

# SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

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THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



# THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

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ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN GERMAN BY  
JOHANN RUDOLF WYSS (1781-1830)

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RETOLD FOR AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY E. M. BENDOVNA

*Johann D. Wyss.*



NEW YORK

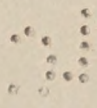
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## ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
“All being ready, we cast off and moved away from the wreck.” . . . . .	5
“I drew up the ladder and we retired for the night.”	28
“He arose with a bound and attempted to dash forward.”	80



## PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

In 1913 "The Swiss Family Robinson" will be one hundred years old. The gentle Swiss teacher who wrote this classic story lived to see it translated into twenty-four different languages. He never dreamed of such success. As a professor of the academy in his native town of Berlin he had taken delight in weaving into a story many interesting and useful lessons for the instruction of the young. The pleasure boys and girls found in "Robinson Crusoe" gave him the hint. His story has become a classic which in popularity has outrun even Defoe's master work. Several generations of young people have prized it as a favorite and the interest in it is as keen as ever.

The present edition was prepared by a teacher who has had many years of experience with young Americans and who is skilled in the art of telling stories. The original text has been carefully revised. All the best editions published in the English language have been consulted. We feel confident that in its present form the story will more deeply appeal to the young people of to-day than any other edition now on the market. It is especially adapted for the purpose of supplementary reading in the schools. The illustrations by Miss Bendovna add much to the pleasure boys and girls will find in this book.

A. S. BARNES & COMPANY.

*New York City, 1907.*



# The Swiss Family Robinson

## CHAPTER I.

**W**E had been tempest-tossed for many days. Six times the darkness had closed over a wild and terrific scene, and returning light as often brought but renewed distress. The raging storm had increased in fury, until on the seventh day all hope was lost. The riven masts had gone by the board, leaks had been sprung in every direction, and the water, which rushed in, gained upon us rapidly.

Instead of reckless oaths, the seamen now uttered frantic cries to God for mercy, mingled with strange and often ludicrous vows, to be performed should they be delivered from death.

Amid the roar of the thundering waves I suddenly heard the cry of "Land, land!" At the same instant the ship struck with a frightful shock, which threw everyone to the deck, and seemed to threaten her immediate destruction.

Then the voice of the captain was heard above the tumult, shouting, "Lower away the boats! We are lost!"

"Lost!" I exclaimed, and the word went like a dagger to my heart. When I saw my children's terror, I quickly

composed myself, and called out cheerfully, "Take courage, my boys! we are all above water yet. There is the land not far off; let us do our best to reach it. You know God helps those that help themselves!" With that, I left them and went on deck. What was my horror when through the foam and spray I beheld the only remaining boat leave the ship, the last of the seamen spring into her and push off, regardless of my cries and entreaties that we might be allowed to share their slender chance of preserving their lives. My voice was drowned in the howling of the blast; and even had the crew wished it, the return of the boat was impossible.

As I cast my eyes despairingly around, I became gradually aware that our position was by no means hopeless, inasmuch as the stern of the ship containing our cabin was jammed between two high rocks, and was partly raised from among the breakers which dashed the forepart to pieces. As the clouds of mist and rain drove past, I could make out, through rents in the vaporous curtain, a line of rocky coast and, rugged as it was, my heart bounded toward it as a sign of help in the hour of need.

Night drew on apace. The storm was as fierce as ever. At intervals we were startled by crashes announcing further damage to our unfortunate ship. Throughout the night my wife and I maintained our prayerful watch, dreading at every fresh sound some fatal change in the position of the wreck.

At length the faint dawn of day appeared. The long weary night was over. With thankful hearts we perceived that the gale had begun to moderate. Blue sky was above us, and the lovely hues of sunrise adorned the eastern horizon.

I aroused the boys, and we assembled on the remaining portion of the deck.

"The sea will soon be calm enough for swimming," said my eldest son, Fritz.

"That would be well enough for you," exclaimed Ernest, "but think of mother and the rest of us! Why not build a raft and all get on shore together?"

"Can't we each get into a big tub and float there?" suggested Jack. "I have often sailed splendidly like that round the pond at home."

"My child, you have hit on a capital idea," said I. "Now, Ernest, let me have your tools, nails, saws, augers, and all; and then make haste to collect any tubs you can find!"

We very soon found four large casks, made of sound wood, and strongly bound with iron hoops; they were floating with many other things in the water in the hold, but we managed to fish them out, and drag them to a suitable place for launching them. They were exactly what I wanted, and I succeeded in sawing them across the middle.

My eight tubs now stood ranged in a row near the water's edge. Next I procured a long, thin plank, on which my tubs could be fixed. The two ends of this I bent upward so as to form a keel. Two other planks were nailed along the sides of the tubs. As these were also flexible, they were brought to a point at each end, and all firmly secured and nailed together. I felt satisfied that in smooth water this craft would be perfectly trustworthy.

I now made fast a long rope to the stern of our boat, attaching the other end to a beam. Then placing rollers under it, we began to push, and soon our gallant craft was safely launched. So swiftly, indeed, did she glide into the water, that, but for the rope, she would have passed beyond our reach. The boys wished to jump in directly. But something more was required to make her perfectly safe. So I contrived out-riggers to preserve the balance,

by nailing long ropes across at the stem and stern, and fixing empty casks at the ends of each.

I persuaded my wife (not without considerable difficulty) to put on a sailor's suit, assuring her that she would find it much more comfortable and convenient for all she would have to go through.

With a hearty prayer for God's blessing, we now began to take our seats, each in his tub. Just then we heard the cocks begin to crow, as though to reproach us for deserting them. "Why should not the fowls go with us!" exclaimed I. "If we find no food for them, they can be food for us!" Ten hens and a couple of cocks were accordingly placed in one of the tubs, and secured with some wire-netting over them.

All being ready, we cast off, and moved away from the wreck. My good brave wife sat in the first compartment of the boat; next her was Franz, a pretty little boy, nearly eight years old. Then came our bold but thoughtless Jack. Next came Ernest, my second son, intelligent, well-formed, and rather indolent. I myself, the anxious, loving father, stood in the stern, endeavoring to guide the raft with its precious burden to a safe landing-place.

The elder boys took the oars; everyone wore a float belt, and had something useful close to him in case of being thrown into the water.

We had left two dogs, Turk and Juno, on the wreck. They were both large mastiffs, and we did not care to have their additional weight on board our craft. When they saw us apparently deserting them, they set up a piteous howl and sprang into the sea. They followed us, and, occasionally resting their forepaws on the out-riggers, kept up with us very well.

By-and-by we began to perceive that, between and beyond the cliffs, there were trees and green grass. By means





All being ready, we cast off and moved away from the wreck.

of a glass I made out that at some distance to the left the coast was inviting. A strong current, however, carried us directly towards frowning rocks. Presently I observed an opening, where a stream flowed into the sea. I steered into the creek, and we found ourselves in a small bay or inlet, where the water was perfectly smooth and of moderate depth. The ground sloped gently upward from the low banks to the cliffs, leaving a small plain, on which it was easy for us to land.

As soon as we could gather our children around us on dry land, we knelt to offer thanks and praise for our merciful escape, and with full hearts we commended ourselves to God's good keeping for the time to come.

All hands then briskly fell to the work of unloading, and oh, how rich we felt ourselves as we did so! The poultry we left at liberty to forage for themselves, and set about finding a suitable place to erect a tent in which to pass the night. This we speedily did. We thrust a long spar into a hole in the rock, and supporting the other end by a pole firmly planted in the ground, we formed a framework, over which we stretched the sailcloth we had brought. Besides fastening this down with pegs, we placed our heavy chest and boxes on the border of the canvas, and arranged hooks so as to be able to close up the entrance during the night.

When this was accomplished the boys ran to collect moss and grass, to spread in the tent for our bed, while I arranged a fireplace with some large flat stones. Dry twigs and seaweed were soon in a blaze on the hearth; I filled our iron pot with water, and giving my wife several cans of condensed soup, she established herself as our cook, with little Franz to help her.

Fritz meanwhile cleaned and loaded our two guns; Ernest sauntered down to the beach, and Jack scrambled among the rocks, searching for shellfish.

Presently Jack ran triumphantly toward the tent. "Mother mother! a lobster, Ernest! look here, Franz! mind, he'll bite you!" All came crowding round Jack and his prize, wondering at its unusual size.

"I, too, found something very good to eat," said Ernest, "only I could not get at them without wetting my feet. They were oysters, not mussels."

"Be good enough, my philosophical young friend, to fetch a few of these oysters in time for our next meal," said I; "we must all exert ourselves, Ernest, for the common good. Now please never let me hear you object to wetting your feet. See how quickly the sun has dried Jack and me."

"I can bring some salt at the same time," said Ernest, "I remarked a good deal lying in the crevices of the rocks. I concluded it was produced by the evaporation of sea-water in the sun."

"Extremely probable, learned sir," cried I; "but if you had brought a bagful of this good salt instead of merely speculating so profoundly on the subject, it would have been more to the purpose. Run and fetch some directly."

It proved to be salt, sure enough, although so impure that it seemed useless, till my wife dissolved and strained it, when it became fit to put in the soup

"How are we to eat our soup?" I asked; "we have neither plates nor spoons, and we can scarcely lift the boiling pot to our mouths."

"Oh, for a few cocoanut-shells!" sighed Ernest.

"Oh, for a half-a-dozen plates and as many silver spoons!" rejoined I, smiling. "Off with you, my boys; get the oysters, and clean out a few shells."

Jack was away and up to his knees in the water in a moment, detaching the oysters. Ernest followed more leisurely, and, still unwilling to wet his feet, stood by the

margin of the pool and gathered in his handkerchief the oysters his brother threw him.

Our spoons were now ready, and we gathered round the pot and dipped them in, not, however, without sundry scalded fingers. When dinner was over, the poultry, which had been straying to some little distance, gathered round us, and began to pick up the crumbs of biscuit which had fallen during our repast. My wife hereupon drew from a large mysterious bag which she had brought with her, some handfuls of oats, peas, and other grain, and with them began to feed the poultry. At the same time she showed me seeds of various vegetables.

“That was very thoughtful of you, my dear,” said I; “but pray be careful of what will be of such value to us. We can bring plenty of damaged biscuits from the wreck, which will suit the fowls very well indeed.”

By this time the sun was sinking beneath the horizon. The pigeons flew up to the crevices in rocks, the fowls perched themselves on our tent-pole, and the ducks and geese waddled off, cackling and quacking, to the marshy margin of the river. We, too, were ready for repose, and having loaded our guns and offered up our prayers to God, we commended ourselves to His protecting care, and closed our tent, and lay down to rest.

## CHAPTER II.

**T**HE voice of our vigilant cook roused me at daybreak, and I then awaked my wife, that in the quiet interval while yet our children slept, we might take counsel together on our situation and prospects. It was plain to both of us that we should ascertain, if possible, the fate of our late companions, and then examine into the nature and resources of the country on which we were stranded.

As soon as we had breakfasted Fritz and I started on an expedition, while my wife remained near our landing-place with the three younger boys.

We found that the banks of the stream were on both sides so rocky that we could get down to the water by only one narrow passage. There was no corresponding path on the other side. Fritz and I pursued our way up the stream until we reached a point where the waters fell from a considerable height in a cascade, and where several large rocks lay half covered by the water; by means of these we succeeded in crossing the stream in safety. We thus had the sea on our left, and a long line of rocky heights, here and there adorned with clumps of trees, stretching away inland to the right. From this point we again turned to the open seashore. Here the scene which presented itself was delightful. A background of hills, the green waving grass, the pleasant groups of trees stretching here and there to the

very water's edge, formed a lovely prospect. On the smooth sand we searched carefully for any trace of our hapless companions, but not the mark of a footstep could we find.

Continuing our way through a thicket, which was so densely overgrown with lianes that we had to clear a passage with our hatchets, we again emerged on the seashore beyond, and found an open view, the forest sweeping inland, while on the space before us stood at intervals single trees of remarkable appearance.

These at once attracted Fritz's observant eye, and he pointed to them, exclaiming:

"Oh, what absurd-looking trees, father! See what strange bumps there are on the trunks."

We approached to examine them, and I recognised them as calabash trees, the fruit of which grows in this curious way on the stems and is a species of gourd, from the hard rind of which bowls, spoons, and bottles can be made. I took from my pocket a piece of string, which I tied tightly round a gourd, as near one end of it as I could. Then I tapped the string with the back of my knife, and it penetrated the outer shell. When this was accomplished, I tied the string yet tighter. Drawing the ends with all my might, the gourd fell, divided exactly as I wished.

"That is very clever," cried Fritz. "Where did you learn that, father?"

"It is a plan which the negroes use," I replied, as I have learned from reading books of travel."

I filled the gourds with sand, and left them to dry; marking the spot that we might return for them on our way back.

For three hours or more we pushed forward. We kept a sharp look-out on either side for any trace of our companions, until we reached a bold promontory, stretching some way into the sea. I knew that from its rocky sum-

mits we should obtain a good and comprehensive view of the surrounding country. We reached the top with little difficulty. The beautiful landscape was carefully surveyed, but we failed to see the slightest sign or trace of human beings. Before us stretched a wide and lovely bay, fringed with yellow sands. The scene inland was no less beautiful. Yet Fritz and I both felt a shade of loneliness stealing over us as we gazed on its utter solitude.

“Cheer up, Fritz, my boy,” said I presently. “Remember that we chose a settler’s life long ago, before we left our own dear country. We certainly did not expect to be so entirely alone—but what matters a few people, more or less? With God’s help, let us endeavor to live here contentedly, thankful that we were not cast upon some bare and inhospitable island.”

We descended the hill and made for a clump of palm trees, which we saw at a little distance. To reach this, we had to pass through a dense thicket of reeds, no pleasant or easy task. I feared at every step that we might tread on some venomous snake. Sending the dog Turk in advance, I cut one of the reeds, thinking it would be a more useful weapon against a reptile than my gun. I had carried it but a little way, when I noticed a little juice exuding from one end. I tasted it, and at once knew that I was standing amongst sugar-canes.

“Oh, father, sugar-canes! Oh, how delicious, how delightful! Do let us take a lot home to mother,” said Fritz, sucking eagerly at the cane.

“Gently, there,” said I, “moderation in all things, remember. Cut some to take home if you like, only don’t take more than you can conveniently carry.”

In spite of my warning, my son cut a dozen or more of the largest canes, and stripping them of their leaves, carried them under his arm. We then pushed through the cane-

brake, and reached the clump of palms for which we had been making. As we entered it a troop of monkeys, who had been disporting themselves on the ground, sprang up, chattering and grimacing, and before we could clearly distinguish them were at the very top of the trees.

Fritz was so provoked that he raised his gun and would have shot one of the poor beasts.

“Stay,” cried I; “never take the life of an animal needlessly. A live monkey up in that tree is of more use to us than a dozen dead ones at our feet, as I will show you.”

Saying this, I gathered a handful of small stones, and threw them up toward the apes. Influenced by their instinctive mania for imitation, they instantly seized all the cocoanuts within their reach, and sent a perfect hail of them down upon us.

Fritz was delighted with my stratagem, and rushing forward picked up some of the finest of the nuts. We drank the milk they contained, drawing it through the holes which I pierced, and then, splitting the nuts open with the hatchet, ate the cream which lined their shells. I slung a couple of the nuts over my shoulder, Fritz having resumed his burden, and we began our homeward march.

Just as we had passed through the grove in which we had breakfasted, Turk suddenly darted away from us and sprang furiously among a group of monkeys which were gambolling playfully on the turf at a little distance from the trees. They were taken by surprise completely, and the dog, now really ravenous from hunger, had seized and was fiercely tearing one to pieces before we could approach the spot.

His luckless victim was the mother of a tiny little monkey, which, being on her back when the dog flew at her, hindered her flight. The little creature attempted to hide among the grass, and in trembling fear watched its mother. When



Fritz perceived Turk's bloodthirsty design, he rushed at once to the rescue. He flung away all he was carrying, and lost his hat in his haste. No sooner did the young monkey catch sight of him, than at one bound it was on his shoulders, and holding fast by his thick curly hair, it firmly kept its seat in spite of all he could do to dislodge it. He screamed and plunged about as he endeavored to shake or pull the creature off, but all in vain; it only clung the closer to his neck, making the most absurd grimaces.

At last, by coaxing the monkey, offering it a bit of biscuit, and gradually disentangling its small sinewy paws from the curls it grasped so tightly, I managed to release poor Fritz, who then looked with interest at the baby ape, no bigger than a kitten, as it lay in my arms.

"What a jolly little fellow it is!" exclaimed he, "do let me try to rear it, father. I dare say cocoanut milk would do until we can bring the cow and the goats from the wreck. If he lives he may be useful to us. I believe monkeys instinctively know what fruits are wholesome and what are poisonous."

