that grows; it is manufactured by mixing together, in nearly equal proportions, bruised charcoal, sulphur, and saltpetre."

"Oh! I did not know," said Francis, simply, "and I thank you for telling me."

Leaving my young philosopher to teach his brother, I became so absorbed in the construction of the hurdle, that I did not notice that my wife and younger children had plucked a great many birds. Fixing them on an old sword we had found in the vessel, my wife was preparing to roast them, when I remarked that there were three times the number of ortolans we could consume. She said she would not have plucked so many, if she had not heard me say that ortolans could be preserved by being laid in butter after being half roasted. The hurdle finished, I determined to have another expedition to Tent House in the afternoon, and again to take Ernest alone, being anxious to cure his indolence and timidity.

"Papa," said Francis, as we were setting out, "Ernest told me that friction or any quick motion draws out the fire that is hid in every body. Now, if I run too fast, I may perhaps set myself on fire."

"Not set yourself on fire, my child, but make yourself very warm. Your little legs, or even the legs of a man, are not strong enough to allow of him running so fast as to set fire to himself. You may set your mind at rest on that subject, and run as fast as you can."

"I am very glad," he answered; "I like famously to run."

Fritz presented us, before we set out, with one of his cases, which was large enough to hold our hatchets. I praised his ingenuity, and we bade them farewell. The ass and cow drew the hurdle, and Ernest and I, with our guns, walked beside it, Flora following. We took the road by the shore, and arrived without accident at the Tent. We set the beasts at liberty, while we loaded the hurdle with a cask of butter, a barrel of powder, and some shot, cheese, and other provisions.

Absorbed in this work, we did not notice that the cow and ass, attracted by the luxuriant verdure on the other side of the stream, had wandered across the bridge. I sent Ernest after them, telling him that I would go meanwhile in quest of a convenient place to bathe, for I thought a bath would refresh us after our fatigues. I found a place in Safety Bay, which I thought would do; but before going into the water, I called Ernest several times. Getting no answer, I became anxious, and went back towards the Tent, calling him, but still receiving no reply. I was beginning to fear some accident, when I perceived him at a little distance, fast asleep at the foot of a tree, the two animals grazing quietly beside him.

"You idle boy!" I cried; "this is a fine way to take care of your charge. Did it never occur

to you that they might recross the bridge and be lost?"

"There is nothing to fear," he answered, rubbing his eyes; "I have lifted some of the planks of the bridge."

"Ah! I see, idleness has made you ingenious; but instead of sleeping there, you might have been filling a bag with salt, as your mother told you to do. Do it now, and when you have finished, come to me behind these rocks, where I am going to bathe." So saying, I left him.

After being nearly half-an-hour in the water, I began to wonder that he had never appeared, and dressed myself to go and see if he had fallen asleep again. I had not gone far, when I heard him cry—

"Oh! father, come and help me, or it will pull me into the water."

Hastening to him, I found the young philosopher on the ground close to the edge of the stream, holding with both hands a line, with which he had caught an enormous fish. I was just in time to prevent him losing his splendid prize, for his strength was nearly exhausted. Taking the cord, I led the fish into a shallow place, where Ernest, despatched it with a hatchet. It was a salmon of at least fifteen pounds. I praised Ernest not only for his skill as a fisher, but also for his prudence and foresight in bringing fishing lines away with him.

While he was bathing, I rubbed the salmon in salt, and placed it, along with some smaller ones he had caught, on the sledge. I replaced the planks on the bridge, re-yoked the animals, and we set out on our return.

We had gone about three quarters of a mile, when Flora suddenly bounded towards a tuft of high grass ; and an animal started out of it, about the size of a sheep, and springing in a very extraordinary way. I fired, but too hastily, and missed. Ernest was more successful, and killed it. On examining this singular animal, we found it had the muzzle of a mouse, the ears of a hare, and the tail of a tiger. Its fore paws were very short, and its hind legs very long. I examined it a long time before I could come to any conclusion as to what animal it could be. Ernest was so delighted with his success, that he could think of nothing else.

“What will my mother and brothers say when they see it ?” he cried ; “and I will tell them it was I who shot it.”

“You have really a correct eye, and a steady hand,” I said ; “but I would like to know the name of your victim ; examine it with me, and perhaps”—

“It has four incisors,” he said, interrupting me, “and therefore may belong to the tribe of the rodentia.”

“But it has, also,” I answered, “a pouch,

which is the distinctive feature of the marsupalia. I think I may venture to say that we have here a female kangaroo—an animal first discovered by Captain Cook in New Holland. You have really made an extraordinary capture.”

“Father,” said Ernest, “you seem very much pleased that I shot the animal; are you not sorry you did not bring it down yourself?”

“No, Ernest; I love my son better than myself, and his success gives me as much pleasure as my own does.”

“My dear father!” he exclaimed, throwing his arms round me.

We put the kangaroo on the hurdle; and as we went on, I told Ernest all I knew about its habits. The children ran to meet us whenever they saw us coming. They were dressed in the most extraordinary style; one in a long white chemise; another in a pair of blue trousers, in which he was almost lost; while the third was enveloped, and nearly out of sight, in a vest, which reached to the ground, and made him look like a walking portmanteau. I asked an explanation of this strange masquerade. They told me that, in my absence, their mother had thought fit to wash their clothes; and so they were obliged to dress, in the meantime, as best they could, out of the sailors' chests. After we had laughed till we could laugh no longer, all gathered round the hurdle to inspect its load. Our housekeeper was

very thankful for the butter, the salt, and the fish ; but the children were most delighted with the salmon and the kangaroo, which Ernest was very proud to exhibit. Jack and Francis shouted with delight when they saw it, but Fritz evidently eyed it with envy, which he vainly tried to hide.

“ Father,” said he, coming close to me, “ will you take me with you in your next excursion ?”

“ Yes, my boy,” said I, and in an undertone, I added, “ if it were only to reward you for making an attempt to subdue your jealousy.”

After this he congratulated Ernest most gracefully on his skill and courage. The hurdle being unloaded, I gave our animals some salt, of which they had been deprived latterly. The kangaroo was hung up in a tree, and we supped on the small fish caught by Ernest, retiring afterwards to our dormitory in the tree.

CHAPTER XI.

SECOND VOYAGE TO THE VESSEL.

THE next morning very early, I called Fritz to accompany me to the vessel. My wife, hearing us moving, began to exclaim against our expedition, on account of its danger, and I had again

to point out the folly of our allowing the waves to swallow up so much of which we stood in need. I got down out of the tree, and proceeded to skin the kangaroo; part of the flesh was to be eaten immediately, and part salted and laid aside.

After having breakfasted, and collected our arms and provisions, I called Ernest and Jack, to give them some orders before leaving. They were nowhere to be found, however. Their mother thought they had gone to dig up some potatoes; and as they had taken Turk with them, we considered they were in safe keeping, and set out without waiting their return.

As we got to the Jackal Bridge, we were startled by Jack and Ernest darting out from behind a bush, and screaming and laughing over the trick they had played upon us. I scolded them well for going away without telling any one; and they owned that they had done so in the hope that I would take them with me to the ship. I assured them this was impossible, for they would be too many for the boat, and those at home would be anxious about their non-appearance. I sent them back with the message that we would be obliged to remain all night—an announcement which I had lacked courage myself to make that morning.

“Try,” said I, “to get home before mid-day. Ernest shall have Fritz’s watch, in order that he may not forget how the time flies. Fritz can get

another for himself in the ship, and also one for Jack."

Without further parley, the two boys set out to Falcon's Nest, leaving us to pursue our voyage. It was not long before we stepped on board the vessel. Our first care was to collect materials to construct a raft, which would carry more than our boat of tubs could hold. Choosing a dozen empty water barrels, we nailed them solidly together, and then put a flooring of planks above, surrounding it with a railing about two feet high.

This occupied us most of the day; and when it was finished, we took a survey of the vessel, to decide what would be most useful to take with us; then, after a comfortable meal, we retired into the captain's cabin, and slept well.

We were astir at dawn the next morning, and began to load our two boats. We visited the cabins, and carried away the locks, bolts, window hangings, and even the windows and doors. Boxes of carpenters' and gunsmiths' tools also formed part of the spoil. A coffer with gold and silver watches and rings dazzled us for a moment; but our attention was soon attracted by what were far more precious to us, namely, bags of oats, wheat, peas, and maize, as well as young European trees, which had been destined to be planted in the new colony. What was our delight to find, besides, bars of iron, wheels, pick-axes, spades, and above all, a hand-mill! Nothing

which could be useful in founding a colony seemed to have been forgotten. We could not take all; so we decided to take only what was sure to be useful. Out of the case of jewels we took only the two watches we had promised to Ernest and Jack. Fritz asked leave to take some fishing tackle, a pair of harpoons, and some packages of cord he had come upon accidentally.

The loading of our rafts took half of the day, and when we were ready to start, they were so heavily laden, we should have had difficulty in moving them, had the wind not helped us very much. I was at the helm, and the sail prevented me seeing what Fritz was about. Suddenly he exclaimed, "Hurrah! it cannot escape now!"

He had very adroitly harpooned a large tortoise as it was sleeping near the surface of the water. I pulled in the sail and wanted to cut the cord of the harpoon, for the animal, in its fright, was dragging our boat after it with great rapidity; but Fritz entreated me not to let his victim escape, promising to cut the cord immediately he saw any danger. Carried forward with such terrible swiftness, I had the greatest difficulty in guiding the boat; and seeing that the animal was directing its course to the open sea, I again hoisted the sail, against which the tortoise could not make any way, so was obliged to turn towards the shore. We ran aground a little distance from shore, and I leapt into the water and des

patched our captive, while Fritz fired his gun to announce our arrival. We were welcomed by the whole family, who had come to meet us; and I had to submit to a very mild scold from my wife, for my long absence.

The two younger boys had brought the ass and cow, with the hurdle, from Falcon's Nest, and we loaded it with mattresses and the tortoise, which weighed three hundred-weight. The rest of the cargo we drew up out of reach of the sea, and anchored our rafts where they were. On our way home we were besieged with questions. Fritz told the children of a box full of piastres he had seen, some of which he brought to Francis.

"Do you mean to sow them, my man?" I asked, laughing.

"No, papa," he answered; "I mean to keep them, and buy gingerbread at the next fair time." His answer amused us all exceedingly.

When we got home, I removed the shell of the tortoise, and gave my wife some slices of the flesh to cook for our repast.

"I must first cut off these greenish pieces," she said.

"These are considered by epicures the most savoury parts," I answered.

"Dear father," said Jack, "may I have the shell?"

Each of the other children also put in a claim; but I reminded them that it was Fritz's pro-

perty. Curious to know what they each intended to do with it, if it were in their possession, I asked them, beginning with Jack. He said he would make a neat little boat to sail in on the stream. Ernest would use it for a shield, to defend him from the savages. Francis was going to make a pretty little house, and the shell was to form the roof.

"Well, my dear boy," I said, turning to Fritz, "what do you intend to do with it?"

"I, father? I want to make a basin at the side of the river, where mamma can always have clear fresh water, when she wishes it."

"Bravo!" I cried; "that will be a public benefit. You must work out your plan as soon as we can find some potter's clay."

"Potter's clay!" exclaimed Jack; "I gathered a heap of it under a tree over there, this morning."

"But where did you get it?" I asked.

"He got it on the hill," answered his mother, "and soiled his clothes so, I had to wash them."

"It was not my fault, mother," answered Jack; "I slipped on the clay, and fell, and it was to that accident that I owe the discovery."

"Oh!" answered his mother; "from what you said this morning, I understood that you went expressly to look for it."

"When the basin is made," said Ernest, "I am going to steep in it some roots I suspect to

be radishes; they are more like shrubs than herbs, and I am afraid to taste them, till I have seen the pig eat them without hurt."

"You are right, my son," I answered; "you cannot be too cautious. Show me the roots, and tell me where you got them."

"I saw the pig devouring those roots," he said, "and brought some of them away."

"If I am not mistaken," I said, "you have made a precious discovery. I think this root is the manioc, from which, in the East Indies, cassava bread is made. It has first, however, to be submitted to a process by which the poisonous juices it contains are extracted."

Having arrived at Falcon's Nest with our load, we returned for another, leaving my wife and Francis to prepare a repast with the flesh of the tortoise. During our walk back to the shore, Fritz asked me if our tortoise was not of the kind the shell of which was often made into ornaments; if so, he said, would it not be a pity to make a basin of it? I told him the species he thought of is named the caret, and is not good to eat; and then enlightened him, as far as I could, as to the way the shell of the caret is polished.

We reloaded the hurdle with a number of useful things, and, amongst others, with the hand-mill, which, now we had found the manioc, would be of great service. Arriving at Falcon's

Nest, my wife came forward, smiling, and saying, "You have had two days' hard work, and, to refresh you, I am going to offer you a beverage you did not expect to find here." I followed her till we came to a little barrel, half buried in the earth, under a tree. "I found that along the shore to-day," she said. "Ernest thinks it is canary wine, and I hope, for your sake, that it is."

I tasted it, and found that Ernest was right. The children were also anxious to taste it, and I had difficulty in restraining their eagerness. I then called them to help me to get the mattresses we had brought carried up into the tree. This done, we sat down to supper, and afterwards slept very comfortably on our improved beds.

CHAPTER XII.

THIRD VOYAGE TO THE VESSEL.—THE PENGUINS.

BEING anxious about the safety of our two boats, I descended the tree next morning before any of the others were awake, and determined on a walk to the shore. I found all the animals astir, and yoked the ass to the hurdle. The boats I found all right, left dry by the ebbing

tide ; so, loading the hurdle, I returned, and was astonished to see no appearance of life when I arrived at Falcon's Nest. I made a noise, equal to an invasion of savages, and my wife looked out, very much amazed at herself for sleeping so long. "The mattresses have made us all very lazy," she said ; "the children can scarcely open their eyes now." The boys yawned and stretched themselves, but did not seem at all inclined to leave their beds. "Get up, get up!" I cried ; "we must have no laziness here." Fritz appeared first, and Ernest last, and looking as if he were very loath to leave his bed even then.

"Are you not ashamed?" I said to him, "to let even Francis get up before you?"

"Oh!" he said, "it is so delightful to go to sleep again after I have been wakened. I would like to be wakened every morning two hours before it is time to get up, just for the pleasure of falling asleep again."

"If you do not struggle against that indolence, Ernest, my boy, you will grow up a weak effeminate man."

We took a hasty breakfast, and then proceeded to the shore, to bring away the rest of our cargo we had left there. We made two journeys in a very short time ; and, as I saw the rising tide had again reached our boats, I resolved to take them round to a place of greater security in Safety Bay. I took Fritz and Jack with me, and

sent the others home with their mother. We were soon afloat; but instead of taking the direct way to Safety Bay, we directed our course once more towards the wrecked vessel. It was too late when we reached it to gather together a large cargo, but we began to collect what we could find that would be useful. Jack, to his great satisfaction, found a wheelbarrow, and Fritz discovered a pinnacle all ready to put together, its parts complete, and even furnished with two little cannon. I was overjoyed to see it, but determined to return for it another day, for I found we had not time to put it together. We brought away some more kitchen utensils, plates, and glasses; some tobacco, a grindstone, and another barrel of powder; Jack's wheelbarrow, and other things equally valuable. We were then obliged to hasten away, in order to avoid the land breeze, which rose every evening. When we were rowing home, we saw a number of little white animals along the shore, which seemed to be regarding us curiously, and stretching out their arms to us.

"Are we in the land of Pygmies?" I said to Jack, laughing.

"Or in that of the Lilliputians?" cried he.

"I think that is a regiment of birds," said Fritz; "for I can see their bills; and those things like arms are their wings."

"You are right, my boy," I answered; "these

are penguins; they swim very swiftly, but their wings are so small in proportion to their bodies, and their feet so ill-adapted for running, that they are very easily captured when surprised on dry ground; besides, they are so indolent, that they will scarcely put themselves about to escape from an enemy." When we were near the shore, Jack seized one of the oars, jumped into the water, and, before the birds were aware of his approach, had killed and stupified several; the others plunged into the water and escaped. Those that were only stunned by the blows Jack had given them, we tied together and set at liberty amongst our ducks and geese, when they recovered their senses. It was too late to unload our rafts that night, but we took with us the wheelbarrows—with which all were delighted—the tobacco, and kitchen utensils. Our housekeeper then showed us a store of potatoes and maniocs they had collected in our absence; and Francis, with an air of mystery, said, "Papa, would you be very much surprised if we soon had crops of maize, oats, and melons? Mamma has planted some down there."

"You little tell-tale!" cried his mother, "I wanted to give your father a surprise."

"Thanks for your kind intentions," I said, "but where did you get all the seeds?"

"In my magic bag," she said, smiling. "You are so occupied with voyages to the ship, I

thought you would have no time to make a kitchen garden; so I set to work myself, and chose the field where we found the potatoes."

Fritz announced his discovery of the pinnacle; but his mother was too much alarmed about the dangers we met with in our voyages on the sea, to receive the announcement with much pleasure. When I showed her, however, that the danger would be less in a real boat than in our raft of tubs, she was reassured. Night having set in, I sent the children to bed, telling them that next day I would teach them a new accomplishment.

CHAPTER XIII.

BAKING.

WHEN the children awoke next morning, they came round me to know what it was I was going to teach them. "To bake," I answered.

"But we have neither oven nor flour," cried Jack.

"The flour," I answered, "we will get from the manioc root; and some iron plates we brought from the vessel yesterday will supply the place of an oven."

After carefully washing the roots, we grated them down till we had a sufficient quantity of

fine flour. "It is the first time I ever heard of bread being made from radishes," said Jack. My wife was not very confident in my powers as a baker, and put on a quantity of potatoes to boil, in case I should fail. But I was not in the least discouraged.

"The manioc is not to be despised," I said; "it forms the principal food of many inhabitants of the New World. Some Europeans even prefer this kind of bread to wheaten bread. I am sure you will all appreciate it, too, if our roots are of the proper kind."

"Then there are several kinds of manioc?" said Ernest.

"There are, at least, three," I answered. "Two are very poisonous, if eaten raw, but are preferred to the third harmless species, because they are more productive, and ripen more quickly."

"How silly," cried Jack, "to prefer the poisonous to the wholesome plant. I will have nothing to do with your poisonous cakes."

"Never fear, you little coward," I answered; "we have only to press the flour, to remove from it everything hurtful."

"Why press it?" asked Ernest.

"To extract the sap, which is the poisonous part. To make certain of the wholesomeness of our bread, we will try it first with the monkey and the fowls."

"But," expostulated Jack, "I do not want poor Knips to be poisoned."

"Do not fear," I answered; "if the food we offer him is in the least hurtful, instinct will lead master Knips to refuse it; it is not the first time he has been of use to us in this way."

Jack, reassured, set to work again; and we had soon what I considered a sufficient supply of flour. This we put into a linen bag, and pressed well between two planks. When the juice stopped running out, the boys urged me to proceed immediately with the baking; but they were not so ardent when I told them that this was only destined for Knips and the hens. Drying the flour in the sun, I kneaded it carefully with a little water, and fired it on one of the iron plates over a hot fire; and we had a very palatable-looking cake, which, however, I forbade the boys to taste.

"How nice it smells!" said Ernest. "What a pity we did not think of it before to-day."

"Oh, papa, let me have just the smallest morsel to taste," cried Jack.

"A bit no bigger than that," said Francis, holding up his little finger.

"You little greedy ones," I said, "you are not afraid of the poison now. I believe there is no danger; but still it is more prudent to ask master Knips's advice."

When we offered it to the fowls and the mon-

key, they ate it eagerly; but I thought it wise, before tasting ourselves, to wait and see that no bad effects followed. In the meantime we had a substantial repast of potatoes, during which I told the children something about the nature of different poisons, warning them particularly against the fruit of the manchineel tree, which I thought might possibly be found in our island; and finishing by repeating what I had often told them, never to eat any fruit till they knew what it was.

After dinner we visited the fowls and Knips, and found them, to our great delight, in perfect health; so I told the boys to set to work again at the baking. They did so with great good will, and soon had a number of cakes of all conceivable shapes. When these were ready and tasted, they were pronounced by all excellent, especially when soaked in milk. The rest of the day we employed in bringing the remainder of our cargo up from the boats.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PINNACE.

ALTHOUGH my wife was so much alarmed by our voyages to the vessel, I persuaded her next day

to let me take the three older boys, for I knew I should need them all to put the pinnace together. So, taking our floats with us, and an ample provision of cassava bread, we started, promising to return in the evening. On examination, I found that all the parts of the pinnace were numbered, and that it only required patience to put them together. The great difficulty was how to get it out of the narrow space where it lay, and to launch it on the sea, as all our united efforts could not move it. After thinking of many plans, none of which were practicable, I called the boys to help me to hew down the partition in which it was incased, trusting meanwhile that some feasible idea might occur to me. Evening came before we had done very much; but we determined to return next day, and complete our work. Francis and his mother met us on the beach; the latter told me she had made up her mind to take up her abode at Tent House during the time we were obliged to be at the vessel. She welcomed with pleasure the supplies we had brought of rice, flour, corn, butter, and other provisions.

Our voyages to the vessel occupied at least a week. Every morning we started at dawn, and only returned on the setting of the sun, when a cheerful meal and interesting conversation made us forget the fatigues of the day. Our pinnace was gradually put together, and, when finished, looked light and elegant. She had a little deck

at the stern, and rigging complete. When we had tarred her, and fitted the two little cannons on to the deck, she was finished; and the difficulty again arose, how to get her into the water.

After much consideration, I hit upon a plan, which I determined to put into execution myself, without letting the boys into my secret. Filling a large iron mortar with gunpowder, and closing it securely over, I fastened it to the side of the vessel where the pinnace was fixed. Then lighting a long match, I ordered the children into the boat, and rowed quickly towards the shore. We were just stepping ashore, when the usual stillness of our island was broken by a loud report. My wife and children were very much startled.

"It is the signal of a vessel in distress; let us go to its aid," said Fritz.

"No," answered his mother, "the report came from the vessel; you must have let a spark fall, and it has found its way to a barrel of powder."

I proposed to the boys to return to the ship immediately, and ascertain the real cause. Curiosity made them row with all their strength, and we soon were alongside once more. We sailed round the vessel before going on board, and I was glad to see neither flames nor smoke. Coming round to where the pinnace had before been fixed, we found a great part of the vessel's side blown out, and our boat quite unharmed.

“Victory!” I cried, “the pinnace is ours.”

I then explained to the boys my expedient. With a little help from a screw, the pinnace glided from its rollers into the sea, and rode gracefully on the waves. The boys thought that with this little vessel, and its complete equipment of cannons, powder, and guns, we might bid defiance to any number of savages who could invade our coasts; but I told them I hoped we should always have reason to thank God for keeping away from us any such danger. We did not complete our little ship for two days more; but my wife was kept in ignorance of what was going on, till we could make a triumphant entry into Safety Bay.

When all was done, we embarked and steered landwards. Myself taking the helm, Ernest and Jack established themselves beside the cannon, to be ready to fire a salute, and Fritz managed the sail. The wind favoured us, and our boat glided through the water very rapidly, although towing behind it our raft of tubs. At last Fritz gave the signal to fire, and at the same time discharged his own two pistols, while we all shouted a joyous “hurrah!” Francis and his mother came running to the beach, and were very much surprised at our beautiful craft, though frightened by the noise.

“You are very welcome,” said my wife. “How beautiful your little ship is; it looks so safe and

comfortable, I think I would have courage to venture on the sea in it myself."

"Oh! mamma, do come in just for a moment, please; see, we have called her after you, 'the Elizabeth,' cried Fritz. She yielded to his entreaties, and we had a short sail all together. When we had again landed, my wife said to me, "You must not think we have been idle, while you were busy in the vessel. Our labours are not the less valuable, that we cannot announce them with a salute of cannons."

So saying, she conducted us to the waterfall on Jackal River, and showed us the potato field there, nicely laid out as a vegetable garden.

"Here is our work," she said; "there, I have planted potatoes; here, manioc. At this side are lettuces, and over there I have left a space for sugar-canes, besides sowing some melons, cabbages, peas, and beans."

I praised her ingenuity and activity, and commended Francis for the help he had been to his mother. "I never thought," I said, "that with only Francis to aid you, you could accomplish such a piece of work as that."

"I did not expect to succeed so well myself," she answered, "and therefore I did not tell you before of my intentions. I only regret one thing, which is, that I have not visited Falcon's Nest, to look after our European plants there; I am afraid they must be in a bad state."

I promised to go and see after them next day. We then unloaded and secured the pinnacle to the shore; and as we had no farther tie to Tent House, we set out for Falcon's Nest.

CHAPTER XV

THE CROCODILE.

THE next day was Sabbath, and we spent it in reading, prayer, and other exercises. Next day the children amused themselves with gymnastics. While they were learning how to climb up a rope hung from a tree, I employed myself fastening a lead ball to each end of a long cord. Ernest, the first to notice what I was about, asked me what I was making.

"I am making a lasso, my dear," I answered, "an instrument used by the Mexicans and Patagonians, for capturing wild animals. They throw it while at full gallop, and the weight at the end causes the rope to twist round the neck or the legs of the animal, making it quite helpless in the hands of its captor. Buffaloes and wild horses are often taken in this way."

My older sons were delighted with the idea of this new kind of hunt, and began to practise the use of the lasso on the trees. Fritz was soon

quite expert, and able to teach his brothers. Next day there was a strong wind blowing, and I saw from the top of our tree that the sea was running high; so we contented ourselves with planting our European shrubs, and attending to other minor duties about Falcon's Nest.

Early next morning we were all astir, for I had announced, the previous evening, that we should all make an excursion to Calabash Wood, to get a new assortment of dishes. We yoked the ass to the hurdle, in which we placed our arms and provisions. Turk with his coat of mail led the way; then followed the boys; and my wife and I brought up the rear, followed by Flora with Knips.

When we had reached Flamingo Marsh, Fritz, who with Turk had wandered away from the others and was quite hid by the bamboos, shot a large bird, which fell, but was only wounded, and tried to run away. Turk pursued it, and Flora, snaking Knips off her back, followed him, and reaching the bird first, caught and held it by the wing till Fritz arrived. It struggled however so violently, that he was forced to call me to his assistance. Throwing a handkerchief over its head, I stopped its struggling, and then, tying its wings and legs, we carried it with us to where the others were waiting, on the borders of the marsh.

"It is a bustard," said our young naturalist,

after examining it. Fritz shrugged his shoulders incredulously.

“Ernest is quite right,” I said. “I recognise it by its feet, with only three toes, all pointing forward; and, judging from the absence of the moustache, it must be a female bustard.”

“Then,” said Jack, “it is probably the same bird that we startled once before here, but could not shoot. You remember, mamma?”

“If that is the case,” said his mother, “I must plead for her; for the young ones had evidently just left the nest shortly before that, and must still need her care.”

“Be assured, my dear,” I said to her, “that during the three weeks that have passed, the little orphans have learned to do for themselves. As to the mother, we will try and tame her, and she will prove a valuable addition to our live stock.”

Placing the bird on the hurdle, we went to the Monkey Wood, Fritz entertaining his brothers by an account of how, on our first visit there, the monkeys provided us with such a plentiful supply of cocoa-nuts. I was much amused by the different expressions the contemplation of these gigantic cocoa-trees called up on Ernest’s face,—a mixture of admiration for such natural prodigies, and a strong desire to have some of the delicious fruit.

“Would you not like,” I said to him, “if

these nuts would fall into your mouth of themselves?"

"Certainly not," he answered; "I would run a great risk of having broken teeth."

He had scarcely done speaking, when a large nut fell at his feet; it was followed by a second and a third.

"This is like what takes place in fairy tales," said Ernest, "where people have only to wish for things, and they get them."

"It certainly looks like it," I answered; "but I think the fairy perched in this tree rather wants to chase us away than to fulfil our wishes." We gathered up the nuts, however, which looked very fine ones.

"The fairy would be very kind if he would send some nuts to little Francis and me, too," said Jack. With this, two nuts more came tumbling down.

"Papa!" cried Fritz, "I see the sorcerer; it is a horrible beast,—round, and with two frightful pincers. There it is coming down the tree now."

Francis ran to his mother. Ernest did not move, but looked about for a safe retreat. The intrepid Jack drew himself up defiantly, and, flourishing his gun, said, "I'll speak to this sorcerer."

By this time the strange-looking animal, clinging to the trunk of the tree, was rapidly descend-

ing. When only a step or two from the ground, Jack struck at him with all his force, but the blow missed its aim, and fell harmlessly on the tree, while the creature, having reached the ground, pursued his assailant with open pincers. Jack tried again to strike it, but it avoided his blows dexterously. Unsuccessful, he retreated, and his brothers began to laugh at him; but he was not to be outdone. Throwing away his gun and game-bag, he next took off his vest, and turning suddenly round upon the animal, threw it over it, thus hindering its further progress.

“Ah! you wicked dragon,” he cried, “I will teach you to show your pincers in that way.” I went to his aid, and, after some heavy blows on its back, despatched the creature, which, even when dead, looked formidable.

“What is the name of that terrible beast?” asked Jack.

“It is a land-crab,” I answered. “This is the second encounter you have had with animals of this order; to-day you have shewn much more courage and presence of mind than the first time. Your ruse was very ingenious, and was well thought of, for the land-crab is a very dangerous adversary, especially to a child. It lives on the cocoa-nuts, which it breaks by throwing them down on the ground.”

After refreshing ourselves with some of the fruit,

we placed the crab on the hurdle, and proceeded on our way. We went slowly, for the thick brush-wood hindered us very much, and we were often obliged to cut our way through it with hatchets. Ernest, observing that a clear juice ran from some of the trailing branches we cut, tasted it, and pronounced it as good and refreshing as the purest spring water.

A few minutes more brought us to Calabash Wood, where, having gathered a number of the gourds, we all set to work to cut them into different kinds of vessels. Amongst others, we made milk-bowls and cheese-moulds; and I also cut out a neat little bowl for my wife to keep eggs in. The boys even manufactured nests for the fowls and pigeons, so neat and comfortable-looking, that Francis wished he had been less, so that he could have one to sleep in.

While occupied in this way, Ernest and Jack resolved to try and cook the crab, as the savages do, by throwing hot pebbles into the water to heat it. For this purpose they prepared an enormous calabash, to serve for a pot. As they were going to light a fire, they remembered they had no water, and separated in opposite directions to look for it. They were scarcely out of sight, when we heard Ernest crying—

“A wild pig! a wild pig! perhaps a boar!”

I ran in the direction from which his voice came, and soon met our young philosopher, run-

ning as fast as he could. I saw the animal also, a little way off, and sent the dog after it.

"It is there, father; do you see it?" said Ernest, who was now marching bravely behind me. "It was there I came upon the terrible beast, roaring hoarsely."

"I do not wonder that it roared," I said, "for you no doubt disturbed it while enjoying an excellent repast."

From the noise the dogs were now making, I knew that they were in close conflict with the enemy; so, leaving Ernest behind, I marched forward cautiously with Fritz, who had followed me. What was our surprise and amusement, to see, instead of a wild boar, our own sow, which, escaping from the dogs, ran forward to meet us. Poor Ernest was sadly teased about his "terrible beast." He changed the subject, by drawing our attention to some little round apples the sow had been devouring when he disturbed her. Fritz thought they might be the fruit of the manchineel tree, against which I had warned them; but I did not think so, and determined to take some of them to master Knips. We were proceeding to rejoin Francis and his mother in the Calabash Wood, when we heard Jack, who had gone in search of water, exclaiming—

"Papa, papa, a crocodile! a crocodile!"

"A crocodile!" I repeated, laughing; "a crocodile in a place where we cannot find a drop of water."

"I assure you, papa," he answered, "that it is a crocodile; I saw it stretched full length below a rock, sleeping in the sun."

We went in the direction he indicated, and saw that what he had taken for a crocodile was a large green lizard, the flesh of which is considered by the Indians a great delicacy. Fritz immediately raised his gun, but I seized his arm.

"You are always too hasty," I said to him; "you may miss fire, and only give the animal a chance of escape by waking it, whereas we can easily take it, now it is asleep." I cut a rod from a neighbouring tree, and tied a cord to the end of it, with a running loop, and then approached the lizard cautiously, whistling an air all the while. Wakened by the music, it looked up and seemed to fall into a kind of ecstasy; and while in this state I threw the noose over its head, and drew it tightly round its throat so as to choke it. The boys were delighted with my device, and I told them it was one often practised by the Indians. I took the lizard on my back, Jack carrying the tail behind me; it looked like the equipage of some oriental prince. My wife, who had been getting anxious about our long absence, and was very much astonished to see us return without water, was about to scold us a little, but the sight of the lizard explained matters.

She told us that during our absence, Knips had been greedily eating some of the new fruit

we had discovered. I gave some to the bustard, which was tied to a tree near, and it devoured them so eagerly, that I was satisfied there could be nothing hurtful about them; so we refreshed ourselves with some, along with the provisions we had brought with us, for it was now too late to think of cooking Jack's crab. In order to hasten our return home, and to leave a place on the hurdle for Francis, who was getting tired, we resolved to go back next day for our calabash dishes, taking with us only a very few that were dry, and the crab and lizard. A part of the latter my wife cooked with some potatoes for our evening meal, which was relished by all.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HEATH-COCK.

NEXT morning Fritz and I, accompanied by our ass and the dogs, set out, nominally to fetch the rest of our gourd dishes, but in reality to try and find out the extent of the land on which we had been cast. When near the oak wood, we again spied our pig, quietly breakfasting on the acorns, but did not disturb her. This wood was alive with birds. Fritz shot a tufted jay and two beautiful

paroquets, and was preparing to load again, when we were startled by a noise like some one playing a tambourine. Afraid that it might be the military music of some band of savage invaders, we advanced very cautiously, and soon discovered the cause of our alarm. Perched on the trunk of a fallen tree was a magnificent heath-cock, performing some wonderful evolutions before an admiring circle of wood-hens. He turned round and round in circles, bristling up his gorgeous neck feathers; then, spreading out his tail like a fan, he uttered the most extraordinary cries. I was curious to see the close of the performance, but a shot from Fritz brought it to a premature end, by striking down the principal actor, and dispersing his audience. I rebuked him very severely for his hastiness.

“Why always be so precipitate?” I said. “Is it not much better to see those beautiful birds enjoying themselves in life than to destroy them wantonly?”

He seemed sorry for his thoughtlessness; and I told him to pick up the dead bird and put it on the ass's back, till he could present it to his mother. Arrived at the wood, we found all we had left, and, as it was still early, proceeded to the exploration of that part of the island still unknown to us. In this we were considerably retarded by the very luxurious undergrowth. We crossed several streams, on whose banks pota-

toes and manioc were very abundant. In a thicket of shrubs a little farther on, I recognised the American wax-tree, from which can be obtained a substance that burns as well as bees-wax, and exhales a delightful fragrance. I was delighted to see it, and told Fritz to gather a plentiful supply.

A little way farther we saw a colony of birds, something like our European chaffinches, which seemed to inhabit one common nest divided into a number of separate cells, each having its own window or door, but all under one roof of interlaced roots or branches. A great many birds were constantly flying out or in, and some little paroquets were hovering about, and seemed to be disputing the right of possession with them. Fritz mounted the tree, and, after getting his hands severely pecked, succeeded in capturing one of the young birds. Putting it inside his vest, he slid down the trunk, and on examination found his captive was a young paroquet, with green plumage, which, with my permission, he resolved to keep, that he might teach it to speak.

In all probability this was a parrot's nest, and the other birds were intruders, which sought to possess themselves of it. Hence the little battle which we had just witnessed.

While we were speaking, we came to the border of a wood, new to us. The trees were of great height, and resembled the wild fig. Fritz

remarked, that out of one of the trunks there exuded a kind of resin, which hardened in the air. He took a little and kneaded it in his fingers. When he saw that it was softened and distended by the heat of his hand, and that he could fold without breaking it, astonished, he came to me, crying, "Really, father, I believe I have found gutta-percha."

"Well," said I, joyfully, "this is a treasure indeed!" Having myself examined the gum, I saw that Fritz had not been deceived; and when he asked of what use this would be to us, I told him that, among other things, it would make us excellent shoes. The curiosity of the young man was excited, and I was obliged to explain to him, as we walked along, how I expected to turn our discovery to good account.

"Gutta-percha, as we have seen," said I, "falls, drop by drop, from the trees. Being gathered in jars, and while in a liquid state, it is put into small earthen bottles, which are exposed to smoke, to dry the gum, and give it a dark colour. Then the bottle which has served as a mould is broken, and there remains a smooth flagon, glossy and flexible. The process which I shall employ in making our shoes resembles the one I have described. We shall fill a pair of stockings with sand, cover them over with gutta-percha, and have a pair of boots ready made, solid, and water-tight."

Delighted with our discovery, and already shod, in imagination, with our gutta-percha boots, we made good speed on our way. A new wood of cocoa-nut trees was before us. "Let us stop here," said I to Fritz. Observing the trees by which we were surrounded, I thought I recognised among them the sago-tree. Not only did I see in one of the trunks, broken by the wind, that succulent pith sold in Europe under the name of sago, but, to confirm me in my opinion, I saw the large white worms—considered by the inhabitants of the East Indies a great delicacy—which feed on the tree. To satisfy myself of their value, I proceeded to roast a number over the fire we had lit. Fritz at first professed to despise my meal, and declared he would never allow such a mess to pass his lips. The odour, however, became shortly so savoury as to be quite irresistible, and Fritz was the first to partake of the dish he had treated so saucily.

At last we came again to the Calabash Wood. Our ass was yoked to the hurdle that we had left there, and in the evening we found ourselves again at Falcon's Nest, where our non-appearance had already excited some anxiety.

The account of our excursion was the subject of conversation during the evening. The parrot was the source of great amusement to the young people, each one offering to be its teacher ;

and the contention was only put an end to by Fritz's declaring that he himself would take sole charge of the new comer.

CHAPTER XVII.

LAST VOYAGE TO THE VESSEL.

IN the morning, I proceeded to make some candles of the berries we had found. I first boiled them in a kettle of water. The green wax soon showed itself on the surface of the liquid. I then collected it in jars, already heated, to prevent its congealing. When my wife had finished making the wicks of linen thread, I dipped them in the wax, and hung them up in the air to dry. By dipping them several times, candles were produced; not, indeed, so round and polished as those made in moulds, nor very brilliant, but giving light enough to relieve us of the dire necessity of going to bed by daylight. This first success encouraged us to put another project into execution.

It distressed my wife to lose her cream for want of a churn in which to make butter. By way of substitute, I took one of our large calabash bottles, filled it three-quarters full of cream, sealed it hermetically, and placed it upon a piece of sail-cloth,

the four corners of which were attached to stakes. I then charged my sons to lay hold of the sailcloth, and keep the bottle in constant motion, which occupation they found so amusing that they made quite a recreation of it. At the end of an hour I opened the jar, and found a small quantity of excellent butter. My wife scarcely knew how to express her delight; and the boys, who always received well a new dainty, were as well pleased as their mother.

The success attending these various experiments gave me boldness to undertake a work much longer and more difficult than anything I had yet attempted. This was to make some kind of small carriage, to replace the hurdle, which our animals had great difficulty in dragging along. I believed myself, from my observations in Europe, to be sufficiently acquainted with the manufacture of carriages to be able to make a simple car; but when I came to the manufacture of wheels, I was at a great loss. The humblest trade demands an apprenticeship, study, and a special talent. After many efforts, and much working in the dark, I had a two-wheeled chariot,—heavy, ill-shaped, frightful, I confess, but very useful to us in our labours.

While I was occupied with this work, my wife and sons were not idle. They had transplanted our European trees each to the most suitable spot. The stalks of the vines were placed under large

trees, the thick foliage of which was to protect them from the burning rays of the sun. An alley of chesnut, nut, and cherry trees, planted by our diligent labourers, shaded the way to Jackal River. We took especial care to embellish Tent House. All trees which would not be harmed by exposure to the sun's rays, such as the lemon, the citron, pistachio, mulberry, and almond tree, were planted here, transforming this barren spot into an agreeable retreat. We made it a place of refuge in time of danger, surrounding it with a great hedge of thorny plants, to protect us from the attacks of wild beasts. These arrangements occupied no less than six weeks, during which time we did not neglect to observe the Sabbath.

The condition of our wardrobe was by this time deplorable, and another voyage to the vessel, where there yet remained some boxes of clothing, was quite indispensable. Choosing the first calm day, we launched the pinnace, which soon took us to the ship. It was much shattered by the wind and waves, and the ammunition and other stores were a good deal damaged. We brought away every article which we thought would be useful—utensils and arms of all kinds, including four pieces of cannon. After this I resolved to blow up the hulk of the vessel, that we might procure the beams and planks which the waves would wash ashore. For this purpose

I rolled into the hull of the vessel a barrel of gunpowder, to which, just as we left the ship, I attached a lighted match. It was dark before the explosion took place. Suddenly a loud report was heard, and a large column of fire rose from sea to sky, announcing the complete destruction of the ship. Thus was severed the last tie that bound us to Europe.

We were astir by break of day, and went down to the beach, where there floated a quantity of spoil from the vessel. I was delighted to espy several large tuns, to which I had attached some copper cooking utensils, too heavy for our pinnace, and which I intended using in my sugar-refining. For several days we were occupied in collecting those parts of the wreck which were thrown up upon the shore. My wife meanwhile discovered that two of the ducks and the geese had brought out a large family of young ones; and she remembered with regret her little feathered flock at Falcon's Nest. We all joined with her in wishing to return; so at last I said we should go to-morrow.

On the way Ernest remarked that the young trees forming the avenue leading to Falcon's Nest were not strong enough to support themselves, and that we should require to bring bamboo canes from Cape Disappointment, with which to prop them up. This expedition became the more necessary, because our wax candles

were diminishing, and we required a fresh supply of wax berries. All the boys found an excuse for being of the expedition, and I willingly consented to turn it into a party of pleasure. In order that my sons might more easily climb the cocoa-trees, I had made shields for their arms and legs out of the skin of the shark. The fields of cassava and potatoes, and the place where we had found the parrot, rose before us, and the boys rushed forward, eager to see this singular bird republic of which Fritz had spoken.

Owing to the great number of wax trees, our provision for lights was soon made; and we hid our bags full of berries in a convenient place, where we might find them on our return. A short walk brought us to the gutta-percha trees. A white liquid flowed from the notches of these trees, which we received in bowls brought for the purpose, and the supply was all that could be desired. After having crossed the wood of palms, and turned Cape Disappointment, our road led through one of the most delightful countries that the imagination can paint. On the left, were fields of sugar-cane; on the right, bamboos and a wood of palms; immediately before us lay the Bay of Disappointment; and beyond it, far as the eye could reach, the boundless ocean. We were so delighted with the prospect, that we decided to make this beautiful spot the centre of our excursions. We even thought of abandoning Falcon's

Nest for this paradise, but habit and a sense of its security had attached us to our old home.

Having unyoked our beasts of burden, and left them to graze on the tufted grass, which grew under the shade of the palm trees, some of us went in search of bamboos for props to our trees; the others set about gathering a store of sugarcane. This work awoke the appetites of the children, who wanted their mother to give them the provisions she had intended for supper. Our prudent housewife would not agree to this, but she advised them to contrive some other means of satisfying their hunger. They cast longing glances to the tops of the palm-trees, where hung magnificent nuts; but not belonging to the race of squirrels, how could they climb to such a height? I helped them out of this difficulty by tying round their bodies pieces of shark skin, to enable them to climb more easily, and by fastening a loop of rope round the trunk of the tree, on which they might rest when tired. By these means, they succeeded in reaching the tops of the trees. With a hatchet which they carried they sent down a shower of fresh nuts, on which we were able to satisfy our appetites, without encroaching upon our supper. Fritz and Jack were proud of their exploit, and rallied Ernest on his laziness in the ascent. But Ernest, insensible to their mockery, seemed bent on some great project. All at once he rose, and asked me to

saw in two one of the nuts for him, out of which he formed a cup, and suspended it at his waist.

"Gentlemen and ladies," said he, "it is true I have no great taste for perilous adventures; but when occasion requires, I can be as courageous as any one. I hope to make you a more agreeable present than even the cocoa-nuts, if you will but wait a little." After a comical bow, he approached a high palm-tree.

"Bravo! Ernest," said I; "the spirit of emulation by which you are animated is worthy of praise."

I offered him the same help as his brothers, and counselled him to act prudently. He sprang lightly up the palm which he had chosen, with an agility of which I did not think him capable, and soon reached the top in triumph. Fritz and Jack, who did not see any fruit on the tree, laughed mockingly; but our naturalist, without replying to their raillery, cut off the top of the tree, which fell at our feet.

"Naughty boy!" cried his mother, "in his spite at not finding any nuts, he has destroyed a noble palm-tree."

"Do not put yourself about, mother," said he, from the top of his tree; "what I have sent you is a cabbage-palm, very much better than the cocoa-nut, and I condemn myself to remain here, if I am saying anything that is not true."

"Ernest is quite right," said I; "the cabbage-

palm is considered very delicate in the Indies, and our naturalist is much more deserving of the admiration than of the sarcasm of certain gentlemen." As I said this, I looked at the two little railers.

Meantime, Ernest was in no hurry to come down; and we tried in vain to see or to guess what he was about. He descended at last, and, drawing from his pocket a flask filled with coloured liquid, he poured it into the cocoa-nut which I had prepared for him, and presented it to me.

"Taste it, Father," he said; "it is the wine of the palm. Is it not delicious?"

I found it refreshing and agreeable, and thanked my little cup-bearer; and after his mother had tasted the sweet liquor, the flask was passed round and emptied to the health of Ernest.

The day was far advanced; and as we had resolved to pass the night in this charming place, we occupied ourselves in making a hut to shelter us from the night air. Suddenly our ass, which had been grazing quietly at the foot of a tree, began to bray loudly, kicking up his heels in the air as if afraid, and at last galloped off and disappeared. We rushed along in the direction he had gone, but could see no trace of him, and returned sad and disappointed. This circumstance troubled me, for two reasons: first, because we had lost a useful animal; and secondly, because I was afraid it had been startled by the approach

of some ferocious beast. Animated by this fear, we lighted large fires all round our hut. The night was calm, and my family stretched themselves on their beds of moss; but I kept watch until I saw the day break, when I snatched a few moments' rest.

In the morning we thanked God, who had preserved us from danger; and having fortified ourselves with a good breakfast, I proposed to go in search of the ass. I took Jack with me, leaving the two eldest to watch over the safety of their mother and Francis. After half-an-hour's walk, I recognised the traces of the ass's hoofs; and a little farther on they became mingled with the impressions of larger hoofs. Following these traces, we reached an immense plain, extending as far as the eye could reach. In the distance, we thought we perceived troops of animals like horses; and, supposing that our ass might possibly be amongst them, we bent our steps that way. In the marshy ground we were obliged to cross we saw reeds of a prodigious height and thickness, which I concluded to be the bamboo properly so called, or giant reed of America, which grows thirty or forty feet high. Leaving this marsh, we found ourselves about a hundred paces from the animals, which we immediately recognised as buffaloes. I knew the ferocity of these animals, and could not restrain a movement of terror. I cast an anxious look

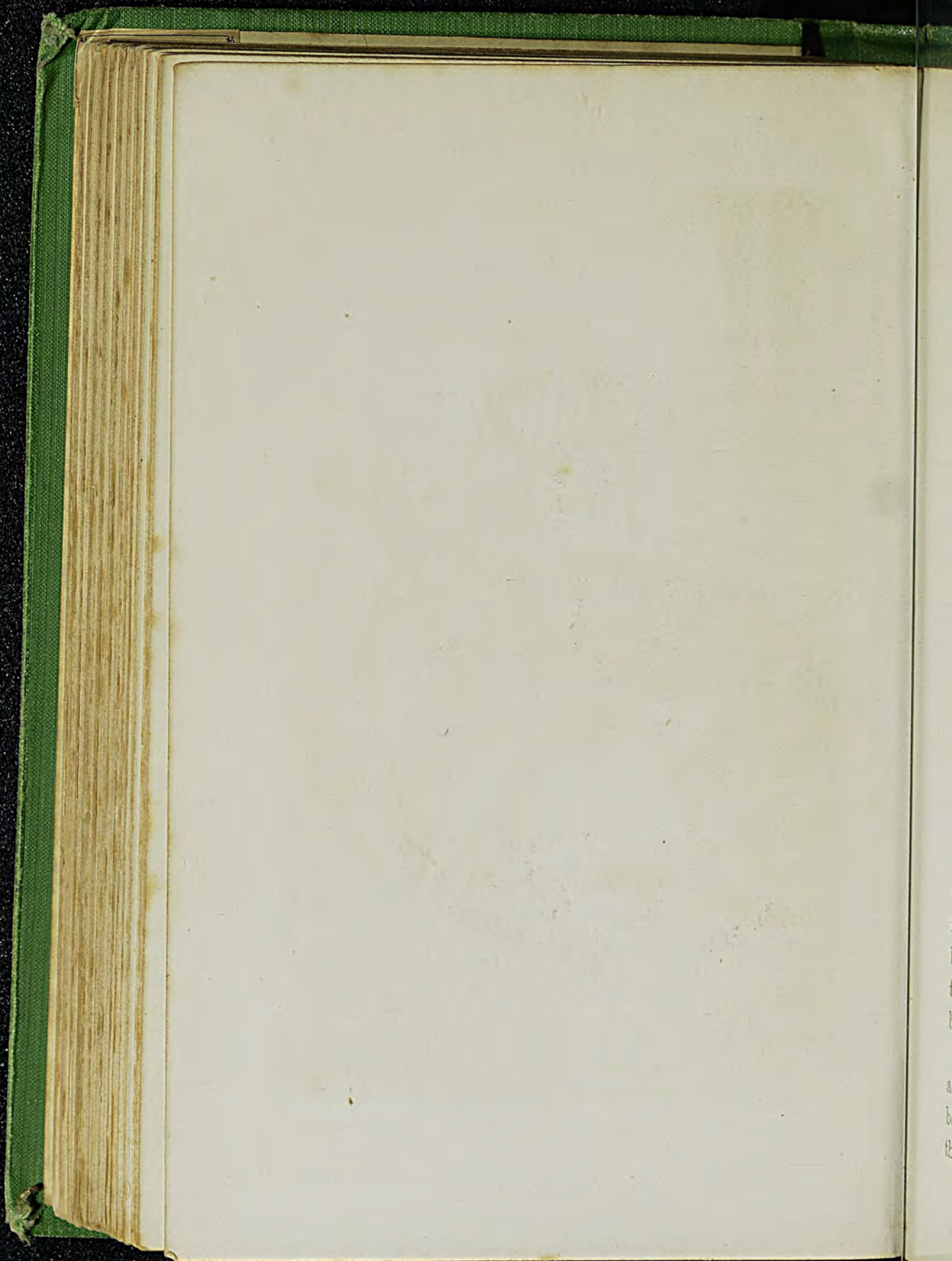
on my son. The sudden fright had deprived me of my presence of mind, so that I did not think even of loading my gun. It was too late to speak of flight; the buffaloes were there staring at us, but with looks more of surprise than anger; for doubtless we were the first men they had seen. All at once, our dogs, which had been behind, rushed on, barking furiously. We tried in vain to keep them back; on seeing the buffaloes, they ran at once into the midst of the herd.

The combat was terrible; the buffaloes ran here and there, roaring, pawing the ground, tearing it up with their horns, and precipitating themselves on the dogs, who, nothing daunted, sprang at their enemies. We had time to load our guns, and retire some steps, when the dogs, laying hold of a young buffalo, commenced dragging him towards us. His mother came to his rescue, and would soon have ripped up one of the dogs with her horns, when Jack, at a sign from me, pulled the trigger of his gun. We both fired together. At the report, the buffaloes fled in terror, and were soon out of sight, and the rocks sent back the echo of their roaring.

Our brave dogs had kept fast hold of the young buffalo. I had fired at the mother, and she had rolled on the ground. Delivered from imminent danger, I breathed more freely, and praised Jack for his courage. Meantime we had still to conquer the young buffalo, which was struggling with



The dogs, nothing daunted, sprung at their enemy, and laying hold of a young buffalo, commenced dragging him towards us.



the dogs; but we did not want to use our guns. I wished to take him alive, to supply the place of our ass, for which I was not inclined to make any further search. Jack happily thought of his lasso; and threw it so cleverly, that the animal, firmly held by the hind legs, was caught at once. I called off the dogs, and replaced the lasso by a tether. But we found it no easy matter to make him follow us. At my wits' end, I had recourse to an expedient, cruel but sure. While his legs were firmly tied, and the dogs held each an ear, I pierced his nostril, and passed a cord through, with which to guide him; and meanwhile tied this cord to a tree. As we had no proper instruments with us to cut up the dead animal, I only took the tongue and some pieces of flesh, which, after rubbing with salt, we carried with us. The rest of the dead buffalo we left to the vultures and other birds of prey, which, after flying round our heads, descended in a black cloud on the carcase. Amongst these birds, I distinguished the royal vulture, and rhinoceros bird, so called from the excrescence which it has above the beak. We returned home after taking some refreshment, leading with us the not very willing buffalo.

As we climbed a low hill, our dogs pursued and caught a young jackal. Jack petitioned to be allowed to keep it, and I consented, because I thought, if trained for the chase, it might be use-

ful to us. Jack was overjoyed, and could not sufficiently admire his future pupil, with its soft yellow hair and bright eyes.

I too had made an important discovery, in the shape of a dwarf palm with prickly leaves, which I thought would be useful in making hedges; and I determined to come as soon as possible, and secure some of these shrubs, to strengthen the enclosure at Tent House.

It was almost night before we reached home, where we found them watching for us. We were assailed with a host of questions, to which Jack replied with his usual vivacity. So much did his account engage the attention of his audience, that it was almost supper time before I found time to ask my wife what had happened in my absence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TRAINING OF ANIMALS.

My wife told me she was proud of her sons who had been left with her at Cape Disappointment. They had cut down Ernest's enormous palm. This work required more strength than skill, but by means of a hatchet, a saw, and a strong rope they succeeded in accomplishing it without

accident. While they were thus engaged, a band of monkeys entered the hut, and worked so much mischief, that it took my sons an hour to repair it.

Fritz had caught a young bird, which I recognised as the eagle of Malabar. I had read that this bird was easily educated, and advised Fritz to take care of his, as it might be trained in the same way as a falcon. Ernest told us all he knew of falconry, which was the favourite art of noblemen in the middle ages; and he was convinced that Fritz's eagle might be taught to catch game. My wife made the young buffalo a supper of potatoes and milk, and he seemed so docile, that we put him beside our cow for the night. Our supper was a very cheerful one; and after securing our safety, by lighting a fire, we sank to sleep on our beds of moss.

The next morning I would have given the signal to depart, but the young people had another project.

"My dear," said my wife to me, "we must not go away without taking part of the palm which the children have cut down. Ernest says that the pith of it is sago, and if our little doctor says true, I will be delighted to carry away a substance so wholesome and agreeable."

I examined the tree, and saw that Ernest was right; but it was no light labour to open up this great trunk, fifty feet long, and take out the

pith; but by the help of hatchets, we at length succeeded. While engaged in this operation, the idea struck me that the two parts of the trunk, if preserved, would form canals, by which we might bring water from the river, to water our kitchen garden.

The first thing we did was to clear one half of the tree, to serve for a channel; we then placed in it the pith, sprinkled well with water, and the boys, turning up their sleeves, kneaded it thoroughly. When the paste was of the proper consistency, I pressed it through a grater attached to one end of the channel, and dried the little round grains thus obtained, in the sun. I even attempted to make vermicelli. This I accomplished by making the paste a little thicker, and exerting a continued pressure upon it.

The next day we set out for Falcon's Nest. The cow and the buffalo were yoked to the chariot, and we were much pleased with the docility of the latter. The road we had taken brought us to our sacks of berries, and we found the calabashes we had left at the foot of the gutta-percha trees were filled with gum. In going through a wood of guaiacums, our dogs started at intervals, barking furiously. Fearing the approach of some savage animal, we stood still, and held our guns ready to fire; when Jack, who was lying almost flat upon the ground trying to discover the cause of our alarm, cried out,

"It is a wild boar and six little ones." A well known grunt followed the exclamation, and was succeeded by a general peal of laughter. There was the poor sow, with six little pigs four or five days old. We agreed to take only two of the little ones, and leave the rest to multiply in the woods.

Our arrival at Falcon's Nest was quite a triumph. We were glad to see our animals again, and they seemed to welcome our return. The buffalo and the jackal were tied up till habit should render them quiet and docile. Fritz's eagle was also tethered; but my son had the imprudence to remove the bandage from his eyes. Immediately the bird began to strike right and left with his claws and beak. The young parrot, which happened to be near, was killed at a single stroke, and Fritz was so angry that he wished to punish the murderer with death.

"Rather give him to me," said Ernest, "I will undertake to tame him."

"No, indeed, replied Fritz; "I caught and I will keep it; but tell me your secret."

"If you are determined to keep your eagle," said Ernest, "I will keep my secret."

Here I interfered, and represented to them both, the unkindness of their conduct. Ernest at once told his brother that the means were very simple. He could blow tobacco smoke in the face of the bird, and thus produce giddiness,

which would make him lose all his ferocity. Fritz affected to disbelieve in the efficacy of the expedient, but Ernest took a pipe we had found in the ship, and commenced smoking at the eagle's head. After the first few puffs he became quite quiet, and by and by motionless. Fritz thought he was dead, and repented having permitted such an experiment; but in a little while the bird revived, and was as tractable as before he had been fierce and violent. Happily it was not necessary to repeat this operation often.

The next morning we proceeded to prop up our young shrubs with bamboos we had brought for the purpose. The trees had been very much bent down by the strong winds that had blown from the shore during the last few days. While we were engaged in raising them up, and tying them to the bamboos, my sons asked me questions about agriculture, which I answered to the best of my ability; but I wished I had known more about the subject, that I might have satisfied them more fully.

"Are the trees we have planted here," asked Fritz, "in their natural state, or have they been trained?"

"What a question!" said Jack. "One would think, to hear you, there is a way of taming trees like animals. Perhaps you think they can be rendered docile, like your eagle, and taught to bend politely, that we may pull the fruit."

“ You think you have said a witty thing, my poor Jack, when you have only said a foolish one. It is quite true that we do not find trees obeying the voice of their possessors ; but some of them grow of their own accord, without culture, while others go through a process of education, by which their fruit is greatly improved. Since you place all beings in the same list, then, when you are disobedient I ought to punish you by passing a cord through your nose, as if you were a buffalo, or blowing tobacco smoke into your eyes.”

“ It would not be a bad plan,” observed Ernest, maliciously.

“ Yes,” replied I, laughing, “ a plan which I would have often to adopt with you all, not excepting Mr Doctor. But if men are treated differently from animals, so vegetables must be treated after their nature, by grafting, transplanting, manuring, and the like.” I told them that the greater number of our fruit trees at home have been brought from foreign countries. The olive-tree, for example, comes from Palestine ; the peach from Persia ; the fig from Lydia ; the apricot from Armenia ; the prune from Syria ; and the pear from Greece ; although most of them have been so long cultivated in our country, that we forget they are not indigenous.