"Well," said I, "let the little orphan be yours. You bravely and kindly exerted yourself to save the mother's life; now you must train her child carefully. Unless you do so its natural instinct will prove mischievous instead of useful to us."

Ere long we found ourselves on the rocky margin of the stream and close to the rest of our party. We were quickly on the other side, and, full of joy and affection, our happy party was once more united.

When the excitement subsided a little, I was able to say words with a chance of being listened to. "I am truly thankful to see you all safe and well. Thank God, our expedition has been very satisfactory, except that we have entirely failed to discover any trace of our shipmates."

“If it be the will of God,” said my wife, “to leave us alone on this solitary place, let us be content, and rejoice that we are all together in safety.”

“Now we want to hear all your adventures, and let us relieve you of your burdens,” added she, and took my game bag.

Jack shouldered my gun, Ernest took the cocoanuts, and little Franz carried the gourds. Fritz distributed the sugar-canes amongst his brothers, and handing Ernest his gun, put the monkey on Turk’s back.

My wife, as a prudent housekeeper, was no less delighted than the children with these discoveries. The sight of the dishes pleased her greatly. She longed to see us eat once more like civilized beings. We went into the kitchen and there found preparations for a truly sumptuous meal. Two forked sticks were planted in the ground on either side of the fire; on these rested a rod from which hung several tempting looking fish. Opposite them hung a goose from a similar contrivance, slowly roasting while the gravy dropped into a large shell placed beneath it. In the center sat the great pot, from which issued the smell of a most delicious soup. To crown this splendid array, stood an open hogshead full of Dutch cheese.

“This is not one of our geese,” my wife said, “but a wild bird Ernest killed.”

“Yes,” said Ernest, “It is a penguin, I think; it let me get quite close, so that I knocked it on the head with a stick. Here are its head and feet, which I preserved to show you. The bill is, you see, narrow and curved downward, and the feet are webbed. Do you not think it must have been a penguin?”

“I have little doubt on the matter, my boy,” and I was about to make a few remarks on the habits of this bird when my wife interrupted me and begged us to come to

dinner, and continue our natural history conversation at some future time.

The sun was now rapidly sinking behind the horizon. The poultry, retiring for the night, warned us that we must follow their example. Having offered up our prayers we lay down on our beds, the monkey crouched down between Jack and Fritz, and we were all soon fast asleep.

We did not, however, long enjoy this repose. A loud barking from our dogs, who were on guard outside the tent, awakened us, and the fluttering and cackling of our poultry warned us that a foe was approaching. Fritz and I sprang up, and seizing our guns rushed out. There we found a desperate combat going on. Our gallant dogs, surrounded by a dozen or more jackals, were fighting bravely. Four of their opponents lay dead, but the others were in no way deterred by the fate of their comrades. Fritz and I, however, sent bullets through the heads of a couple more, and the rest galloped off. Fritz wished to save one of the jackals that he might be able to show it to his brothers in the morning. He dragged the one that he had shot near the tent and concealed it. Then we returned to our beds at once.

Soundly and peacefully we slept until cock-crow next morning, when my wife and I awoke, and began to discuss the business of the day.

“It seems absolutely necessary, my dear wife,” I began, “to return at once to the wreck while the sea is yet calm. We ought to save the poor animals that were left behind, and bring on shore many articles of infinite value to us. If we do not recover them now, we may finally lose them entirely. At the same time I feel that I ought not to leave you in such an insecure shelter as this tent.”

“Return to the wreck by all means,” replied my wife, cheerfully. “Patience, order, and perseverance will help

us through all our work. Come, let us wake up the children, and set to work without delay."

They were soon aroused, and Fritz overcoming his drowsiness before the others, ran out for his jackal; it was cold and stiff from the night air, and he placed it on the legs before the tent in a most life-like attitude, and stood by to watch the effect upon the family.

"A yellow dog!" cried Franz.

"A wolf!" exclaimed Jack.

"It is a striped fox," said Ernest.

"Hallo," said Fritz. "The greatest men may make mistakes. Our Professor does not know a jackal when he sees one."

"But really," continued Ernest, examining the animal, "I think it is a fox."

"Very well," retorted Fritz, "no doubt you know better than your father. He thinks it is a jackal."

"Come, boys," said I, "no more of this quarreling; you are none of you very far wrong, for the jackal partakes of the nature of all three, dog, wolf, and fox."

The monkey had come out on Jack's shoulder, but no sooner did it catch sight of the jackal, than it fled precipitately back into the tent, and hid itself in a heap of moss until nothing was visible but the tip of its little nose. Jack soothed and comforted the frightened little animal, and I then summoned them all in to prayers, soon after which we began our breakfast. While we were thus employed, I noticed that the two dogs were lying unusually quiet by my side; the faithful animals had not escaped unhurt from their late combat, but had received several deep and painful wounds, especially about the neck. The dogs began to lick each other on the places which they could not reach with their own tongues, and my wife carefully dressed the wounds with butter, of which we had a hogshead.

A sudden thought now struck Ernest, and he wisely remarked, that if we were able to make spiked collars for the dogs, they would escape such dangerous wounds in the future. "Oh, yes!" exclaimed Jack, "and I will make them."

I begged the party who were to remain on shore to keep together as much as possible. After I had arranged a set of signals with my wife, that we might exchange communications, I asked a blessing on our enterprise. I erected a signal post. While Fritz was making preparations for our departure, I hoisted a strip of sailcloth as a flag. This flag was to remain hoisted so long as all was well on shore, but should our return be desired, three shots were to be fired and the flag lowered.

We had not got far from the shore, when I perceived that a current from the river set in directly for the vessel. I succeeded in steering the boat into the favorable stream, which carried us nearly three-fourths of our passage with little or no trouble to ourselves. Then, by dint of hard pulling, we accomplished the whole distance. Entering through the breach, we gladly made fast our boat and stepped on board.

Our first care was to see the animals, who greeted us with joy—lowing, bellowing, and bleating as we approached; not that the poor beasts were hungry, but they were apparently pleased by the mere sight of human beings. Fritz then placed his monkey by one of the goats, and the little animal immediately sucked the milk with evident relish, chattering and grinning all the while. "Now," said I, "we have plenty to do; where shall we begin?"

"Let us fix a mast and sail to our boat," answered Fritz; "for the current which brought us out will not take us back, whereas the fresh breeze we met would help us immensely had we but a sail."

"Capital thought," I replied; "let us set to work at once."

I chose a stout spar to serve as a mast. Next we made a hole in a plank and nailed it across one of the tubs. With the help of a rope and a couple of blocks, we fastened the mast and secured it with stays. Then we discovered a lug-sail, which had belonged to one of the ships boats. This we hoisted. Our craft was now ready to sail.

I contrived a rudder, that I might be able to steer the boat. I knew that an oar would serve the purpose, but it was cumbrous and inconvenient. While I was thus employed, Fritz examined the shore with his glass and soon announced that the flag was flying and all was well.

So much time had now slipped away that we found that we could not return that night, as I had wished. We signalled our intention of remaining on board, and then spent the rest of our time in taking out the stones we had placed in the boat for ballast, and stowed in the place heavy articles of value to us.

The ship had sailed for the purpose of supplying a young colony, and she had therefore on board every conceivable article we could desire in our present situation. Our only difficulty, indeed, was to make a wise selection.

Night drew on, and a large fire, lighted by those on shore, showed us that all was well. We replied by hoisting four ship's lanterns, and two shots announced to us that our signal was perceived; then, with a heartfelt prayer for the safety of our dear ones on shore, we retired to our boat, and Fritz, at all events, was soon sound asleep.

At daybreak Fritz and I arose and went on deck. I brought the telescope to bear upon the shore, and with pleasure saw the flag still waving in the morning breeze. While I kept the glass directed to the land, I saw the door of the tent open, and my wife appear and look steadfastly toward us.

"Fritz," I said, "I am not now in such haste to get back. I begin to feel compassion for all these poor

beasts. I wish we could devise some means for getting them on shore.

"Well," said Fritz, "I can think of nothing else, unless, indeed, we make them such swimming belts as you made for the children."

"Really, my boy, that idea is worth having. I am not joking," I continued, as I saw him smile; "we may get every one of the animals ashore in that way."

I caught a fine sheep, and first fastened a broad piece of linen round its belly, and to this attached some corks and empty tins; then, with Fritz's help, I flung the animal into the sea—it sank, but a moment afterward rose and floated famously. The ass, cow, sheep, and goats followed one after the other. We fastened to the horns or neck of each animal a cord with a float attached to the end, and now embarking, we gathered up these floats, set sail, and steered for shore, drawing our herd after us. Steering the boat to a convenient landing-place, I cast off the ropes which secured the animals, and let them get ashore as best they might.

There was no sign of my wife or children when we stepped on land, but a few moments afterward they appeared, and with a shout of joy ran toward us. We were thankful to be once more united, and proceeded to release our herd from their swimming belts, which though so useful in the water, were exceedingly inconvenient on shore.

Fritz, Ernest, and I began the work of unloading our craft. Jack seeing that the poor donkey was still encumbered with his swimming belt, tried to free him from it. "I have not been idle all day," he said; "look here!" and he pointed to a belt round his waist. It was a broad belt of yellow hair, in which he had stuck a couple of pistols and a knife. "And see," he added, "what I have made for the dogs. Here, Juno! Turk!" The dogs came bounding up at his call, and I saw that they were each supplied with a collar

of the same skin, in which were fastened nails, which bristled round their necks in a most formidable manner.

“Capital! capital, my boy,” said I, “but where did you get your materials, and who helped you?”

“Except in cutting the skin,” said my wife, “he had no assistance. As for the materials, Fritz’s jackal supplied us with the skin, and the needles and thread come out of my wonderful bag.”

When all was accomplished we started for our tent, and I said, “Fritz, let us have a Westphalian ham.”

“Ernest,” said my wife, smiling, “let us see if we cannot conjure up some eggs.”

Fritz got out a splendid ham for our cargo, and carried it triumphantly to his mother, while Ernest set before me a dozen white balls with parchment-like coverings.

“Turtles’ eggs!” said I. “Well done, Ernest!”

The meal to which we sat down that evening was quite unlike the first supper we had there enjoyed. My wife had improvised a table of a board laid on two casks; on this was spread a white damask tablecloth, on which were placed knives, forks, spoons, and plates for each person. First appeared a tureen of good soup which was followed by a capital omelette. Then we had slices of ham. Some Dutch cheese, butter, and biscuits, completed the repast.



### CHAPTER III.

“**I** WILL spare you a description,” said my wife, “of our first day’s occupations. Truth to tell, I spent the time chiefly in anxious thought and watching your progress and signals. I rose very early this morning, and began to consider how our position could be improved. ‘For it is perfectly impossible,’ said I to myself, ‘to live much longer where we are now. The sun beats burningly the livelong day on this bare rocky spot. Our only shelter is this poor tent, beneath the canvas of which the heat is even more oppressive than on the open shore. Among those delightful woods and groves where Fritz and his father saw so many charming things, I feel sure there must be some little retreat which we could establish ourselves comfortably. There must be, I am sure, and I will find it.’”

“My scheme of a journey was agreed to joyously by my young companions. Preparations were instantly set on foot. Weapons and provisions were provided. The two elder boys carried guns. I was given charge of the water flask and a small hatchet.

“After filling our water-jar we crossed the stream, and went on to the height, from whence a lovely prospect is obtained, as you described.

“A pretty little wood in the distance attracted my notice particularly, and thither we directed our course. But we

soon found it impossible to force our way through the tall strong grass, which grew in dense luxuriance higher than the children's heads. So we turned toward the open beach on our left, and, following it, we reached a point much nearer the little wood. We quit the strand and made toward it.

"We were lost in admiration of the trees of this grove. I cannot describe to you how wonderful they are. You cannot form the least idea of their enormous size without seeing them yourself. What we had been calling a wood proved to be a group of only about a dozen trees. What was stranger yet, the roots sustained the massive trunks exalted in the air, forming strong arches, and props and stays all around each individual stem, which was firmly rooted in the centre.

"The longer we remained in this enchanting place, the more did it charm our fancy; and if we could but manage to live in some sort of dwelling up among the branches of those grand noble trees, I should feel perfectly safe and happy. It seemed to me absurd to suppose we should ever find another place half so lovely. So I determined to search no further, but return to the beach and see if anything from the wreck had been cast up by the waves which we could carry away with us.

"On reaching the shore we found it strewed with many articles, doubtless of value, but all too heavy for us to lift. We rolled some casks, however, beyond high-water mark, and dragged a chest or two also higher on the beach.

"Now I hope you approve of the proceedings of your exploring party, and that to-morrow you will do me the favor of packing up everything, and taking us away to live among my splendid trees."

"Perhaps something may come of the idea," said I. "Meanwhile, as we have finished our supper, and night is coming on, let us commend ourselves to Almighty protection and retire to rest."

Beneath the shelter of our tent we all slept soundly until break of day, when, my wife and I awaking, we took counsel together as to future proceedings.

“In the first place,” said I, “I am unwilling to quit a spot to which I am convinced we were providentially led as a landing-place. See how secure it is; guarded on all sides by these high cliffs, and accessible only by the narrow passage to the ford, while from this point it is so easy to reach the ship that the whole of its valuable cargo is at our disposal. Suppose we decide to stay patiently here for the present—until, at least, we have brought on shore everything we possibly can?”

“I agree with you to a certain extent, dear,” replied she; “but you do not know how dreadfully the heat among the rocks tries me. It is almost intolerable to us who remain here all day, while you and Fritz are away out at sea or wandering among the shady woods, where cool fruits refresh, and fair scenes delight you.”

“Well, I must admit that there is much right on your side,” I continued; “suppose we were to remove to your chosen abode, and make this rocky fastness our magazine and place of retreat in case of danger. I could easily render it more secure by blasting portions of the rock with gunpowder. But a bridge must be constructed in the first place to enable us to cross bag and baggage. Bags and baskets we must have to put things in, and if you will turn your attention to providing those, I will set about the bridge at once. It will be wanted not once, but continually; the stream will probably swell and be impassable at times, and even as it is, an accident might happen.”

When the children heard of the proposed move their joy was boundless. They began at once to talk of it as our “Journey to the Promised Land.” Their only regret was

that time must be "wasted" as they said, in bridge-building before it could be undertaken.

Jack showed me where he thought the bridge should be, and I certainly saw no better place. The banks were at that point only some eighteen feet apart, steep, and of about equal height.

The question as to how the planks were to be laid across was a difficult one. There fortunately were one or two trees close to the stream on either side. I attached a rope pretty near one end of a beam, and slung it loosely to the tree beside us. After fastening a long rope to the other end, I crossed with it by means of broken rocks and stones. With a pulley and block, I soon arranged the rope on a strong limb of the opposite tree. Then I returned with the end to our own side.

Now I brought the ass and the cow. Fastening this rope to the harness I had previously contrived for them, I drove them steadily away from the bank. To my great satisfaction, and the surprise and delight of the boys, the end of the plank which had been laid along-side the stream began gently to move, rose higher, turned, and soon projecting over the water, continued in advance, until, having described the segment of a circle, it reached the opposite bank. I stopped my team, the plank rested on the ground, the bridge was made!

A second and a third plank were laid beside the first; and when these were carefully secured at each end to the ground and to the trees, we very quickly laid short boards side by side across the beams, the boys nailing them lightly down as I sawed them in lengths. When this was done, our bridge was pronounced complete. Nothing could exceed the excitement of the children. They danced to and fro on the wonderful structure, singing, shouting, and cutting the wildest capers.

Next morning the greatest activity prevailed in our camp. Some collected provisions, others packed kitchen utensils, tools, ropes, and hammocks, arranging them as burdens for the cow and ass. My wife pleaded for a seat on the latter for little Franz, and assuring me likewise that she could not possibly leave the poultry, even for a night, nor exist an hour without her magic bag, I agreed to do my best to please her, without downright cruelty to the animals.

Having filled the tent with the things we left behind, closing it carefully, and ranging chests and casks round it, we were finally ready to be off, each well equipped and in the highest spirits.

Fritz and his mother led the van. Franz and the sober-minded cow followed them closely. Jack conducted the goats. One of these goats had a rider, for Nips, the monkey, was seated on his foster-mother, whose patience was sorely tried by his restlessness and playful tricks. The sheep were under Ernest's care. I brought up the rear of this patriarchal band, while the two dogs kept constantly running backward and forward in the character of aides-de-camp.

With honest pride I introduced my wife to my bridge, and we passed over it in grand procession, reinforced unexpectedly on the opposite side by the arrival of our cross-grained old sow. I soon found we must, as before, turn down to the sea-beach. Not only did the rank grass impede our progress, but it also tempted the animals to break away from us. If it had not been for our watchful dogs, we might have lost several of them.