About mid-day our work was done, and we returned to Falcon's Nest to dinner. After dinner, we occupied ourselves in the execution

of a plan we had long thought of. This was to replace the rope ladder leading to our aërial castle, and which formed a perilous ascent for my wife and youngest son, by a fixed staircase. To make an outside stair would have been a difficult, not to say an impossible, work. I resolved, therefore, to construct it inside the hollow trunk of the fig-tree, then occupied by a hive of bees. To expel these angry tenants was our first work.

To sound the cavity of the tree, we each took a hatchet, and, with the back of it, struck the trunk at different places. This noise disturbed the bees, who came out in great numbers, and attacked Jack, who, in spite of my warning, had ventured too near the mouth of the hive. In a moment his face and hands were stung all over, causing him great pain. I relieved him a little by rubbing him with wet earth. This accident proved to me that we could only dislodge our neighbours by violent means. I had hoped to force them to change their habitation, and had formed, out of a hollow trunk and one end of a calabash, a small bee-hive, in which I had thought to install them; but I did not see how I was to accomplish the translation; and I was not sure that, supposing it accomplished, the bees would adopt a new place of abode.

As I was trying to solve this problem, I noticed an unusual commotion at the mouth of the hive.

The bees came and went in a great state of excitement. I concluded that a new hive was going to separate itself from the parent one, and I was right. In a few moments a small army of bees came out of the trunk, and, after flying about for a short time in the air, settled in the form of a large bunch of grapes on the lowest branch of a small tree. I had more than once seen a hive taken, and set about employing the same means. I covered my head with a piece of sail-cloth, leaving several small holes in it through which I might see and breathe. Protecting my hands with a handkerchief, I approached the tree, and reversed the hive which I had made under the branch on which the bees had alighted. With my foot I shook the tree. The greater part of the bees fell into the hive, which I hastened to place on a plank laid for this purpose at the foot of the tree. The most difficult part of the work was over. I had taken care to leave a hole by which the bees might go in and out. A noisy coming and going was established between the bees on the tree and those in the hive, but an hour after the whole swarm had taken possession of their new home. At night, when they were asleep, we placed the hive against the wall of our kitchen garden, facing the south; and in the morning the little republic commenced working. Having become possessed of a hive which promised us in future a double supply of honey

and wax, we had less regret in sacrificing those in possession of our fig-tree. We killed them by throwing into the trunk two or three pieces of lighted sulphur, and then closing up the opening. The next day we took possession of the accumulated provisions of the year, and proceeded without hindrance to the construction of our stair. I sounded the tree, and found, to my satisfaction, that it was hollow from the base almost to the branches on which we had placed the planks of our house, so that we could make a winding stair inside without losing time.

First we made, at the foot of the tree, a large opening, into which we fitted the door of the captain's cabin. A large joist from the vessel was set up in the middle of the trunk to support the steps, which rested on their other extremities in hollow grooves cut on the inside of the tree. We also made openings in the trunk, into which we put the windows we brought from the vessel, giving it the appearance of a tower surmounted by a house almost hid amongst the branches. This work, which occupied several days, was perhaps wanting in architectural elegance, but it was solid and convenient, and appeared to us superb.

While we had been working at our stair, Flora had had two little pups, a male and a female; and I allowed Jack to give his jackal as foster-brother to the little dogs. The docile mother

made no objection to this addition to her family, who on his part was much benefited by the adoption. About the same time we had an addition to our flock, of four kids, and five or six lambs. We saw with pleasure our stock of animals increasing; but fearing lest, like the ass, they should stray from us, Jack suggested that we should tie the little bells we had brought from the wreck round their necks, so that the tinkling might guide us to the track of the fugitives.

The incision I had made in the nostrils of the buffalo was now quite healed, and I followed the example of the Hottentots, by passing a piece of stick through it to serve as a bit. Thanks to this invention, he was soon easily led; but it was some time before he would allow himself to be mounted or to carry burdens. Fritz busied himself training his eagle. The bird knew his master perfectly, and obeyed his voice; but he was too desirous to regain his liberty to make it safe for him to be loosed.

Ernest, too, was taken with this education fever, which had become general. He determined to train the monkey which Fritz had given to him. It was amusing to see the indolent boy patiently trying to conquer his blundering and rebellious pupil. The careless professor, who felt the least burden too heavy, resolved that master Knips should carry his. He tied to his back a small

creel, made of reeds and filled with light things. The monkey found this occupation little to his taste, and rolled on the sand, ground his teeth, and tried several other ways of getting quit of his basket. But at length, by means of alternate praises and threats, Ernest taught him to carry light burdens with a better grace.

Jack in his turn was occupied training his jackal, which in anticipation he had named Hunter, and which he intended should seek out the living game, and bring it to him after having killed it. The animal was very difficult to teach. He would seize anything that was thrown to him, but could not be got to bring the game he had sought out to his master. Jack, however, did not despair of obtaining a better result in time. Such were our employments during the hours in which we were not working; so that we had no time for wearying.

Hardly was our stair finished, when we began to think of perfecting our wax candles. We were in want of wicks, for my wife reasonably refused to let us tear our handkerchiefs and cravats for that purpose. I thought of making them of a kind of inflammable wood, found in the Antilles, and had already cut several small splinters, which I placed inside the moulds; but my wife had little faith in wooden wicks, and she manufactured some out of the fibres of the karata, dried in the sun, and twisted together. Having prepared our

wicks, we melted a quantity of wax in our kettle over a slow fire, and poured it into the moulds, which had been previously dipped in cold water to secure the wax hardening quickly. When night came I lighted two candles, one of each sort, that we might see whether the wood or the fibres burned best.

Alas! they both fell far short of the cotton. The inflammable wood burned too quickly, and the fibres of the karata carbonised. We sighed for the time when we should be able to obtain cotton without destroying our clothes. Having finished the candles, I turned my attention to the manufacture of boots. I employed the process of which I had spoken to Fritz when we discovered the gutta-percha tree. I filled a pair of stockings with sand, and daubed them over with clay, which I afterwards dried in the sun. I then, by means of a brush made of goat's hair, covered them with a coating of liquid india-rubber. When this coating was dry, I put on a second, and continued the process till the india-rubber appeared to me to be of the proper thickness. When the whole was sufficiently dry, I removed the sand and clay, and found myself in possession of a pair of boots, so comfortable, that the children requested me to make each of them a pair.

As the boys often stirred up the mud of the stream when they were drawing water, I formed

a small well of the shell of the tortoise, collecting the water by means of a tube made of the wood of the sago palm. Thus, day by day, we busied ourselves trying to better our situation.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WILD ASS.

ONE morning, as we were commencing our work, we were startled by a terrible sound in the distance. It was a mixture of howling and sharp whistling, and died away in a lamentable moan. Fearing an attack, we collected our animals under the roots of the tree, and retired into our strong castle, while our dogs stood with ears erect, ready to defend us. There was silence for some moments, and then the sounds were repeated, but this time much nearer. We all turned our heads in the direction from which they appeared to come, and Fritz, who had sharper eyes than the rest of us, threw down his gun and burst into a fit of laughing, saying, "It is our ass, who returns with a flourish of trumpets." His brothers began to feel ashamed of being so easily frightened. I was not so reassured as they were. "It is possible," I said to Fritz, "that

it was our ass made that strange noise, but it is not at all certain."

"You are right, papa," said he, "for our ass brings company."

I looked in the direction he indicated, and saw a magnificent wild ass, or onagra, trotting beside our ass. I immediately descended from the tree, followed by Fritz, telling the others to make as little noise as possible. I tied a long cord to the root of our tree, and made a running loop on the other end of it. With a piece of bamboo I made a pair of pincers, while Fritz stood beside me wondering what I was going to do with them. In his impatience he wanted to catch the onagra with his lasso, but I stopped him, telling him mine was the better way.

The two animals approached the tree. The onagra saw us, and started back in fear. Just at this moment Fritz held out his hand full of oats to our ass, who approached with such eagerness that the onagra, thinking, from the conduct of his companion, it must be something tempting, followed her example. I seized the opportunity, and threw round his neck the rope I held in my hand. He tried to escape, but the knot tightened and he fell on the ground almost suffocated. I hastened to replace the noose by our ass's halter, and before the onagra could recover himself, I pierced his nostrils with my bamboo pincers, following the example of farriers when they tame

wild horses. I tied the halter to a tree, and waited till the animal recovered himself, that I might know what to do next.

Meantime my family had come down from the tree, and were admiring the graceful form of our captive. After a few moments he rose and tried to regain his liberty, but feeling the pain of his wound, his ardour cooled considerably, and he allowed himself to be conducted to the stable. We had lost confidence in our ass, and to prevent her deserting us a second time, we fettered her fore feet, and tied her up beside the onagra, hoping that this might help to reconcile him to his new mode of life. This we found by experience to be no easy matter. We tried privations, and even stripes, but did not succeed until we had tried an American plan, and pierced his ear several times.

At the end of some weeks, Lightfoot, as we called him, was quite tame, and we mounted him without fear. To guide him I invented a bridle composed of a halter and small switch, which was so balanced as to strike either his right or left ear as his driver wanted.

About this time we had an addition of more than forty chickens to our poultry; and this reminded me that the rainy season was at hand, and that it was necessary to build a stable and hen-roost. On the arched roots of our dwelling we constructed a pent-house of bamboo canes,

interlaced together, and covered with moss and clay, coated with tar. The whole enclosure we surrounded with a pretty balustrade. The interior of this erection was divided into two compartments, the one serving as stable and barn, the other as milk-house and store-house, in which were our provisions for the rainy season, the winter of these tropical climates.

Few days passed without enriching our magazine with some new acquisition.

One evening, returning from gathering potatoes, I left my wife and two youngest sons to guide the team home, while Fritz, Ernest, and I went to the wood of green oaks, to gather acorns. Fritz was mounted on the onagra; Ernest had his monkey on his shoulder. We carried several empty bags with us, which we proposed to bring back filled on the back of the onagra.

Arrived at the wood, I tied Lightfoot to a tree, and we commenced filling our sacks. The harvest was abundant, and our work progressed rapidly. All at once the monkey darted into the nearest thicket, and we heard the cries of birds and fluttering of wings, which made us suspect that master Knips was having a combat with some inhabitant of the woods. Ernest, who was nearest the field of battle, advanced cautiously, and cried out, "Come, Fritz, here is a nest of eggs; come and take the bird before it escapes, while I hold master Knips." Fritz ran towards

the thicket, and soon afterwards came towards me, carrying a Canadian fowl he had attempted to shoot some days before. I helped him to tie its legs together, as I considered it a valuable acquisition. Ernest, who had succeeded in chasing away the monkey, came with his cap full of eggs, and covered with leaves like those of the iris. Showing me his spoil, he said, "I have brought some of the leaves of which the nest was made; they are like lances, and Francis will amuse himself with them."

Our sacks filled, we laid them on the back of the onagra. Ernest carried the eggs, and I the hen. My wife was delighted at the sight of the bird and eggs. She set the hen carefully, and at the end of twenty days we had fifteen chickens.

Some days after, on seeing the lance-like leaves Francis had been playing with, scattered round the foot of the tree, Fritz, by way of amusing his brother, said to him, "Come, Francis, we will make whips of these leaves." As they were splitting them up into long thin straps, I happened to pass, and taking up one of them, I discovered that this plant was the *phormium tenax*, which, amongst the Indians, answers all the purposes of flax. My joy at this discovery was equalled by that of my wife, who exclaimed, "It is the greatest discovery you have made; bring me a sufficient quantity of these leaves, and I

will make you shirts and clothing of all kinds." Alas! she forgot through how many processes these leaves would have to go before they could be made into cloth.

While I was explaining this to her, I saw Fritz on the onagra, and Jack on the buffalo, disappear in the direction of the oak wood. About a quarter of an hour afterwards they re-appeared, their animals laden with enormous bundles of flax plants, which they deposited at our feet.

"We must first steep the flax," said I, "by exposing it to the damp and to the air, so that the plant may corrupt to a certain degree. The soft part or vegetable glue that holds the plant together dissolves and leaves the long strong fibres."

"But do not these fibres corrupt with the rest?" asked Fritz.

"That would happen," said I, "if the steeping was continued too long; but such is the toughness of the threads, that this rarely happens, and there is little fear of it if the plant, instead of being exposed to the hot rays of the sun, is simply steeped in water."

My wife thought that, owing to the great heat of the climate, we ought to adopt this latter mode of steeping, and suggested the Flamingo Marsh as a likely place for the process. I agreed with her, and the next morning we yoked the ass to the cart, in which we placed Francis, master

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Knips, and our package of flax, and set out, armed with shovels and pickaxes.

Arrived at our destination, we sunk the flax to the bottom with large stones, in order that it might be quite submerged. While engaged in this work, we had occasion to admire the instinct of the flamingoes in the construction of their nests. They were raised above the water in the form of a truncated cone, and the eggs were placed at the bottom, so that the female can sit on them with her legs in the water. These nests are built of earth, so well packed together that the action of the water cannot destroy them till the young flamingoes are beyond danger. After fifteen days, our housekeeper thought that the flax would be sufficiently steeped; so we went and drew it out of the water, spreading it on the grass to dry. We then brought it home to Falcon's Nest, leaving the peeling, spinning, and weaving of it to a future day.

I saw that the rainy season was at hand, and began to lay in a store of provisions. The weather, which up to this time had been warm and clear, changed. The sky was overcast, the wind blew violently, and heavy showers fell. We gathered together all the potatoes and cassava we could find, and stowed them away in heaps. We also provided ourselves with a large store of nuts and acorns. Instead of cassava and potatoes, I had sown a good quantity of wheat; for, in spite of

all the delicacies offered to us by this fertile country, we regretted the want of bread. We did not know how precious it was until we were deprived of it; and even little Francis, who was never very fond of it, was of this opinion.

We transplanted to Tent House a number of young cocoas; and some sugar-canes, but the rain surprised us in the midst of our work, and fell in such torrents, that Francis was seriously alarmed, and asked if it was going to be a second deluge, and if we had not better build an ark, as Noah had done.

The rain was so heavy and the wind so violent, that it was impossible for us to live in our castle. We found that we should have to live under the pent-house at the foot of the tree; but it was so full of provisions, tools, and animals, that this was no easy matter. The worst of it all was that, in attempting to light a fire, we were threatened with suffocation. To make more room, we confined all our animals in one compartment, and packed away a number of our things in the winding stair. We did with as little cooking as possible, as the smoke was very disagreeable to us.

As we had only gathered a very small quantity of wood, we had reason to be thankful that the climate was only damp, and not cold, else we should have suffered very much. My wife was in great fear lest the children would take ill.

Happily her fears were groundless, as they all seemed strong and well.

The fodder we had collected began soon to be exhausted, and we dared not supply the want with any of our own provisions ; so we liberated during the day such of our animals as had originally belonged to the country, that they might forage for themselves, taking care to go in search of them at night and bring them to the foot of our tree.

My wife, seeing us return from these excursions drenched to the skin, resolved to make each of us a waterproof coat. She took two of the sailors' shirts, and made a hood, which could be drawn over the head, to each of them. She then dipped them in liquid gutta-percha. Covered with these mantles, we went out in the rain without fearing for our clothes or our health.

It was now that I found time to write an account of our adventures in this desert island ; but I had more than once to refer to my wife and sons, about the details of events that had escaped my memory. The children instructed each other by their mutual questions, and each told all he could recollect. Ernest took notes, that nothing might be forgotten ; Jack and Francis were his pupils ; their pious mother gave them religious instructions ; I preached hope and courage to all ; and thus we amused ourselves and whiled away the time, which yet

appeared long, notwithstanding all we could do.

The captain's case of books was a great help to us. We found some good works in it, scientific dictionaries and manuals, and sometimes were able to correct, by our experience, remarks made on the animals and plants. Ernest made a note of these errors on the margin. The errors, however, were few, compared with the amount of useful information.

Of all my works, my wife appreciated most a comb which I made for carding the flax. I rounded and pointed with a file long nails, which I fixed at equal distances in a thin sheet of tin. The edge of this sheet was turned up all round, so as to form a box, into which we poured melted lead, to consolidate the nails. To this card I soldered little flaps, by which it might be fastened to a support. My wife now wished impatiently for the sun to dry the flax, that we might begin to card it.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DRY SEASON.

It is impossible to describe our joy, when, after long weeks of privation and confinement, we saw

the sky clear and the sun shine out brightly. It was with unfeigned delight that we left our unhealthy room to breathe the fresh air once more. We forgot in our joy all the troubles we had experienced, and work seemed mere play in our eyes. Our first care was to visit what we called our domains. Our plantation was in good condition. The seeds we had sown had sprouted, and the earth was covered with a carpet of beautiful flowers, whose delicious scent was borne to us on the wind ; the birds were singing on every tree, and it appeared to us that we had never seen such a beautiful spring.

My wife wished to begin at once to the carding and spinning of the flax. While the younger boys took out the animals to graze on the fresh green grass, Fritz and I spread the flax out on the ground before the sun. When it was sufficiently dry, the children beat it out with large sticks ; and my wife, aided by Francis and Ernest, occupied herself with peeling it. I was the carder, and succeeded so well, that my wife entreated me to make her a spindle, that she might proceed to the spinning at once. By means of perseverance and application I succeeded in making not only a spindle, but also a wheel and a reel. My wife set to work immediately, without even allowing herself a walk, of which she had great need. She consented willingly to remain alone with Francis while we

went to Tent House, her desire being to renew our store of under-clothing.

I went to the Tent with my three sons, and found it in a sad state. A great part of it had been carried away with the wind, and much of our provisions destroyed with the rain. We immediately set to work, and dried all that could be useful to us. Fortunately the pinnacle was not injured, but our tub-boat was rendered utterly useless.

What grieved me most was the loss of two barrels of powder that I had left under the Tent, instead of placing them in the rock magazine, where, happily, I had preserved four others. This accident made me resolve to build winter quarters, in which we might find a refuge from the heavy rains, and where we might store our provisions.

I dared not hope that, as Fritz proposed, we should be able to cut out a dwelling for ourselves in the rock, even supposing we had had tools strong enough for the purpose. I thought, however, we might hollow out a small cave, in which to place our provisions. I set out one morning with Fritz and Jack, armed with shovels, pick-axes, and hammers; and having chosen a convenient spot and marked out the form of the opening, we set to work. At the close of the day we had done so little, that we were on the point of giving it up, but took courage on observ-

ing that the rock became softer as we progressed, and that we were able, in some places, even to detach portions of it with the spade. We had already penetrated seven feet, when Jack, who was in the hollow, trying to move a piece of rock with his lever, suddenly cried out—

“I have broken through, papa, I have broken through.” “Broken through what?” I asked; “the mountain?” “Yes, I have broken into the mountain,” he cried, joyfully. “Hurrah! hurrah!”

“He is right,” said Fritz, who had run to the spot, “and, poor boy, his lever has fallen down inside.”

I advanced, and convinced myself of the truth of what they said; and, lifting my pickaxe, I struck the rock, which immediately fell in, leaving an opening into which the boys would have rushed, had I not stopped them. The air which proceeded from the cave was unwholesome, and I felt quite dizzy on approaching to look into the interior. I embraced this opportunity of explaining to my sons the component parts of the atmosphere.

“The gases,” I said, “of which the air is composed, must be in a certain proportion to each other, and unmixed with any pernicious element. There are several means of knowing vitiated air. The surest of these is fire, which will only burn in pure air.”

Our first experiment was to throw bundles of burning herbs into the cave, which were immediately extinguished. I then had recourse to a more efficacious means. I put in a case some fusées and grenados, used in vessels for signals. Placing the case in the opening to the cave, I set fire to it. It exploded, and showed us a deep cavern, whose walls glittered as if they had been studded with diamonds. After firing off a gun once or twice, I tried the herbs a second time, and found that they burned brightly; so I concluded that there was no danger in entering the grotto. Still, as it was very dark, I thought it not safe to venture in without a light. I despatched Jack to Falcon's Nest to bring candles, and tell the joyful news to those at home.

During his absence Fritz and I busied ourselves enlarging the entrance to the cave. We had just finished when we saw my wife and her three sons coming towards us in the cart, which Jack was driving. Francis and Ernest waved their hats when they saw us. We all entered the cavern at once, each with a lighted candle. Fritz and I carried matches, lest our lights should go out. I led the way, my sons following closely.

The soil of the cave, which seemed to have been prepared for us, was firm, and covered with a fine dry sand. Having examined the form of the crystals, in fragments which I broke off from the wall, and tasted, I saw that this was a cavern

of rock salt. I rejoiced at this discovery, because it would secure to us a plentiful supply of salt, and save us the trouble of gathering it upon the shore. When we had penetrated farther into the cave, our admiration could not contain itself at the wonderful scene before us. Majestic spiral columns rose to the roof, covered with strange figures, which, according to the light reflected on them, appeared to be men, or fabulous animals. Oriental courts, lustres, gothic lamps, beautifully sculptured, surrounded us on all sides. Francis fancied himself in a cathedral, Jack in a fairy palace. Ernest was pensive and reflective, while Fritz exclaimed, "It is a most beautiful diamond castle." "Yes, my son, and God is the architect," said his mother.

I found pieces of crystal detached from the walls in several places. I thought it probable that they had become loosened by our firing; and, to preserve ourselves from accident, I called my family to the mouth of the cave, and fired upon those pieces of rock that seemed inclined to come away. We sounded the vault with long poles, and did not leave it till we were assured of its solidity.

When we had decided on making it our winter residence, numberless projects filled our minds with regard to it. Falcon's Nest was to continue our summer residence; but we thought no more of the improvements we had intended to make

before the rainy season. Our subterranean castle occupied all our attention. We shaped the doorway properly, and formed windows in the walls. Into these we fitted the doors and windows of Falcon's Nest, which were not needed, now that summer was come.

The grotto was spacious, and divided into several compartments. To the right was our house; to the left the kitchen, the stables, and the workshop. Underneath were the cellar and magazine. Our house contained several rooms. The first was my bedroom, the second the dining-room, and the third the children's bedroom. In the kitchen we made a large fire-place, and constructed a chimney high enough to carry away the smoke. Our tools and provisions had a place assigned to them; and, notwithstanding the extent of the cavern, we were at a loss where to place some of our animals. Never since coming to the island had we been so busy; and our labour was crowned with success. While working at the grotto, we had been subsisting on eggs and the flesh of some tortoises we had caught on the shore. In order that we might have one for our table when we wished, we had caught some of the animals, and, boring holes in their shells, had them tied to stakes on the shore; so that, although they had liberty to plunge in the water, they were still our prisoners.

One morning, on going to Safety Bay we ob-

served that the sea, for hundreds of yards round, was in great commotion, while gulls and sea-swallows flew, in wild excitement, over the waves. My sons were lost in conjecture as to what all this could mean. Fritz thought it was owing to the eruption of a subterraneous volcano, while Ernest declared the commotion could only be caused by some sea monster. This idea was favoured by the children, who were always ready to catch at the marvellous. A little observation enabled me to see that the disturbance was caused by the arrival of a shoal of herrings; and I determined to take advantage of this new means of subsistence which Providence had thrown in our way.

“You have heard,” I said to the children, “that these shoals are composed of columns of fish closely packed together, and covering often an extent of several miles. They are often accompanied by dolphins and sturgeons, which feed on the flesh of the herring. The sea birds, too, are continually on the watch to pounce upon such of the small fish as venture to the surface. To escape their enemies the herrings retire to deep pools, where they may be taken in nets.”

While I was speaking the shoal had advanced into the bay, the fish knocking against and jump-over each other, thus causing the commotion in the water we had first observed. Fritz now entered the sea with a basket in his hand, which

he immersed in the water, and filled with fish. He then threw them out on the sand. Ernest and Jack gutted them, and my wife salted them, and packed them in the tubs belonging to our old boat. I nailed up the tubs and conveyed them to our grotto.

This work occupied us three days. As we were about to leave the bay, we observed a number of sea-dogs, come probably in search of the shoal. We killed several, and preserved the skin and fat: the skin to make harness for our beasts of burden, and clothes for ourselves; and the fat to be used in manufacturing candles. We threw the flesh in the Jackal River, and by means of this bait, caught a number of lobsters. By my advice the children preserved them alive in a case pierced with holes, and sunk in the water. In the same way we kept alive, in sea water, some of the fish the boys were daily catching.

The fishing over, we set to work vigorously at our cave. I found some loose pieces of plaster stone on the floor, and on inspecting the walls closely, observed a vein of this precious substance, close to our magazine. This discovery gave us excellent plaster, and enabled us to perfect, and even to ornament, our dwelling. In the meantime I used it to render our herring barrels air-tight, two of which we set apart for smoked herrings.

I had seen cow-hunters smoke their meat, and

determined to try the same plan with our fish. I constructed a large hut at some distance from our habitation, inside of which I suspended the herrings. We then lighted a fire of moss and damp herbs, and closed the door of the cabin. When this operation was repeated several times, we obtained a quantity of excellent smoked herrings, which we stored up in our magazine.

About a month after the herrings had disappeared, a number of salmon and sturgeons came up our stream to deposit their eggs in fresh water. Jack, who saw them first, thought they were young whales. As I was reflecting on the best means of capturing the fish, Jack saw my embarrassment, and running to the other side of the cave, cried out, "Wait a little, papa; I know what will do it."

In a little he returned with a bow and arrows, some hooks, a quantity of pack-thread, and some bladders of the sea-dogs. Curious to know what he was going to do, we formed a circle round him. He tied a piece of string round a bladder, one end of which he attached to an arrow, and the other to a large stone. Then, drawing his bow, he shot at the first large salmon that showed himself. The arrow entered the body of the animal.

"Caught, caught," cried the little archer, joyfully.

The salmon plunged, and would have made off,

but was prevented by the weight of the stone and the air in the bladder. His strength was soon exhausted, and we pulled him out easily. Jack's success excited us all to emulation. Fritz went for the harpoon and spindle. I armed myself with a trident. Ernest provided himself with fish-hooks, which he baited with pieces of the salmon, and fished according to rule. Jack would not give up his old plan. He shot several arrows, but only succeeded in catching one salmon. Ernest secured a large sturgeon. I struck two fish, but only succeeded in capturing one. As for Fritz, he kept his harpoon in readiness till he saw an enormous sturgeon, ten feet long, opposite him; he then plunged it into the back of the animal, which made terrible struggles to get away. It took our united efforts to prevent his escaping us. Little by little we got him into a deep pool. One of the boys went into the water and passed a cord round his body, and we drew him ashore.

In gutting the fish, I put aside the eggs and bladder of the sturgeon for a particular purpose. The greater part of the flesh was cut in pieces and salted; the rest I pickled as I had seen them do tunnies on the shores of the Mediterranean, by cooking them in very salt water, and packing them in barrels with oil. My wife thought the bladder and eggs were useless, and wanted to throw them away, but I assured her that a very

delicate dish could be made of the eggs, and that I could manufacture isinglass from the bladder. The eggs I prepared by washing them in the sea, steeping them in salt water, and smoking them in the hut as we had done the herrings. I then set about manufacturing the glue. I pared off stripes of the bladder, steeped them in water, and dried them in the sun to soften them. We thus obtained a kind of shavings, which, when thrown into boiling water, dissolved and formed glue.

The garden at Tent House was very fruitful, and yielded all kinds of vegetables, almost without culture. The only thing we required to do was to water it; and even this cost us little trouble, for we had formed small canals of sago-wood, that conveyed the water from the Jackal River. The greater part of the plants had become quite acclimated. The melons and cucumbers were already ripe, and the pine-apples promised well. The flourishing state of this plantation augured well for those at a distance; and one morning the whole family set out on an expedition to visit them.

On our way to Falcon's Nest, we stopped at the old field my wife had planted, and which we found well stocked with barley, peas, lentils, and wheat. In one corner I observed a large quantity of maize, quite ripe. As we approached to cut it down, half a dozen bustards, a number of quails, and two or three kangaroos, started out from

amongst the grain. Fritz loosened his eagle, which pounced upon a bustard, and brought it to us so little hurt that we kept it alive. The jackal, which had become a famous hunter, brought us about a dozen quails.

We continued our journey, and reached Falcon's Nest in the afternoon. We were very tired, and my wife made us a most refreshing drink, by crushing some grains of maize, and dissolving the paste thus obtained in water, sweetened with the juice of the sugar-cane. The rest of the day was spent in shaking out the grain from the maize, and in preparing for a project which I had formed some days before. I wished to try and form a colony of animals in the open country, which would get accustomed to the climate, and propagate themselves, thus saving us the trouble of looking after them and feeding them. We could well afford to make the experiment, as our animals were very numerous.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE COTTON PLANT.

THE next morning we set out on our expedition, taking with us a dozen hens, two cocks, three

young pigs, and two brace of hares. Fritz, on the onagra, went before the caravan as pioneer. Our course was directed to a part of the island we had not yet visited, namely, that country which lay between Falcon's Nest and the great bay beyond the observatory and Cape Disappointment. On setting out, we had sometimes to clear the way with our hatchets, for we had to cross fields obstructed with high herbs and thickets. But on passing through a little wood, we reached a plateau where grew numerous shrubs, covered with white flakes.

"Snow, snow," cried Francis, jumping down from the cart. "Here, at last, we are come to a country where there is real winter."

We all laughed at the simplicity of the child. I knew the plant at once; but observing that the doctor joined in the laugh, I said to him, "Do you know the name of the shrub?"

"I have guessed at it," he said. "As far as I am able to judge, it is the cotton plant; and if so, we can have an excellent supply of cotton without much trouble."