The wonderful appearance of the enormous mangrove trees, and the calm beauty of the spot altogether, fully came up to the enthusiastic description which had been given me. My wife gladly heard me say that, if an abode could

be contrived among the branches, it would be the safest and most charming home in the world.

We hastily unloaded the ass and the cow, securing them, as well as the sheep and goats, by tying their fore-feet loosely together. The doves and poultry were set at liberty, and we sat down to rest among the soft herbage while we laid our plans for the night.

Presently Fritz brought in a tiger cat he had shot, and Jack a porcupine, while Franz joyfully produced some wild figs, which were first tried on the monkey, who ate them greedily.

Part of the porcupine was put on the fire to boil, while we reserved the rest for roasting. I employed myself in contriving needles for my wife's work, by boring holes at one end of the quills. I did this by means of a red-hot nail. Soon I had a nice packet of various sizes, which pleased her immensely.

When dinner was over I prepared our night quarters. I first slung our hammocks from the roots of the tree which, meeting above us, formed an arched roof, then covering the whole with sail-cloth, we made a temporary tent, which would at least keep off the night damps and noxious insects.

My wife was engaged in making a set of harness out of sail-cloth for the ass and cow, whose strength I intended to employ the following day in drawing the beams up to our tree. I walked down with Fritz and Ernest to the beach to look for wood suitable for building our new abode, and also to discover, if possible, some light rods to form a ladder. For some time we hunted in vain. Nothing but rough drift-wood was to be seen, utterly unfit for our purpose. Ernest at length pointed out a quantity of bamboos, half buried in the sand. These were exactly what I wanted and, stripping them of their leaves, I cut them into lengths of about five feet each. I bound these in bundles to carry to the tree. Then I gathered up some slight reeds to serve as arrows.

Telling Fritz to collect all our cord, and the others to roll all the twine into a ball, I sat down, and taking the reeds, speedily manufactured half a dozen arrows and feathered them from a flamingo we had shot. I then took a strong bamboo, bent it, and strung it so as to form a bow.

Fritz had obtained two coils of cord, each about forty feet in length. These we stretched on the ground side by side. Then Fritz cut the bamboos into pieces of two feet for the steps of the ladder. As he handed them to me, I passed them through knots which I had prepared in the ropes. Jack fixed each end with a nail driven through the wood. When the ladder was finished, I fastened one end of it to a rope. The other end of the rope was attached to an arrow which I shot over the bough. Now I hauled up the ladder and then fixed the lower end firmly to the ground by means of stakes, and all was ready for an ascent.

Jack, active as a monkey, sprang up the ladder and quickly gained the top.

“Three cheers for the nest!” he exclaimed, waving his cap. “What a house we will have up here! Come along Fritz.”

His brother was soon by his side, and with a hammer and nails secured the ladder yet more securely. I followed with an axe, and took a survey of the tree. It was admirably suited to our purpose. The branches were very strong and so closely interwoven that no beams would be required to form a flooring. When some of the boughs were lopped and cleared away, a few planks would be quite sufficient.

Fritz and I ascended the tree, and finished the preparations I had begun the night before; all useless boughs we lopped off, leaving a few about six feet from the floor, from which we might sling our hammocks, and others still higher, to support a temporary roof of sail-cloth. My wife made fast the planks to a rope passed through a block I had fixed to the boughs above us, and by this means Fritz and I hauled



I drew up the ladder and we retired for the night.



them up. These we arranged side by side on the foundation of boughs, so as to form a smooth solid floor. Round this platform we built a bulwark of planks, and then throwing the sail-cloth over the higher branches, we drew it down and firmly nailed it.

Our house was thus enclosed on three sides. Behind the great trunk protected us, while the front was left open to admit the fresh sea breeze which blew directly in. We then hauled up our hammocks and bedding and slung them from the branches we had left for that purpose. After working like slaves all day, Fritz and I flung ourselves on the grass, while my wife arranged supper on a table we had made. "Come," said she at length, "come and taste flamingo stew, and tell me how you like it."

We lit our watch-fires, and leaving the dogs on guard below, ascended the ladder. Fritz, Ernest, and Jack were up in a moment. Their mother followed very cautiously. Then, taking little Franz on my back, I let go the fastenings which secured the lower end to the ground, and swinging to and fro, slowly ascended.

Then for the first time we stood altogether in our new home. I drew up the ladder, and, with a greater sense of security than I had enjoyed since we landed on the island, offered up our evening prayer, and retired for the night.

## CHAPTER IV.

**N**EXT morning all were early awake. The children sprang about the tree like young monkeys.

At breakfast we decided to give suitable names to the different places we had visited on this coast.

“It is important that we do this,” said I, “for it will become more and more troublesome to explain what we mean, unless we do so. Besides, we shall feel more at home if we talk as people do in populated countries; instead of saying, for instance, ‘the little island at the mouth of our bay, where we found the dead shark,’ ‘the large stream near our tent, across which we made the bridge,’ ‘that wood where we found cocoanuts, and caught the monkey,’ and so on. Let us begin by naming the bay in which we landed. What shall we call it?”

“Oyster Bay,” said Fritz.

“I think,” observed his mother, “that, in token of gratitude for our escape, we shall call it Safety Bay.”

“Good!” said they all, and Safety Bay was forthwith accepted as a fixed name.

Other names were quickly chosen. Our first place of abode was called Tenthelm; the islet in the bay Shark’s Island, and the reedy swamp, Flamingo Marsh. It was sometime before the serious question of a name for our leafy castle could be decided. But finally we named it

Falconhurst. The few remaining points were designated as Prospect Hill, the eminence we first ascended; Cape Disappointment, from whose rocky heights we had strained our eyes in vain search for our ship's company; and Jackal River, the large stream at our landing place.

After this the days sped quickly. We brought up our stores from Tentholm. Important discoveries were made in both the animal and the vegetable kingdoms, including potatoes, salmon, and kangaroos. We also constructed a sledge for our animals to draw. Fritz and I also made repeated visits to the wreck, until we were really provided with all that settlers could desire in the way of beginning a truly civilized existence.

One of our most valuable acquisitions was discovered by Fritz. He had found, carefully packed and enclosed within partitions, what appeared to be the separate parts of a yacht, with rigging and fittings complete. There were even a couple of small brass guns to go with the boat. This was a great discovery. But it proved an arduous task to put such a craft together so as to be fit for sea.

For the present we took ashore all the implements for a smith's forge, also a copper boiler, iron plates, two grindstones, a small barrel of powder, and another of flints, and three wheel-barrows.

The next days were spent in hard work on board. We first cut and cleared an open space round the yacht. Then we put the parts together. We started early and returned at night, and each time brought valuable freight from the old vessel.

At length everything was completed. The yacht stood actually ready to be launched. But it was imprisoned within massive wooden walls which defied our strength.

Without explaining my purpose I filled a large cast-iron mortar with gunpowder and secured a block of oak to the

top. Through this block I pierced a hole for the insertion of the match. This great bomb I placed in such a way that when it exploded it should blow out the side of the vessel next to which the yacht lay.

After securing the bomb with chains that the recoil might do no damage, I told the boys I was going ashore earlier than usual. After asking them to get into the boat I lighted a match which I had so prepared that it would burn some time without reaching the powder. Then I hastened after my boys with a beating heart, and we made for the land.

We brought our raft close in shore and began to unload it. The other boat I did not haul up, but kept her ready to put off at a moment's notice. My anxiety was not observed by any one, as I listened with strained nerves for the expected sound. It came! a flash! a mighty roar! — a grand burst of smoke!

My wife and children, terror-stricken, turned their eyes toward the sea, whence the startling noise came. Then, in fear and wonder, they looked to me for some explanation.

“Perhaps,” said the mother, as I did not speak, “perhaps you have left a light burning near some of the gunpowder, and an explosion has taken place.”

“Not at all unlikely,” replied I, quietly; “we had a fire below when we were calking the seams of the yacht. I shall go at once and see what has happened. Will anyone come?”

The boys needed no second invitation. They sprang into the boat. Meanwhile I reassured my wife by whispering a few words of explanation. Then joining the boys we pulled for the wreck at a more rapid rate than we ever had done before.

No alteration had taken place in the side at which we usually boarded her. We pulled around to the further side.

There a marvellous sight awaited us. A huge rent appeared. The decks and bulwarks were torn open. The water was covered with floating wreckage. All seemed in ruins. The compartment where the yacht rested was fully revealed to view.

There sat the little beauty, to all appearance uninjured. The boys were astonished to hear me shout in enthusiastic delight: "Hurrah! she is ours! The lovely yacht is won! We shall be able to launch her easily after all. Come, boys, let us see if she has suffered from the explosion which has set her free."

It was evident the launch could now be effected without much trouble. I had been careful to place rollers beneath the keel, so that we might by our united strength move her forward toward the water. The yacht began to slide from the stocks, and finally slipped gently and steadily into the water where she floated as if conscious it was her native element. We were wild with excitement, and cheered and waved enthusiastically.

Some days were devoted to completing the rigging. Next we mounted her two little brass guns. It was wonderful what martial ardor was awakened by the possession of a vessel armed with two real guns. The boys chattered incessantly about savages, fleets of canoes, attack, defence, and final annihilation of the invaders. We now took her to the island and showed her to mother.

After the yacht had been duly admired my good wife said to me, "Now you must come with me and see how Franz and I have improved our time every day of your absence."

We all landed. With great curiosity we followed mother up the river toward the cascade. There, to our astonishment, we found a garden neatly laid out in beds and walks. Mother continued "Look at my beds of lettuce and cab-

bage, my rows of beans and peas. Think what delicious dinners I shall be able to cook for you."

"My dear wife," I exclaimed, "this is beautiful! You have done wonders! Did you not find the work too hard?"

"The ground is light and easy to dig hereabouts," she replied. "I have planted potatoes, and cassava roots; there is space for sugar-canes and young fruit trees, and I shall want you to contrive to irrigate them, by leading water from the cascades in hollow bamboos. Up by the sheltering rocks I mean to have pine-apples and melons; they will look splendid when they spread there. To shelter the beds of our vegetables from the heat of the sun, I have planted seeds of maize round them. The shadow of the tall plants will afford protection from the burning rays. Do you think that is a good plan?"

The time passed in happy talk over our many new interests. Everyone felt the pleasure which attends successful labor that gives joy to others. My boys realized that there is true happiness in this, rather than in mere self-gratification.

The welcome Day of Rest now returned again, to be observed with heartfelt devotion and grateful praise. We all joined in singing our favorite hymns, which my wife knew from memory,

## CHAPTER V.

**S**OME bushes one day attracted my notice. They were loaded with small white berries, of peculiar appearance like wax, and very sticky when plucked. I explained to Fritz that, by melting and straining these berries, we might easily succeed in making candles from the greenish wax obtained from these berries, which would be more brittle than beeswax, but it would burn very fairly and diffuse an agreeable perfume. We gathered berries enough to fill one canvas bag, and then continued our walk

Soon after we arrived at a grove of tall trees, with very strong, broad, thick leaves. We paused to examine them. They bore a round, fig-like fruit, full of little seeds and of a sour, harsh taste.

Fritz saw some gummy resin exuding from cracks in the bark. It reminded him of the boyish delight afforded by collecting gum from cherry-trees at home. So he stopped to scrape off as much as he could. He attempted to soften what he had collected in his hands; but soon found that it would not work like gum. He was about to fling it away, when he suddenly found that he could stretch it and that it sprang back to its original size.

“Oh, father, only look! this gum is quite elastic! Can it possibly be india-rubber?”

“What!” cried I; “let me see it! That would be a valu-

able discovery, indeed, I do believe you are perfectly right!"

"Why would it be so valuable, father?" inquired Fritz. "I have only seen it used for rubbing out pencil marks."

"India-rubber," I replied, is a milky, resinous juice which flows from certain trees in considerable quantities when the stem is purposely tapped. These trees are indigenous to the South American countries of Brazil, Guiana, and Cayenne. The natives, who first obtained it, used to form bottles by smearing earthen flasks with repeated coatings of the gum when just fresh from the trees, and when hardened and sufficiently thick, they broke the mould, shook out the fragments, and hung the bottles in the smoke, when they become firmer and of a drab color. India-rubber can be put to many uses. I am delighted to have it here. We shall, I hope, be able to make it into different forms. First and foremost, I shall try to manufacture boots and shoes."

The idea of candle-making seemed to have taken the fancy of all the boys. Next morning they woke, one after the other, with the word candle on their lips. When they were thoroughly roused they continued to talk candles. All breakfast-time, candles were the subject of conversation. After breakfast they would hear of nothing else but setting to work at once and making candles.

"So be it," said I; "let us become chandlers."

I spoke confidently, but to tell the truth, I had in my own mind certain misgivings as to the result of our experiment. I knew that we lacked a very important ingredient—animal fat, which is necessary to make candles burn for any length of time with brilliancy. Of this, however, I said nothing, and the boys were soon at work. We first picked off the berries and threw them into a large, shallow, iron vessel placed on the fire. The green, sweet-scented wax was rigidly melted, rising to the surface pot by the fire, ready for use. We repeated the operation several



times, until we had collected sufficient liquid wax for our purpose. I then took the wicks my wife had prepared, and dipped them one after the other into the wax. I handed them as I did so to Fritz, who hung them up on a branch to dry. The coating they thus obtained was not very thick; but, by repeating the operation several times, they at length assumed very fair proportions, and became real sturdy candles. Our wax being at an end, we hung these in a cool, shady place to harden. That same night we sat up three whole hours after sunset. Falconhurst was for the first time brilliantly illuminated.

We were all delighted with the success of our experiment.

“You are indeed clever,” said my wife; “only I wish that with your ingenuity you would show me how to make butter. Day after day I see a large supply of good cream become sour under my very eyes, simply because I have no use to which to put it. Invent a plan, please do.”

“I think that perhaps I can help you,” I replied, after thinking about the matter. “Jack, bring me one of our gourd bottles.”

I took the gourd, with a small hole at one end and well hollowed out and cleaned. This I partially filled with cream and then corked up the hole tightly.

“Here, boys,” said I, “you can continue the operation.”

They fixed four posts in the ground, and to them fastened a square piece of sail-cloth by four cords attached to the corners. In this cradle they placed the gourd of cream, and each taking a side rolled it backward and forward continuously for half an hour.

“Now,” I cried, “open the gourd and take the contents to your mother, with my compliments.”

They did so, and my good wife’s eyes were delighted with the sight of a large lump of capital fresh butter.

With my son's assistance our cart was in time completed. A clumsy vehicle it was, but strong enough for our purpose. It proved of immense use to us.

We then turned our attention to our fruit-trees, which we had planted in a plot ready for transplanting. The walnut, cherry, and chestnut trees we arranged in parallel rows, so as to form a shady avenue from Falconhurst to the bridge. Between them we laid down a tolerable road, that we might have no difficulty in reaching Tentholm, be the weather bad as it might. We planted the vines round the arched roots of our great mangrove, and the rest of the trees in suitable spots, some near Falconhurst and the others away over Jackal River, to adorn Tentholm.

Tentholm had been the subject of serious thought to me for some time past, and I now turned all my attention thither. It was not my ambition to make it beautiful, but to form of it a safe place of refuge in a case of emergency. My first care, therefore, was to plant a thick, prickly hedge capable of protecting us from any wild animal, and forming a tolerable obstacle to the attack of even savages, should they appear. Not satisfied with this, however, we fortified the bridge, and on a couple of hillocks mounted two guns which we had brought from the wreck, and with whose angry mouths we might bark defiance at any enemy, man or beast.

Six weeks slipped away while we were thus busily occupied, six weeks of hard, yet pleasant, labor. I now determined to pay another visit to the wreck, to replenish our wardrobe and to see how much longer the vessel was likely to hold together.

"Come, boys," cried I, "not an article of the slightest value must be left on board; rummage her out to the very bottom of her hold."

They took me at my word; sailors' chests, bales of cloth

and linen, a couple of small guns, ball and shot, tables and benches, window shutters, bolts and locks, barrels of pitch, all were soon in a heap on the deck. We loaded the yacht and went on shore. We soon returned with our tub-boat in tow, and after a few more trips nothing was left on board.

“One more trip,” said I to my wife, before we started again, “and there will be the end of the brave ship which carried us from Switzerland. I have left two barrels of gunpowder on board and mean to blow her up.”

Before we lighted the fusee I discovered a large copper cauldron which I thought I might save. I made fast to it a couple of empty casks, that when the ship went up it might float. The barrels were placed, the train lighted, and we returned on shore. Suddenly a vivid pillar of fire rose from the black waters. A sullen roar boomed across the sea, and we knew our good ship was no more.

We had planned the destruction of the vessel. We knew that it was for the best. Yet that night we went to bed with a feeling of sadness in our hearts, as though we had lost a dear old friend.

## CHAPTER VI.

**I** WISH," said my wife, "that you would invent some other plan for climbing to the nest above us; I think that the nest itself is perfect—I really wish for nothing better, but I should like to be able to get to it without scaling that dreadful ladder every time. Could you not make a flight of steps to reach it?"