Ernest was right; this was the cotton plant. The field presented a very curious appearance to us. The pods of the tree being fully ripe, had burst open, and the down, of which they were full, had escaped from them. Some of it still hung on the branches, and was blown about with every breath of wind; the rest lay on the ground like

snow. This discovery delighted us all very much, but particularly my wife, who saw her way now to renew our under-clothing, and was most anxious to have some of the cotton in a state for weaving. The boys filled our empty bags with the white flakes, and their mother collected some of the seeds to sow near Tent House, that we might have this precious plant growing nearer home.

Continuing our route, we came to a low hill from which we had a magnificent view, and the sides of which were covered with rich vegetation. At the foot of this hill extended a large plain, fertilised by the water of a winding river. We all agreed that this was the place for our animals. The tent was set up, a fire-place constructed, and my wife, aided by Francis and Jack, began to prepare our supper. While it was getting ready, Fritz, Ernest, and I went out to explore the country, and choose the most favourable place for the colony.

At last we came to a group of trees so conveniently situated, that we thought they might form the pillars of the edifice we intended to construct; so we laid our plans for the morrow's work, and returned home. My wife had made a pillow for each of us of the cotton we had gathered; and our sleep was sound and refreshing. The trees which I had chosen for the construction of our cabin, were six in number, and placed

so as to form an oblong, the side of which faced the sea. In the trunks of the three first, about twelve feet from the ground, I inserted several notches, into each of which I placed a strong pole. I did the same to the other three, but at a distance of only eight feet from the ground. On these poles rested others less strong, closer together, and covered with bark for tiles. By means of a kind of bind-weed and flexible reeds, interlaced, the walls were closed to the height of five feet. The roof was formed of lattice work, through which the light and air could penetrate freely. The interior of the edifice was divided into two unequal parts; the largest was reserved as a sheep-fold, a small corner being cut off for the fowls; and the smallest as a resting-place for ourselves. All this was quickly finished, and left much to be done; but I promised to return as soon as we could spare a little time; and in the meanwhile, it was sufficient that our animals had a shelter. To induce them to come home at night, we filled their troughs with grain, mixed with salt; and this allurement was continued till they became accustomed to their new abode.

This work, which we had thought to accomplish in a day or two, took us a week; and our provisions began to run short; but we did not wish to return to Falcon's Nest till we had put our farm in good order; so Fritz and Jack went to bring us a fresh supply. In their absence I went

with Ernest, to explore the surrounding country and seek for potatoes and cocoa-nuts.

We ascended a small stream, which brought us to the road, and after following it for a little, we came to a small picturesque lake, the banks of which were covered with the wild rice plant. A flock of birds fled at our approach. I shot five or six, but my efforts would have been fruitless had not the jackal followed us, and, springing into the water, brought us each bird as it fell. A little further on, master Knips made a sudden dart into a thicket, where I discovered him regaling himself with strawberries. Having refreshed ourselves with them, we filled the monkey's basket with the fruit, and covered them over with a thick layer of leaves, lest it should please master Knips to overturn his burden and devour the strawberries. I pulled some of the rice and took it home, that we might try how we liked it cooked.

In repassing the lake, we observed several black swans sailing majestically upon the water. Our admiration at this beautiful and novel sight kept us from firing. Flora, however, who did not seem to participate in our admiration, darted into the water and brought out an animal, which at a distance had appeared to be an otter, but which, when I had examined it, baffled all my ideas of natural history, as it seemed a curious combination of a bird, a fish, and a quadruped. I thought it must be unknown to naturalists; so I gave it the

name of "beaked animal," and told Ernest to carry it home, and we would stuff it as a curiosity.

"I know it," said the little philosopher; "it is the ornithorhynchus. I was reading a description of it in one of the captain's books the other day."

"Well," said I, laughing, "this will be the commencement of our study of natural history."

Loaded with our booty, we reached the farm at the same time as Fritz and Jack, who told us all they had done at Falcon's Nest; and I was happy to see that, besides attending to all I said, they had brought some very useful things of their own accord. The next morning we left the farm, to which we gave the name of Forest Farm. Entering a small wood, we encountered a troop of monkeys, which welcomed us with hideous cries, and showered pine-apples at us. I fired once or twice in the air, to frighten them away; and having made the children gather a quantity of the fruit, we proceeded on our way, and soon reached Cape Disappointment. Here we erected a pavilion, to serve us as a resting-place in case of an excursion in this direction, and dignified it with the name of Prospect Hill. For a long time I had been wishing to find a tree, of the bark of which I could make a small boat; and I did not despair of attaining my object, although I had hitherto been unsuccessful; and one day, when out on an exploring expedition with the boys, I found what I wanted. The tree I fixed upon

was something like an oak, both in its height, leaves, and fruit.

We had our rope ladder with us, and Fritz climbed the tree and sawed through the bark at the top of the trunk, while I did the same at the bottom. I then peeled off a small stripe lengthways, and by means of wedges of wood, carefully applied, we succeeded in getting all the bark away. This part of the work was comparatively easy, as the tree was full of sap; but it was not so easy to convert this bark into a boat. By perseverance, however, and working while the bark was soft and pliable, we succeeded in making a tolerably good boat. To make it light, I fixed leather bottles to the sides, which also prevented it from being upset.

Soon after the rainy season, our cow had a calf, and I now thought the animal old enough to be of service to us. One evening I asked the advice of the assembled family on this subject. Ernest thought we should follow the example of the Hottentots, and train our calf to fight; and seeing his brothers look surprised, he said, "These people inhabit a country infested with wild beasts; and their flocks, which form their riches, would be completely destroyed if they were not protected by those animals, which are trained to fight. These brave champions watch over the cattle in the pastures, keeping them all together. When they perceive danger, they form

them into a circle, putting the weak members in the middle ; and when the enemy sees a rampart of long pointed horns awaiting him, he rarely comes any further. The lion, however, is not so easily intimidated, and sometimes the gallant defender has to lay down his life for his troop. These animals are used, too, in the wars of the Hottentots ; and it is often to their courage that the conquerors owe their victory."

This story pleased the younger boys very much ; but as we had neither troops to guard, nor wars to carry on, we thought it better to give our calf a more ordinary education.

The next point was, Who would train him ? The indolent Ernest was tired even of his monkey ; Fritz had the onagra and his eagle ; and enterprising Jack had most to do, his jackal and buffalo occupying all his spare time. The ass was my wife's care, and I myself looked after all the animals together. Francis alone had nothing to do.

"Well, little man," said I, "will you take care of the calf ?"

"Oh yes, papa," he exclaimed, clapping his hands. "The calf is very gentle, and I will be kind to him, and give him what he likes ; and though I am young, I think I shall succeed. I will call my pupil Steady."

This name pleased the children, and they immediately began to find names for all the animals. Jack proposed to call the buffalo Tempest, be-

cause it would sound well to hear it said, "Here comes Jack on the Tempest." The two young dogs were called respectively, Scamper and Swift.

For two months we worked in the cavern, putting up partitions, and leaving all embellishment for the winter season. The great quantity of planks and other material we possessed, rendered our work less difficult than we had expected. The floor of our room was clay, thickly studded with pebbles; as for the plaster we had used for our walls, I thought it would dry before the end of the summer. We made a sort of carpet for our drawing-room and dining-room, by spreading a quantity of goat's hair and sheep's wool on a piece of canvass, watering it with boiling water, in which was dissolved some of the isinglass, rolling up the canvass, and beating it well with thick sticks. When this process was repeated once or twice, and the canvass unrolled, we obtained a sheet of felt, which, although not of the finest description, answered our purpose.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ANNIVERSARY.

ONE morning, being awake sooner than usual, and not wishing to disturb my wife, I began to calculate how long it was since we were ship-

wrecked, and found, to my surprise, that the next day was the anniversary of that unfortunate, yet, at the same time, happy event. I was indulging in sad thoughts of the past, when I was roused by the thought of my ingratitude to that God, who had not only saved us all from death, but also placed us on this beautiful island, where all our work had been visibly blest. A hymn of praise rose from my heart to Him who had so cared for my beloved wife and dear little ones; and I determined that this day should not pass unnoticed amongst us. That evening, at supper, I said to my children—

“To-morrow is a great day, and one which we must never forget all our life long. It is the anniversary of our miraculous deliverance, and our landing in this island. We must be up early in the morning to celebrate it.”

This news surprised the children; they could not believe that we had been a year in our solitude.

“Is it not possible,” said my wife, “that you may have miscalculated?”

“No, my dear wife,” said I, “I am not mistaken. We were shipwrecked on the 30th of January, and the calendar which I saved guided us for eleven months; since it expired, it is exactly four weeks. We landed on this island on the 2d of February, and to-morrow is the anniversary. Our librarian has forgotten to send a new almanack, but we must look after our chronology.”

"That is easy, papa," said Ernest; "we have only to put a notch on a piece of wood every day, as Robinson Crusoe did, and divide these notches into weeks, months, and years."

The idea seemed to me a good one. I gave the clocks of our dominion into Ernest's hand, and jokingly termed him the astronomer of the colony.

"The astronomer," said he, modestly, "is much indebted to the library. How fortunate that we preserved those precious books."

"I don't like books," said Francis.

"Little lazy boy," said his mother; "wait till you know what is in them before you speak."

"But, mamma, I like better to play with Flora, run with Jack, or work with you in the garden. That is not wrong, is it?"

"No, not just now," said his mother, "but when you grow older you must learn to like reading too. There are good things in big books, Francis, very necessary to know, and very pleasant to read about, and you will find this out some day."

After this our conversation returned to the measurement of time. I said to Ernest, "You know that the year is made up of 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 43 seconds; but will not these odd minutes destroy your calculations?"

"No," said he, "I will add them up at the end of every fourth year; they will form an odd day, which, put into February, will make leap year."

"Papa," said Fritz, "I always forget what months have thirty-one days, and which only thirty."

"You may remember that easily," said I, "for you carry with you a calendar to which you can always refer."

"A calendar!" said Jack, in amazement.

"Yes, on your hand, my child. Shut your hand, and look at the roots of your fingers, not taking your thumb into account: what do you see?"

"Nothing at all," said Jack.

"And you, Fritz?"

"I see four little bones, and three hollows between."

"Well, begin with the little bone and name the months of the year, and in coming back, when you have got the length of the little finger, you will see—What will you see?"

"So it is," said Fritz; "the months that have 31 days fall on the bones, those that have 30 on the hollows between."

"That is it," said I; "only remember that February has but 28 days, and 29 in leap year." This experiment amused the children greatly. After talking a long time, we retired to rest, the boys wondering how I meant to celebrate the next day.

In the morning we were aroused by the firing of cannon on the shore. At first we did not

know whether to rejoice, or feel afraid; but seeing that Fritz and Jack were not in their beds, I thought I saw how it was. In a little they came in

“ Well, how do you like the thunder ? ” said Jack.

But Fritz, seeing that I was not quite pleased, said, “ Forgive us, papa, for the liberty we have taken, of opening this day with the firing of cannon. We only thought of surprising you, and did not remember you might be alarmed.”

I said I blamed them less for rudely wakening, or even alarming us, than for uselessly squandering a quantity of our precious powder, the means of replacing which we had not yet found. But their intentions were good, and I had not the heart to damp their joy. After breakfast in the open air, at the door of the grotto, I read from my journal the account of our deliverance. Then followed religious services, and a walk to the Bay of Deliverance. After our return, we sat down to an excellent repast my wife had prepared; and that over, I said to the boys, “ Come, my children, let me see your skill in gymnastic exercises. I will give prizes to the victors.”

A loud hurrah showed that my proposition was approved of. The birds, roused by the noise, took fright, and flew screaming overhead; and the boys, amused at the stir they had

excited, joined hands, and danced round in a circle, singing.

I decided that the exercises would begin by firing. I set up a piece of wood about a hundred paces off, and formed it somewhat in the shape of a kangaroo. Each of the boys except Francis loaded his gun and fired. Fritz struck the head twice; Ernest, less skilful, sent a ball through the body; Jack's first shot missed the mark altogether; the second struck the ears. They now threw down their guns and took up their pistols; and here again Fritz had the advantage. I then made them load their arms with small shot, and fire at an old hat which I threw up into the air. Fritz and Ernest showed almost equal skill, but Jack missed his mark entirely. They all showed great skill with the bow and arrow; and here Francis distinguished himself so much, that his brothers made him a crown of leaves, which he wore as proudly as if it had been gold.

The race was the next thing; but, as the children were pretty well tired, they took a short rest. Fritz and Jack set off impetuously; Ernest more deliberately, but at such a steady pace that I prophesied he would win. They were to run to Falcon's Nest, and the winner was to bring me, in token, a knife I had left on my table. About an hour after they had started Jack returned on his buffalo.

"Oh, Mr Horseman," I said, "it was of the

swiftness of your own legs we wanted to judge, not of those of your buffalo."

"I am not so simple as to run for nothing," he replied, jumping down. "When I saw that with all my efforts I could not keep up, I gave up all hopes of the prize, and, arriving at Falcon's Nest, I mounted my buffalo." Just then Fritz appeared, and a little way behind him, Ernest, holding the knife in his hand. I asked him how he, the victor, happened to be last? He replied, that from the moment he saw the knife was his, he thought there was no need to hurry. I could not refrain from smiling at this characteristic answer of the indolent doctor.

I now told the boys to show us their skill in climbing. Jack ran to a tall palm-tree, climbed up it, and descended with the agility of a squirrel. A second and third he climbed in the same manner, turning round the trunk and pulling faces with a drollery that was irresistible. Fritz and Ernest applauded warmly, and declared that it was impossible for them to compete with him.

Jack and Fritz next displayed their prowess in horsemanship. They rode without saddle or bridle, jumping off and on when the animals were at a gallop. Ernest shook his head, and declined entering the lists. Francis, who up to this time had been a spectator, requested to be allowed to show us how he had trained Steady. After having performed several evolutions, he showed

how obedient the animal was to his voice. He made it turn round, go backwards or forwards, and walk, trot, or gallop, as he pleased, and, finally, caused it to kneel, that he might come down and receive our congratulations.

We now went to the shore, that we might judge who was the best swimmer. Fritz carried off all the honours here. Ernest was timid. Jack plunged impetuously into the waves, but soon lost strength. Little Francis gave promise of becoming an excellent swimmer. When the sun set, we returned home.

My wife had preceded us, that she might be prepared to receive us, and to distribute the prizes. We found her seated on a large tun, decorated with leaves. The children passed before her, and stood in a circle round the throne. She accompanied each prize with a few words of praise and encouragement. To Fritz was awarded a double-barrelled English gun, and a hunting knife he had long wished to have; to Ernest, a gold watch; to Jack, a pair of spurs and a whip; and to Francis, a small pair of spurs. I then advanced to my wife, and amidst the loud applause of my children, presented her with a beautiful bureau, full of all that could be useful to a housekeeper, which I had preserved from the wreck, and concealed till I could find a fitting opportunity to present it. The boys begged to be allowed to close the day by firing a

salute; and I gave them leave, counselling them, at the same time, to use as little powder as possible.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ADVENTURES OF JACK.

ABOUT a month after this, the trees at Falcon's Nest became covered with thrushes, ortolans, and wild pigeons; and we resolved to capture some of them for our use. I did not wish to use our powder if I could help it, so had recourse to a kind of glue made of india-rubber and fat. Our stock of the former substance was just about exhausted; so I sent Fritz and Jack to the gutta-percha trees for a fresh supply. They returned in the evening, and, besides a large quantity of the india-rubber, they brought with them some turpentine, a crane that Fritz's eagle had caught, an anise plant, and some roots they called monkey roots, because they had seen the monkeys feeding upon them. In these roots I recognised the ginseng, a plant which the Chinese value very much, and which only the emperor of that country is allowed to cultivate. There was one piece of bad news, however, which the children

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brought us. They had been to Forest Farm, and found it completely devastated,—the cabin demolished, the fowls strangled, and the sheep and goats wandering about. This they thought was the work of the monkeys. I determined to have my revenge, but said nothing to my family.

The glue which I succeeded in making I put on small sticks below the branches; and in less than a week we caught as many birds as would fill a large barrel. We prepared them for use, as we had done the year before. Amongst the ensnared birds, we discovered two of our old pigeons that had deserted us. At Jack's request they were spared, and a dove-cot erected for them at Tent House. This abode they found so comfortable, that they not only remained there themselves, but also allured a number of wild pigeons to settle with them.

An accident, more comical than sad, happened at this time to divert the monotony of our life. One morning Jack appeared all covered with mud, and with a most pitiable face. His brothers began to tease him, but he seemed more ready to cry than to laugh. I stopped their raillery, and asked Jack where he had been to dirty himself so.

“Behind the rocks in the Goose Marsh,” said he.

“But what were you doing there? You are not a goose, I suppose.”

"I went to gather reeds for the pigeon-house," replied he.

"Your intention was good," I answered, "although you have not succeeded."

"Not succeeded!" he replied; "I have brought all this immense bundle."

"They are as muddy as yourself, my poor boy. We cannot use them in that state. But tell us what happened to you."

"I wanted to get thick straight reeds, such as grow in the middle of the marsh; and as I was jumping from one piece of firm ground to another, I fell in. I immediately sank, and the more I struggled to get out the faster I went down. The mire reached over my knees; I shouted for help, but no one came, and I saw that I must help myself. With my knife I cut the reeds about me, and made them into a bundle, on which I rested my chest and arms while I disengaged my legs. With a vigorous spring I succeeded in placing myself on the bundle so as to ride upon them, and thus supported I made the best of my way to the edge of the marsh, where probably I should have been yet but for my jackal."

"How was that?" said Ernest.

"Although I had come to the edge of the marsh, I had nothing to lay hold of by which to pull myself out. My brave jackal went and came, and seemed very uneasy about me. I

called him to me; he came. I stretched out my hands and caught him by the tail. Terrified, he made a vigorous effort to escape, and pulled me after him on to firm ground."

Although Jack had just escaped from a most dangerous position, we could not help laughing at the thought of the ridiculous appearance he presented. At the same time, I praised him for the calmness and courage he had shewn. His mother hurried him away to change his clothes, and Francis followed, "to help to rub him up," he said.

I took some of the strongest of Jack's reeds, and used them in constructing combs for the loom I had promised to make for my wife. I employed the children to make little wooden teeth for me; and as I wished to tell no one about this piece of work till it was finished, I had to use my skill in parrying the many curious questions that were put to me. About this time the onagra had a young ass, which we called Lightning, which name he justified afterwards by his great speed.

As the rainy season was approaching, it became necessary to lay in a large store of provisions, both for ourselves and our animals. We also formed a canal of bamboo canes, supported by wooden forks stuck in the ground, which conducted the water to a large barrel sunk beside our winter palace as a reservoir. My wife was

as proud of her fountain as if it had been built of marble and ornamented with statuary. We were at a loss where to put the fruit we had gathered; so my wife made us sacks of sail-cloth, and we demolished our raft to make barrels.

I had not forgotten our expedition against the monkeys; and one morning my three eldest sons and I set out well armed, and provided with a quantity of bird-lime. Arrived at the lake, we chose a convenient place for our camp, and tied up our animals so that they could not run away. I sent Fritz out as a spy, and he returned saying he saw the enemy at a little distance from the wood. I planted small stakes round the farm, interlaced with bind-weed, and placed near them some cocoa-nuts and calabashes filled with rice and palm, covering the stakes and calabashes with bird-lime. We then retired to lie in wait; but that night we saw nothing of the enemy. The next morning, however, a troop of monkeys advanced towards the hut, and were caught in the snare. Their despair when they found themselves in the toils was pitiable. Our dogs rushed on them, but we called them back, and, after administering several strokes of the whip to our captives, we released them, and they scampered off with incredible speed.

“Well, a monkey is like no other animal,” said Ernest; “killing one seems almost like killing one of our own species.”

“Yes,” replied Jack, “they are like little old men and women in rags.”

“You know,” said Ernest, “that the negroes think an ourang-outang is a negro, and that he is dumb, not because he can’t, but because he won’t speak.”

“What reason do they give for his not speaking?”

“Oh,” replied Ernest, “they say he is afraid of being made to work.”

“Poor negro,” said Jack, “he envies the lot of the monkey.”

Fritz now proposed that we should repair the devastations of the farm. To prevent the monkeys returning, we erected a succession of windmills round about it. I was not quite persuaded of the efficacy of this means, but the boys had proposed it, and I let them carry out their own plan. We took four days to repair the damage that had been done, and immediately afterwards we had to shut ourselves up in our winter quarters, for the rain came on. We only kept four of our domestic animals with us—the cow, the onagra, the buffalo, and the ass. The dogs, the eagle, the jackal, and monkey, remained near us, and the tricks of the latter amused us greatly.

The light, which came in by the windows of our cave, was not sufficient for us. To remedy this in the meantime, I hit upon a plan in which Jack greatly assisted me. I fixed a long pole in

the floor of the cavern, the top of which reached to the roof. Up this pole Jack climbed, and fixed to the roof a piece of wood, to which was attached a pulley. He passed a cord over the pulley, by means of which, when it was lighted, we pulled up a large lantern we had brought from the ship. The arrangement of our apartments took us some time. Ernest and Francis put up shelves in the library; my wife and Jack occupied themselves with the drawing-room and kitchen; while Fritz and I looked after the workshop. Here we placed the captain's turning-lathe, the joiner's bench, and all the tools of the carpenter and cooper. Close by the workshop was the forge; we had got the bellows, anvil, and hammers, but we wanted many of the tools necessary to a blacksmith. Every day we felt more and more the want of such things as chairs, tables, and chests of drawers; and to prevent our being idle, we occupied ourselves trying to make those things of which we stood most in need. With the masses of stone we had dug out of the rock we made a sort of terrace, on which, supported by four strong bamboos, we erected a balcony, to serve as a look-out or observatory.

Our library, under the care of Ernest and Jack, began to assume quite an imposing appearance. On the shelves were ranged the captain's books, treatises on natural history, botany, and zoology. There were also a number of mathematical and

astronomical instruments, and a large terrestrial globe. Amongst the books were grammars and dictionaries of different languages, which suggested to us the idea of perfecting ourselves in those we were in some degree acquainted with, and studying those of which we were ignorant, so as to be able to hold communication with the first European vessel that might pass, no matter to what nation it might belong. French was well known to all of us. The two elder boys decided to turn their attention to English. Jack chose Italian and Spanish, as being harmonious and pompous in sound. Ernest applied himself to Latin, so as to understand the treatises on natural history and medicine in our library. He also constituted himself little Francis's teacher, and was so patient and gentle that the child, instead of hating books as before, began to look forward with pleasure to his lessons. I myself studied the Malay, because I thought it not impossible that Indians might some day land on our island.

When we unpacked the cases which had been washed ashore among the debris of the vessel, we found ourselves unexpectedly rich in a great many articles both useful and ornamental—mirrors, writing-desks, and a beautiful commode. My wife had her choice of what she should have, and the boys fitted her up a room for herself, with which she was very much delighted. We named our subterranean dwelling Rock House.

The close of the month of August was marked by a succession of terrible hurricanes and thunder storms, when we had often cause to thank God for our grotto, which sheltered us so securely from the war of the elements. The weather, however, at last changed; the sky again became blue, and we ventured out of our retreat.

Fritz, with his lynx-eyes, thought he saw something like a stranded vessel near a little island in Flamingo Bay. I took the telescope, but could discern nothing distinctly; so we determined to make an excursion to the bay, and find out what it was. Fritz, Ernest, Jack, and myself, accordingly set off for the bay. As we approached the islet, what Fritz had taken for a stranded ship turned out to be an immense whale, which the violence of the waves had thrown up on the beach.

The islet, which was about half-a-mile in circumference, had no trees on it, but was covered with flowers of all kinds. We were obliged to make a circuit, in order to get a convenient landing-place. I climbed over the rocks towards the whale; my sons taking the road round the shore. From the peaks of the rocks I had an extensive view, both towards Tent House, Falcon's Nest, and seaward; the view in one direction calling up thoughts of the past, and of our fatherland, from which we were now severed for ever; and that in the other, thoughts of the present and

future. From these sad reflections I was roused by the sight of the whale, and hastened to rejoin my boys, who came to meet me, and showed some beautiful shells and corals they had picked up on the beach. I told them what I knew about the nature—half animal, half vegetable—of the corals, which interested them so much, they forgot the primary object of our visit; so, as the day was already wearing on, and we had not the necessary means with us to enable us to carry away any of the whale, we decided to return to it another day, and again took the way to the shore.

My wife and Francis were waiting us on the shore. They were delighted with the beauty of the corals we brought, and said they would go with us when we returned to the whale next day. Next morning the whole family started together, taking an ample supply of provisions, and some tools and empty barrels. The sea was very calm, and we soon anchored at the islet. Francis and his mother were much struck by the formidable appearance of the monster, which was, at least, seventy feet in length, and would weigh not less than sixty thousand pounds.

We now began to cut up the whale. Fritz and Jack, armed with their saws and hatchets, mounted on the back. We filled our barrels with pieces of fat dug out of the sides, and were often interrupted at our work by birds of prey

that lighted on the body and devoured the flesh close to our hatchets. The next day we proceeded to penetrate into the body of the animal; but this being a very disagreeable piece of work, we left my wife and youngest son at home. Before proceeding, however, we took the precaution to change our clothes for others made on purpose. My wife objected strongly to this kind of work, but I quieted her a little by telling her how rich it would make us.

Our next business was to convert the fat of the whale into oil. We first extracted a quantity of fine oil, and afterwards, by melting some of the fat in our large pot, obtained some of a more ordinary quality; but we took care to perform this operation at a distance from our dwelling. With all our precaution, however, my wife was greatly annoyed with the unpleasant odour, and proposed that we should do this work, in future, on the little island. "I have been thinking, too," she said, "that since the islet is so fertile, we might found a colony of our birds there, and then we would not be afraid of monkeys or jackals."

"The idea is a good one," said I; "and we will put it into execution immediately." The younger boys, delighted with the idea, would have set off at once, but I reminded them that we had some alterations to make in our canoe and oars. These alterations finished to our

satisfaction, late one afternoon, I proposed a voyage to Prospect Hill the next day. The next morning, accordingly, the whole family set out on the expedition. The weather was beautiful and the sea calm. In passing the Monkey's Wood, we landed to renew our provision of coconuts. This done, we embarked and soon reached Prospect Hill. Our first care was to visit the colony, which we found in pretty tolerable order; but the goats and sheep had become so wild, that the boys had to use their lassoes to catch them. The fowls were tamer, and my wife caught two or three couples, and put them in the canoe to take to Whale Island.

After having gone over this part of our dominions to ascertain that all was in good order, we sat down to dinner. When that was over, we collected some sugar-canes and roots of plants, and again set sail. Arrived at Whale Island, the boys dispersed in various directions, while my wife and I occupied ourselves planting the roots we had brought from Prospect Hill. All at once Jack came running towards us. "Papa," cried he, "come and see this mammoth skeleton."

I laughingly told him his mammoth would be the skeleton of the whale; but, as he insisted, I rose to go with him. On the way I was arrested by Fritz, who wanted me to help him with an enormous tortoise he had caught. I rushed back for our oars, and arrived just in time, for the

animal was in the act of escaping when I came up. I turned it over on its back, and effectually prevented its running away. I now went with Jack to see his mammoth, and found, as I had anticipated, that it was the skeleton of our whale, from which the sea birds had completely stripped the flesh. I asked Jack what made him think of a mammoth, and discovered that he had been mystified by the doctor. I rallied him on his credulity, and gave him a lesson on natural history, to which he listened attentively.

When we got back to the plantation it was too late to plant all the shrubs ; so we covered the roots of those that remained with wet leaves, to preserve them, and turned to go home. In order to get the tortoise with us, we tied a cord round its neck and fore paws, and attached it to the boat, placing two large barrels under it to prevent its diving. I sat in the end of the boat with a knife in my hand, ready to cut the cord in case of accident ; but fortunately it was not required, and we arrived safely at Rock House. The next morning we decided on killing the animal, whose shell made a more elegant fountain than the barrel we had used for the purpose.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE LOOM.

Soon after this time, with Ernest's help, I finished and presented to my wife the loom I had promised to make for her. She was overjoyed; and, pleased with my success, I determined to make saddles and harness for the animals. In this, however, I was not so skilful, and had often to go like a tailor and take the measure. I had scarcely finished this work when a shoal of herrings arrived, followed by the sea-dogs. As we had done the previous year, we laid in a good store of the fish, killed several of the dogs, preserved their skins, fat, and bladders, and threw their flesh into the Jackal River as a bait to the lobsters. We now set about making baskets and panniers, in which my wife might store roots and grain. With a little practice, we acquired great skill in this. Jack and Ernest were so proud of one they had made, that they put Francis in it, and, placing sticks through the handles, marched proudly up and down.

Fritz, who was watching them, said, "Papa, do you not think we could make something of the kind for mamma when she wishes to accom-

pany us on our excursions? That would be much more comfortable for her than the cart."

"Doubtless, Fritz; but which of us would have strong enough shoulders for such a palanquin?"

"We will make Tempest and Steady support between them the rod to which the basket is tied," said Jack.

I consented, and they immediately put their plan into execution. Jack and Francis mounted the animals, and Ernest went into the basket, which was suspended between them. The basket balanced beautifully, and all were delighted. Little by little the pace was quickened, much to the delight of Ernest, who, at the same time, could not refrain from clutching nervously at the sides of the basket. His brothers seeing this, mischievously quickened their pace to a gallop. Poor Ernest, jolted and shaken, roared with all his might, till, at last, the animals stopped of themselves just before us, as if for our applause. Ernest angrily reproached his brothers, who would have retorted, had I not stepped in and showed them what might have been the serious consequences of their frolic. They were very sorry, and begged Ernest's pardon, who, in his turn, was easily pacified, and not only helped them to unyoke the animals, but was soon busy arranging with them about the next ride in the palanquin.

As my wife and I were talking quietly together, Fritz, who had been looking towards the river, came up to me, and said, "There is a strange-looking animal over there; it seems to be coming from the shore, and raising great clouds of dust."

"It will be some of our animals rolling in the sand," said my wife.

"No," said Fritz; "all our animals are shut up, and this beast is like an immense cable, that alternately coils itself up and throws itself out."

My wife, terrified, retired into the cave, and I ordered my sons to get their arms ready, while I went with a lantern in the direction of the bridge. Suddenly I called out.

"What have you found, papa?" said Fritz.

"An enormous serpent," said I, in a low voice.

"Then I will not be last in the fight," said the courageous boy; "I will go and fetch our guns and hatchets."

"We must be prudent," said I; "the serpent is very cunning." Saying these words I entered the grotto, and we prepared to receive the monster. We could see the frightful reptile crawling up from the shore; already he had crossed the bridge, and from time to time raised his hideous head as if to reconnoitre. We had barricaded the door, stuffed up all the openings, and were mounted on the terrace, where we could

see without being seen. The serpent was a boa of the largest size, and was coming direct towards us, when suddenly he stopped and seemed to hesitate when he saw signs of a human dwelling. Ernest accidentally let go the trigger of his gun, and Jack and Francis thought they were at liberty to fire also. At this triple discharge, the animal raised his head, more in surprise than fear. He did not appear to be wounded, and Fritz and I were preparing to take a surer aim, when the reptile glided quickly into the Goose Marsh and disappeared.

A murmur of satisfaction escaped from all; but the near neighbourhood of the boa disturbed me greatly. At any moment the terrible animal might appear; and any attempt to rid ourselves of him was fraught with danger. I forbade any one to leave the grotto on any pretence whatever without my permission. For three days we remained in our dwelling, without daring to venture even to the door. We saw nothing of the serpent, but knew, from the excited state of the feathered tribe, that he was still near us. Our provisions were nearly exhausted, and I sent Fritz to liberate our animals, that they might seek food for themselves. He drove them as much as possible away from the marsh, while we stood on the balcony ready to fire on the animal if he appeared. All at once the ass, who was rather frisky with three days feeding and no work. set

off at full speed over the country, braying and gambolling in a manner that made us laugh in spite of our danger. Fritz mounted the onagra and prepared to pursue the fugitive, but I reminded him of the danger to himself in going near the marsh.

We tried all we could to entice back the ass, but in vain; he seemed determined to enjoy his liberty, and made straight for the marsh. All at once a horrible head was raised above the reeds. The ass saw it, and gave a wild cry of terror, but, on the serpent approaching, made no effort to escape, and seemed rooted to the spot. One moment more, and the poor beast was folded in the coils of the reptile, and suffocated in the horrible embrace. All this we saw from our balcony. The children begged me to allow them to fire, and save the poor ass; but I told them it would only irritate the monster, without saving the ass, who by this time was dead.

“Wait,” said I, “till he has swallowed his victim, and then he will be easily caught.”

“But,” said Jack, “will the boa swallow the ass at one mouthful?”

“Serpents,” said I, “have no teeth with which to tear their prey to pieces; so they swallow it whole, as the boa is about to do now.”

When the hideous reptile had swallowed all but the head of his victim, he fell down quite motionless.

"Now is our time," said I to my sons; "courage! the monster is ours."

I seized my gun, and rushed forward, followed by Jack and Fritz. Ernest, more timid, remained watching. As we advanced, the serpent regarded us with eyes full of rage; but he was incapable of moving, and Fritz and I shot him through the head, and killed him. Our cries of joy brought my wife and two boys to our side.

"I think," said Ernest, always ready to display his learning, "that we ought to revere the ass, as his fellow-citizens did Curtius."

"What will we do with the serpent?" said Jack.

"Stuff it, and put it in our museum," said Ernest.

"Is it not good for eating?" asked Francis.

"Good for eating—a venomous serpent!" cried my wife in horror.

"The boa, my dear wife," said I, "is not venomous, and if he were, there would be no danger, if only we were careful to throw away the head, in which are the glands that secrete venom."

Here the children overwhelmed me with questions on natural history. Ernest wanted to know if it were true that some serpents were fond of music. "Yes," said I; "and not only are they fond of it, but they will dance in time to it by raising themselves on their tails. It is thus that

jugglers charm serpents; but they make a mystery of their art to deceive the ignorant."

"I think," said Ernest, "I have read that some serpents charm their prey by their fixed look."

"That is taking the effect for the cause," said I; "what appears to be fascination on the part of the serpent, is only terror on the part of its victim. Our ass was an example of this. It is possible, however, that these serpents may exhale an odour that stupifies their victims, though this has never happened with man."

"Father," said Fritz, "what ought one to do, when bitten by a serpent?"

"In the first place, my dear children," said I, "if you are bitten by one of these serpents, it must be through your own carelessness, for they are timid, and will not attack you, unless you hurt or threaten them. An enemy who warns you of his approach, by the noise which he makes, and the disagreeable odour he exhales, is not very formidable, especially when you are well armed. But if you are bitten, the most effectual remedy is to cut out or burn the piece of poisoned flesh. There are milder remedies, but they are not so sure."

"I think the cure is worse than the disease," said Ernest.

"You would not say that if you were really stung, my child," said I; "for if the poison were not arrested, you would die a horrible death."

"I am sorry there are serpents in our island," said Francis; "we were better off in Switzerland; there were none there."

"Are you then going to leave our beautiful island, and go back to the narrow crowded streets?"

"You are mocking me now," said Francis, "but I do not like serpents."

"I am like Francis," said my wife; "I shall never feel happy when you are out."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ASS.

DURING this long conversation, we had been resting ourselves under the shade of a large rock. I now turned to Ernest, and, to rally him for the inactive part he had taken in the dangerous adventure, I asked him to make an epitaph for our ass, as he had formerly shewn considerable talent in that way. Ernest failed to perceive the slight irony in my request, and, burying his face in his hands, prepared to comply with it to the best of his ability. In about ten minutes he raised himself up, saying, "I have made an epitaph, but you must not laugh at me, papa." I

encouraged him to go on, and, slightly colouring, he repeated his composition, which ran as follows:—

HERE LIES
AN HONEST ASS,
THE VICTIM OF HIS OWN IMPRUDENCE.
HIS DEATH
WAS THE MEANS OF PRESERVING THE LIVES
OF FOUR CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS,
WHO WERE SHIPWRECKED
ON THIS ISLAND.

“Bravo, Ernest,” said I; “we must inscribe your epitaph on the rock over the spot where this accident occurred.” So saying, I took a red pencil from my pocket, and wrote the above inscription on the rock at Ernest’s dictation, who was divided between pleasure at being the author, and the consciousness that his production was not a master-piece.

Arrived at Rock House, we set about stuffing the skin of the boa, as a curiosity to place in our museum. To give it a characteristic attitude, I coiled the immense body round a stake about five feet high, and rested the head on the top of the stake. The mouth was open and the tongue hanging out, and the hideous animal looked so life-like lying exposed to the sun, that our cattle were quite afraid to pass it. When it was quite dry we placed it in our library, the boys inscribing over it, in red letters, “Entrance forbidden to asses.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE EXCURSION.

ALTHOUGH the danger was over for the present, I was in constant terror lest we should meet with more of these formidable enemies. We beat the bush round about Falcon's Nest, and, that done, I planned an excursion to Prospect Hill, lest there might be some of the terrible creatures lurking there. I saw that Jack and Ernest had not got over the impression that the sight of the boa had produced, and that they were unwilling to go.

"I cannot help shivering," said Jack, "when I think of the terrible half-hour we passed with the horrible beast."

I tried to reassure them as well as I could, and represented to them, that if the boa had left any eggs or young ones behind it, and we did not immediately seek them out and destroy them, we exposed ourselves to great future danger. This consideration roused them at once, and we all set out together, armed with everything we thought we were likely to need. When we arrived at the marsh, we advanced cautiously, throwing planks and bamboos before us; but we reached the other side without finding any traces of the boa, or

discovering anything that would lead us to suspect it had left either eggs or little ones behind it.

A little farther on we came to a large grotto, the floor of which was covered with a fine earth, which I discovered to be fullers'-earth.

"This will be a present for your mother," said I; "It will help to clean our clothes, and will relieve me from the tiresome necessity of preparing lime."

"Is lime a necessary part of soap?" said Ernest.

"Yes," said I; "soap is composed of greasy or fatty matter, soda, potash, and cinders washed in lime water. This preparation, however, is expensive, and its place is often supplied by this fullers'-earth we have discovered."

I remarked that the little stream proceeded from a fissure in the rock, and the stone being very brittle, I succeeded in making an opening, through which Fritz and I crept, telling Jack and Ernest to wait for us. We found ourselves in a cave, of the extent of which we were ignorant, for it was profoundly dark. I fired a pistol, and concluded, from the sound, that it must be about the same size as the one we had left. We then lit a candle to test the air, and found it quite pure.

"Oh, papa," cried Fritz, looking round at the glittering walls, "another salt grotto."

"It is not salt, my child," said I, "for the water in the little stream is quite fresh. I think it must be rock crystal."

"Oh, yes, papa, you are right," said he, more and more delighted; "what a treasure it will be."

"Precious as it is, my son," said I, "it will be as useless to us as the gold was to Robinson Crusoe."

"At any rate, papa, I will take a piece as a specimen. But why," said he, holding up a piece he had broken off, "has this crystal lost its transparency?"

"Because, said I, "you have not broken it off properly. These masses of crystal contain a central solid piece called the mother crystal, to which are attached others; and in breaking off a piece you must strike only the mother crystal, and bring it away with all the small ones that adhere to it. If you injure or bruise the small crystals, you destroy their transparency, and produce that milky appearance."

During this conversation we had been walking through the grotto, and our candle was almost out; so I said to Fritz it was time to return. When we got to the entrance of the cave, I perceived Jack standing by himself, sobbing bitterly; but the moment he heard our voices he ran towards us, shouting for joy.

"My dear child," said I, "what is the matter?"

“Oh, papa,” he replied, “I am so glad to see you again! I thought you were never coming back, and once or twice I thought I heard strange noises proceeding from the direction in which you disappeared.”

“My dear boy,” said I, “your fears were groundless. We are quite safe; but where is Ernest?”

“He is down amongst these reeds,” said Jack.

I left him with Fritz, and went after Ernest, whom I found seated among the reeds, making a fishing basket.

“I have done more than that, papa,” said he; “I have killed a young serpent; it is lying beside my gun.”

“A serpent,” said I, laughing, when I had examined it; “it is a large eel, which will make us an excellent supper.”

His brothers learning his mistake, commenced to tease him; but I interfered. “Ernest,” said I, “has showed great courage, for he was quite under the belief that his eel was a serpent, and yet he fought bravely.” This said, we collected our spoil and returned home.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE VOYAGE TO THE HERMITAGE.

SATISFIED that all was safe in the direction of the Goose Marsh, I determined to make a second expedition to the farm; and as it was to last several weeks, we took everything with us that could possibly be of use. We set out gaily, having first liberated our animals, that they might seek their own nourishment, and took the road towards Forest Farm, where we proposed to pass the night. We hoped to be able to fill our sacks with cotton, and examine the lake a little more minutely.

Up till this time we had perceived but faint traces of the serpent; and these traces, like those of the monkeys, had gradually disappeared since we left Falcon's Nest. Our farm we found in a flourishing condition; and after dinner we set out to explore the lake. My wife and Ernest, accompanied by Flora and master Knips, examined the lower end; Fritz and Jack, taking Turk and the jackal with them, went up the right side; as for myself, after placing a gun in Francis's hand and teaching him how to use it, I called Scamper and Swift, and we turned to the left. Our pathway was all interlaced with reeds, amongst which

our dogs seemed to be in their element. All at once we heard a sort of disagreeable roaring; and Francis thought it must be our young ass.

“That is impossible,” said I; “our ass is too young to bray so loudly; and besides, he could not have passed us without our seeing him. The noise is caused by a bittern, or marsh cow, as it is called, from its roaring.”

“But, papa,” said Francis, “how can a little bird make such a noise?”

“You must not judge of the size of animals by the strength of their voice,” said I. “Night-ingales and canaries have stronger voices than ducks or turkeys, although they are small birds. The bittern, when it cries, pushes its beak into the mud of the marsh.” Bittern or not, Francis was very anxious to try his first shot upon it. To gratify him, I called the dogs, and put them on the right track.

Several minutes after, I heard Francis shout triumphantly, “I have shot it, papa! I have shot it.”

“What is it, then?” said I.

“A wild boar,” papa; “a large wild boar.”

“I hope you have not shot one of our little pigs,” said I, advancing to the spot.

Fortunately it was not one of our pigs, but a cavia, or cabiai, about two-and-a-half feet long, with dark rough hair of a deep black brown colour. It is a web-footed animal belonging to

the family of the rodentia, and is known in Europe by the name of the Indian pig. It lives on aquatic plants, and can remain a long time below the water, but is not, strictly speaking, amphibious. Francis, like a true hunter, wished to carry his game over his shoulders; but finding it too heavy, he consigned it to the care of Swift, which he had himself trained to carry burdens, and we reached Forest Farm without seeing any traces of the boa. We found Ernest surrounded by an immense number of newly killed rats. I asked him, in astonishment, where he had found them.

“In a nest, at the foot of the rice field,” said he. “I saw two or three rats come out of this nest, and, armed with my stick, I imprudently ventured in without ascertaining the number of my enemies. While striking right and left, and examining the place, which resembled a large cylinder artistically built with twigs, rice, leaves, and reeds, I was surrounded by an innumerable army of rats. I had to make a vigorous use of my feet and stick, but the horrible animals always returned to the charge. I shouted aloud for all the world to help me, but no one heard me but Flora, which came bounding in—bit in all directions—and soon made a clear space round me. Those rats which were fortunate enough to escape her soon disappeared. Mamma helped me to collect the carcasses of the vanquished.”

Ernest's story interested me very much, and I asked him to conduct me to this nest. From his description, I thought it must resemble a beaver establishment. "I am right in my conjectures," said I; "these animals are, properly speaking, neither rats nor beavers, but beaver-rats, musk-rats, and are natives of North America."

Returning to where we had left my wife, we found that Fritz and Jack had returned, bringing with them a moor-cock and hen, and some eggs rolled in a kind of fur. Before dinner we skinned the rats, and, stretching each skin in the sun by means of little sticks, we salted it, and powdered it with cinders. Part of Francis's *cabiai* we cooked for that day's dinner, but we did not relish it very much. During dinner my sons questioned me about the singular odour which gives these rats their name.

"The animals," said I, "are provided with vesicles that secrete an oil having this peculiar odour. I do not know if they make any particular use of this oil, but the odour serves to repel those of their enemies to whom the smell of musk is disagreeable."

Ernest complained that he had nothing to put away the taste of the *cabiai*. Fritz and Jack brought him some kernels of the pine-apple, and some small green apples that Jack had picked up near the lake, and which turned out to be very good.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SUGAR MEADOW.

EARLY in the morning we started for the sugar-cane marsh that we had named Sugar Meadow. While my wife was occupying herself with the dinner, we went to look for traces of the boa, but found none. We had just returned, and were refreshing ourselves with some sugar-cane, when we heard our dogs barking furiously. Rushing out, we saw a string of young wild pigs, or peccaries, making their escape as fast as possible. We fired and killed about half-a-dozen; and, as they were too many for present use, we salted the greater number and packed them in the cart. The next morning was employed in preparing an Otaheitian roast, with which Fritz wished to surprise his mother. By his directions his brothers dug a cylindrical hole, in which they burned a fire of wood till the stones became red hot. When the roast was prepared, it was buried in this bed of burning stones, coals, cinders, and earth; Fritz having first, by my advice, rolled it in bark to protect it from the dust.

The hams of the peccaries we suspended and smoked in a hut built for the purpose, and this caused us to remain two days longer at Sugar

Meadow. During these two days we made several excursions, in one of which we came upon some enormous sugar-canes, sixty feet high. These we sawed down, and made into barrels for ourselves. In a visit to Prospect Hill, I was sorry to see that the colony had suffered, in the same way as that at Forest Farm, from the depredations of the monkeys; but I had to defer putting it in order to another time. We now continued our journey, taking one or two of the hams with us, and stowing the others away in our hut, the door of which we barricaded with stones and sand, to prevent the entrance of beasts of prey, or monkeys.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WALK IN THE SAVANNAHS.

AFTER two hours walk we found the country became less fertile; the verdure gradually disappeared; even the grass became rare. Happily for us, we had filled our gourds before leaving the river. After a tiresome walk of two hours, during which my sons had only opened their mouths to grumble at the heat, we came to the foot of a steep hill, and threw ourselves down under the shadow of a rock to refresh ourselves.

Suddenly master Knips jumped up and darted towards the rocks, followed by the dogs. We took no notice of them, for we had just opened out our provisions, and did not want to be disturbed for a trifle.

But Fritz, who had been looking after them, suddenly exclaimed, "What do I see there! Men on horseback! Can they be the Arabs of the desert, papa?"

"That is impossible, my child," said I; "take my glass and tell us what you see now."

"Troops of animals running here and there, haycocks walking, and chariots coming and going from the river! What can it all mean, papa?"

Smiling, I took the glass from him. "What you mistook for cavaliers," said I, "are large ostriches, and if you are willing we will give chase to them, since we have got such a fine opportunity." The boys were delighted, and, calling off the dogs, we hid ourselves in a crevice of the rock. The ostriches approached, and when they saw us, stood still, uncertain what to do. Reassured, however, when they saw that we remained still, they drew a little nearer. But our dogs could be restrained no longer, and they darted out, barking furiously. In a moment the ostriches were off, and were soon beyond reach. One male, however, lingered a little behind to protect his companions, and this delay proved

fatal to him. Fritz loosed his eagle, which caught and pulled him to the ground; and the jackal, coming up at the moment, killed him. We only arrived in time to preserve some of his feathers.

We were walking on slowly, when Jack and Ernest, who were in advance, suddenly exclaimed, "An ostrich nest, papa." We ran to the spot, and found it as they had said.

"Do not disturb the order of the eggs," said I, "lest the ostrich should forsake them when she comes back."

"Do you not think they may be forsaken already?" said Fritz.

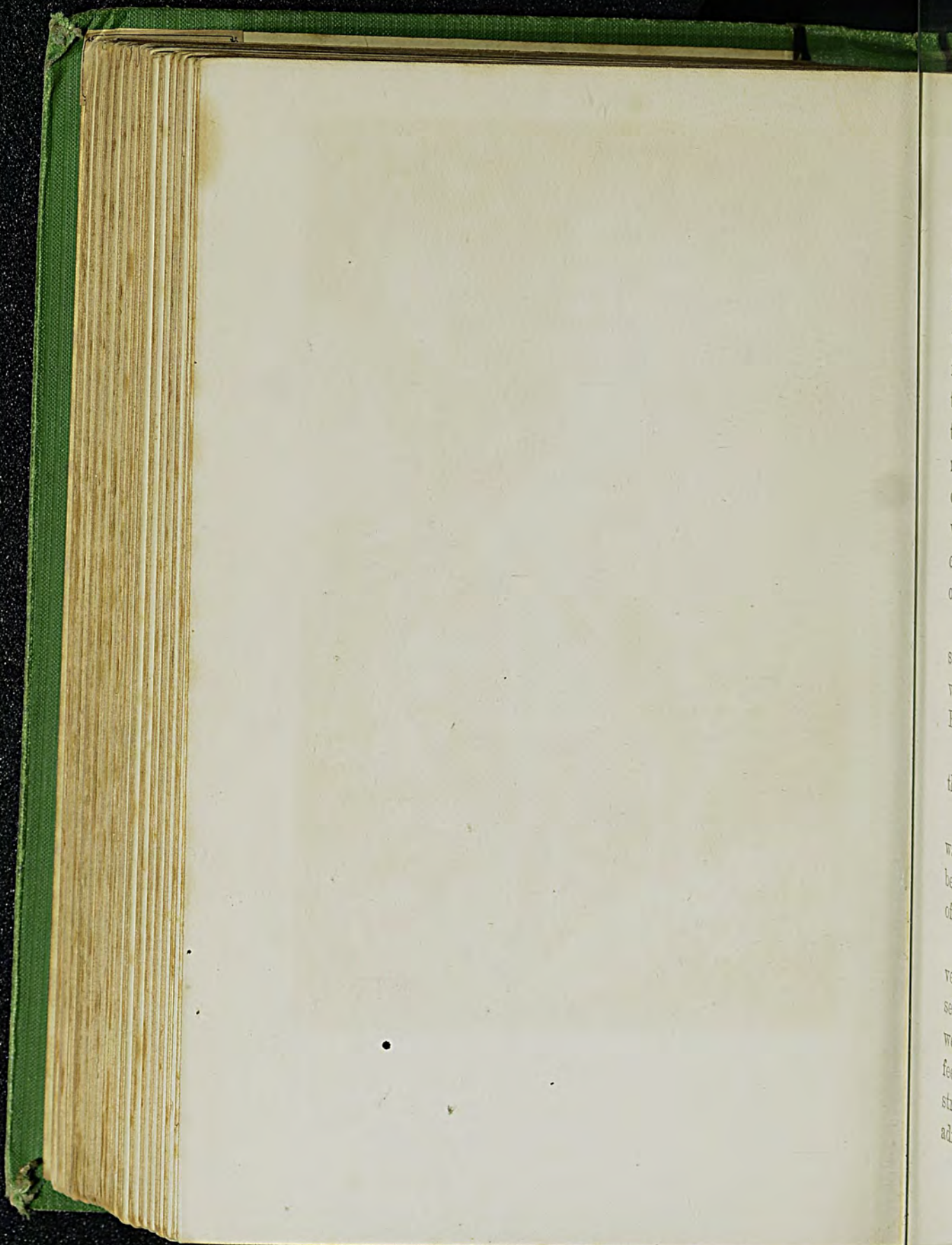
"No," I answered; "in this warm climate the ostrich often leaves her eggs during the day, and returns to them at night."

The boys, however, could not resist the temptation of carrying one or two of the eggs to show to their mother. I raised a pile of small stones at some distance, to guide us to the nest. We now entered a beautiful green valley, which formed a strong contrast to the one we had left. Troops of buffaloes and antelopes were grazing peacefully in it. Gradually we approached the cave where Jack had found his jackal, when we saw Ernest running towards us, pale with terror.

"A bear, papa, a bear," said he, throwing his arms round my neck, and almost strangling me in his terror. His fears were only too well founded, for I perceived two enormous bears



"A bear, Papa, a bear!" said he, throwing his arms round my neck and almost strangling me in his terror. His fears were only too well founded, for I perceived two enormous bears coming out of the cave.—p. 238.



coming out of the cave, and endeavouring to shake themselves free of the dogs. Fritz and I both fired, but only succeeded in wounding one in the jaw, and the other in the leg. These wounds, however, rendered them less capable of fighting with the dogs, who threw themselves on them with redoubled fury. The bears defended themselves bravely, and I saw that the contest might prove fatal to the dogs; so I approached cautiously, and shot one bear through the head with my pistol, at the same time that Fritz succeeded in sending a ball through the heart of the other.

“God be praised!” said I, fervently, when I saw them both stretched dead. Jack, who had witnessed the victory, carried the joyful news to Ernest.

“What made you in such a hurry to reach the cave?” said I.

“I have been rightly punished,” said he. “I wanted to frighten Jack by making a noise like a bear, and the first thing I heard was the sound of a real bear.”

“My dear children,” said I, “we ought to be very thankful that we have been able to rid ourselves of two such dangerous neighbours.” They were two formidable animals; one being eight feet long, the other six. Their heavy paws, strong shoulders, and thick necks, were the admiration of the children, who could now ex-

amine them at leisure. We drew the two corpses into the cave, and left them there with the ostrich eggs, barricading the entrance with branches of trees.

CHAPTER XXX.

EXCURSION.

THE sun was setting when we reached home; and at supper we told over the story of our adventures. My wife also narrated what she had been doing in our absence. She had discovered a species of fine clay, with which she thought we might make porcelain. She and Francis together had built an oven with this clay and pieces of rock; they had formed a small canal, by which to lead water from the river; and had collected in one place all the materials they thought we should require for our fortifications. Before going to bed I made several small balls of the clay my wife had discovered, and placed them near the fire to dry. In the morning I found that the heat had been too strong for them, and they were cracked; so I resolved that when we attempted to make vessels of it, I would build a furnace in such a way that I could regulate the heat.

After breakfast we set out for the Bears' Cavern. Fritz, who went before, shouted to us to come quickly and see the crowd of birds round the cavern. "One is marching up and down," said he, "like a guardian to keep the others off." This so-called guardian bird was black, with a ruff of white feathers round its neck, which was naked and of a pale red colour. As we were looking at it we heard a flutter of wings overhead, and looking up saw a large bird Fritz had just shot fall at our feet. The flock of birds, startled, flew away; the guardian at first kept his place, but apparently on second thoughts considered it would be better to follow the example of his companions.

When I entered the cave, I saw that the tongue and eyes of one of the bears were gone; an hour or two later, and their beautiful skins would have been lost to us.

The boys were very impatient to continue the excursion, and at last I complied with their earnest request, and allowed Fritz, Jack, and Francis to go by themselves, whilst we examined the cavern. I found that the rock in the interior consisted partly of mica, and discovered several large leaves of this transparent substance, which I determined to put into our windows instead of glass.

Towards evening, when we were anxiously looking for the boys, a shout announced their

return. I ran out to meet them. Jack and Francis each carried a living kid on their shoulders; Fritz, a very significant-looking sack. "Beautiful hunting, papa," cried Jack; "here are two goats."

"Without counting the innumerable rabbits Fritz has in his sack," said Francis.

"Without counting also——" said Jack.

"Softly," said I; "let Fritz relate your adventures to us."

Fritz then began. "An hour," said he, "after we left you, we crossed the Green Valley and entered the Great Plain. We climbed to the top of a small hill, from which we could perceive a defile of rocks, and I formed the resolution of chasing into it a troop of animals like goats or antelopes. We crept cautiously towards them; Jack keeping the middle, and Francis and I at each side. We had got pretty near them, when some of the group took alarm. We then loosed our dogs, and pursued our animals as fast as possible, and managed so well that the troop ran just in the direction we wanted, and all went into the defile. The next thing was to keep them there. We stretched a cord across the passage, at the height of three or four feet, to which we attached ostrich feathers and rags, to frighten any of the animals from coming back. This idea I took from a book I had read."

"Well done," said I, interrupting the boy; "I

am happy to find that you have profited by these readings. But tell me now how you have become possessed of your rabbits, and what you intend doing with them; for I warn you that I cannot allow you to take them home, they would be so destructive to our plantations."

"It was my eagle," said Fritz, "that caught two out of a great many that were running about the hill; and we might put them on our desert island; they would be capital eating, and their skins would do for hats."

"You speak wisely, my son; therefore I shall leave you to carry out your well-conceived plan."

"May I speak now?" demanded Jack impatiently.

"Certainly," replied I, smiling; "tell us how you caught those pretty birds."

"We caught them at the gallop, father. While Fritz was chasing his rabbits, our dogs started two animals like large hares, which capered away before us in an extraordinary fashion. After a chase of a quarter of an hour, we captured them. Instead of hares, they proved to be birds; and there they are."

"Very good, my children; but allow me to tell you that your birds are dwarf antelopes." Then turning to Jack, I asked him how he came to have such a swelled face; had he, by mistake, been fighting with a swarm of mosquitoes?

"Oh! my wounds are more honourable," said

Jack. "As we were returning towards you, a bird preceded us, lighting on tree after tree, and seeming, by its song, to invite us to follow it. I at once shouldered my gun, intending to bring it to the ground, but Fritz prevented me, reminding me that my piece was loaded with ball. We all followed the bird, which soon perched upon a tree and stopped singing. We stood still, and perceived that this tree was the retreat of a swarm of bees. It was a cuckoo, which coveted the spoil of the hive, and had guided us to it in the hope that it would have a share. We debated how to take the honey, and Fritz suggested that we might smoke them with sulphur. Without waiting for this, I pushed too near the hive, and the whole swarm came buzzing out upon me. They stung me till I believed all the bees in the world were after me; so there was nothing for it but to mount my buffalo and take refuge in flight."

"You ought to have taken care, my poor Jack," I said, "seeing this is not the first time you have met with such an accident."

CHAPTER XXXI.

AN OSTRICH.

MANY things yet remained to be done before our return to head quarters—a return necessary for

many reasons, of which the chief was the approach of the rainy season. Our bears' flesh was smoked and salted ; but I was not willing to lose the ostrich eggs, nor the gum of the spurge which I had discovered in a small wood during one of our halts. I resolved then upon a final expedition to the savannah. On setting out I left with his mother, not little Francis, who willingly accompanied us, but Ernest, who was lazy, and frankly avowed his dislike of these fatiguing expeditions. Fritz gave up to me his onagra, and took the young colt ; Jack and Francis were mounted on their buffaloes ; Ernest, by my desire, retained the dogs as a protection to his mother. We took our old road by the Green Valley, and arrived at the Tower of the Arabs—a name we gave to the eminence from which we first saw the ostriches, and mistook them for Arab riders. Jack and Francis I sent on before, always keeping them in sight ; Fritz remained with me, to assist in collecting the gum from the incisions which I had before made in the shrubs surrounding us. The sun had dried the gum, of which we collected a considerable quantity in a vessel which we had brought for that purpose. This precious harvest gathered, we thought of overtaking our companions, who had long ago passed the ostrich nests. Doubtless, the boys were anxious to fall in with a few of these beautiful coursers of the plain. We had not long to

wait for the result of their sport. From the bushes close by rushed out four ostriches—three females and one male. As they came towards us, and our two riders followed them closely, they could scarcely hope to escape.