I thought over the project carefully and turned over every plan for its accomplishment.

"It would be impossible, I am afraid," said I, "to make stairs outside, but within the trunk it might be done. More than once have I thought that this trunk might be hollow, or partly so, and if such be the case our task would be comparatively easy. Did you not tell me the other day that you noticed bees coming from a hole in the tree?"

Master Jack, practical as usual, instantly sprang to his feet to investigate. The rest followed his example. Soon they were all climbing about like squirrels, peeping into the hole, and tapping the wood to discover by sound how far down the cavity extended.

They forgot, in their eagerness, who were the tenants of this interesting trunk. They were soon reminded of it, however. The bees, disturbed by this unusual noise, burst out with an angry buzz. They swarmed round the boys, stung them on the hands, face, and neck, settled in their

hair, and pursued them as they ran to me for assistance. It was with difficulty that we got rid of the angry insects. Jack, who had been the first to reach the hole, had fared the worst. He was a most pitiable sight. His face swelled to an extraordinary degree. It was only by the constant application of cold earth that the pain was alleviated.

In the meanwhile I made my arrangements. I first took a large calabash gourd, for I intended to make a beehive, that, when we had driven the insects from their present abode, we might not lose them entirely. The lower half of the gourd I flattened, I then cut an arched opening in the front for a doorway, made a straw roof as a protection from the rain and heat, and the little house was complete.

I waited till dark. Then, when all the bees had again returned to their trunk, I carefully stopped up, with Fritz's assistance, every hole in the tree with wet clay, that the bees might not issue forth next morning before we could begin operations. Very early were we up and at work. I first took a hollow cane, and inserted one end through the clay into the tree. Down this tube with pipe and tobacco I smoked most furiously.

The humming and buzzing that went on within was tremendous. The bees evidently could not understand what was going to happen. By the time I had finished a second pipe all was still. The bees were stupefied.

"Now, then, Fritz," said I, "quick with a hammer and chisel, and stand here beside me."

He was up in a moment, and together we cut a small door by the side of the hole. This door, however, we did not take out. We left it attached by one corner that it might be removed at a moment's notice. Then giving the bees a final dose of tobacco smoke, we opened it.

Carefully but rapidly we removed the insects, as they clung in clusters to the sides of the tree, and placed them in

the hive ready for their reception. I then took every atom of wax and honey from their storehouse, and put it in a cask I had made ready for the purpose.

The bees were now safely removed from the trunk. So at length, after due consideration, they abandoned their former habitation to us, the invaders of their territory. By the evening we ventured to open the cask in which we had stored our plunder. We first separated the honey from the honeycomb and poured it off into jars and pots. The rest we then took and threw into a vessel of water placed over a slow fire. It soon boiled and the entire mass became fluid. This we placed in a clean canvas bag, and subjected to a heavy pressure. The honey was thus soon forced out, and we stored it in a cask. The wax that remained in the bag I also carefully stored. I knew it would be of great use to me in the manufacture of candles. Then after a hard day's work we turned in.

The internal arrangement of the tree had now to be attended to. So early the following morning we prepared for the laborious task. A door had first to be made. We cut away the bark at the base of the trunk and formed an opening just the size of the door we had brought from the captain's cabin, and which, hinges and all, was ready to be hung. The clearing of the rotten wood from the centre of the trunk occupied us some time, but at length we had the satisfaction of seeing it entirely accomplished. As we stood below, we could look up the trunk, which was like a great smooth funnel, and see the sky above. It was now ready for the staircase. First we erected in the centre a stout sapling to form an axis round which to build the spiral stairs. In this we cut notches to receive the steps, and corresponding notches in the tree itself to support the outer ends. The steps themselves we formed carefully and neatly of planks from the wreck, and clinched them firmly in their places

with stout nails. Upward and upward we built, cutting windows in the trunk as we required, to admit light and air, until we reached the level of the floor of the nest above. To make the ascent of the stairs perfectly easy we ran a hand-rail on either side, and one round the pillar, and the other following the curve of the trunk. This task occupied us a whole month.

One morning as we were completing our spiral staircase, and giving it such finish as we were capable of, we were suddenly alarmed by hearing a most terrific noise, the roaring of a wild beast. It was a strange sound. I could not imagine what it was.

Jack thought it was a lion, Fritz hazarded a gorilla, while Ernest gave it as his opinion, and I thought it possible he was right, that it was a hyena.

"Whatever it is," said I, "we must prepare to receive it. Up with you all to the nest while I fasten the door."

Then arming the dogs with their collars, I sent them out to protect the animals below, closed the door and joined my family. Every gun was loaded, every eye was upon the watch. The sound drew nearer, and then all was still. Nothing was to be seen. I determined to descend and investigate. Fritz and I carefully crept down. With our guns fully cocked we glided among the trees. Noiselessly and quickly we pushed on further and further.

Suddenly, close by, we heard the terrific sound again.

Fritz raised his gun, but almost as quickly again dropped it, and burst into a hearty fit of laughter.

There was no mistaking those dulcet tones. "He-haw, he-haw, he-haw"—resounded through the forest. Our donkey brayed his approach merrily. Soon he appeared in sight. To our surprise, however, our friend was not alone. Behind him trotted another animal, slim and graceful as a horse. We watched their movements anxiously.

“Fritz,” I whispered, “that is an onager. Creep back to Falconhurst and bring me a piece of cord—quietly now!”

While he was gone, I cut a bamboo and split it half-way down to form a pair of pincers, which I knew would be of use to me should I get near the animal. Fritz soon returned with the cord. I was glad to observe that he had also brought some oats and salt. We fastened one end of the cord to a tree, and at the other end we made a running noose. Silently we watched the animals as they approached, quietly browsing. Fritz then arose, holding in one hand the noose and in the other some oats and salt. The donkey seeing his favorite food thus held out, advanced to take it, and was soon munching contentedly. The stranger, on seeing Fritz, started back; but finding her companion showed no signs of alarm, was reassured, and soon approached sniffing. Just as she was about to take some of the tempting food, the noose left Fritz’s adroit hand and fell round her neck. With a single bound she sprang backward the full length of the cord. The noose drew tight, and she fell to the earth half strangled. I at once ran up, loosened the rope, and replaced it by a halter. After placing the pincers upon the nose, I secured her by two cords fastened between two trees. Then I left her to recover herself.

Next morning I found the onager after her night’s rest as wild as ever. As I looked at the handsome creature I almost despaired of ever taming her proud spirit. Every expedient was tried. At length, when she was subdued by hunger, I thought I might venture to mount her. Having given her the strongest curb and shackled her feet, I attempted to do so. I watched for a favorable opportunity and then sprang upon the onager’s back. Seizing her long ear in my teeth, in spite of her kicking and plunging, I bit it through, after the fashion of the American Indians. The result was marvellous, the animal ceased plunging, and, quivering violently,



## THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

stood stock-still. From that moment we were her masters. The children mounted her one after the other, and she carried them obediently and quietly.

Additions to our poultry yard reminded me of the necessity of providing some substantial shelter for our animals before the rainy season came on. Three broods of chickens had been successfully hatched, and the little creatures, forty in all, were my wife's pride and delight.

Our winter quarters—stables, poultry yard, hay and provision lofts, dairy, kitchen, larder and dining-hall—were now completed. We had but to store them with food. Day after day we worked, bringing in provisions of every description.

It was soon after this that we found the New Zealand flax, a discovery which delighted my wife above measure. "Bring me the leaves!" she exclaimed. "Oh, what a delightful discovery! No one shall now be clothed in rags. Just make me a spindle, and you shall soon have shirts and stockings and trousers, all good homespun! Quick, Fritz, and bring your mother more leaves!"

We decided that Flamingo Marsh would be the best spot for the operation of steeping or "retting" the flax. So next morning we set out thither with the cart drawn by a donkey. Franz and Nips were seated between our bundles on the cart. The rest of us followed with spades and hatchets. I described to my boys as we went along the process of retting. I explained to them how steeping the flax leaves destroys the useless membrane, while the strong fibres remain. For a fortnight we left the flax to steep. Then we took it out and dried it thoroughly in the sun. Afterward we stored it for future use at Falconhurst.

Daily did we load our cart with provisions to be brought to our winter quarters. Manioc, potatoes, cocoanuts, sweet acorns, sugar-canes, were all collected and stored in abundance. Grumbling thunder, lowering skies, and sharp

showers warned us that we had no time to lose. Our corn was sown, our animals housed, our provisions stored, when down came the rain.

Our nest soon was an impossible habitation. We were obliged to retreat to the trunk, where we carried such of our domestic furniture as might have been injured by the damp. Our dwelling was indeed crowded; the animals and provisions below, and our beds and household goods around us, hemmed us in on every side. By dint of patience and better packing, we obtained sufficient room to work and lie down in. By degrees, too, we became accustomed to the continual noise of the animals and the smell of the stables. The smoke from the fire, which we were occasionally obliged to light, was not agreeable, but in time even that seemed to become more bearable.

To make more space, we turned outside during the daytime such animals as we had captured, and who, therefore, might be imagined to know how to shift for themselves. At night we let them sleep under the arched roots. To attend to the duty of gathering them in Fritz and I used to sally forth every evening, and as regularly every evening did we return soaked to the skin. Mother contrived waterproofs, to overcome this difficulty. She brushed on several layers of India-rubber over stout shirts, to which she attached hoods. She then fixed duck trousers to these. Thus she prepared for each of us a complete waterproof suit. Clad in this we could brave the severest rain.

Week after week rolled by. Week after week saw us still close prisoners. Incessant rain battered down above us; constant gloom hung over the desolate scene.

## CHAPTER VII.

**T**HE winds at length were lulled, the sun shot his brilliant rays through the riven clouds, the rain ceased to fall—spring had come. No prisoners set at liberty could have felt more joy than we did. We refreshed our eyes with the pleasant verdure around us, and our ears with the merry songs of a thousand happy birds, and drank in the pure, balmy air of spring.

Our plantations were thriving vigorously. The seed we had sown was shooting through the moist earth. All nature was refreshed.

I was anxious to visit Tentholm, for I feared that much of our precious stores might have suffered. Fritz and I made an excursion hither. The damage done to Falconhurst was as nothing compared to the scene that awaited us. The tent was blown to the ground, the canvas torn to rags, the provisions soaked, and two casks of powder utterly destroyed. The yacht was safe, but our faithful tub-boat was dashed in pieces.

The irreparable damage we had sustained made me resolve to contrive some safer and more stable winter quarters before the arrival of the next rainy season. Fritz proposed that we should hollow out a cave in the rock. The difficulties of such an undertaking appeared almost insurmountable. Yet I determined to make the attempt.

Some days afterward we left Falconhurst with the cart laden with the cargo of spades, hammers, chisels, pickaxes, and crowbars, and began our undertaking. On the smooth face of the perpendicular rock I drew out in chalk the size of the proposed entrance. Then, with minds bent on success, we battered away. Six days of hard and incessant toil made but little impression. We still did not despair. Presently we were rewarded by coming to softer and more yielding substance. Our work progressed, and our minds were relieved.

On the tenth day, as our persevering blows were falling heavily, Jack, who was working with a hammer and crowbar, shouted:

“Gone, father! my bar has gone through the mountain! It went right through the mountain! It went right through the rock; I heard it crash down inside. Oh, do come and see!” he shouted, excitedly.

We sprang to his side, and I thrust the handle of my hammer into the hole he spoke of; it met with no opposition—I could turn it in any direction I chose. Fritz handed me a long pole; I tried the depth with that. Nothing could I feel. A thin wall, then, was all that intervened between us and a great cavern.

With a shout of joy the boys battered vigorously at the rock; piece by piece it fell, and soon the hole was large enough for us to enter. I stepped near the aperture, and was about to make a further examination, when a sudden rush of poisonous air turned me giddy, and, shouting to my sons to stand off, I leaned against the rock.

When I came to myself I explained to them the danger of approaching any cavern or other place where the air has for a long time been stagnant. “Unless air is incessantly renewed it becomes vitiated,” I said, “and fatal to those who breathe it. The safest way of restoring it to its original

state is to subject it to the action of fire." We tried the experiment. A flame was extinguished the instant it entered. Though bundles of blazing grass were thrown in, no difference was made.

I saw that we must apply some more efficacious remedy. So I sent the boys for a chest of signal rockets we had brought from the wreck. We let fly some dozens of these fiery serpents, which went whizzing in, and disappeared at apparently a vast distance from us. They looked like avenging dragons driving a foul, malignant fiend out of a beautiful palace.

We waited for a little while after these experiments, and I then again threw in lighted hay. It burned clearly; the air was purified, and we entered with beating hearts.

We were in a grotto of diamonds—a vast cave of glittering crystal. Our candles reflected on the walls a golden light, bright as the stars of heaven. Great crystal pillars rose from the floor like mighty trees, mingling their branches high above us and drooping in hundreds of stalactites, which sparkled and glistened with all the colors of the rainbow.

The floor of this magnificent palace was formed of hard, dry sand, so dry that I at once saw that we might safely take up our abode therein, without the slightest fear of danger from the damp.

This was a cavern of rock salt. There was no doubt about it—here was an unlimited supply of the best and purest salt! To satisfy ourselves that there were no pieces tottering above us, we discharged our guns from the entrance, and watched the effect. Nothing fell—our magnificent abode was safe.

We returned to Falconhurst with minds full of wonder at our new discovery, and plans for turning it to the best possible advantage.

Nothing was now talked of but the new house, how it should be arranged, how it should be fitted up. The safety and comfort of Falconhurst, which had at first seemed so great, now dwindled away in our opinion to nothing. Falconhurst, we decided, should be kept up merely as a summer residence. Our cave should be formed into a winter house and impregnable castle.

Our attention was now fully occupied with this new house. Light and air were to be admitted. So we hewed a row of windows in the rock, where we fitted the window cases we had brought from the officers' cabins. We brought the door, too, from Falconhurst, and fitted it in the aperture we had made. The cave itself we divided into four parts: in front, a large compartment into which the door opened, subdivided into our sitting, eating, and sleeping apartments; the right-hand division containing our kitchen and workshop, and the left our stables; behind all this, in the dark recesses of the cave, was our storehouse and powder magazine.

We contrived a properly built fireplace and chimney. Our stable arrangements, too, were better. Plenty of space was left in our workshop that we should not be hampered in even the most extensive operations. We called this new home Rock House.

After finishing Rock House, some time was taken up with salting and curing a quantity of herrings, of which a shoal had recently visited the island. These labors were scarcely completed before we made other grand discoveries. Among them the rice and cotton-plants.

We next turned our attention to building a bark canoe.

One morning I happened to awake unusually early. I turned my thoughts, as I lay waiting for sunrise, to considering what length of time we had passed now on this coast. To my surprise, I discovered that the very next

day would be the anniversary of our escape from the wreck. My heart swelled with gratitude to the gracious God who had then granted us deliverance, and ever since had loaded us with benefits. I resolved to set to-morrow apart as a day of thanksgiving, in joyful celebration of the occasion.

Everyone was surprised to hear that we had already been twelve months in the country. Indeed, my wife believed I might be mistaken. I showed her how I had calculated regularly ever since the 31st of January, on which day we were wrecked, by marking off on my almanac the Sundays as they arrived for the remaining eleven months of that year.

I desired that the awful events of the shipwreck should live in the remembrance of my children with a deepening sense of gratitude for our deliverance. Therefore I read aloud passages from my journal, as well as many beautiful verses from the Psalms, expressive of joyful praise and thanksgiving. Even the youngest among us was impressed and solemnized at the recollections of escape from a terrible death, and blessed and praised the name of the Lord our Deliverer.

Dinner followed shortly after this happy service. I announced for the afternoon a "Grand Display of Athletic Sports," in which I and my wife were to be spectators and judges.

"Father, what a grand idea!"

"Oh, how jolly! Are we to run races?"

"And prizes, father?"

"The judges offer prizes for competition in every sort of manly exercise," replied I. "Shooting, running, riding, leaping, climbing, swimming; we will have an exhibition of your skill in all. Now for it!"

The whole afternoon was thus taken up, and then we returned to our dwelling, the mother having preceded us in

order to make arrangements for the ceremony of prize-giving.

We found her seated in great state, with the prizes set out by her side. The boys marched in pretending to play various instruments in imitation of a band. Then all four, bowing respectfully, stood before her, like the victors in a tournament of old, awaiting the reward of valor from the Queen of Beauty. She bestowed the prizes with words of praise and encouragement.

Fritz, to his immense delight, received, as a reward for excellence in shooting and swimming, a splendid double-barreled rifle, and a beautiful hunting-knife.

To Ernest, as winner of the running match, was given a handsome gold watch.

For climbing and riding, Jack had a pair of silver-plated spurs, and a riding whip.