When they neared us, I threw out my lasso, which, instead of catching the feet of the bird, twisted round its body, and for a moment embarrassed its wings; soon, however, it disentangled itself; and, had not Fritz unhooded his eagle, I should have lost my game. The eagle flew at the ostrich, fastened upon its head, and thus impeded its rapid flight. Jack now came up at full gallop on his buffalo, and, more dexterous than I, threw the lasso round the legs of the ostrich, which fell heavily on its side. To secure it was the work of a moment. Having covered its eyes, I bound it with a leather strap, which I attached on each side by a cord to the collars of the two buffaloes. I then uncovered its eyes, and watched the result. At first, irritated at finding itself conquered, it remained motionless, crouching to the ground. Then, suddenly believing itself free, it mounted, as if to take flight; but, being held by the belt, fell again to the ground. Rising immediately, it renewed its efforts, but still in vain, thanks to the strong chests of our buffaloes, between which it was obliged to march.

While Jack and Francis took our captive to

the Tower of the Arabs, Fritz and I went in search of the ostrich nest. We were just within a few feet of it, when a female ostrich rose off her eggs, taking us so much by surprise that we had not presence of mind to pursue her. Her being there, however, showed us that the nest was not abandoned; so we selected a dozen eggs, leaving the remainder buried in the sand. This prize secured, we rejoined our companions, taking the road by the Bears' Cave and the Green Valley.

Cries of astonishment greeted our return. Our housewife was rather alarmed at the prospect of feeding the stranger, and exclaimed, "Why do you bring that glutton here?"

"It shall be my courser," said Jack, with enthusiasm. "Its name shall be Fleetwing, and some of these days I shall go to Europe, thanks to my ostrich, and bring you news and supplies; and, as soon as I shall have trained it, you, Ernest, shall have my buffalo." From this time the ostrich became the property of Jack, who took charge of its training.

On our return to Rock House, one or two days afterwards, the ostrich, freed from its buffalo attendants, was tethered before the house, under the trees, where it was to remain till quite tamed. Our ostrich eggs were bathed in tepid water, then placed upon cotton in our oven, where, directed by the thermometer, I kept up

the temperature necessary to hatch them. The same day the rabbits were transported to the island, there to be acclimatised. The Whale Islet was allotted to the dwarf antelopes. Had it not been that we were afraid our dogs would molest these small, graceful creatures, only a foot in length, we would not have sent them away from us. As for the tortoises which I had found, my wife objected to their being admitted into the garden, because they would probably work more mischief than the snails on which they were to feed; so, by my orders, Jack carried them off to the marsh.

He had scarcely left us when I heard him calling loudly to Fritz to bring him a stick. I thought at first that he had seen some frogs, which the boys had been anxious to hunt, and was not a little surprised to see them return bringing a splendid eel, caught in a net laid by Ernest before our departure. Part of this excellent fish we cooked for dinner, and part we preserved in melted butter. The young cuttings of the pepper plant and scented shrubs, which we had brought, we planted at the foot of the bamboo columns supporting the projecting roof of our dwelling, up which we expected them to climb, knowing them to be trailing plants. Our housewife claimed the bear and peccary hams, also the cask of tallow which we had filled from those animals. The bear-skin was plunged in

the sea, and secured by large stones. The wood-hens were placed in a special cage, out of the reach of the monkey and the dogs.

The condor and the vulture were put, in the meantime, in our museum, as trophies. The stuffing of their skins we reserved as a pastime during the rainy season. The minerals we also laid aside for the present in our workshop.

Lastly, the skins of the musk-rats were hung up under the roof of our gallery. These various arrangements occupied two days; after which the sowing of our field, the taming of the ostrich, and the curing of the bear skins, engaged our attention.

Field labour, a thing quite new to us, we felt to be rather hard, and began to understand, by experience, the full meaning of the words, "Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow."

Of a single acre we managed to clear, we sowed one third in wheat, one in maize, and one in barley. On the other side of the rivulet, I planted a small tongue of land with potatoes and manioc. To this hard work we only devoted two hours in the morning, and two again in the evening, thus avoiding the heat of the day, and leaving us considerable leisure to devote to other matters. We set about, for instance, training the ostrich; and here, I must confess, we made at first but sorry progress. I had recourse to the tobacco fumes, as in the case of Fritz's eagle.

Under this influence, the ostrich fell to the ground, quite stupified, and while in this state the boys got upon its back, in order to accustom it to a burden. But, notwithstanding all our care and kind usage, the poor creature began to refuse all food, and seemed determined to die of want. It became, at the same time, so weak, that I really began to have my fears on its account. Happily, however, my wife tempted its delicate appetite with something very savoury of her own cooking, and it took quietly ever afterwards anything we gave it, and, indeed, became so voracious, that we began to fear a famine. Its strength being restored, its training was managed without much difficulty. In a month it could lie down, rise, turn itself, march in step, trot, or gallop, at the command of its rider.

I was certainly puzzled as to what sort of bit and bridle we should have for our new steed. A bit it must have, with which to direct it; but who ever saw a bit adapted to a beak? I was on the point of giving up this riddle as insolvable, when I recollected how the ostrich was affected by the alternations of light and darkness. My idea was to make for it a leather hood, like that of the eagle, only coming further down on the neck, and having two movable blinders: one of these being lowered, the ostrich would turn to the other side, following the light; both being lowered, it would stand still; both being raised, it would move

straight forward. The saddle also demanded particular attention ; but here I acquitted myself to admiration.

This equipment completed, we had only to try our courser, and were delighted with the results ; for although there was a little rearing and plunging at first, this only showed his high mettle ; and the journey to and from Falcon's Nest was made in less time than Fritz had allowed for one half of the way. Jack was rather envied by his brothers, who wished me to recall my decision that Jack should be master of the ostrich ; but I remained firm, though I admitted that the new steed was in one sense public property, and that all the four had a right to it. Fritz, Ernest, and Francis consoled themselves with the thought that the eggs in our kiln would soon be hatched, and provide them with coursers as swift as Jack's. The ostrich chickens, however, notwithstanding all our care, only lived a few days ; so the hopes of the three boys were but short-lived.

The preparation of the bear skins had been progressing at the same time as the training of the ostrich. I had cleaned them with the blade of an old sabre. I tanned them with a kind of vinegar, and made them supple and fit for use by rubbing them with a mixture of grease and cinders. My success as tanner and distiller encouraged me : I resolved to turn hat manufacturer, by trying to make little Francis a hat out of the musk-rat

skin. After several attempts, I made a sort of felt, which I coloured with cochineal, and made waterproof by means of gutta-percha liquid. This mixture I exposed during one night, on a mould of my own invention, to the heat of our drying-oven, and had in the morning the satisfaction of showing a Swiss cap of a bright red colour. My dear wife, delighted at the pleasure this would give the child, added herself a silk lining, a gold lacing, and an ostrich plume. Francis, however, was not quite at his ease in his newly acquired splendour, and insisted on my providing his brothers with similar head gear. This I undertook to do.

CHAPTER XXXII.

RETURN OF THE RAINY SEASON.

So busy had we been that we were now surprised to find it so near the time of the rainy season. My success as hatter, &c., encouraged me also to turn our workshop temporarily into a pottery. I adapted an old cannon-wheel to a wooden axle, to which I fixed a circular piece of wood, and began with making some bowls to replace the calabashes in which we put our milk. I had found among our articles from the wreck certain

glass wares, that had been intended for barter with savages. Part of these I crushed to a very fine powder, and with it enamelled the half-dried pottery. After several unsuccessful attempts, we made several coffee cups, a sugar basin, and six small plates.

My stock of porcelain clay being all used, I occupied myself during the remainder of the rainy season in stuffing a condor and vulture we had shot. I softened the skins by plunging them in tepid water powdered with herbs to keep away insects, and then stretched them on a wooden block formed like a bird. The neck was distended by means of small rings covered with cotton, and the eyes were made of painted porcelain.

This work completed, we still were prisoners, it being the rainy season. Ernest gave lessons to Francis; Jack read for his own improvement; and I gave lectures on natural history for our mutual edification. Nevertheless, our time did sometimes hang heavily on our hands, and Fritz helped me to invent a new occupation. "Now," he said, "we have Mr Fleetwing as a swift courser on land; let us make one to go on the sea; let us make a Greenland canoe, a kajak!" I welcomed the proposal with satisfaction, and the boys were quite enthusiastic on the subject; but their mother, who had only a very faint idea of what a kajak was, looked rather frightened;

and even when I explained the mystery, her aversion to the sea prevented her entering cordially into our plans.

We set to work immediately, being anxious to complete at least the hull of our kajak before the fine weather should return. We made the keel and ribs of whalebone, and bound them together with bamboo-cane. The deck was placed on a level with the sides, in which were circular holes to admit the rower. The Greenlander kneels in his canoe; but as this is a fatiguing posture, we provided our boatmen with stools. The hull being completed, we caulked all the seams with tar and moss, and covered the whole boat with the skin of the sea-dog. The holes for the oars were towards the stern, as I wanted to keep the fore part of the boat clear for a sail and mast. Our kajak was now ready, and I said that Fritz, who had first projected the canoe, should be the first to enter it. To guard against accident, I begged his mother to make him a swimming coat, close-fitting but double, and supplied with a small tube for filling the space between the two plies with air, thus making the coat a sort of life-buoy.

Meanwhile, the rainy season passed away; and right glad were we to welcome back the sunny weather. It was on a beautiful afternoon that our canoe was launched into the sea; and Fritz, delighted to venture in his new boat, put on his

swimming coat, and pushed off from the shore. His brothers, as he sat enveloped in his puffed-out coat, greeted him with shouts of laughter; but he took no notice of them, and rowed away manfully till he arrived at Shark Island, where we soon followed in our own boat. We paid a visit to our dwarf antelopes, and left them some salt, maize, and soft roots; we were happy to find them flourishing in their new home. Before re-embarking, we made a circuit of the island to seek for corals and shells for our museum. We also saw quantities of sea-weed, which the boys gathered and brought away, by their mother's orders.

On our return to Safety Bay she selected a few leaves of a certain marine plant, and placed them mysteriously in our oven. We teased her to tell us what she was going to do, but we got no satisfactory answer. Some days after, when we returned hot and tired from a journey to Falcon's Nest, we were presented by our thoughtful housekeeper with a dish of most delightful jelly, made from the mysterious leaves. My wife said that, on our visit to the island, she had recognised among the sea plants one which she had seen used at the Cape in this way. As a substitute for citron or orange juice, of which she had none, she had seasoned the jelly with cinnamon, honey, and vinegar, and very good it was, and most refreshing after our hard work.

As we had been well satisfied with the state of our plantations on Shark Island, we expected to find those on Whale Island equally flourishing. We found, however, on our arrival, that our rabbits, having multiplied greatly, had destroyed the bark of many of the young trees, and had quite devoured the cocoas we had planted. The resinous flavour of the pines seemed to have protected them from a like fate. We fenced our nursery anew with prickly plants, and left it once more, hoping the greedy little creatures would be unable to destroy it.

On the shore we found the remains of the whale, the bones picked almost bare by birds of prey, and bleached by the sun and wind. We had little difficulty in bringing part of the skeleton away with us. We also brought home two marine plants, on which I had observed the rabbits feeding: the one had a very disagreeable taste, the other had a perfume of violets: the first I thought was the *fucus saccharinus*, and the other the *fucus palmatus*.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE WILD BOAR.

ONE morning, while three of my sons had gone off to catch beaver-rats, of whose skins they

made caps, I decided to go in search of a tree of a certain size, that I wanted, to make a grinding mill, and also to seek some more porcelain clay, of which I was also in need. I yoked Steady to our old sledge, and accompanied by Flora and Turk, I set out for the wood beside the Jackal stream. As I neared the bridge, and got my eye on our plantation of manioc and potatoes, I was horrified to find it sadly destroyed by the ravages of some animals, evidently, by the footprints, of the hog tribe. These depredators had come in great numbers, and had done a world of mischief; but there was not one of them visible on whom I could wreak my vengeance. Suddenly, however, the dogs began to bark furiously, and were answered by a loud grunting. I ran, and saw our own old pig facing the two dogs, surrounded by eight well-grown pigs. Blinded by anger, I fired at once upon them. Three fell, and the rest fled. I then dragged the carcasses to my sledge, and went in search of my tree. I found one such as I wanted, two feet in circumference; the trunk straight and smooth. After having marked it in the manner of a woodman, I returned to our grotto. Our rat-hunters had not yet got home, and my wife was alone with Ernest, who had been spending the day in the library. Towards evening the wanderers arrived, Jack on his ostrich, followed by Fritz, and Francis leading Tempest, loaded with two sacks, containing twenty ortolans,

a kangaroo, a monkey, two animals like hares and half-a-dozen beaver-rats. Fritz, besides, carried in his hand a bunch of large thistles; but the contents of the sacks in the meantime engrossed all our attention.

“Oh! father, father,” cried Jack; “was there ever such a courser as my ostrich? She runs like the wind; I thought I should have lost my breath entirely. You must make me a mask with glass eyes, for the rapidity is quite blinding.”

“Impetuous little man,” said I. “No, I *must* not do what you want.”

“Why, father?”

“First, because you ought never to say to your parents, ‘You must;’ and secondly, because I have other things to do much more important than the making of a mask with glass eyes for a young gentleman who can make what he wants for himself if he chooses.”

Jack was silent, and allowed Fritz to speak. “We have really, father, spent a most delightful day,” said he; “and see what supplies we have brought home; but we are willing to exchange all our riches for a taste of our mother’s wine.”

“Each of you shall have some wine,” said I, “for you well deserve it; but another time you must not go away from home as you did this morning, without asking leave. And now, unyoke your animals; a good cavalier always attends to his horse’s comfort before he thinks of his own.’

When we met at supper Fritz related the day's adventures,—how he and his brothers had remained the whole day in the neighbourhood of Forest Farm, setting their traps in different places; how with snares they had caught the ortolans, and the beaver-rats with little fish; and how, afterwards, they had dined under the trees.

“But you say nothing of my jackal,” said Jack; “he beat the cover for us, and raised the hares, and the kangaroo, which, for the first and last time in its life, smelt gunpowder.”

“In running about,” said Fritz, “I found these large thistles, which I thought might be useful in carding felt; also I picked up this little cinnamon apple, and gave a lesson with my gun to this big monkey, that would throw cocoa-nuts at me.” His mother took the thistles and the apple from him, with both of which she was well pleased.

The animals which they brought I proposed to skin, by means of an instrument from the surgeon's chest, resembling a syringe. I introduced air by an opening in the skin between it and the flesh; thus separating them, and making the removal of the skin very easy. The children laughed greatly when I appeared among them with this strange apparatus, but their delight and astonishment knew no bounds when they witnessed the result of my experiment.

“Wonderful!” cried Jack and Francis, in a breath. “Father is quite a sorcerer.”

“But how is it done?” said Jack.

Having satisfied their curiosity, I left them to finish taking off the skin; and, as we had a good many animals to treat in the same manner, we had quite a day of it.

Next morning we started early, to cut down the tree I had marked the day before. Jack first climbed the tree, to cut off any branches that might be entangled with the neighbouring trees in falling. With a large saw we made a considerable incision all round, and then, pulling hard at the ropes which Jack had fastened, the trunk fell without much trouble. We soon cut off what we wanted for immediate use, and left the remainder to dry in the sun. When one is not master of his trade he makes no great progress at work of this sort; but I managed, after some difficulty, to construct a mill capable of grinding a little rice. Whilst superintending my mill, I noticed that our fowls kept going to the neighbouring field with great eagerness, and returned with a very well satisfied air. The mystery I soon solved on going myself to the field, for there was our corn already nearly ripe. This discovery was very gratifying, for we were now sure we should have two harvests in the year.

Next morning we went to the corn field and

began our reaping, and by evening had it completed. My wife, when she saw us taking merely the heads of the wheat, and leaving all the straw and grass, thought we were very wasteful; but I explained to her that this was the Italian method of reaping: they leave the long stubble standing, to protect the young grass, which is cut down afterwards for winter fodder.

The treading out of the corn was a rare amusement for the boys. Each mounted his favourite animal on the occasion, and enjoyed the work immensely. Their mother rather grudged seeing the buffalo occasionally regale himself with a mouthful of the precious grain, but I removed her scruples by quoting the text, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." We added nearly a hundred measures of wheat, and almost as much barley, to our store of provisions by this harvest. With a view to a second harvest, we had to sow again immediately: this time, however, we sowed oats and rye, instead of wheat and barley. In the midst of our work, the shoal of herrings reached our island, followed by the sea-dogs. Under the circumstances we contented ourselves with securing two barrels of herring and a small number of the sea-dogs, which were rapidly deprived of their skins by my newly-invented method.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

DISAPPEARANCE OF FRITZ.

ALL this while the kajak had been lying idle, and Fritz, who was considered captain, was getting quite impatient for a voyage in his new craft. The busy season now being over, there was no reason why he should not be gratified. We all went down to the shore to see him off, and after we had equipped and armed him for the voyage, he stepped into his kajak and bounded away over the waves like a miniature Neptune. I was proud to see how cleverly he managed his boat; but in order to satisfy his mother, who was by no means at ease, I had our pinnace ready to push off at a moment's notice to the assistance of the adventurer should he require it. The kajak seemed easily propelled, and shot hither and thither like an arrow. Sometimes it seemed as if almost upset; this latter feat being performed by Fritz for our benefit, to show us that there could not possibly be any danger. This alarmed my wife, however, not a little; and when the daring boy made directly for the current of the Jackal stream, and was carried right out to sea with terrible rapidity, I thought it was time to get into the canoe and follow him. Our six oars soon

took us to the other side of the bay, to the point at which the kajak had disappeared; but we got there only to be entangled in a labyrinth of rocks and shoals; our view of the horizon being completely shut out; and impatient though we were, we could not for some time find our way out. We had just reached the open sea, when I thought I perceived in the distance a thin wreath of smoke, and heard a faint report of firearms.

"Fritz is there!" cried I, with great satisfaction. "Where, where?" asked Jack and Ernest.

At that moment I heard a second report, and fired my pistol, which was answered by a third shot. I assured the boys that we were within a quarter of a mile of their brother, and a little vigorous rowing soon brought us up with him. After he had shewn us a "blue wonder," as they call the sea-cow, which he had killed, I reproached him with having caused us such anxiety. He excused himself by saying that the current had carried him out whether he would or not. I suspect he was not sorry to have an opportunity of trying the dangers of the open sea; but of this he said nothing, and I was quite willing to let the matter rest, satisfied to be able to take him home unhurt to his mother.

On our way home Ernest questioned me as to how I had calculated that Fritz was within a quarter of a mile of us. I told him how light travels faster than sound, and how, by counting

the number of seconds between the appearance of the smoke and the sound of the shot, I calculated the distance. "Have these same calculations been applied to the light of the stars?" asked Ernest. "Oh yes; and there are stars so distant that their light takes thousands of years to reach our earth; and if they were extinguished to-day they would still be visible to us during these thousands of years."

"How delightful it would be to know everything," said Ernest.

"It is delightful to know what we do know, my boy, and better still to know that the secret of the remainder rests with God."

We had only made about a third of our passage when the storm, which I had expected but had believed to be still distant, overtook and broke upon us with great violence. Fritz unfortunately was a good deal in advance, and the roaring of the wind and waves, and the falling of the heavy rain, rendered it quite impossible to recall him to shelter in our boat. We had quite lost sight of him by this time. I began to be very anxious, but tried not to alarm my companions by showing it. I bade them buckle on their life-buoys and fasten themselves to the sides of the canoe, to prevent their being washed away by the waves. Jack and Francis happened both to rise at the same moment, and coming against each other violently, were pitched into the sea. They were

excellent swimmers, and, by good fortune, a rope was hanging from the stern, which Jack grasped in a moment; but such was my excitement when I saw my two sons thus struggling with the waves, I should, in my despair, have leaped in after them, but Ernest held me and implored me to remain to assist him in getting them into the pinnace. This we accomplished with considerable difficulty; and beyond being drenched with salt water they sustained no further injury.

Meanwhile the storm continued to increase in fury. The waves seemed to rise to the sky and then fall in avalanches, lighted up by lurid flashes of lightning. Every now and then we expected to be engulfed in the abyss, which opened just under our boat. Our canoe stood the rough usage wonderfully. When the water got in we baled her as best we could, but all attempts at directing her course were perfectly useless. The fear for our own safety was nothing compared with what I suffered on Fritz's account. Swift as his kajak was, I knew he could not have got to shore before the storm overtook him. I imagined all sorts of dreadful things—that he was drowned—that he was dashed to pieces on the rocks—that he was devoured by the sharks. I was occupied with these despairing thoughts when over the wave tops I caught sight of the headlands enclosing Safety Bay, for which we immediately pulled, and were soon ashore. But how shall I

describe our joy, when we saw on the rocks at the head of the bay, Fritz and his mother and Francis, praying for us, whom they never expected to see again! or how shall I tell of our happy meeting! My wife and I were so glad to have all our children in safety around us, that we could not reproach Fritz, even in the gentlest way, for what his thoughtlessness had cost us. After having thanked God for our deliverance, and partaken of a hasty meal, we dragged our pinnace and kajak to the grotto. The sudden swelling of the streams by the heavy rain had made some work for us. The Jackal stream had carried off our bridge, and done a good deal of damage besides.

One bright moonlight night I was awakened by the barking of the dogs, answered by a kind of growling. I got up in great haste, seized my gun, and put my head out over the door. Presently I heard Fritz calling—

“Are you up, father?”

“Yes; come with me.”

Fritz came, and we went towards the scene of the commotion, which seemed to be caused by an invasion of pigs, which our dogs were trying to repel. The invaders were evidently our own animals, become wild. We pursued the pigs to the stream, which they crossed by the bridge, which we had restored in a temporary way; so we resolved to make a drawbridge.

I was well aware of the numerous improvements in drawbridges, and especially of the revolving bridges, which I had seen in use in the great dock-yards of France. Something much simpler, however, was amply sufficient for our purpose; and having constructed two uprights of great strength, with pulleys attached to them, through which ropes could be passed, and placed two others on the top of these, suspended midway, so as to act as levers, we had little difficulty in making the beams on our own side of the river move on pins passed through them as on a hinge. The other ends we cut through obliquely, so that they would still rest firmly when down, on the pieces secured on the opposite side; and having firmly fastened all the planks which had hitherto been left loose, we had an excellent drawbridge, which could be pulled up at all times when not in use, and thus place the river as a barrier between us and any invaders. Its novelty was a source of great delight to the boys, and for some days the pulling up and down of it formed one of their chief pastimes, and the principal object of their thoughts.

"What a pity," said Fritz one day, "that we cannot tame these graceful antelopes, and have them going about us when we are at our work."

"Yes," said Ernest, "we should make a "saltlick," as it is called in Georgia, and they would come of themselves."

For the benefit of his brothers less well-informed, I explained that Ernest meant patches of salt earth or soil impregnated with salt, either natural or artificial, resorted to by wild animals, and that he proposed to make an artificial "salt-lick" on the spot where we stood, to attract the gazelles and antelopes. "I am quite willing," I continued, "if you would like it. With porcelain earth and salt we could make an excellent bait. Let us procure some more of the clay, and at the same time we can get some bamboo canes, which I require for the execution of a plan I have in my head." The boys looked at one another. "Father," said Fritz, "we have a plan, too, in our heads, which we have long thought of; we should like to go to Forest Farm and Prospect Hill, and make excursions on the way in all directions. What do you say to it?" All eyes were anxiously turned upon me. "If you are very anxious," said I, "I see nothing to prevent you. Our establishments there are much in want of being looked after."

"Let us go! let us go!" cried they all.

"I should like first," said Fritz, "if my mother would give me some bear's flesh to make pemmican."

"And what is pemmican? Is that what savages eat?" asked my wife.

"Mother," replied Fritz, "it is a kind of preserved meat used by Canadian hunters on their

long expeditions ; it takes up little room, and yet is very substantial ; and as we are about to undertake a hunting excursion, we wish to have a supply of it."

His mother never looked favourably on those expeditions which took her children and husband away from her, but she submitted in silence to what she supposed to be inevitable, and helped Fritz to make his pemmican. Meantime the other boys made ready for the hunt, which was to be on a large scale, judging from the preparations required. The old sledge, on two cannon wheels, was loaded, not only with all manner of sacks and panniers and baskets, but also with the tent and kajak ; while Jack, ignorant that I was watching him, packed up with the pemmican, of which there was more than enough, some pigeons, on his own account, as a variety ; for I supposed he thought he might tire of eating nothing but bear's flesh.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HYENA.

It had been resolved we should all journey together ; but on the morning fixed for our departure, my wife declared she needed rest, and

would remain at home. Ernest, after some consultation with Fritz and Jack, said he also preferred to remain with her; so, having some work of my own, I thought it best to send the three boys by themselves. Our three hunters departed in good spirits, having been well counselled to be prudent—advice which no doubt they found it easy to carry.

I busied myself constructing a press for the sugar-canes, which did not differ materially from the sugar mill, and therefore need not be described. The adventures of the boys, as they told them to us on their return after a few days, may be more entertaining.

On drawing near to Forest Farm, where they intended spending the first two days, they were startled by a strange shout, resembling the laughter of a man. The ostrich and buffaloes, as well as the dogs, seemed terrified; and as the strange laugh was continued, they turned to flee. Fritz and Francis, dismounting, tried to calm the excited animals, and Francis crept cautiously forward to reconnoitre. Drawing aside the branch of a small shrub, he saw at the distance of about thirty paces, a large hyena in the act of devouring a ram. The animal, on seeing him, renewed its horrid laughter, and Francis, aware of his danger, fired, and striking it on the fore paw and breast, it tumbled over. Fritz, who had succeeded in tying up the buffaloes,

now came to his brother's rescue ; but fortunately his aid was not needed, for the dogs had thrown themselves on the hyena and killed him. In a few moments Jack rejoined his brothers, having been all this time engaged in quieting his ostrich, in which he was at length successful.

While all this was happening we were seated quietly resting ourselves at home, after the labours of the day, my wife trembling lest any mischief should befall her sons ; and I questioned Ernest as to the motives of his brothers in going away. His answers were rather enigmatical ; but at last he said, " Keep your mind easy, my dear father ; to-morrow I think I will have news of our travellers to tell you."

" How is that ?" said I. " Do you propose rejoining them ? That will be rather inconvenient for me."

" I will not leave you, papa, but I still hope to have news to give you. Perhaps I shall dream to-night where they have been, and so will be able to tell you all about it to-morrow."

" Stop," said I. " What is that which has entered the dove-cot ? It is so dark I cannot see whether it is a wild pigeon or one of our own."

" Perhaps it is a courier from Sidney," said Ernest. " If so, we might make use of it to correspond with New Holland."

" Would that it were," said I ; " but it is late, and we must go to bed. If you like, you can

consult your courier in the morning, and tell us the news at breakfast time; meanwhile, good night, and do not dream too much."

The next morning Ernest went to the dove-cot, and, just as we were sitting down to breakfast, he gravely handed us a sealed and folded paper, saying, "The humble postmaster of Rock House respectfully recommends himself to your lordships, and hopes you will not be displeased at his not forwarding the despatches from Forest Farm and Sidney sooner; they arrived only last night."

My wife and I could scarcely keep from laughing; but thinking I saw underneath some little piece of diversion invented by Ernest to beguile the time during his brothers' absence, I entered into the spirit of it, and, with a serious air, replied, "Well, Mr Secretary, what has happened in our capital? Give us the news of our subjects."

Ernest then unfolded his paper, bowed gravely, and read in a clear voice:—

"The Governor-General of New South Valley, to the Governor of Rock House, Falcon's Nest, Forest Farm, &c. &c., sendeth greeting:

"Most beloved, noble, and faithful Ally,—We have learned with displeasure that three adventurers have left your colony to live as robbers in this province, by plundering and destroying the game, and also that a troop of hyenas have made an irruption into your province, and committed ravages amongst your flocks. We pray you to take prompt measures against

these disorders by recalling the hunters to your colony, and putting an end to the outrages of these animals.—The Governor,

“PHILIP PHILIPPSON.”

“Sidney, Jackson's Bay, 12th of this month,
34th year of the colony.”

When Ernest had finished reading, he began to laugh and dance about, when a small note fell from his pocket. “This,” said he, “is a particular note from Forest Farm; if it is your pleasure I will read it to your lordships. It is short, but contains perhaps as much information as the official document of Sir Philip Philippson, who, it appears to me, has received these exaggerated reports with too much credulity.”

“This is quite an enigma,” said I. “Did Fritz leave you this letter, and order you to deliver it to me on a certain day?”

“No, father,” said Ernest; “here is the solution of the enigma in this note, brought by a carrier pigeon yesterday evening.

“DEAR PARENTS AND ERNEST,—A great hyena has devoured a lamb and a sheep. Francis is a noble fellow; he wounded it right in the chest, and the dogs despatched it. We took a whole day to take off its skin, which is very beautiful. Our pemmican is not worth eating: mother is quite justified in making fun of my cooking.—Your

“‘FRITZ.’”

“‘Forest Farm, 15th inst.’”

“A true hunter's letter,” said I, laughing.
“I am thankful that Francis is unhurt in his encounter with the hyena.”

"I wish they would be more prudent," ejaculated my wife, who wanted us to start from home immediately to seek the hunters, and bring them back with us.

Towards evening another pigeon arrived, bringing a note, which ran as follows:—

"Quiet night. Beautiful morning. Sailing in the kajak on Forest Lake. Capture of black swans. Royal heron. Cranes and widgeons. Unknown animal escaped. To-morrow to Prospect Hill. Farewell to all.

"FRITZ, JACK, AND FRANCIS."

This little note, assuring us of their welfare, was very comforting to us. The details they would communicate on their return.

It had been their intention to explore this lake more particularly, to find out the places where it could be reached from the shore without sinking in the mud. Fritz coasted in his kajak, while Jack and Francis beat about among the reeds. Such spots were marked by bamboos, that they might be easily discovered again. It was in the course of this exploring expedition that Fritz discovered three young black swans, which he caught and brought home. Subsequently he observed, quite near him, a royal heron, over which he cast his lasso, and shooting his kajak among the reeds, secured his prey. While the three brothers stood on the shore, admiring their beautiful captives, there came out of the marsh a strange-looking animal, quite new to them.

Fritz went in pursuit, leaving his brothers to take the other game to the Forest Farm. This animal I afterwards found, from their description, must be the tapir, a kind of small elephant.

At dinner they met again, the two younger boys bringing numbers of cranes and other water-fowl, and Fritz a gorgeous bird of paradise. They dined on peccary ham and potatoes, leaving the pemmican to the dogs. They spent the evening in preparing for the journey to Prospect Hill. I shall now leave Fritz to tell all about it in his own words: "We had hardly entered into the little pine wood, when we were surrounded by numbers of monkeys, who pelted us with pine-apples. To stop this we fired among them, on which four or five fell to the ground, and their companions, alarmed at our mode of returning their mischievous pranks, soon vanished out of sight."

Here I take up the story and continue the narrative. We were just comforting ourselves in the assurance of the well-being of our absent ones, when a pigeon arrived bearing a note having the following:—"The defile has been broken through. As far as Sugar Vale everything is destroyed; the canes are trampled and broken; many enormous footprints are visible everywhere. Come quickly to our help. We are all well, but dare not go either back or forward for fear of our unknown enemy." Without delay I saddled the

onagra, and telling Ernest and his mother to meet us the day following with various stores at the defile, I started at full gallop.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ELEPHANTS.

I MADE the journey, which usually occupied six hours, in three, so great was my anxiety; and when I arrived so much sooner than was expected, the boys greeted me with shouts of joy. Without a moment's delay, I examined the footprints which had caused them such alarm, and saw at once, from the nature of the devastation, that a troop of elephants had broken into the enclosure. There were also footprints of the hyena, but neither they nor I saw any of the animals themselves. Before night set in, we gathered a huge pile of firewood, and, having kindled it, Fritz and I kept watch by the tent door all night, but were not disturbed.

About mid-day Ernest and his mother arrived, and we made preparation for a considerable stay, to repair the damages our plantation had sustained. We first closed the defile with a very strong barrier. This occupied us a whole week. Then we constructed a summer-house of four fine trees growing close together, whose interlacing

boughs we bound together, cutting away others to give us room. In this way we had an upper house at once safe and beautiful, which we called The Hermitage.

The boys varied their employments by occasional excursions, in which they made many valuable discoveries, such as the cacao-bean, of which chocolate is made, and the banana, which forms an excellent substitute for bread. We had some trouble in the preparation of the cacao; but our learned Ernest told us how, by heating it, the husk might be removed, and then that, by roasting, it could be pounded in a hot mortar. With a little sugar, it was then fit for use. The banana, which is called the king of vegetables, we planted in the garden in slips.

Next day Fritz took his kajak across the lake to bring a fresh supply to his mother of the cacao and banana fruits. On his return he gave an account of all the wonderful things he had seen in his explorations,—how he had seen elephants in groups of ten and twenty, stripping trees of their young branches, which they seemed to swallow without difficulty; panthers with beautifully spotted skins, which he had been much tempted to shoot; and how he had observed many other fierce and wild animals, known and unknown, whose notice he was very glad to escape.

After having advanced a considerable way up the lake in this manner, congratulating himself

on the impunity which his mode of approach into this new and dangerous region afforded him, he turned his kajak in order to descend, when, what was his horror to see almost within gunshot, and making apparently directly for him, an enormous pair of jaws filled with formidable teeth, which seemed gliding towards him on the surface of the water! Poor Fritz's presence of mind nearly forsook him at so unexpected an assailant, and though he continued to ply his oars, and by a sort of instinctive wheel of the canoe shot dexterously out of the way of his terrific antagonist, and then continued his course swiftly down the lake, yet he said he could hardly tell how it had been done, and he had obtained a lesson in natural history which he had no desire to repeat.

Ernest at once pronounced the horrible monster to have been an alligator or crocodile, and proceeded to give his brothers an account of this aquatic giant lizard, and of its production from an extremely small egg. The conclusion, meanwhile, which I arrived at was, that this new region beyond the defile was occupied by still fiercer and more dreadful animals than I had had any conception of, and I felt as little satisfaction in the belief that we had already so effectually fortified the defile as permanently to protect us from their intrusion.

Fritz's experience in the voyage up the lake

had not in any degree intimidated him in the use of his kajak; and when we were ready to set off homeward on the following morning, I was in no degree displeased when he made the proposition of going home in it round Cape Disappointment. The ease with which he managed his light canoe gave me the utmost confidence; and I was glad of the opportunity of obtaining a little more definite knowledge of the coast. Both parties accordingly set out, and arrived at home nearly about the same time. Fritz, indeed, had a short route and an unencumbered carriage, compared with us; but while we steadily pursued our homeward route, various attractions sufficed to delay him. Among the rocks he recognised a plant covered with highly scented rose-coloured flowers, in which my wife was delighted to discover the caper tree used for pickling. His observations, however, led to a much more important discovery; for, on inspecting the branch of a plant he had brought home, bearing numerous small white flowers, and leaves somewhat like the myrtle, I had no doubt of its belonging to the same family as the Chinese tea-plant.

The latter discovery was a source of general delight; nor can it be concealed that, amid all our contentment and satisfaction with our lot, we still indulged the idea that we might some day hail a European ship, and find a new value in the various stores of skins, furs, cotton, spices,

and other articles of native produce, which were annually accumulating in our stores. We could not, indeed, amid all our present comforts, look forward to our living and dying solitary beings, upon an unknown shore, without some feeling of dissatisfaction, which gave birth to more ardent, though still moderate desires. We now, however, looked on the newly discovered tea-plant as a means available for present comfort still more than for future barter.

Jack, who was mounted on the ostrich, was the first to reach home ; Fritz followed immediately ; while the rest of us found our baggage and stores required us to proceed at a more deliberate pace. All, however, arrived safely at last, and united in unloading the waggon and storing away the various fruits of our journey, and putting our dwelling once more in order for occupation. We found, however, after our brief sojourn in the airy hut we had constructed at the defile, that, with all the many comforts of Rock House, it was still open to objections as a summer residence ; and my wife appealed to me if it was right to desert our beautifully situated dwelling at Falcon's Nest, and leave it to go to ruin. As her remarks completely coincided with my own ideas on the subject, I readily promised to comply with her wishes ; and we accordingly set out soon after for Falcon's Nest.

I set to work, with the aid of the boys, and soon

put in order the building reared round the trunk of the tree in which our first season had been passed. The staircase and platform were still firm and good; and over the latter I constructed a pent-roof of bark, and closed in the sides with trellis-work of wrought bamboos, so that we found it once more a most agreeable resting-place, while the number of animals, and the convenient carriages we had at our command, rendered the stores at Rock House accessible at all times.

When this work of restoration was finished, another task of a very different nature awaited us. Fritz had never abandoned his idea of having a fort reared on Shark Island, as a secure rallying point under any imminent danger. I put him off from time to time, but his head was full of the project; and as our chief works for the season were completed, I at length yielded to his importunities, conceiving that it could do no harm, and would serve to keep the boys occupied. It proved, however, no easy task; but at length, after much more labour than we had any idea of when we commenced, a broad platform was completed on the highest part of the island, with ramparts and embrasures; and on this, after much toil, we at length saw our guns planted, and a magazine, dwellings, storehouse, and all other requisites for this new city of refuge finished. Our last work was the erection of a flag-staff; and when we had all landed on Shark

Island to celebrate the completion of our fort, the white flag was hoisted amid the shouts of the boys; nor, with all my sense of the urgent necessity for economy of our ammunition, could I resist the contagion, but loading both our cannons, we fired them, and listened with a feeling of triumph as the echoes prolonged and repeated the sounds.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AFTER TEN YEARS.

TEN years passed away with little to vary their uniformity,—ten years far from the world, far from home and friends, in which our own industry had been our only support, and the goodness of God, with our mutual affection, which had strengthened with every trial, our only hope. In all our ways we have sought to acknowledge Him; every night, ere we slept, we committed ourselves to His care, every morning sought His blessing, and every day have endeavoured to guide ourselves by His holy Word. We have too often forgotten Him, indeed, and allowed earthly cares to engross our minds; but we have put our trust in the mercy of the Saviour of sinners, and have not trusted in vain.

We had been engaged throughout the period of our residence on the unknown land, whither

we were so unexpectedly driven, in conquering and taking possession of its wealth. Our habitations at Falcon's Nest and Rock House were pleasant, commodious, and admirably suited to all the requisites of the favoured climate and country where our lot was cast. Rock House supplied the most excellent and ample accommodation for all our winter stores, and abundant accommodation for our lodgement during the rainy season, while Falcon's Nest had become our habitual residence during the greater part of the year, in which we enjoyed the pleasant shelter of its shady environs and the abundant fruits of the fertile country which surrounded it. We continued from year to year to add to its accommodations, as convenience or necessity dictated; so that we had, through time, abundant provision for the housing and feeding of all our flocks and herds, and our European and native poultry; our extensive palisaded enclosures securing them alike from wandering or from danger from hostile intruders. Our large trees were also the resort of great flocks of pigeons, who made their nests in the columbaria constructed with calabashes on the branches, and roosted there throughout the year; so that while our dove-cot at Rock House remained abundantly stocked, we were under no apprehension from the continued increase of this more extensive colony.

Every year we found our experience of the

climate, and our knowledge of the many natural productions of the country, increasing, while the completion of all the great undertakings which had kept our hands so fully occupied during the early seasons of our enforced settlement on an unknown and uninhabited coast, left us with abundant leisure, and required only a pleasant amount of exertion to preserve our erections in repair, or to add to them such additional conveniences as seemed calculated to increase our comfort. Ten years also made an important difference on my assistants. The boys, who, when we landed, were only a source of care and anxiety to me, had, by that time, grown up to be strong and active youths, equally capable of any amount of exertion or fatigue as myself; and having acquired nearly all their knowledge and habits of life in the strange country which my wife and I were sometimes tempted to contrast with the remembrances of our native land, their hopes and anticipations were entirely concentrated in our new possessions.

Thus happiness and contentment reigned throughout our cheerful colony, and a rich abundance greatly exceeded our utmost wants. The bees, which had at first threatened to prove dangerous and troublesome neighbours at Falcon's Nest, had so prospered under our management, that we had now little other trouble than to provide additional hives for the annual swarms; and

their great numbers around our pleasant summer dwelling attracted to it flocks of the merops, or bee-eater, the inroads of which on the increasing numbers of the bees was rather advantageous, while their presence added to the life and cheerfulness of the scene, their brilliant plumage glancing in the sun, and far surpassing in beauty anything to which we had been accustomed among the feathered songsters of our native land.

As our works of necessity, dictated by the indispensable requirements of shelter, food, and raiment, were gradually completed, we continued to add to our comforts by many embellishments of our different dwellings. Rock House especially received all the internal improvements we could devise during our annual occupation of it in the winter season, and was, besides, greatly increased in comfort and beauty of appearance by the additions we made to it during the summer. Under our united labours, the surrounding ground, which had at first been a sterile and barren waste, was gradually occupied with extending plantations, which rendered it as pleasant in summer as it was comfortable and ample for our winter accommodation. Still further to add to its beauty and convenience, a covered gallery and verandah were erected along the whole front of the grotto, supported on stout columns of bamboo, up which the vine and other climbing plants, and beautiful flowering creepers,

were trained; so that it was latterly a matter of choice with us at all seasons whether we found it most agreeable to make Rock House or Falcon's Nest our abode.

Our various outposts were no less comfortable and convenient. Our labours at the Hermitage and Prospect Hill were at last crowned with abundant success. Our structure at the defile also fully answered the purpose for which it had been reared with so much labour, and we found it occasionally a pleasant change to remove to the station-house we had erected there, and to make it the centre of various expeditions into the country beyond, in which the love of novelty and adventure found abundant gratification.

Our colonies on Shark and Whale Islands had also succeeded beyond our highest hopes. These islands were now covered with thriving palms and other valuable fruits, and occupied by our thriving colonies, which multiplied there beyond the reach of any assailants, so that we could at any time command the most abundant supplies without labour or delay.

Could a stranger have witnessed the desolate beach on which our first Tent House was reared, and then returned for the first time after this interval of ten years, he could not have conceived it possible that the beautiful garden of fruit-trees, palms, and luxuriant tropical plants, extending all the way from Rock House to Jackal River,

was, when we had first landed, a parched and desert plain. By digging in the vicinity of Rock House, we had found two abundant springs of water, which rose in graceful and refreshing fountains, and were then led in winding channels amid our plantations, so as to water the whole, and give it the appearance of a rich and fertile garden. In the extreme heat of summer the trees supplied a most grateful and refreshing shelter; and by means of bamboo tubes we were able to distribute the water, so as to preserve an abundant and luxurious vegetation where formerly all had been scorched and burnt up by the heat.

Our European fruit-trees had also thriven most successfully, and the avenue which we had planted with so much labour from Falcon's Nest to Family Bridge, was now a luxuriant orchard, under the delightful shade of which we could traverse, in the hottest season, from one habitation to the other.

With such conveniences and attractions at both habitations, and the ready means of transport and conveyance which the increase of our cattle afforded us, we no longer regarded the distance between the two dwellings as any great impediment even to daily intercourse between them, so that, even when taking up our permanent summer abode at Falcon's Nest, we rode over to our store-house at Rock House for whatever

the daily demands on its abundant stores required.

Throughout the whole extent of the space between the two lodgings, the eye was now regaled with the cocoa-nut and other palms, the bread-fruit tree, the sugar and cabbage palms, and numerous other native fruit-trees, mingling with the delicious products of European orchards, while, in the hottest season, the comfort of its delightful shelter was increased by the prospect of the sea laving the shore, at a little distance, with its deep blue waves. Oranges, figs, bananas, dates, guavas, cocoa-nuts, and many other delicious fruits, appeared in continuous succession throughout the season, and helped to attract whole flocks of birds, which pillaged our stores as rapidly as they ripened, and were far too numerous to be baffled by any attempts we could make to lessen their depredations by shooting or snaring the spoilers. There was, however, abundance for all; and though the flocks of pillagers compelled us to be on our guard, in order to secure the desired supplies, we could always, with a little care, obtain as abundant stores of ripe fruit as it was possible to consume, or desirable to preserve for the winter.

It almost seemed as if there was nothing left us that we could desire; yet many a look had I cast towards the sea, during these years that had intervened since the shipwreck, in the hope of

espying a distant sail, and once more greeting other human beings, from whom we had been so long shut out. The same feeling animated me in continuing to store up cotton, spices, ostrich-plumes, &c., in the hope that some day they might prove a source of wealth to us, and enable us to purchase permission to return to Europe, or to acquire such additions to our supplies as might become requisite. Such feelings were little sympathised in by the boys. Fritz, indeed, was now a hardy, vigorous young man of twenty-four years of age. Ernest and Jack had also attained to manhood, and Francis was a lively and active youth of eighteen. They all had fine dispositions, and we had the inestimable advantage of being able to train them up without the risk of any contaminating influences of evil companions, or the temptations of civilised life.

My dear wife Elizabeth, and myself, were already feeling the symptoms of approaching age; and, with our own more vivid recollections of the past, it was impossible to shut out some haunting anticipations for the future. We felt, if the place of our settlement was to be our final abode, that some one of us must be destined to be the survivor of all the rest; and to my mind especially the thought frequently recurred, with sad forebodings, and made me turn my thoughts to heaven, and pray to God that he, who had cared for us amid so many dangers, and surrounded us

with so many mercies, would avert from any of us so sad a fate as to perish in solitude, amid scenes which had been the source of so much comfort and happiness.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

FRITZ'S VOYAGE.

ONE morning, Fritz, having left us in his kajak, and not returning till evening, we all went in the afternoon to the Shark Island to watch his return. We fired one shot to attract his attention, and almost immediately the kajak appeared, like a black speck upon the water, coming very slowly towards us. As it came nearer it appeared to be heavily laden.

“Where have you come from, Fritz,” cried I, “loaded in this way? I hope you have not been running into danger.”

“No,” said he; “this has been the most fortunate voyage possible, as you will think when I tell you all about it.”

As soon as he landed we all gathered round him, anxious to hear his story. “First of all, father, I stocked my boat well with provisions, in case of my having a long sail, and had also with me

harpoons, boat-hooks, pistols, &c., so that I was ready for any emergency. The weather was all that could be desired ; the sea calm, and the sky without a cloud. When I passed the spot where the vessel broke up ten years ago, the water was so clear that I could see at the bottom cannons and many other things, which might be useful to us if we could contrive a diving-bell to raise them. Turning to the south-west, I passed a rocky promontory, on which I saw several large animals,—bears, sea-lions, walruses, &c., from which I prudently kept my distance. Coasting farther round, I came to a sort of triumphal arch, built of immense blocks of rock, piled one upon another, the recesses of which were crowded with the nests of the sea-swallow. These birds flew about my head in hundreds ; and here is a piece of a nest, which you can taste, if you have a mind to know what the Chinese consider a dainty. I sailed yet farther, and came to a beautiful bay, bordered by a green savannah, dotted with trees, and watered by a winding stream with wooded banks. In this stream I noticed several large oyster-beds. I brought up a few with my boat-hook, and opened them, intending to regale myself with them, but I found them very tough, and in each something about the size of a pea, and very like a pearl. I brought some home in a bag ; here they are ; you can judge for yourself."

At these words all pressed eagerly round to in-

spect the wonderful pearls, which were indeed of a fine kind, and some of them large.

“This is really a treasure which you have stumbled upon,” said I to Fritz. “Had we communication with the rest of the world, this oyster-bed would be a very mine of wealth to us. In the meantime, it is not worth a bag of nails or wheat. Some day, however, we may be permitted to renew our intercourse with our brethren, and then we may profit by your discovery. Now, my boy, finish your story.”

Fritz resumed: “After a short repast, I continued my voyage at random along the beautiful coast. Having arrived at the mouth of the river, I was surrounded by a great flock of birds,—seaswallows, sea-gulls, albatrosses, &c. I kept swinging my boat-hook about my head to keep them off, and I brought one to the ground, which was an albatross. Having gone thus far, I thought I had better turn homewards; and here I am, loaded with spoils.”

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ENGLISHWOMAN.

FRITZ had finished the public recital of his adventures; but, while my wife and the boys were examining what he had brought more closely, he

drew me aside, and confided to me the following facts:—"Listen, father," said he. "When I lifted the albatross, I noticed a piece of linen tied round its leg. I unwound it, and found written on the inside, in red ink, these words in English: 'Whoever you are to whom God sends this message of a helpless girl, make haste to seek out a volcanic island, distinguished by the smoke which escapes from its summit. O! haste, and rescue a poor castaway.'"

Amazed, I took the piece of linen from Fritz, and read and re-read these words, to assure myself that I was not dreaming. "What!" cried I; "is it possible a human being is living in these lands! How did she come here? Oh! that we may find her in time!"

"Meanwhile," continued Fritz, "I tried to restore the albatross, which was only stunned, by giving it a little cordial. I tore a piece off my handkerchief, and wrote with a quill of the albatross, dipped in the sea-dog's blood, these words:—'Trust in God; His help is nearer, perhaps, than you think.' I fastened my message as she had fastened hers, and set the bird at liberty. He made for the south-west so rapidly that I could not follow him. I had hoped he would guide me to the burning mountain; but he was soon out of sight, and I was disappointed. That is what I had to tell, father; and now, that message of mine, will it ever reach the poor girl? Where is

she? How shall I find her?" "My dear son," said I, "I cannot but praise you for the prudence with which you have conducted yourself in this matter. You did quite right to tell your tale only to me. We must talk over this another time. You know this message you have found may be of very old date, or the island spoken of may be very distant, and quite beyond our reach. In the meantime let us join the others; they will wonder what we are talking about." Addressing the group, I said—"Dear wife and children, I find that Fritz here has so long conducted himself with courage, skill, and wisdom, that I think he is quite worthy to be trusted with full liberty of action; so from this day I declare him his own master: still our son and brother, of course, but no longer to be commanded like a child, but counselled and advised as a man." Fritz was congratulated by all on the auspicious occasion. His mother kissed him, in silence. "I wish you joy, with all my heart," said Ernest; "now that you are no longer a boy, and are at liberty to wear the manly toga."

"Cover me sometimes, brother," said Jack, "with that toga of yours, when I am on the point of committing some piece of youthful folly." "And take me with you," said Francis, "that I may be your companion, and share your independence." Fritz smiled, but said nothing, and we all went to supper. The conversation turned

upon pearl fisheries, and I had to explain all about them,—how the pearls were formed, how they were fished for, and what dangers the divers have to encounter. The result of this was that the boys were bent upon an expedition to the oyster-beds. Every one took part in the preparations. I forged four iron hooks, furnished with a strong wooden handle, which was to be attached to our canoe. These hooks were intended to rake the bed and loosen the shells. Ernest made another sort of hook, destined to tear from the rocks the nests of the sea-swallow. Jack made a light sort of ladder, by which to scale the rocks; and Francis and his mother made strong nets of cord, in which to carry the oysters. As for Fritz, he seemed to devote himself to altering his kajak to hold two instead of one. We left Francis at home with his mother, and Jack insisted on going in the kajak with Fritz, Ernest and I following them in the pinnace. We soon arrived in Pearl Bay, and before the famous arch of rocks of which Fritz had told us.

The gigantic arch under which we passed was well worthy the praises Fritz had given it; and we were surrounded as he had been, by hundreds of sea-swallows, as numerous as flies on a summer evening. We dispersed over the rocks in search of any rarities we thought might be valuable to us; but the daring adventures of my sons made me feel uneasy; and calling them back to the boat,

we put our treasures in a large bag we had brought for the purpose.

The rising tide helped us to pass safely through this dangerous strait, when we found ourselves in a magnificent bay, about seven or eight miles in circuit, and studded with a number of beautiful islets. The entrance to the bay was guarded by a ridge of high rocks, leaving a passage wide enough to admit the largest vessels. The only drawback was the sand-banks in it, which, however, were not dangerous. A creek near a bank of pearl oysters was chosen as our landing-place. The dogs and monkey were ashore before us, and ran eagerly to slake their thirst at a clear limpid stream. The sun was far down, and it was time to think of supper and our arrangements for the the night. We lighted a large fire of dry wood on the beach, and, leaving our dogs on shore to watch, we retired on board our pinnace, which was anchored some distance out.

CHAPTER XL.

FRITZ'S EXPEDITION.

THE only disturbance we had through the night was caused by the howling of the jackals in the distance—our own of course answering them. At

dawn we were all astir, and busy fishing for oysters, which were so abundant that I determined to continue fishing for three days longer. We laid them out on the shore as we caught them, and the sun opened them.

Every evening before supper we made a short pedestrian excursion, and brought home either birds or some new vegetable. The last evening we penetrated farther into the wood than we had yet done. Ernest with Fallow led the way; then Jack and his jackal; Fritz and I remained on the beach, repairing some of our tools. Suddenly we were startled by the report of a gun, then a sharp piercing cry of distress, followed by another report. We immediately ran in the direction of the noise, Fritz having his eagle, Turk, and Flora. This cry of distress was soon followed by another quite different, and we came in sight of Jack, limping and trembling, supported by his brother.

"What has happened, Jack, my child? What is the matter? Are you hurt?" cried I, greatly alarmed.

"Oh! I am hurt here, and here, and here, and all over," sobbed Jack; "I am bruised like pepper."

I examined him carefully, but could find no wounds at all, only a blue mark or two.

"My dear Jack," I said, quite reassured, "you are much too soft for a hunter."

"Too soft!" he cried, with a degree of indig-

nation quite comic, "when I have been nearly murdered, trampled and ground under foot! Father, if our good dogs and Fritz's eagle had not rescued me, I would have fallen a prey to the monster."

"But what monster is it that is the author of so much evil?"

"A wild boar, papa, an enormous wild boar!" answered Ernest, "with tusks half a foot in length. If we had not had our guns with us, Jack would have been trampled to death. Jack gave him one shot, but slipped his foot, and the beast rushed upon him. Fallow and the jackal behaved nobly, and I managed to shoot him right through the head."

"Well, thank God, the danger is past," I said, "and dear Jack safe and sound."

So saying, I led Jack to the boat, and gave him some canary wine, rubbing his bruises with a little of the same; and he soon fell asleep. To this accident we owed the discovery of the swine-bread, on which the boar had been feasting when disturbed. We gathered a large supply of it, knowing it would be acceptable to our housewife.

My boys asked me about this singular plant, and I told them that naturalists place it in the class of mushrooms, for it has neither leaves, twigs, nor root. "Dogs and swine are a great help in discovering it," I said, "for by their scent they can find out where it grows. It is found

abundantly in France and Italy, and is very much prized,—as much, I dare say, for its odour as for its taste, which is nothing remarkable.”

That night we also passed in the boat, and were undisturbed. Next day my two elder sons accompanied me to where the dead boar was. Jack preferred to rest himself, feeling still a little bruised. We were very much struck by the great size of the animal.

“What a good opportunity to replenish our stock of hams,” said Fritz.

“I would like to get the head for our museum,” said Ernest; “but I suppose the first thing to be done is to get the body down to the shore.”

“That will be easily done, if father gives us permission,” answered Fritz.

“I will not forbid you,” I said; “but I know that, excepting the legs and head, the other parts are not good to eat, and I advise you to cut off those parts, and leave the enormous carcass here.”

They took my advice, and we placed the head and legs of the boar on a kind of sledge made of branches, drawn by the dogs. We found that the branches we cut for this purpose were those of the Nankin cotton tree, and I gathered a large quantity of the beautiful yellow down. Jack, quite recovered both in health and spirits, met us on the shore, and was very active in helping his brothers to prepare the hams. Lighting our fire on shore, we again retired on board our boat.

and were just falling asleep, when we were roused by a horrible roar, which made the forest and the rocks ring again.

“What a fearful concert!” cried Fritz, starting to his feet and seizing his gun. “Stay you here,” he added; “I will go and discover the enemy.”

So saying, the brave boy jumped into his kajak, and disappeared in the darkness. I stood ready to go to his aid, should it be necessary. The roar was repeated several times, each time nearer than the last. The boys were terrified. I was myself very uneasy, and expected every moment to see the glaring eyes of a panther or leopard. We soon saw, by the light of our fire, a large lion come and stop abruptly, scared by the blaze, which fell full on its face, on which rage and hunger were painted. Suddenly there was the report of a gun.

“It is Fritz,” said Ernest, hoarsely.

The lion sprang forward with a roar of pain, and then rolled over on the grass.

“Fritz has killed it,” I cried, rowing ashore, but telling Ernest and Jack to remain in the pinnace and keep their arms in readiness. The dogs came bounding to meet me, but soon began anew to growl, springing towards the forest. I stopped, fearing another enemy; and I was not wrong; for a large lioness emerged from the wood, and by her cries seemed to be calling her companion. When she saw the carcass, she went up to it,

licked the blood from the wounds, and then, when the truth seemed to dawn upon her, with glaring eyes and a deep growl of vengeance, turned round as if to seek a victim.

At this moment there was another shot, causing her to howl with pain; but the creature was only wounded, and still dangerous. Fritz had shot one of her paws. I fired, and shattered her jaw, and then the dogs sprang forward and fastened on her sides. A mortal combat ensued. I remained a mute spectator, not daring to move. I was deterred from firing by the fear of wounding the dogs; but when I saw poor Flora struck down dead by one blow of the terrible creature's paw, I rushed forward and plunged my hunting knife into its breast. It rolled over dead on the ground. I discharged my pistol into its head to make sure; and Fritz coming up, we called Ernest and Jack, who ran and threw themselves into our arms, so great was their joy to see us safe and sound again.

The two lions were stretched side by side on the sand; and even though dead, we could not look at them without a shudder. The dead body of poor Flora lay beside that of her antagonist.

"Brave dog!" said Fritz, "she has fallen a victim to her devotion. There, my dear Ernest, is another opportunity of exercising your literary talent, by composing an epitaph on our faithful companion."

“ Yes,” said Ernest, “ but my heart is too full to compose in rhyme ; so the epitaph must be in simple prose.”

While he retired to compose the epitaph, Fritz and Jack dug the grave. I washed the wounds of Turk and Fallow, and even of the jackal, which had fought bravely, and received its share of blows from the paws of the enemy. When the grave was dug, we buried the body of our old friend. A flat stone was laid above on the ground, on which Ernest proposed to engrave the following epitaph :—

HERE LIES THE FAITHFUL FLORA.

SHE DIED AS DIE THE BRAVE.

STRUCK DOWN BY THE PAW OF A GIGANTIC LIONESS,

SHE FELL A MARTYR TO HER DEVOTION,

AND IS MOURNED BY THE FRIENDS SHE SAVED.

Poor Jack was inconsolable. “ My poor dear Flora ! our best friend,” he cried.