Franz received a pair of stirrups, and a driving whip made of rhinoceros hide, which we thought would be of use to him as he was now training a young bull calf.

When the ceremony was supposed to be over, I advanced, and solemnly presented to my wife a lovely work-box, filled with every imaginable requirement for a lady's work-table, which she accepted with equal surprise and delight.

The whole entertainment afforded the boys intense pleasure. Their spirits rose to such a pitch, that nothing would serve them but another salvo of artillery, in order to close with befitting dignity and honor so great a day. They gave me no peace till they had leave to squander some gunpowder. Then at last their excited feelings seeming relieved, we were able to sit down to supper; shortly afterward, we joined in family worship and retired to rest.



## CHAPTER VIII.

**F**IVE months sped rapidly by. The interior arrangements of the cavern were well under way. I now applied myself to the making of an aqueduct, that fresh water might be led close up to our cave. It was a long way to Jackal River, and especially inconvenient on washing days. As I wanted to do this before the rainy season began, I set about it at once.

Pipes of hollow bamboo answered the purpose well. A large cask formed the reservoir. The supply was good, and the comfort of having it close at hand so great, that the mother declared she was as well pleased with our engineering as if we had made her a fountain and marble basin adorned with mermaids and dolphins.

The rainy season was near at hand. I pressed forward all work connected with stores for our southern winter. Great was the in-gathering of roots, fruits and grain, potatoes, rice, guavas, sweet acorns, pine-cones. Load after load arrived at the cavern. Mother's active needle was in constant requisition, as the demand for more sacks and bags was incessant.

The weather became very unsettled and stormy. Heavy clouds gathered in the horizon and passing storms of wind, with thunder, lightning, and torrents of rain swept over the face of nature from time to time. The sea was in frequent

commotion; heavy ground swells drove masses of water hissing and foaming against the cliffs. Everything heralded the approaching rains. All nature joined in sounding forth the solemn overture to the grandest work of the year.

It was now near the beginning of the month of June, and we had twelve weeks of bad weather before us.

We established some of the animals with ourselves at the salt cave. The boys would ride over to Falconhurst very often to see that all was in order there, and fetch anything required.

Much remained to be done in order to give the cave a comfortable appearance. This became more desirable now that we had to live indoors. The darkness of the inner regions annoyed me, and I set myself to invent a remedy.

After some thought, I called in Jack's assistance, and we got a very tall, strong bamboo, which would reach right up to the vaulted roof. This we planted in the earthen floor, securing well by driving wedges in round it. Jack ascended this pole very cleverly, taking with him a hammer and chisel to enlarge a crevice in the roof so as to fix a pulley, by means of which, when he descended, I drew up a large ship's lantern, well supplied with oil, and as there were four wicks, it afforded a very fair amount of light.

Several days were spent in arranging the different rooms.

Ernest and Franz undertook the library; they fixed the shelves, and set in order the books which we had brought from the wreck.

Jack and his mother took in hand the sitting-room and kitchen. Fritz and I, as better able for heavy work, arranged the workshops. The carpenter's bench, the turning lathe, and a large chest of tools were set in convenient places, and many tools and instruments hung on the walls.

An adjoining chamber was fitted up as a forge, with fire-

place, bellows, and anvil, complete, all which we had found in the ship, packed together, and ready to set up.

When these great affairs were settled, we still found in all directions work to be done, Shelves, tables, benches, movable steps, cupboards, pegs, door handles, and bolts—there seemed no end to our requirements. We often thought of the enormous amount of work necessary to maintain the comforts and conveniences of life which at home we had received as a matter of course.

In reality, the more there was to do the better. I never ceased devising fresh improvements, being fully aware of the importance of constant employment as a means of strengthening and maintaining the health of mind and body. This, indeed, with a consciousness of continual progress toward a desirable end, is found to constitute the main element of happiness.

Ernest and Franz were highly successful as librarians. The books, when unpacked and arranged, proved to be a most valuable collection, capable of affording every sort of educational advantage.

Besides a variety of books of voyages, travels, divinity, and natural history (several containing fine colored illustrations), there were histories and scientific works, as well as standard fiction in several languages; also a good assortment of maps, charts, mathematical and astronomical instruments, and an excellent pair of globes.

I foresaw much interesting study on discovering that we possessed the grammars and dictionaries of a great many languages, a subject for which we all had a taste. With French we were well acquainted. Fritz and Ernest had begun to learn English at school, and made further progress during a visit to England. The mother, who had once been intimate with a Dutch family, could speak that language pretty well.

After a great deal of discussion, we agreed to study different languages, so that in the event of meeting with people of other nations there should be at least one of the family able to communicate with them. All determined to improve our knowledge of German and French.

The two elder boys were to study English and Dutch with their mother. Ernest, already possessing considerable knowledge of Latin, wished to continue to study it, so as to be able to make use of the many works on natural history and medicine written in that language. Jack announced that he meant to learn Spanish, "because it sounded so grand and imposing." I myself was interested in the Malay language, knowing it to be so widely spoken in the islands of the Eastern Seas, and thinking it as likely as any other to be useful to us.

Our family circle by-and-by represented Babel in miniature, for scraps and fragments of all these tongues kept buzzing about our ears from morning to night, each sporting his newly-acquired word or sentence on every possible occasion, propounding idioms and peculiar expressions like riddles to puzzle the rest.

Occasionally we amused ourselves by opening chests and packages hitherto untouched, and brought unexpected treasures to light—mirrors, wardrobes, a pair of tables with polished marble tops, writing-tables and handsome chairs, clocks of various descriptions, a musical box and a chronometer were found. By degrees our abode was fitted up like a palace, so that sometimes we wondered at ourselves, and felt as though we were strutting about in borrowed plumes.

The weeks of imprisonment passed so rapidly that no one found time hang heavy on his hands.

Books occupied me so much that but little carpentering was done. Yet I made a yoke for the oxen, a pair of cotton wool carders, and a spinning wheel for my wife.

The uproar of the elements came to an end at last.

Nature resumed her attitude of repose, her smiling aspect of peaceful beauty. Soon all traces of the ravages of floods and storms would disappear beneath the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics.

We gladly quit the sheltering walls of Rock House, or Rockburg as we now called it, to roam in the open air. We crossed Jackal River for a walk along the coast. Presently Fritz with his sharp eyes observed something on the small island near Flamingo Marsh, which was, he said, long and rounded, resembling a boat bottom upward.

Examining it with the telescope, I could form no other conjecture. We resolved to make it the object of an excursion next day, being delighted to resume our old habit of starting in pursuit of adventure.

The object proved to be a huge stranded whale.

The island being steep and rocky, it was necessary to be careful, but we found a landing place on the further side. The boys hurried by the nearest way to the beach, where lay the monster of the deep, while I clambered to the highest point of the islet, which commanded a view of the mainland from Rockburg to Falconhurst.

On rejoining my sons, I found them only half way to the great fish, and as I drew near they shouted in high glee:

“Oh! father, just look at the glorious shells and coral branches we are finding. How does it happen that there are such quantities?”

“Only consider how the recent storms have stirred the ocean to its depths! No doubt thousands of shell-fish have been detached from their rocks and dashed in all directions by the waves, which have thrown ashore even so huge a creature as the whale yonder.”

“Is coral of any use?” demanded Jack suddenly.

“In former times it was pounded and used by chemists,

but it is now chiefly used for ornaments, and made into beads for necklaces, etc. As such it is greatly prized by savages, and were we to fall in with natives, we might very possibly find a store of coral useful in bartering with them. For the present we will arrange these treasures of the deep in our library, and make them the beginning of a Museum of Natural History, which will afford us equal pleasure and instruction."

Dinner was quickly dispatched, and preparations for cutting up the whale set on foot.

The more oil we could obtain the better, for a great deal was used in the large lantern which burnt day and night in the recesses of the cave. Therefore all available casks and barrels were pressed into service. Many, of course, once full of pickled herrings, potted pigeons, and other winter stores were now empty, and we took a goodly fleet of these in tow.

The whale's enormous size quite startled my wife and little boy. The length was from sixty to sixty-five feet, and the girth between thirty and forty. The weight could not have been less than 50,000 lbs. The color was a uniform velvety black. The enormous head was about one-third of the length of the entire bulk, the eyes quite small, not much larger than those of an ox, and ears almost undiscernible.

The jaw opened very far back, and was nearly sixteen feet in length. The most curious part was the so-called whalebone, masses of which appeared all along the jaws, solid at the base, and splitting into a sort of fringe at the end. This arrangement is for the purpose of aiding the whale in procuring its food, and separating it from the water. The tongue was remarkably large, soft, and full of oil. The opening of the throat was scarcely two inches in diameter.

“And now, boys, fasten on your sharkskin buskins, and let me see if you can face the work of climbing this slippery mountain of flesh and cutting it up.”

Fritz and Jack stripped, and went to work directly, scrambling over the back to the head. They assisted me to cut away the lips so as to reach the whalebone, a large quantity of which was detached and carried to the boat.

Ernest labored manfully at the creature's side, cutting out slabs of bubber while his mother and Franz helped as well as they could to put it into casks.

It was nearly time to leave the island. I stripped off a long piece of the skin, to be used for traces, harness, and other leather work. It was about three-quarters of an inch thick, and very soft and oily, but I knew it would shrink and be tough and durable.

I also took a part of the gums in which the roots of the baleen or whalebone was still embedded, having read that this is considered quite a delicacy, as well as the skin, which, when properly dressed and cut in little cubes, like black dice, has been compared, by enthusiastic and probably very hungry travellers, to cocoanut and cream-cheese. The boys thought the tongue might prove equally palatable, but I valued it only on account of the large quantity of oil it contained.

With a heavy freight we put to sea, and made what haste we could to reach home, and cleanse our persons from the unpleasant traces of the disgusting work in which we had spent the day.

Next morning we started at dawn.

My wife and Franz were left behind. Our proposed work was even more horrible than that of the preceding day. They could not assist, and had no inclination to witness it. It was my intention to open the carcass completely, and to obtain various portions of the intestines. My idea was that

it would be possible to convert the larger ones into vessels fit for holding the oil.

“There are countries,” I said, “where no wood grows of which to make barrels, and no hemp for thread, string and cordage. Necessity, the mother of all the more valuable inventions, has taught the inhabitants of those countries, Greenlanders, Esquimaux, and others, to think of substitutes, and they use the intestines of the whale for one purpose, the sinews and nerves for the other.”

The blubber was afterward boiled in a cauldron over a fire kindled at some distance from our abode. By skimming and straining through a coarse cloth we succeeded in obtaining a large supply of excellent train-oil. This was gathered in casks, and bags made of the intestines, and safely stowed away in the “cellar,” as the children called our roughest store-room. This day’s work was far from agreeable. The dreadful smell oppressed us all, more especially my poor wife. She very urgently recommended that the new island should be the headquarters for another colony, where, she said, “any animals we leave would be safe from apes and other plunderers, and where you would find it so very convenient to boil whale-blubber, strain train-oil, and the like.”

This proposal met with hearty approval, especially from the boys, who were always charmed with any new plan. They were eager to act upon it at once. I reminded them of the putrefying carcass which lay there. They confessed it would be better to allow wind and storms, birds and insects to do their work in purging the atmosphere, and reducing the whale to a skeleton before we revisited the island.

The idea of a rowing machine now kept recurring to my brain. I determined to attempt to make one.

I took an iron bar, which when laid across the middle of



the boat, projected about a foot each way. I provided this bar in the middle with ribbed machinery, and at each end with a sort of nave, in which, as in a cart-wheel, four flat spokes, or paddles, were fixed obliquely. These were intended to do the rowers' part.

Then a mechanical jack was arranged to act upon the machinery in the middle of the iron cross-bar in such a way that one of its strong cogwheels bit firmly into the ribs, so that when it was wound up it caused the bar to revolve rapidly, of course turning with it the paddles fixed at either end, which consequently struck the water so as to propel the boat.

Although this contrivance left much to be desired in the way of improvement, still when Fritz and I wound up the machinery, and went off on a trail trip across the bay, we splashed along at a famous rate. The shores rang with the cheers and clapping of the whole family, delighted to behold what they considered my brilliant success. We went back and took the whole family on board, and, aided by a light breeze, directed our course toward Whale Island.

On landing I began at once to plant some saplings we had brought. The boys assisted me for a while, but wearied somewhat of the occupation, and one after another went off to look at the whale's skeleton or in search of shells and coral, leaving their mother and me to finish the work.

Presently I heard a voice shouting loudly: "Father, father! a great enormous turtle! Please make haste. It is waddling back to the sea as hard as it can go, and we can't stop it."

I sprang down the bank, and, making use of the oar as a lever, we succeeded with some difficulty in turning the creature on its back. It was a huge specimen, fully eight feet long, and being now quite helpless, we left it sprawling.

It soon was decided that the turtle must swim home. I fastened an empty water-cask to a long line, one end of which was made fast to the bow of the boat, the other carefully passed round the neck and fore-paws of the creature. He was then lifted, so as to let him regain his feet. He instantly made for the water, plunged in, the cask floated after him and prevented his sinking. We were all on board in a moment. The worthy fellow, after vainly attempting to dive, set himself diligently to swim right forward, towing us comfortably after him. I was ready to cut the line on the least appearance of danger, and kept him on the course for Safety Bay by striking the water with a boat-hook, right or left, according as the turtle was disposed to turn too much one way or the other. The boys were delighted with the fun, and compared me to Neptune in his car, drawn by dolphins, and accompanied by Amphitrite and attendant Tritons.

We landed safely at the usual place, near Rockburg, and the turtle was condemned and executed soon afterward; the shell, which was quite eight feet long and three broad, was, when cleaned and prepared, to form a trough for the water supply at the cave, and the meat was carefully salted and stored up for many a good and savory meal.

## CHAPTER IX.

**I** WAS seated one day with my wife and Fritz beneath the shade of the veranda of Rockburg, engaged in wickerwork, and chatting pleasantly. Suddenly Fritz got up, advanced a step or two, and gazing fixedly along the avenue which led from Jackal River, he exclaimed:

“I see something strange in the distance! What in the world can it be? First it seems to be drawn in coils on the ground like a cable, then uprises as it were a little mast, then that sinks and the coils move along again. It is coming towards the bridge.”

My wife took alarm at this description, and calling the other boys, retreated into the cave. I asked them to close up the entrances, and keep watch with firearms at the upper windows. These were openings we had made in the rock at some elevation, reached within by steps, and a kind of gallery which passed along the front of the rooms.

Fritz remained by me while I examined the object through my spyglass.

“It is, as I feared, an enormous serpent!” cried I; “it advances directly this way, and we shall be placed in the greatest possible danger, for it will cross the bridge to a certainty. Thank God we are here, where we can keep in safe retreat while we watch for an opportunity to destroy this frightful enemy. Go up to your mother now and assist in

preparing the firearms; I will join you directly, but I must further observe the monster's movements."

Fritz left me unwillingly. I continued to watch the serpent, which was of gigantic size, and already much too near the bridge to admit of the possibility of removing that means of access to our dwelling. I recollected, too, how easy it would pass through the walls. The reptile advanced with writhing and undulatory movements. From time to time it reared its head to the height of fifteen or twenty feet, and slowly turned it about, as though on the look-out for prey."

As it crossed the bridge, with a slow, suspicious motion, I withdrew, and hastily rejoined my little party. We prepared to garrison our fortress in warlike array. We placed ourselves at the upper openings.

After strongly barricading everything below ourselves, unseen, we awaited with beating hearts the further advance of the foe, which speedily became visible to us.

Its movements appeared to become uncertain, as though puzzled by the trace of human habitation; it turned in different directions, coiling and uncoiling, and frequently rearing its head, but keeping about the middle of the space in front of the cave. Suddenly, as though unable to resist doing so, one after another the boys fired, and even their mother discharged her gun. The shots took not the slightest effect beyond startling the monster, whose movements were accelerated. Fritz and I also fired with steadier aim, but with the same want of success. The monster, passing on with a gliding motion, entered the reedy marsh to the left and entirely disappeared.

A wonderful weight seemed lifted from our hearts, while all eagerly discussed the vast length and awful though magnificent appearance of the serpent. I had recognized it as the boa constrictor. It was a vast specimen, upward of thirty feet in length.

The near neighborhood of this terrific reptile occasioned me the utmost anxiety. I asked that no one should leave the house on any pretence whatever without my express permission.

During three whole days we were kept in suspense and fear. We did not dare to stir above a few hundred steps from the door, although during all that time the enemy showed no sign of his presence.

We began to think the boa had passed across the swamp, and found his way by some cleft or chasm through the wall of cliffs beyond. On the third day the restless behavior of our geese and ducks gave proof that he still lurked in the thicket of reeds which they were accustomed to make their nightly resting-place. They swam anxiously about, and finally taking wing, they crossed the harbor and took up their quarters on Shark Island.

My embarrassment increased as time passed on. I could not venture to attack with insufficient force a monstrous and formidable serpent concealed in dense thickets amidst dangerous swamps. Yet it was dreadful to live in a state of blockade, cut off from all the important duties in which we were engaged, and shut up with our animals in the unnatural light of the cave, enduring constant anxiety and perturbation.

Out of this painful state we were at last delivered by none other than our good old simple-hearted donkey, out of sheer stupidity. My wife having one morning opened the door, old Grizzle, who was fresh and frolicsome after the long rest and regular feeding, suddenly broke away from the halter, cut some awkward capers, then bolting out, careered at full gallop straight for the marsh.

In vain we called him by name. Fritz would even have rushed after him, had not I held him back. In another moment the ass was close to the thicket, and with the cold shudder of horror, we beheld the snake rear itself from its

lair, the fiery eyes glanced around, the dark, deadly jaws opened widely, the forked tongue darted greedily forth—poor Grizzle's fate was sealed.

Becoming aware on a sudden of his danger, he stopped short, spread out all four legs, and set up the most piteous and discordant bray that ever wrung echo from rocks.

Swift and straight at a fencer's thrust, the destroyer was upon him, wound round him, entangled, enfolded, compressed him, all the while cunningly avoiding the convulsive kicks of the agonized animal. A cry of horror arose from the spectators of this miserable tragedy.

"Shoot him, father! oh, shoot him—do save poor Grizzle!"

"My children, it is impossible!" cried I. "Our old friend is lost to us forever! I have hopes, however, that when gorged with his prey we may be able to attack the snake with some chance of success."

"But the horrible wretch is never going to swallow him all at once, father?" cried Jack.

"Snakes have no grinders, but only fangs, therefore they cannot chew their food, and must swallow it whole."

"It seems utterly impossible that the broad ribs, the strong legs, hoofs and all, should go down that throat," exclaimed Fritz.

"Only see," I replied, "how the monster deals with his victim. Closer and more tightly he curls his crushing folds. The bones give way. He is kneading him into a shapeless mass. He will soon begin to gorge his prey, and slowly but surely it will disappear down that distended maw!"

The mother, with Franz, found the scene all too horrible, and hastened into the cave, trembling and distressed.

To the rest of us there seemed a fearful fascination in the dreadful sight, and we could not move from the spot. I expected that the boa before swallowing his prey, would cover it with saliva, to aid in the operation. It was evident

to us, however, that this popular idea was erroneous. The act of lubricating the mass must have taken place during the process of swallowing; certainly nothing was applied beforehand.

This wonderful performance lasted from seven in the morning until noon. When the awkward morsel was entirely swallowed, the serpent lay stiff, distorted, and apparently insensible along the edge of the marsh.

I felt that now or never was the moment for attack!

Calling on my sons to maintain their courage and presence of mind, I left our retreat with a feeling of joyous emotion quite new to me, and approached with rapid steps, and levelled gun the outstretched form of the serpent. Fritz followed me closely. Jack, somewhat timidly, came several paces behind; while Ernest, after a little hesitation, remained where he was.

The monster's body was stiff and motionless, which made its rolling and fiery eyes, and the slow, spasmodic undulations of its tail more fearful by contrast.

We fired together, and both balls entered the skull. The light of the eye was extinguished. The only movement was in the further extremity of the body, which rolled, writhed, coiled, and lashed from side to side.

Advancing closer, we fired our pistols directly into its head. A convulsive quiver ran through the mighty frame. The boa constrictor lay dead.

"I hope the terrible noise you made just now was the signal of victory," said my wife, drawing near with the utmost circumspection, and holding Franz tightly by the hand. "I was half afraid to come, I assure you."

"See this dreadful creature dead at our feet; and let us thank God that we have been able to destroy such an enemy."

My wife having gone to prepare dinner we continued talking as we rested in the shade of some rocks, near the ser-

pent, for a considerable time. The open air was welcome to us after our long imprisonment. We were, besides, desirous to drive off any birds of prey who might be attracted to the carcass, which we wished to preserve entire.

My boys questioned me closely on the subject of serpents in general. I described to them the action of the poison fangs; how they folded back on the sides of the upper jaw; and how the poison-secreting glands and reservoir are found at the back and sides of the head, giving to the venomous serpents that peculiar width of head which is so familiar a characteristic.

“The fangs are hollow,” said I, “and when the creatures bite, the pressure forces down a tiny drop of the liquid poison, which enters the wound, and, through the veins, quickly spreads over the entire system. Sometimes, if taken in time, cures are effected, but in most cases the bite of a serpent is followed by speedy death.”

“What is the best thing to be done for the bite of a serpent?” inquired Fritz.

“Remedies are very various, very uncertain, and differ with the species inflicting the bite. Suction, ammonia, oil, the use of the knife, application of fresh mould, lunar caustic, leaves of certain plants, all these and more are mentioned.

“A mode of cure adopted by the natives of India, Ceylon, and parts of Africa, is by the application of a remarkable object called snake-stone. These are described as flattish, something like an almond with squared ends, rather light, bearing a very high polish, and of an intense jetty black.

“On being bitten by a cobra, the sufferer applies one of these ‘stones’ to each puncture, where they adhere strongly for a time, five or six minutes being about the average. They seem to absorb the blood as it flows from the wound, and at last fall off, when the danger is considered to be over.”



“Come, Ernest, can you not give us an epitaph for our unfortunate friend, the donkey?”

Ernest took the matter quite seriously, and planting his elbows on his knees, he beat his thoughtful brow in his hands, and remained wrapped in poetic meditation for about two minutes.

“I have it,” cried he, “but perhaps you will all laugh at me?”

“Ho, no, don’t be shy, old fellow; spit it out!” and thus encouraged by his brother, Ernest, with the blush of a modest author, began:

“Beneath this stone poor Grizzle’s bones are laid,  
A faithful ass he was, and loved by all.  
At length, his master’s voice he disobeyed,  
And thereby came his melancholy fall.  
A monstrous serpent springing from the grass,  
Seized, crushed, and swallowed him before our eyes.  
But we, though yet we mourn our honest ass,  
Are grateful; for he thereby saved the lives  
Of all the human beings on this shore—  
A father, mother, and their children four.”

“Hurrah for the epitaph! Well done, Ernest!” resounded on all sides, and taking out a large red pencil I used for marking wood, the lines were forthwith inscribed on a great flat stone, being, as I told the boy, the very best poetry that had ever been written on our coast.

We then had dinner and afterward went to work with the serpent.

The first operation was to recover the mangled remains of the ass, which being effected, he was buried in the soft marshy ground close by, and the hole filled up with the fragments of rock.

Then we yoked Storm and Grumble to the serpent, and dragged it to a convenient distance from Rockburg, where the process of skinning, stuffing, and sewing up again afforded occupation of the deepest interest to the boys for several days.

We took great pains to coil it round a pole in the museum, arranging the head with the jaws wide open, so as to look as alarming as possible, and contriving to make the eye and tongue sufficiently well to represent nature; in fact, our dogs never passed the monster without growling, and must have wondered at our taste in keeping such a pet.

Over the entrance leading to the museum and library were inscribed these words:

NO ADMITTANCE FOR ASSES.

## CHAPTER X.

**I**T was most important to ascertain whether any other serpent lurked among the woods of our little territory between the cliffs and the sea. Preparations were set on foot for a search throughout the country beyond the river, as far as the Gap. I wished all the family to go on the expedition, a decision which gave universal satisfaction.

Intending to be engaged in this search for several weeks, we took the small tent and a store of all sorts of necessary provisions, as well as firearms, tools, cooking utensils, and torches.

All these things were packed on the cart, which was drawn by the buffalo and the bull, Storm and Grumble. Jack and Franz mounted them, and acted at once the part of riders and drivers. My wife sat comfortably in the cart, Fritz rode in advance, while Ernest and I walked. We were protected in flank by the dogs and Fangs, our tame jackal.

Fritz, Jack, and Franz presently diverged with me to the sugar-cane brake, and satisfied ourselves that our enemy had not been there. It was long since we had enjoyed the fresh juice of these canes. We were refreshing ourselves therewith, when a loud barking of dogs, and loud rustling and rattling through the thicket of canes, disturbed our pleasant occupation. We could see nothing a yard off from

where we stood. I hurried to the open ground, and with the guns in readiness we awaited what was coming.

In a few minutes a herd of creatures like little pigs issued from the thicket, and made off in single file at a brisk trot. They were of a uniform grey color, and showed short sharp tusks.

My trusty double-barrel speedily laid low two of the fugitives. The others continued to follow their leader in line, scarcely turning aside to pass the dead bodies of their comrades, and maintaining the same steady pace, although Fritz and Jack also fired and killed several.

I felt certain that these were peccaries. I remembered that an odoriferous gland in the back must be removed immediately, otherwise the meat will become tainted, and quite unfit to eat. This operation, with the help of my boys, I accordingly performed at once.

I determined to cure a good supply of hams, so we made haste to load the cart. The boys adorned it with flowers and green boughs, and with songs of triumph which made the woods ring they conveyed the valuable supply of game to the hut we had made hard by on a former occasion. Their mother was anxiously waiting for us.

After dinner we set to work upon our pigs, singeing and scalding off the bristles. I cut out the hams and diligently cleansed and salted the meat. The boys meanwhile prepared a shed, where it was to be hung to be cured in the smoke of fires and green wood.

This unexpected business of course detained us for some time. On the second day, when the smoking shed was ready, the boys were anxious to cook the smallest porker in the Otaheitian fashion. For this purpose they dug a hole, in which they burned a quantity of dry grass, sticks, and weeds, heating stones, which were placed round the sides of the pit.

While the younger boys made ready the oven, Fritz singed and washed his peccary. We stuffed it with potatoes, onions, and herbs, and a good sprinkling of salt and pepper. He then sewed up the opening, and enveloped the pig in large leaves to guard it from the ashes and dust of its cooking-place.

The fire no longer blazed, but the embers and stones were glowing hot. The pig was carefully placed in the hole, covered over with hot ashes, and the whole with earth, so that it looked like a big mole heap.

Dinner was looked forward to with curiosity. Great excitement prevailed as Fritz removed the earth, turf, and stones, and a delicious appetizing odor arose from the opening. It was the smell of roast pork, certainly, but with a flavor of spices which surprised me, until I thought of the leaves in which the food had been wrapped up. These proved to belong to a tree which I knew to be found in Madagascar, called by the natives *ravensara*, or "good leaf." It is said to combine the scent of the nutmeg, clove, and cinnamon.

When all was in readiness for the prosecution of our journey, we closed and barricaded the hut, in which, for the present, we left the store of bacon. Arranging our march in the usual patriarchal style, we took our way to the Gap, the thorough defence of which defile was the main object we had in view.

We halted on the outskirts of a little wood, behind which, to the right, rose the precipitous and frowning cliffs of the mountain gorge, while to the left flowed the torrent, leaving between it and the rocks the narrow pass we called the Gap, and passing onward to mingle its water with the sea. We pitched the tent, and then occupied ourselves with preparations for the next day, when it was my intention to penetrate the country beyond the defile, and make a longer ex-

cursor across the savannah than had yet been undertaken.

All was ready for a start at an early hour. My brave wife consented to remain in camp with Franz as her companion. The three elder boys, and all the dogs except Juno went with me.

Our march proceeded slowly. Many were the uncomplimentary remarks made on the "new country."

It was "Arabia Petrea," groaned one. "Desert of Sahara," sighed another. "Fit abode for demons," muttered a third. "Subterranean volcanic fires are raging beneath our feet."

"Patience, my good fellows!" cried I; "you are too easily discouraged. Look beyond the toilsome way to those grand mountains, whose spurs are already stretching forward to meet us. Who knows what pleasant memories await us amid their deep declivities? I, for my part, expect to find water, fresh grass, trees, and a lovely resting-place."

We were all glad to repose beneath the shade of the first over-hanging rock we came to, although, by pressing further upward, we might have attained to a pleasanter spot. When hunger was somewhat appeased, Fritz cast his eyes over the expanse of plain before us, and after looking fixedly for a moment, exclaimed:

"Is it possible that I see a party of horsemen riding at full gallop toward us! Can they be wild Arabs of the desert?"

"Arabs, my boy! certainly not; but take the spyglass and make them out exactly. We shall have to be on our guard, whatever they are!"

"I cannot see distinctly enough to be sure," said he presently; "I could fancy them wild cattle, loaded carts, wandering haystacks, in fact, almost anything I like."

The spyglass passed from hand to hand. Jack and

Ernest agreed in thinking the moving objects were men on horseback. When it came to my turn to look, I at once pronounced them to be very large ostriches.

“This is fortunate, indeed!” I exclaimed; “we must try to secure one of these magnificent birds. The feathers alone are worth having.”

“A live ostrich, father! that would be splendid. Why, we might ride upon him!”

As the ostriches approached, we began to consider in what way we should attempt a capture. I sent Fritz and Jack to recall the dogs, and placed myself with Ernest behind some shrub which would conceal us from the birds as they came onward.

“I do not believe we shall have a chance with these birds,” said I, “except by sending Fritz’s tame eagle in pursuit; and for that we must bide our time, and let them come as near as possible.”

We had the dogs concealed as much as possible. The stately birds suddenly perceiving us, paused, hesitated, and appeared uneasy. Yet, as no movement was made, they drew nearer, with outstretched necks, examining curiously the unwonted spectacle before them.

The dogs became impatient, struggled from our grasp, and furiously rushed toward our astonished visitors. In an instant they would have been beyond our reach, but as they turned to fly the eagle was unhooded. Singling out the male bird the falcon made his fatal swoop, and, piercing the skull, the magnificent creature was laid low. Before we could reach the spot the dogs had joined the bird of prey, and were fiercely tearing the flesh and bedabbling the splendid plumes with gore.

This sight grieved us.

“What a pity we could not capture the glorious bird alive!” exclaimed Fritz, as we took its beautiful feathers. “It must

I am sure, have stood more than six feet high, and two of us might have mounted him at once! But what does Jack mean by waving his cap and beckoning in that excited fashion? What has he found, I wonder!"

He ran a little way toward us, exclaiming:

"Eggs, father! Ostriches' eggs! A huge nest full—do come, quick!"

We all hastened to the spot, and in a slight hollow of the ground beheld more than twenty eggs, as large as an infant's head.

The idea of carrying more than two away with us was preposterous, although the boys, forgetting what the weight would be, seriously contemplated clearing the nest.

They were satisfied when a kind of landmark had been set up, so that if we returned we might easily find the nest.

As each egg weighed about three pounds, the boys soon found the burden considerable, even when tied into a handkerchief and carried like a basket. To relieve them, I cut a strong elastic heath stick, and suspending an egg in its sling at each end, laid the bent stick over Jack's shoulder, and like a Dutch dairy-maid with her milk pails, he stepped merrily along without inconvenience.

We presently reached a marshy place. The soft ground was trodden and marked by the footsteps of many different sorts of animals. We saw tracks of buffaloes, antelopes, onagers or quaggas, but no trace whatever of any kind of serpent. Our journey in search of monster reptiles was signalized by very satisfactory failure.

By sunset we reached the tent, and joyfully rejoined the mother and Franz, right glad to find a hearty meal prepared for us, as well as a large heap of brushwood for the watch-fire.

When a full account of our adventures had been given, mother related what she had done during our absence. She and Franz had made their way through the wood up to the



rocks behind it, and discovered a bed of pure white clay, which it seemed to her might be used for making porcelain. Then she had contrived a drinking trough for the cattle out of a split bamboo.

She had arranged a hearth in a sheltered place by building up large stones, cemented with the white clay. Finally, she had cut a quantity of canes and brought them, on the cart, to be in readiness for the building we had in hand.

## CHAPTER XI.

**A**T early dawn I aroused the boys, and with two dogs we galloped off—first to visit some euphorbia trees to collect the gum, and then to discover whether the ostrich had deserted her eggs in the sand.

Our steeds carried us down the Green Valley at a rapid rate, and we followed the direction we had pursued on our former expedition. We soon reached Turtle Marsh, and then, filling our water-flasks, we arrived at the rising ground where Fritz discovered the “mounted Arabs.”

Jack and Franz were some distance beyond us, when suddenly four magnificent ostriches rose from the sand where they had been sitting.

The boys perceived them, and with a great shout, drove them toward us. In front ran a splendid male bird, his feathers of shining black, and his great tail plume waving behind. Three females of an ashen grey color followed him. They approached us with incredible swiftness, and were within gunshot before they perceived us. Fritz had had the forethought to bind up the beak of his eagle so that should he bring down an ostrich, he might be unable to injure it.

He threw up the falcon which, towering upward, swooped down upon the head of the foremost bird, and so confused and alarmed him, that he could not defend himself nor con-

tinue the fight. So greatly was his speed checked that Jack overtook him, and hurling his lasso, enfolded his wings and legs in its deadly coils and brought him to the ground. The other ostriches were almost out of sight, so leaving them to their own devices, we leaped from our steeds and attempted to approach the captured bird. He struggled fearfully, and kicked with such violence, right and left, that I almost despaired of getting him home alive.