In the morning, after taking the skins of the two lions, we started on our return to Rock House, leaving our pearls for another day. Fritz went before in his kajak. When we were past the rocks, he turned round and presented me with a letter, which, he said laughing, the postman had forgotten to deliver. I withdrew to the stern of the boat, and was rather troubled to read Fritz’s determination to go in search of the poor castaway on the burning mountain. I looked after him anxiously as he shot, swift as an arrow, over the water. “ Adieu, Fritz ; be cautious,” I

cried after him, "and return soon, my child, to your mother and us all." He kissed his hand to us, and then disappeared behind a promontory, and we went on our voyage without him.

My wife welcomed us back cordially, and was much pleased with the treasures we brought her; but nothing I could say to her would quiet her anxiety about Fritz, the real object of whose expedition I had not disclosed to her. When four days had passed and still there was no word of him, I also began to feel anxious, and proposed that we should take the pinnace, and go in search of him.

My wife also asked to accompany us. So, taking a good supply of provisions, we set sail. A strong land-breeze carried us out to sea so quickly that I had almost lost command of the vessel altogether, when we struck against a large block that seemed to be floating on the surface. At the same moment the whole mass lifted itself out of the water with a great noise, and, throwing up two immense spouts of water, plunged under the waves and disappeared. We had run against a cachalot. We were rather disconcerted by the neighbourhood of such a monster, and held ourselves ready to fire should it reappear, which it did a little distance off. Jack and Ernest fired, and the bullet took effect. The monster dived, but left a long train of blood behind him, and when again he rose to the surface, his strength

seemed far gone, and the waves afterwards threw up the immense carcass on the rocks at the entrance to the bay.

I was thanking my sons for delivering us from such a formidable enemy, when Jack suddenly exclaimed—

“A savage, father, a savage!”

Looking in the direction in which he pointed, I saw, a great distance off, a strangely formed canoe. The occupant of it evidently saw us, and darted behind a ridge of rocks. I told the boys to get the cannons ready, for I feared this might only be one of a horde of savages. When he reappeared I seized the speaking-trumpet and saluted him with some Malay words, which, however, he did not seem to understand. Jack next took the trumpet, and shouted one or two English phrases common among sailors. Immediately the stranger waved a branch as a signal of peace, and bounded lightly over the waves towards us.

The boys were pleased at the success of Jack's idea; but their delight knew no bounds, when in the black-stained savage, with plumed head, we recognised our lost Fritz.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CASTAWAY.

It was now necessary to explain to my wife the real object of Fritz's voyage, at the disclosure of which her surprise knew no bounds. The others, suspecting some mystery, overwhelmed him with questions. When they became a little calmer, I questioned him as to the success of his expedition.

"My expedition has been most successful," he answered, looking meaningly at me, "and I am glad, father, that I undertook it. As for my disguise, I assumed it out of prudence. I took you for Malay pirates, and I thought that in this dress I would more easily escape notice than in my European costume."

His mother came and entreated him to go and resume his natural colour and usual dress. He yielded to her wishes, and returning, said to me, "Father, I have discovered the isle of the burning mountain, and if you will consent, we will row to a little island near, where we will find——" Here I interrupted him, and, taking him aside, interrogated him about the person he was going to introduce to us. He satisfied me fully.

"Father," he said, "she will be a sister to us, and a daughter worthy of my mother and you."

“Come,” I said joyfully, “lead us to her.”

We were soon all aboard, and rowing quickly towards a little island at the extremity of the Bay of Pearls, where we landed. We followed Fritz into a small wood of palm-trees, where he halted, and fired a pistol. At this signal we saw, descending a large tree, a handsome but slightly built young sailor. I cannot describe our feelings at this moment. For ten years we had been shut out from the society of human beings, and now it was restored to us, in this young, fragile, child-like creature. We were quite stupified by this apparition. The younger boys could not believe their eyes, and the stranger, too, hesitated, uncertain as to how he should address us. Fritz, however, put an end to our embarrassment.

“My dear mother, father, and brothers, allow me to present to you Edward Montrose! Welcome him as a friend and brother into our family circle!”

“He is welcome!” we all answered earnestly; and I went forward and spoke to him in English, welcoming him as cordially as I could have done a long-lost child. He answered in a low tremulous voice, and then turned to my wife, as if claiming her special protection and love.

I saw by Fritz’s face that he wished to keep his brothers in the dark as to the real sex of our new friend; so I advised my wife to do the same, charging the boys to pay all possible attention to

the young stranger. We enjoyed a most savoury supper, enlivened by merry conversation, and then I proposed that we should retire for the night.

The stranger was preparing to mount a palm-tree, but my wife interfered and prepared a bed on board the pinnace. The boys had lighted a large fire on the beach, for security against intruders, and sat talking by it. The three younger ones questioned Fritz unceasingly as to how he had first conceived the idea of making a voyage to the burning mountain. He told them the story of the albatross and his expedition, and was so interested in the recital, that he forgot to substitute "Edward" for "Jenny," which was our new friend's true name.

"Ah, ah! master Fritz," they cried all at once; "you have betrayed yourself, and our new brother turns out to be a charming sister. Hurrah!"

Fritz was rather disconcerted, but returned an answer, laughing. "Dear me," said Francis, quite stupified, "I had almost forgot there were any women in the world but mamma."

The boys felt rather awkward next morning in meeting their adopted sister, whom they now called Jenny. The poor child, in her turn, coloured and looked down; but recovering her self-possession, she held out her hand frankly, and asked them to take her as a sister.

After breakfast we set out in search of the

body of the cachalot, which, when we had found, we took what of it we could carry away, and returning, embarked all that Jenny had left on the isle of the burning mountain.

With praiseworthy gratitude, she carried away every object that could remind her of her solitary life, and the special protection of Providence that had been vouchsafed her. Bidding adieu to the burning mountain, and naming the place where we had landed, Happy Bay, we steered for the Bay of Pearls, where we intended to make a short stay before returning to Rock House. We pitched our tent with the intention of remaining only long enough to allow of our gathering the pearls; but the discovery of what I thought was limestone decided me to continue a little longer, and prepare some of it in a furnace.

One evening, when Jenny had retired to rest, Fritz gave us the following history of his meeting with her:—"When I parted from you in the Bay of Pearls, the sea was calm; but I was no sooner beyond the bay than a tempest arose. My kajak being too slight to struggle against the violence of the waves, I thought it more prudent to let it drift. After three hours the sea became calmer, the sky more serene, and my kajak glided once more smoothly over the waves. But I could nowhere discover any land that I knew. The scenery round me was on a much grander scale than any I had seen before. The mountains

towered up to the clouds, and large majestic rivers came rolling down to the sea. I was very much tempted to sail up some of the rivers; but the recollection of the object of my search deterred me. The heat in the middle of the day, however, was so scorching, that I was glad to land and take shelter under the large trees. I had scarcely, however, jumped ashore, than I was glad to push off again, for I saw, a little way off, a herd of hippopotami; and as I rowed along the shore, I often saw lions, panthers, elephants, and other formidable animals, besides several immense serpents. After rowing several hours longer, the country seemed to be inhabited with more peaceful animals.

“ The silence of these coasts was only broken by the songs of beautiful birds. Here I landed, and after refreshing myself with a few oysters and other shell-fish, again retired for the night into my boat, which I anchored a little way from the shore. The night passed quietly, and early next morning I proceeded on my way. After some hours' hard rowing, feeling tired, I landed near a little wood which looked very inviting, and entering it, threw myself down on the soft green sward. My eagle, which I had liberated for a little, had flown away in search of prey, and before long returned with a little green parrot. While examining this beautiful bird, I was startled by a noise behind me, and turning quickly

round, I saw, not more than ten or twelve feet from me, an enormous tiger, whose eyes glared fiercely at me. A cold perspiration broke out all over my body, and I trembled so violently that I could scarcely hold my gun. The eagle, which seemed to understand my fear, pounced upon the creature's head, and with its beak and talons gave it so much to do in defending itself, that it thought no more of me. I immediately seized my pistols and shot it through the head, when, with a terrible roar, it fell quite dead. But my joy at this deliverance was mingled with deep regret; for one of the bullets had struck my eagle, and it lay dead beside the tiger. I could not help shedding tears over the faithful bird, which I lifted and carried to my kajak; and with a sad and discouraged heart, I rowed away. My heart was so heavy and desponding, that I was on the point of giving up my search as hopeless, and returning to Rock House, when, turning round a promontory, I came in sight of a little rocky island, from which rose a volume of reddish smoke.

“‘The isle of the burning mountain!’ I shouted, and all my enthusiasm returned.

“Hard rowing soon brought me to the island, where I landed, and climbed up the rocks to a point from which I could survey the landscape. Descrying a narrow path leading to some rocks a little way off, I followed it, and found myself in

front of a kind of cave, or grotto. What was my surprise to see it inhabited, not by some ferocious animal, as I had feared, but by a human being, who seemed to be fast asleep on a bed of moss. I stood rooted to the spot, and as much astonished as if all along this had not been the object of my search. I was glad to find that the stranger was so young and charming; indeed the sleeper's features were so infantile, that I could not believe she could be more than twelve or fourteen years old. She was clothed in the dress of a young sailor, but that did not deceive me. The little white hand, and long fair curls, as well as the delicately cut features, told me that I had found a sister of our own age, and a daughter to my mother and you.

“I could hear my heart beating against my breast, and a hundred confused thoughts hurried through my brain. I would have given worlds if my good mother had been in my place at that moment, to speak the first words of kindness to the poor young stranger. My hesitation was put an end to by a little bird which flew into the cave and alighted on the sleeper's forehead. She awoke, and raising herself and looking around, her large eyes rested on me. She uttered an exclamation of surprise and alarm; but, in a voice almost of supplication, I entreated her to be calm and fear nothing.

“‘Do not look so frightened,’ I said; ‘I do not

wish you any harm ; I am even more astonished than you.'

“ ‘ Who are you ? ’ she asked me. ‘ Where do you come from ? How came you here ? ’ Then rising, she added, ‘ Whoever you may be, if you are an honest man, you are welcome in this solitude. ’ The sound of her voice, her uneasy looks, and the extreme emotion which agitated her, all helped me to regain my composure.

“ ‘ I am come, ’ I said, ‘ in answer to the message you confided to the albatross. I am not English, as you may guess from my accent, but I am from a free country, and know the respect due to misfortune. A tempest, I suppose, has cast you upon this rock. A tempest cast me, with my father, mother, and three brothers, on a neighbouring island. For ten years we have been cut off from the rest of mankind. If you will follow me, I will conduct you to my friends. ’

“ After some moments' hesitation, during which I could read her conflicting feelings in her face, she came forward and held out her hand to me.

“ ‘ God bless you and yours, ’ she said, ‘ who have saved me from a life worse than death. If your mother and father will receive me, if your brothers will welcome me, I will be the most submissive and grateful of children, and the most devoted of sisters. ’

“ Our common misfortunes drew out our mutual confidence ; and Jenny—she told me that was

her name—and I were soon fast friends. She narrated how she had been thrown half dead on the rocky isle, and how, by what seems most miraculous courage and industry in a young girl, she has managed to live. The island is very different from ours; it is rocky and barren, and yields none of the delicious fruits and wholesome vegetables we have enjoyed. Her self-possession and unbounded trust in God are well worthy of admiration. My astonishment was extreme when she recounted to me the life she had led. She was soon completely at her ease, and asked me to aid her in preparing our supper, which I improved by some provisions I had brought with me; these to Jenny were a rare treat.

“‘I used to be an epicure,’ she said, laughing; ‘they spoiled me at home. Ah! my poor father! He little dreamed what fate was in store for his daughter.’

“At this allusion she burst into tears, and I wept with her, both from sympathy with her forlorn condition, and because I could not restrain sad thoughts about our own friendless life.

“‘My poor sister,’ I said, ‘God will yet restore or make up for all you have lost.’

“We passed an undisturbed night, I in my kajak, and she in the tree where she had established her dwelling, and which she climbed most nimbly. Next morning all my efforts to persuade her to accompany me to Rock House were in

vain; so I left her alone once more and came back, with the double object of getting a larger boat that would hold all she wished to carry away, and of bringing you to welcome her."

CHAPTER XLII.

JENNY'S HISTORY.

FRITZ'S recital was so interesting that we forgot how time was passing, and it was late when we retired; but next morning the boys again gathered round Fritz, entreating him to tell them what more he knew of Jenny's history. The account he gave us was as follows:—

Major Montrose, her father, belonged to the British army in India. He lost his wife when his daughter was not more than seven years old. He gave her almost a boy's education, having trained her to the use of firearms, the management of horses, &c., as well as in accomplishments more suitable to her sex.

About this time Major Montrose was nominated to the command of an expedition, and was obliged to leave his daughter to the care of a friend, who was captain of a man-of-war, and with his vessel was returning to Europe. Jenny's father in-

tended that during his absence she should visit a sister of his own in London, where, after a year, he would rejoin her. The first few days of her voyage were favourable, but a tempest soon rose, which threw the vessel on some rocks. It foundered, and went down at once. Jenny, with the captain and some sailors, jumped into a boat, which, however, was upset, and, as if almost by a miracle, she was washed ashore in a fainting condition on the isle of the burning mountain, where we found her; the others she supposes were drowned, for she never saw anything of them.

When she came to herself, the prospect before her was full of horror; death either from hunger or savage beasts seemed her inevitable fate. How thankful she felt then that her father had taught her to fish and use the bow and arrow. Happily, among a few other things, a case of sailors' clothes had been washed ashore with her, and several planks or spars of wood, some of which she used to construct a kind of hut, or rather nest, for herself, amongst the branches of a large palm-tree, and some she made into arrows, &c. One of her favourite pastimes was to catch and tame young birds; it was thus that the albatross was entrusted with her message, and knew to carry back to her Fritz's answer.

Such was the stranger's history. The affecting recital increased our interest in her; and her

extreme gratitude for every little attention or kindness endeared her still more to us. Her activity and good sense were a great help to us in whatever work we undertook. I had often cause to bless God for having sent us such a child.

Next day we weighed anchor and returned homewards. On our way we landed at Prospect Hill, and visited our live stock. Poor Jenny was delighted with everything she saw. Our cocks and hens, and the farm-like appearance of our establishment, called forth her most lively admiration. It was the first trace of a human habitation she had seen for two years.

Fritz and Francis, who had preceded us to Rock House, saluted us with cannon when we entered Safety Bay. We answered their salute by firing the small cannon of the pinnace. They met us in the kajak, and Fritz, as Governor of Rock House, invited us to do him the honour of partaking of the refreshments he had prepared; then, offering Jenny his arm, he led her towards the shady terrace which surrounded the grotto. Here we were surprised to find a most tastefully laid out table, groaning with savoury dishes and choice fruits, beautifully decorated with flowers, some of which were arranged so as to form the following words: "Welcome to our sister; welcome to our dwelling." It was quite an ovation. Jenny took her place between my wife and me, as the place of honour. Ernest and Jack sat

opposite, but Fritz and Francis refused to be seated at all. They performed the part of waiters very expertly, carving the meat, changing the plates, and pouring out the wine with great good grace. After dinner the boys led Jenny to all the different apartments in the grotto, with which she was very much pleased.

The following day all were early astir, for we intended an excursion to Falcon's Nest. We went on foot, except Jenny, at whose disposal Francis placed his buffalo. We found our tree dwelling rather dilapidated; but, after three days' labour, we made it very comfortable. Several heavy showers warned us of the approach of the rainy season, to which, much as we were accustomed to it, we always looked forward with sadness. This time, however, our long imprisonment was very much enlivened by the cheerful conversation and winning ways of our new friend. She became most attached to my wife, who, in her turn, could not have been fonder of her own child. Jenny had a very sweet voice, and quite a natural musical talent. Many an hour was whiled away listening to her beautiful songs. Never had the rainy season passed so quickly before.

CHAPTER XLIII.

CONCLUSION.

As soon as we could leave our prison, we resumed our various occupations. Jenny took great pleasure in the poultry. Ernest and Francis set out for Whale Island, to see if the storm had brought us anything new, promising to announce their arrival by firing two guns. My wife told me she would take a walk along the beach, and that Jack would follow her to Shell Cave, which we had so named from the beautiful shells we had gathered there; and Fritz and I busied ourselves with our gardens, which the wind had wasted.

Several hours elapsed, and neither my wife nor Jack appearing, I sent Fritz in search of them. In an incredibly short space he returned in the highest state of excitement. "Where is mother?" he cried, "Where is Jack. Are they not here?" As soon as he was calm enough, he gave me an account of what had alarmed him.

It appeared that on leaving me he saw very distinctly the footprints of his mother and Jack on the soft sand; but about the distance of two miles he was startled to see the prints of several feet, which on examination he saw were large

and evidently those of men. At this point he lost trace of those of his mother and brother, and ran forward where the track along the shore was distinctly marked. Turning round the shoulder of a huge rock, he came suddenly on two men, one like a clergyman, while a boat was beached on the shore, and another was rowing rapidly away in the distance. Fritz rushed at once to the conclusion that his mother and brother had been kidnapped, and at first he thought of avenging himself on those who stood before him, but who seemed no less surprised than he was. However, he changed his purpose, and kneeling down to the clergyman, and seizing his hand, cried, "Reverend man, you have seen my brother Jack, perhaps my mother too. You know where they are ; oh ! are they living ?"

Both the minister and his companion, it seems, had endeavoured to soothe him, and assured him they had seen no one ; but, pointing to the distant boat, Fritz asked them if they were not there. He hardly knew what they said, and thought, from their manner, they could not be trusted ; so, starting to his feet, he rushed home to tell me what he had seen.

Just at this moment my wife with Jack were seen quietly approaching us from the other side of the house, and were no less astonished than we were at Fritz's story, for they had seen no one. While we were considering what to do, two

shots were heard from Whale Island, which were answered by another report from a distance. At first we thought it must be an echo, but a second report, and afterwards a third and a fourth, showed our mistake. There was evidently a large ship in our neighbourhood, and those Fritz had seen belonged to it.

In a little while Ernest and Francis made their appearance, crying, "Oh, father, did you hear anything? Did you not hear the report of cannon?"

We told him we had, and what Fritz had seen. They told us they had been looking seaward, and imagined they saw two boats, one much nearer than the other. This let us know it was of no use to go in search of the clergyman and his companion. It was decided that next day we should all embark on board the pinnace and proceed, in great state, to the vessel, which, from the boom of the cannon, we saw was only a short distance from us. We got out all our finest attire, which was somewhat nautical and perhaps old-fashioned, but was of excellent quality; and we loaded our boat with the finest fruits and productions of our island, as a present.

A light breeze soon carried us round the point, where we beheld, anchored in the bay, a large three-masted vessel, carrying the British flag, which we at once saluted by the firing of our cannon. Our salute was acknowledged, and we

saw the whole shrouds crowded with men, who gave us a loud cheer as we drew close up to the ship. "There is the clergyman," cried Fritz, pointing to a gentleman in black, "and that beside him, who I think must be the captain, is his companion." We were invited to come on board, and had refreshments presented us in the cabin; and we placed the fresh fruits and provisions we brought with us at the disposal of the captain.

I told him our history briefly, and then spoke to him of Jenny, asking him if he knew her father, Major Montrose. He had heard that he had landed safely at Portsmouth, and believed he was now in London. He told us that his own name was Littlestone, and the vessel he commanded was "La Licorne."

The captain introduced to us the family of a Mr Wolton—a distinguished marine engineer, passengers in "La Licorne." Mr Wolton's health had suffered very much by the sea voyage. We offered them our grotto until the ship sailed, which we assured them they would find very comfortable. They accepted it gratefully, and we all set out for it at once.

The strangers were struck with astonishment and admiration when they saw our establishment. Every new sight called forth another exclamation of surprise.

During the evening my wife and I consulted seriously as to whether or not we should avail

ourselves of this opportunity of returning home to Europe. After much consideration, we decided to remain in our adopted country, to which we had become so much attached, we could not bear the thought of leaving it. We determined, however, that our decision should not be allowed to influence the boys, though we felt that to part from any of them would break our hearts.

Jenny, ever since she heard of her father's return to England, had expressed the most ardent longing to rejoin him; and I knew that her departure would be a great trial to Fritz, who, I could perceive, was warmly attached to her, and she not less so to him.

The captain and officers of the vessel breakfasted with us next morning. During the repast Mr Wolton said to me, "I have a plan to propose to you. The quiet life you lead here pleases me; the beautiful scenery around revives me; I am tired of European life, and would like to establish myself on a corner of this beautiful island, if you will allow me."

This announcement was received by all with extreme joy. We all expressed to Mr Wolton the happiness it would give us if he and his family would settle amongst us; and I took the opportunity to announce the determination my wife and I had come to, that we would spend the remainder of our days in New Switzerland, as we had named our island.

"Prosperity to New Switzerland," cried all, filling their calabash wine cups.

"And to those who are coming to live with us," cried the three younger boys.

I guessed the reason of Fritz's silence. I saw that he wished to accompany Jenny.

"Mother, my own dear mother," he said at last, "I will not leave you; no, never; I will die with you."

"The captain," I replied, "assures me he was commissioned to discover a safe harbour in these islands, and has been successful; so that there will soon be ready communication with Britain. Jenny must go to her father. We cannot keep her here; but your mother and I see no reason why you should not go with her, and return again within a year.

It was not difficult to make the necessary arrangements with the captain; and after a few days we saw the ship sail, taking Fritz and Jenny away. The blank caused by their departure was never filled up; our beautiful island seemed converted into a desert; but in another year they returned. Jenny's father had died in London two months before her arrival, leaving her a very small fortune; and without waiting our consent, which they knew could not be denied, they were married in England.

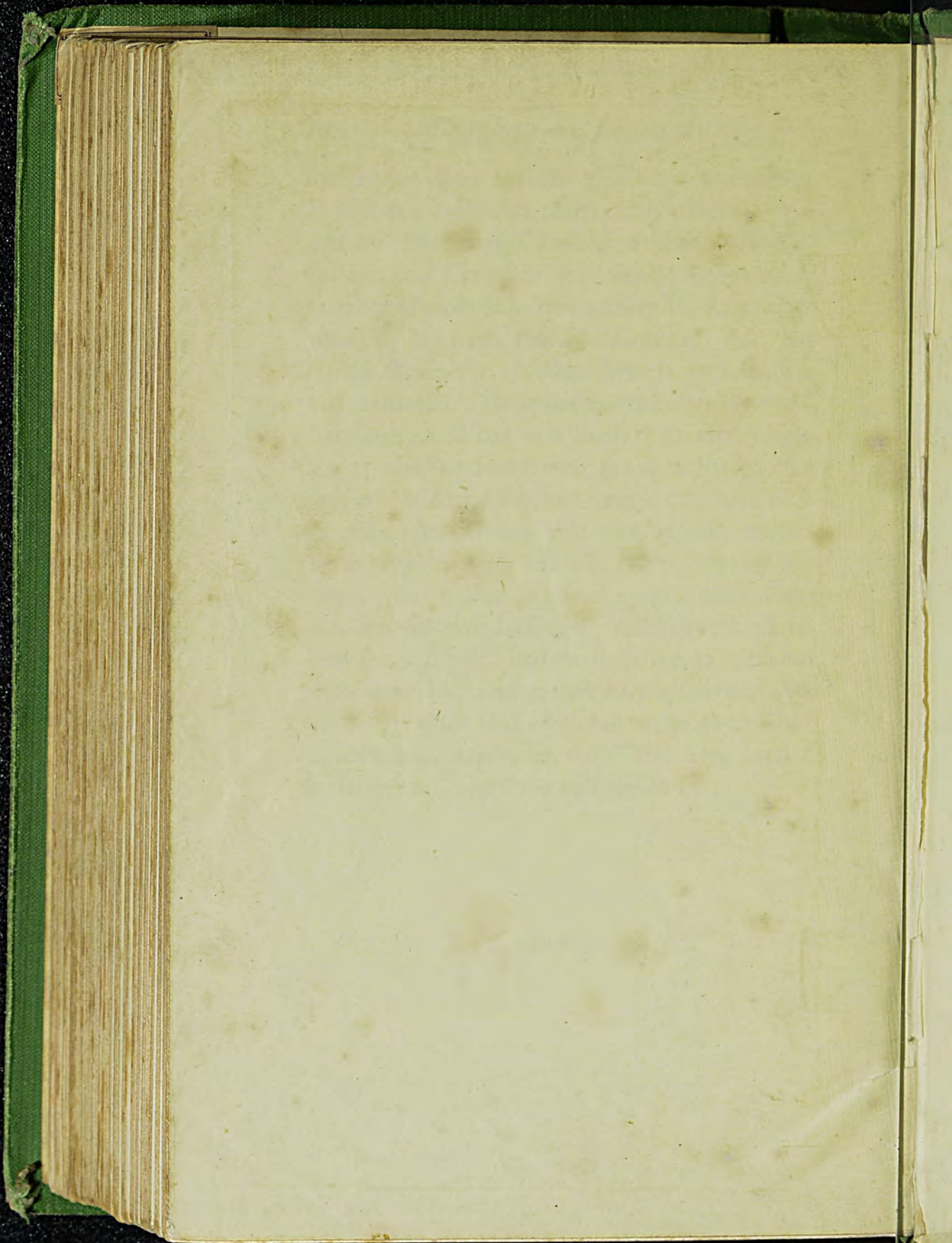
Ten years have elapsed, and our island now contains two thousand inhabitants. The report of

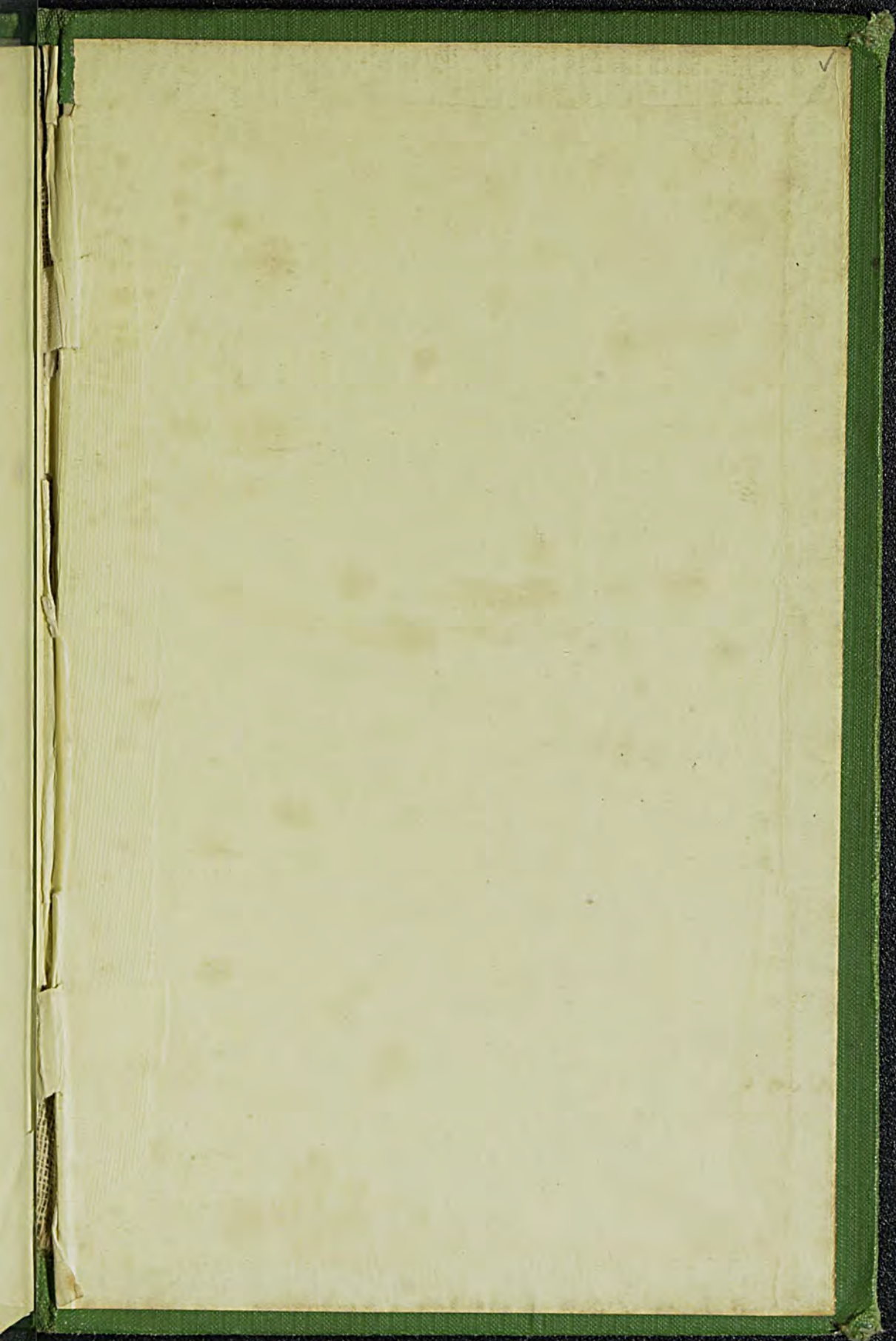
our riches soon brought numbers of colonists. Ernest and Jack have married Mr Wolton's two amiable daughters. Jack is a successful ship-builder, and Ernest is still the philosopher,—a member of more than one society in Europe, to which he has made valuable contributions. The "little Francis" of other days is captain of a merchantman. He is not married. "My vocation is that of son and uncle," he says, laughingly; and he loads with presents his mother and his little nephews and nieces, by whom he is adored. As for my wife and myself, we are perhaps getting old, but that is the least of our cares. Our welfare is bound up with that of our children and grandchildren; and they are all industrious, happy, and well-behaved; satisfied with their lot, and universally esteemed. We are ready, when God shall call us, to go to Him; death has no terrors for those who have trusted in His mercy, and lived and served Him.

THE END.

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SWEET'S

FAMILY
ROBINSON