It occurred to me, however, that if we could cover his eyes, his fury might be subdued. I instantly acted upon this idea, and flung over his head my coat and hunting-bag, which effectually shut out the light.

No sooner had I done this than his struggles ceased and we were able to approach. We first secured round his body a broad strip of seal skin, on each side of which I fastened a stout piece of cord, that I might be able to lead him easily. Then, fastening another cord in a loop round his legs that he might be prevented from breaking into a gallop, we released him from the coils of the lasso.

“Do you know,” said I to the boys, “how the natives of India secure a newly-captured elephant?”

“Oh, yes!” said Fritz; “they fasten him between two tame elephants. We’ll do that to this fine fellow, and tame him double-quick.”

“The only difficulty will be,” remarked Jack, “that we have no tame ostriches. However, I daresay Storm and Grumble will have no objection to perform their part, and it will puzzle even this great monster to run away with them.”

So we at once began operations. Storm and Grumble were led up on either side of the recumbent ostrich, and the cords secured to their girths. Jack and Franz, each armed with a stout whip, mounted their respective steeds, the



E.M.B.

wrappers were removed from the bird's eyes, and we stood by to watch what would next occur.

For some moments after the return of his sight he lay perfectly still, then he arose with a bound and, not aware of the cords which hampered him, attempted to dash forward. The thongs were stout and he was brought to his knees. A fruitless struggle ensued, and then at length, seeming to accommodate himself to circumstances, he set off at a sharp trot, his guards making the air re-echo with their merry shouts. These cries stimulated the ostrich to yet further exertions, but he was at length brought to a stand by the determined refusal of his four-footed companions to continue such a race across loose sand.

The boys having enjoyed the long run, I told them to walk with the prisoner slowly home, while Fritz and I returned to examine the ostrich's nest. The eggs were quite warm, and I was certain that the mother had quite recently left the nest. Leaving about half, I packed the rest of the eggs in a large bag I had brought for the purpose, and slung it carefully on the saddle before me. We soon caught up our advance guard, and without other notable incident reached our tent.

Astonishment and dismay were depicted on the face of the mother as we approached.

"My dear husband," she exclaimed, "do you think our provisions so abundant that you must scour the deserts to find some great beast to assist us to devour them. Oh! I do wish you would be content with the menagerie you have already collected, instead of bringing in a specimen of every beast you come across. And this is such a useless monster!"

"Useless! mother," exclaimed Jack; "you would not say so had you seen him run. Why, he will be the fleetest courser in our stables. I am going to make a saddle

and bridle for him, and in future he shall be my only steed. Then as for his appetite, father declares it is most delicate he only wants a little fruit and grass, and a few stones and nails to help his digestion."

At early dawn our picturesque caravan was moving homeward. The ostrich continued so refractory that we were obliged to make him again march between Storm and Grumble. As these gallant steeds were thus employed, the cow was harnessed to the cart, laden with our treasures. Room was left in the cart for the mother, Jack and Franz mounted Storm and Grumble, I rode Lightfoot, and Fritz brought up the rear on Swift.

Within two days we were once more settled at home. Windows and doors were thrown open to admit fresh air, the animals established in their stalls, and the cart's miscellaneous cargo discharged and arranged.

As much time as I could spare I devoted to the ostrich, whom we fastened, for the present, between two bamboo posts in front of our dwelling.

I then turned my attention to the eggs we had brought, and which I determined to hatch, if possible, by artificial heat. For this purpose I arranged a stove, which I maintained at a uniform temperature, and on it I placed the eggs, carefully wrapped in cotton wool.

Next morning Fritz and I went off in the boat, first to Whale Island, there to establish as our colonists, Angora rabbits, and then to Shark Island, where we placed dainty little antelopes. Having made them happy with their liberty and an abundance of food, we returned.

We devoted much attention to the ostrich. Our efforts on behalf of his education seemed all in vain. He appeared as untamable as ever. I determined, therefore, to adopt the plan which had subdued Fritz's eagle, which also had proved very refractory when we first tried to tame him.

The effect of the tobacco fumes almost alarmed me. The ostrich sank to the ground and lay motionless. Slowly at length, he arose, and paced up and down between the bamboo posts.

He was subdued, but to my dismay resolutely refused all food. I feared he would die. For three days he pined, growing weaker and weaker each day.

“Food he *must* have!” said I to my wife. The mother determined to attempt an experiment. She prepared balls of maize flour mixed with water. One of these she placed within the bird’s beak. He swallowed it, and stretched out his long neck, looking inquiringly for a second mouthful. A second, third, and fourth ball followed the first. His appetite returned and his strength came again.

All the wild nature of the bird had gone. I saw with delight that we might begin his education as soon as we chose. Rice, guavas, maize, and corn he ate readily, *washing it down*, as Jack expressed it, with small pebbles, to the great surprise of Franz, to whom I explained that the ostrich was merely following the instinct common to all birds—that he required these pebbles to digest his food, just as smaller birds require gravel.

After a month of careful training our captive would trot, gallop, obey the sound of our voice, feed from our hand, and, in fact, showed himself perfectly docile. Now our ingenuity was taxed to the utmost. How were we to saddle and bridle a bird? First, for a bit for his beak. Vague ideas passed through my mind, but every one I was obliged to reject. A plan at length occurred to me. I recollected the effect of light and its absence upon the ostrich, how his movements were checked by sudden darkness, and how, with the light, power returned to his limbs.

I immediately constructed a leathern hood to reach from

the neck to the beak, cutting holes in it for the eyes and ears.

Over the eyeholes I contrived square flaps or blinkers, which were so arranged with whalebone springs that they closed tightly of themselves. The reins were connected with these blinkers, so that the flaps might be raised or allowed to close at the rider's pleasure.

When both blinkers were open the ostrich would gallop straight ahead, close his right eye and he turned to the left; close his left and he turned to the right; shut both and he stood stock-still.

I was justly proud of my contrivance, but, before I could really test its utility, I was obliged to make a saddle. After several failures, I succeeded in manufacturing one to my liking, and in properly securing it. It was something like an old-fashioned trooper's saddle, peaked before and behind—for my great fear was lest the boys should fall. This curious-looking contrivance I placed upon the shoulders as near the neck as possible, and secured it with strong girths round the wings and across the breast, to avoid all possibility of the saddle slipping down the bird's sloping back.

I soon saw that my plan would succeed, though skill and considerable practice were necessary in one's use of my patent bridle. It was difficult to remember that to check the courser's speed it was necessary to slacken rein, and that the tighter the reins were drawn, the faster he would fly. We at length, however, all learned to manage Master Hurricane, and the distance between Rockburg and Falconhurst was traversed in an almost incredibly short space of time.

I now applied myself to the manufacture of porcelain. I first cleaned the pipeclay and talc from all foreign substances, and made them ready to be beaten down with water into a soft mass, and then prepared my moulds of gypsum plaster.



These preparations were at length made, and the moulds received a thin layer of the porcelain material. When this was partly baked, I sprinkled over it a powder of colored glass beads which I had crushed, and which looked very pretty in patterns upon the transparent porcelain.

Some of my china vessels cracked with the heat of the stove, some were very ill-shaped; but, after many failures, I succeeded in producing a set of white cups and saucers, a cream-jug, a sugar-basin, and half a dozen small plates.

I must allow that my china was far from perfect. Nevertheless, the general appearance gave great satisfaction, and when the plates were filled with rosy and golden fruit resting on green leaves, and fragrant tea filled cups, it greatly added to the appearance of the table.

During the next rainy season, we turned out a very presentable and also serviceable *cajack*, or bark canoe, which was destined to be used chiefly by Fritz. It was by means of this craft that he one day was enabled to return with a dead walrus in tow.

## CHAPTER XII.

**W**E spend our years as a tale that is told," said King David.

These words recur to me again and again as I review ten years, of which the story lies chronicled in the pages of my journal. Year followed year; chapter succeeded chapter; steadily, imperceptibly time was passing away.

The shade of sadness cast on my mind by retrospect of this kind was dispelled by thoughts full of gratitude to God, for the welfare and happiness of my beloved family during so long a period. I had cause especially to rejoice in seeing our sons advance to manhood, strengthened by early training for lives of usefulness and activity wherever their lot might fall.

And my great wish is that young people who read this record of our lives and adventures should learn from it how admirably suited is the peaceful, industrious, and pious life of a cheerful, united family to the formation of strong, pure, and manly character. None, take a better place in the great national family, none are happier or more beloved than those who go forth from such homes to fulfill new duties and to gather fresh interests around them.

Rockburg and Falconhurst continued to be our winter and summer headquarters, and improvements were added which made them more and more convenient, as well as attractive in appearance.

The fountains, trellised verandas, and plantations round Rockburg completely changed the character of the residence which, on account of the heat and want of vegetation had in early days been so distasteful to my wife. Flowering creepers overhung the balconies and pillars, while shrubs and trees, both native and European, grew luxuriantly in groves of our planting.

In the distance Shark Island, now clothed with graceful palms, guarded the entrance to Safety Bay, the battery and flagstaff prominently visible on its crested rock.

The swamp, cleared and drained, was now a considerable lake, with just marsh and reeds enough beyond it to form good cover for the waterfowl, whose favorite retreat was it.

Beneath the spreading trees and through the aromatic shrubberies old Hurry, the ostrich, was usually to be seen marching about, with grave and dignified pace, as though monarch of all he surveyed. Every variety of beautiful pigeons nested in the rocks and dovecotes, their soft cooing and glossy plumage making them favorite household pets.

By the bridge alone could Rockburg be approached; for higher up the river, where, near the cascade, it was fordable, a dense and impenetrable thicket of orange and lemon trees, Indian figs, prickly pears, and all manner of thorn-bearing shrubs, planted by us, now formed a complete barrier.

The rabbit warren on Shark Island kept us well supplied with food, as well as soft and useful fur; and, as the antelopes did not thrive on Whale Isle, they also were placed among the shady groves with the rabbits, and their own island devoted to such work as candle-making, tanning, wool-cleaning, and any other needful but offensive operations. The farm at Woodlands flourished, and our flocks and herds supplied us with mutton, beef, and veal, while my wife's dairy was almost more than she could manage.

Excellent health had been enjoyed by us all during these

ten years, though my wife occasionally suffered from slight attacks of fever, and the boys sometimes met with little accidents.

They were all fine, handsome fellows. Fritz, now twenty-four, was of moderate height, uncommonly strong, active, muscular, and high-spirited. Ernest, two years younger, was tall and slight, in disposition, mild, calm, and studious. His early faults of indolence and selfishness were almost entirely overcome. He possessed refined tastes and great intellectual power. Jack, at twenty, strongly resembled Fritz, being about his height, though more lightly built, and remarkable rather for active grace and agility than for muscular strength. Franz, a lively youth of seventeen, had some of the qualities of each of his brothers. He possessed wit and shrewdness, but not the arch drollery of Jack. All were honorable, God-fearing young men, dutiful and affectionate to their mother and myself, and warmly attached to each other.

Although so many years had elapsed in total seclusion, it continued to be my firm impression that we should one day be restored to the society of our fellow men.

But time, which was bringing our sons to manhood, was also carrying their parents onward to old age. Anxious, gloomy thoughts relating to their future, should they be left indeed alone, sometimes oppressed my heart. On such occasions I would not communicate the sense of depression to my family, but turning in prayer to the Almighty Father, laid my trouble before Him, with never-failing renewal of strength and hope.

Fritz had been absent one whole day from Rockburg, and not until evening did we remark that his cajack was gone and that he must be out to sea. Anxious to see him return before nightfall I went off to Shark Island with Ernest and Jack in order to look out for him from the watch tower there. At the same time we hoisted our signal flag, and loaded the gun.

When he at length appeared, I remarked that his skiff sailed at a slower rate than usual toward the shore. The cannon was fired to let him know that his approach was observed. Then we joyfully hurried back to receive him at the harbor.

It was easy to see, as he drew near, what had delayed his progress. The cajack towed a large sack, besides being heavily laden.

“Welcome, Fritz!” I cried. “Welcome back, wherever you come from, and whatever you bring. You seem to have quite a cargo there!”

“Yes, and my trip has led to discoveries as well as booty,” answered he; “interesting discoveries which will tempt us again in the same direction. Come boys let’s carry up the things, and while I rest I will relate my adventures.”

“You have discovered treasure, indeed!” I exclaimed; “why, these are most beautiful pearls! Valueless, certainly, under present circumstances; but they may prove a source of wealth, should we ever again come into contact with the civilized world. We must visit your pearl-oyster beds at the earliest opportunity.

Next morning Fritz drew me aside and confided to me a most remarkable story in these words:

“There was something very extraordinary about an albatross I knocked over yesterday, father. I raised it to the deck of the canoe, and then perceived a piece of rag wound round one of its legs. This I removed, and, to my utter astonishment, saw English words written on it, which I plainly made out to be—‘Save an unfortunate Englishwoman from the smoking rock!’

“This little sentence sent a thrill through every nerve. My brain seemed to whirl. I felt stupefied for some minutes. The bird began to show signs of life, which recalled me to myself. Quickly deciding what must be done, I tore a strip

from my handkerchief, on which I traced the words—‘Do not despair! Help is near!’ ”

“This I carefully bound round one leg, replacing the rag on the other, and then applied myself to the restoration of the bird. It gradually revived. After drinking a little, it surprised me by suddenly rising on the wing, faltering a moment in its flight, and then rapidly disappearing from my view in a westerly direction.

“Now, father, one thought occupies me continually. Will my note ever reach this English woman? Shall I be able to find and to save her?”

I listened to this account with feelings of the liveliest interest and astonishment.

“My dear son,” said I, “you have done wisely in confiding to me alone your most exciting discovery. Unless we know more, we must not unsettle the others by speaking of it. It appears to me quite possible that these words were penned long ago on some distant shore, where, by this time, the unhappy stranger may have perished miserably. By the ‘smoking rock’ must be meant a volcano. There are none here,”

Fritz was not disposed to look at the case from this gloomy point of view. He did not think the rag so very old. He believed smoke might rise from a rock which was not volcanic. Evidently he cherished the hope that he might be able to respond effectually to this touching appeal.

After earnest consultation on the subject, we decided that Fritz should go in search of the writer of the message, but not until he had so altered the canoe as to fit it for carrying two persons, as well as provisions sufficient to admit of his absence for a considerable time.

An excursion to Pearl Bay was now the event to which all thoughts turned, and for which preparations on a grand scale were made. It was due to form, at it were, the basis of the more important voyage Fritz had in view, and to which,

unsuspected by the rest, he could devote all his attention.

I took an opportunity, one day, when all were present, to remark in a serious tone:

“I have been considering, dear wife, that our eldest son is now of an age to be dependent on himself. I shall, therefore, henceforth leave him at liberty to act in all respects according to his own judgment. Especially in the matter of voyages or excursions, he must not be hampered by the fear of alarming us should he choose to remain absent longer than we expect. I have such entire confidence in his prudence, and at the same time in his affection for us that I am certain he will never needlessly cause us anxiety.”

Fritz looked gratefully toward me as I spoke. His mother ratified my words, embracing him affectionately, and saying with emotion, “God bless and preserve thee, my boy!”

It took some time to make several raking or scraping machines, which I invented for the purpose of detaching and lifting the pearl-oysters from their native rocks. That gave Fritz leisure to change the fittings of his canoe so as to have a spare seat in it.

“You must pilot us through the channel in the reef, Fritz,” said I on the morning that we started; adding, in a lower tone, “and then it is to be ‘farewell,’ my son!”

“Yes, dear father—*Au revoir!*” returned he, brightly, with a glance full of meaning, while he threw into his canoe a cushion and a fur cloak. Then, springing into his skiff, he led the way toward the open sea.

We followed carefully, and soon passed the reef. Fritz turned in the opposite direction, and quickly vanished behind the point, which I afterwards named Cape Farewell.

When missed by his brothers, I said he had a fancy to explore more of the coast, and if he found it interesting he might, instead of only a few hours, remain absent for two or three days.

### CHAPTER XIII.

**F**IVE days passed, but Fritz still remained absent. I could not conceal my anxiety, and at length determined to follow him. All were delighted at the proposal. Even mother, when she heard that we were to sail in the yacht, agreed to accompany us.

The boat was stored, and on a bright morning, with a favorable breeze, we five, with the dogs, stepped aboard, and ran for Cape Minister.

Our beautiful little yacht bounded over the water gaily. The bright sunshine and delicious sea breeze put us all in the highest spirits. The boys were about to raise a joyful shout, but checked the shout upon their very lips; for darting behind a rock they suddenly espied a canoe paddled by a tall and muscular savage, who now stood up in his skiff and appeared to be examining us attentively. Seeing that we were standing toward him, the swarthy native seized his paddle and again darted behind a rock. An awful thought now took possession of me. There must be a tribe of blacks lurking on these shores, and Fritz must have fallen into their hands. I determined, however, that should we not be easily taken. Our guns were loaded and run out.

Presently a dusky face appeared, peeping at us from a lofty rock. It vanished, and we saw another peeping at us from lower down. Then, again, the skiff put out as though to



make a further reconnoitre. All, even Jack, looked anxious, and glanced at me for orders.

“Hoist a white flag,” said I, “and hand me the speaking-trumpet.”

I seized the instrument and uttered such peaceable words in the Malay language as I could recall. Neither the flag nor my words seemed to produce any effect. The savage was about to return to the shore.

Jack hereupon lost patience, and in his turn took up the trumpet. “Come here, you black son of a gun,” he exclaimed. “Come on board and make friends, or we’ll blow you and your—”

“Stop! stop! you foolish boy,” I said; “you will but alarm the man, with your wild words and gestures.”

“No! but see,” he cried, “he is paddling toward us!” And sure enough the canoe was rapidly approaching.

Presently a cry from Franz alarmed me. “Look! Look!” he shrieked, “the villain is in Fritz’s cajak. I can see the walrus head.”

Ernest alone remained unmoved. He took the speaking-trumpet: “Fritz, ahoy!” he shouted; “welcome, old fellow!”

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when I, too, recognized the well-known face beneath its dusky disguise.

In another minute the brave boy was on board, and in spite of his blackened face was kissed and welcomed heartily. He was now assailed with a storm of questions from all sides: “Where had he been?” “What had kept him so long, and why had he turned blackamoor?”

“The last question,” replied he, with a smile, “is the only one I will now answer. The others shall be explained when I give a full account of my adventures. Hearing guns fired, my mind was instantly filled with the ideas of

Malay pirates. I never dreamed that you could be here in the yacht, so I disguised myself as you now see me, and came forth to reconnoitre. When you addressed me in Malay you only added to my terror, for it left not a doubt in my mind that you were pirates."

Having in our turn described to him our adventures, I asked him if he knew of a suitable spot for the anchorage of the yacht.

"Certainly," he replied, casting toward me a glance full of meaning; "I can lead you to an island where there is a splendid anchorage, and which is itself worth seeing, for it contains all sorts of strange things." After removing the stains from his skin, and turning himself once more into a civilized being, he again sprang into his canoe and piloted us to a picturesque little island in the bay.

Now that there could be no doubt as to the success of Fritz's expedition, I no longer hesitated to give my wife a private account of this project, and to prepare her mind for the surprise which awaited her. She was greatly startled, as I expected, and seemed almost overcome with the emotion at the idea of seeing a human being, and that being one of her own sex.

The boys could not at all understand the evident air of mystery and suppressed excitement which neither their mother, Fritz, nor I could entirely conceal. They cast glances of the greatest curiosity toward the island. As soon as the sails were furled and the anchor dropped, they sprang eagerly ashore. In a body we followed Fritz, maintaining perfect silence. Presently we emerged from the thicket through which we were passing, and saw before us a hut of sheltering boughs, at the entrance of which burned a cheerful fire.

Into this leafy bower Fritz dived, leaving his brothers without, mute with astonishment. In another moment

he emerged, leading by the hand a slight handsome youth, by his dress apparently a young English naval officer. The pair advanced to meet us. Fritz, with a countenance radiant with joy, briefly introduced his companion as Edward Montrose.

“And,” he continued, looking at his mother and me, “will you not welcome him as a friend and a brother to our family circle?”

“That will we, indeed!” I exclaimed, advancing and holding out my hands to the fair young stranger. “Our wild life may have roughened our looks and manners, but it has not hardened our hearts, I trust.”

The mother, too, embraced the seeming youth most heartily. The lads, and even the dogs, were not behind-hand in testifying their gratification at the appearance of their new friend—the former delighted at the idea of a fresh companion, and the latter won by her sweet voice and appearance.

From the expression made use of by Fritz I perceived that the girl wished to remain unrevealed to the rest of the party until the mother could obtain for her a costume more suited to her real character.

The mere fact of meeting with any human being after so many years of isolation was in itself sufficient to raise the boys to the greatest state of excitement. That this being should be one so handsome, so gay, so perfectly charming, seemed completely to have turned their heads. When our new friend had retired for the night, and silence had been restored, Jack exclaimed:

“Now, then, Fritz, if you please, just tell me where you came across this jolly fellow. Did you take your mysterious voyage in search of him, or did you meet him by chance? Out with your adventures, while we sit comfortably round the fire.”

Jack cast more wood upon the blazing pile, and threw himself down in his usual careless fashion, prepared to listen attentively.

Fritz, after a few moments' hesitation, began:

"Perhaps you remember," said he, "how, when I returned from my expedition in the cajack the other day, I struck down an albatross. None but my father at the time knew, however, what had become of the wounded bird or even thought more about it. Yet it was that albatross who brought me notice of the shipwrecked stranger, and he, too, I determined should carry back a message to cheer and encourage the sender.

"I first, as you know, prepared my cajack to carry two persons. Then, with a heart full of hope and trust, I left you and the yacht, and made for the open sea. For several hours I paddled steadily on, till, the wind freshening, I thought it advisable to keep in nearer shore; that, should a regular storm arise, I might find some sheltered bay in which to weather it.

"A high point of land lay before me. I rounded it, and beyond found a calm and pleasant bay, from whose curved and thickly wooded shores ran out a reef of rocks. From the point of this reef rose a column of smoke, steadily and clearly curling upward in the calm air. I could scarcely believe my senses. I stopped gazing at it, as though I were in a dream. Then, with a throbbing pulse and giddy brain, I seized my paddle, and strained every nerve to reach it.

"A few strokes seemed to carry me across the bay. After securing my canoe, I leaped upon the rock, on which the beacon was blazing, but not a sign of a human being could I see. I was about to shout. As the fire had evidently been recently piled up, I knew the stranger could not be far off. Before I could do so, I saw a slight figure passing

along the chain of rocks toward the spot on which I stood. You may all imagine my sensations.

"I advanced a few paces, and then mastering my emotion as best I could, I said in English:

"Welcome, fair stranger! God, in His mercy, has heard your call, and has sent me to your aid!"

"Miss Montrose came quickly forward——"

"Who? What?" shouted the boys, interrupting the narrative; "who came forward?" and amid a general hubbub, Ernest, rising and advancing to his brother, said in his quiet way, "I did not like to make any remark till you actually let out the secret, Fritz, but we need no longer pretend not to see through the disguise of Edward Montrose."

Fritz, though much disconcerted by the discovery of the secret, recovered his self-possession. After bearing with perfect equanimity the jokes with which his brothers assailed him, he joined in three cheers for their new sister. When the confusion and laughter which ensued had subsided, he continued his story:

"Miss Montrose grasped my hands warmly. Guessing from my pronunciation, I am afraid, that I was not in the habit of speaking English every day of my life, she said in French:

"Long, long, have I waited since the bird returned with your message. Thank God, you have come at last!"

"Then with tears of joy and gratitude, she led me to the shore, where she had built a hut and a safe sleeping-place, like Falconhurst on a small scale, among the branches of a tree. I was delighted with all she showed me. Her hut and its fittings evinced no ordinary skill and ingenuity. Round the walls hung bows, arrows, lances, and bird-snares. On her work-table, in boxes and cases, carved skillfully with a knife, were fish-hooks of mother-of-pearl,

needles made from fish-bones, and bodkins from the beaks of birds, fishing-lines of all sorts, and knives and other tools. These latter she told me were, with a chest of wearing apparel, almost the only things washed ashore after the wreck, when three years ago she was cast alone upon this desolate coast. I wondered more and more at the wonderful way in which this girl had surmounted obstacles.

“The hut itself was a marvel of skill. Stout posts had been driven into the ground, with cross pieces of bamboo, to form a framework. The walls had been woven with reeds, the roof thatched with palm-leaves, and the whole plastered smoothly with clay, an open space being left in the centre of the roof for a chimney to carry off the smoke of the fire.

“She told me she was the daughter of a British officer, who had served for many years in India, where she herself was born. At the early age of three years she lost her mother.

“After the death of his wife, all the colonel’s love and care was centered upon his only child. Under his eye she was instructed. From him she imbibed an ardent love of field sports. By the time she was seventeen, she was as much at home upon her horse in the field as in her father’s drawing-room. Colonel Montrose now received orders to return home with his regiment. As she did not wish to accompany him in the ship with the troops, he obtained a passage for her on board a vessel which was about to sail at the same time.

“The separation was extremely painful to both the old soldier and his daughter, but there was no alternative. They parted, and Miss Montrose sailed in the *Dorcas* for England. A week after she had left Calcutta, a storm arose, and drove the vessel far out of her course. More bad weather ensued. At length, leaks having been sprung

in all directions, the crew were obliged to take to the boats. Jenny obtained a place in one of the largest of these. After enduring the perils of the sea for many days, land was sighted. The other boats having disappeared, an attempt was made to land. The boat was capsized, and Miss Montrose alone reached the shore. For a long time she lay upon the sand almost inanimate. Reviving sufficiently to move, she at length obtained some shell-fish, and by degrees recovered her strength. From that time forth until I appeared she never set eyes upon a human being. To attract any passing vessel, and obtain assistance, however, she kept a beacon continually blazing at the end of the reef. With the same purpose in view, she attached missives to the feet of any birds she could snare alive.

“We should have reached Rockburg this evening, had not an accident occurred to our skiff and compelled us to put in at this island. The boat was scarcely repaired when I heard your first shots. I instantly disguised myself. Never doubting that Malay pirates were near, I came forth to reconnoitre. Glad, indeed, I was to find my fears ungrounded.”

Next morning, as we assembled for breakfast, I took the opportunity of begging Miss Montrose no longer to attempt to continue her disguise, but to allow us to address her in her real character.

Jenny smiled. She had noticed, as the young men met her when she came from the cabin, a great alteration in their manner. She had guessed at once that her secret was guessed.

“After all,” she said, “I need not be ashamed of this attire. It has been my only costume for the last three years, and in any other I should have been unable to manage all the work which during that time has been necessary.”

All was now bustle and activity. Breakfast over, we

went aboard the yacht. Fritz and Jack stepped into the canoe; and we soon left Fair Isle and Pearl Bay far behind.

The morning was delightful. The sea, excepting for the slight ripple raised by the gentle breeze wafting us homeward, was perfectly calm. Slowly and contentedly we glided along through the wonders of a splendid natural archway, threaded our passage among the rocks and shoals, and passed out to the open sea. Nautilus Bay and Cape Pug-Nose were in due time passed, and Shark Island hove in sight. With great astonishment Jenny gazed at our watch-tower, with its guard-house, the fierce-looking guns, and the waving flag upon the heights. We landed, that she might visit the fortification. We displayed all our arrangements with great pride. On reaching home, a grand salute of twelve shots welcomed us and our fair guest to Rockburg.

Fritz and Jack, who had preceded the yacht in their cajak, stood ready to receive us on the quay. With true politeness they handed their mother and Jenny ashore. They turned and led the way to the house through the gardens, orchards, and shrubberies which lay on the rising ground that sloped gently upward to our dwelling.

Jenny's surprise was changed to wonder as she neared the villa itself—its broad, shady balcony, its fountains sparkling in the sun, the dovecotes, the pigeons wheeling above, and the bright, fresh creepers twined round the columns, delighted her. She could scarcely believe that she was still far from any civilized nation, and that she was among a family wrecked like herself upon a lonely coast.

Splendid pineapples, oranges, guavas, apples, and pears resting on cool green leaves, lay heaped in pyramids upon the porcelain dishes. A haunch of venison, cold fowl, ham, and tongues occupied the end and sides of the table. In



the centre rose a vase of gay flowers, surrounded by bowls of milk and great jugs of mead. It was, indeed, a perfect feast, and the heartiness of the welcome brought tears of joy into the lovely eyes of the fair girl in whose honor it had been devised.

When the banquet was over, and the waiters had satisfied their appetites, they joined their brothers, and with them displayed all the wonders of Rockburg to their new sister. To the house, cave, stables, gardens, fields, and boat-houses, to one after the other did they lead her.

On the following day, after an early breakfast, we started, while it was yet cool, for Falconhurst. As I knew that repairs and arrangements for the coming winter would be necessary, and would detain us for several days, we took with us a supply of tools, as well as baskets of provisions, and other things essential to our comfort.

Many a shower wetted us through during these days, and we had scarcely time to hurry back to Rockburg and house our cattle and possessions before the annual deluge began.

Never before had this dreary season seemed so short and pleasant. With Jenny among us the usual feeling of weariness and discontent never appeared. The English language was quickly acquired by all hands. Fritz, in particular, spoke it so well that Jenny declared she could scarcely believe he was not an Englishman. She herself already spoke French, and therefore easily learned our native language and spoke it fluently before we were released from our captivity.

## CHAPTER XIV.

**T**HIS winter was a truly happy time. At length the rain ceased and the bright sun again smiled upon the face of nature. We could scarcely believe, as we stepped forth and once more felt the balmy breath of spring, that, for so many weeks, we had been prisoners within our rocky walls.

All was once more activity and life. The duties in field, garden, and orchard called forth the energy of the lads, while their mother and sister found abundant occupation in the poultry yard and house. Our various settlements and stations required attention. Falconhurst, Woodlands, Prospect Hill, Shark and Whale Islands were in turn visited and set in order. The duty of attending to the island battery fell to Jack and Franz.

They had been busy all day repairing the flagstaff, re-hoisting the flag, and cleaning and putting into working order the two guns. Evening was drawing on, and our day's work over. The rest of us were strolling up and down upon the beach, enjoying the cool sea breeze. They loaded and ran out their guns, and paddling off with an empty tub in the cajack, placed it out at sea as a mark for practice. They returned and fired, and the barrel flew in pieces, and then, with a shout of triumph, they cleaned the guns and ran them in.

Scarcely had they done so when, as though in answer to their shots, came the sound of three guns booming across the water from westward.

A tumult of feelings rushed over us—anxiety, joy, hope, doubt, each in turn took possession of our minds. Was it a European vessel close upon our shores, and were we about to be linked once more to civilized life? Or did those sounds proceed from a Malay pirate, who would rob and murder us!

Before we could express these thoughts in words the cajack had touched the shore, and Jack and Franz were among us. “Did you hear them? Did you hear them?” they gasped. “What shall we do? Where shall we go?”

“Oh, Fritz,” continued my youngest son, “it must be a European ship. We shall find her. We shall see our Fatherland once more,” and in an emotion of joy he grasped his brother’s hands. Till then I knew not what a craving for civilized life had been aroused in the two young men by the appearance of their European sister.

Few slept that night. The boys and I took it in turn to keep watch from the veranda, lest more signals might be fired, or a hostile visit might be paid us. But about midnight the wind began to rise, and before we reassembled to discuss our plans a fearful storm was raging. So terrible was the sea that I knew no boat could live. For two days and two nights the hurricane continued, but on the third day the sun again appeared, and the wind lulling, the sea went rapidly down.

Fritz and I at once prepared to make a reconnoissance. We armed ourselves with our guns, pistols, and cutlasses, took a spyglass, seated ourselves in the cajack, and with a parting entreaty from the mother to be cautious, paddled out of the bay and round the high cliffs on our left. For nearly an hour we advanced in the direction from which

the reports of the guns seemed to proceed. Nothing could we see, however, but the frowning rocks and cliffs, and the waves beating restlessly at their base. Cape Pug-Nose was reached, and we began to round the bluff old point. In a moment all our doubts were dispelled, and joy and gratitude to the Great Giver of all good filled our hearts. There, in the little sheltered cove beyond the cape, her sails furled and anchor dropped, lay a brig-of-war with the English colors at her masthead.

Still keeping under the shelter of the cliff, I carefully surveyed the vessel, and my fears were once more dispelled. All was neatness and regularity on board. The spotless decks, the burnished steel and brass, and the air of perfect order which prevailed both ship and camp, betokened that authority and discipline reigned there. Satisfied by the appearance of a camp on shore that there was no chance of the brig quitting the coast for several days, we resolved to return without betraying our presence. I was unwilling to appear before these strangers until we could do so in a manner more in accordance with our actual resources.

At the break of that eventful morn when we were destined to once more set our eyes upon our fellowmen and to hear news of the outer world, the anchor was weighed, the sails set, and, with the canoe in tow, the yacht, as though partaking of our hopes and joyous expectation, bounded merrily over the waters of Safety Bay, gave a wide berth to the Reef, and kept away for the cove, where the English ship unconsciously awaited us. The pug-nosed cape was reached and, to the surprise and utter amazement of the strangers, we rounded the point, and brought up within hail. Every eye on board and on shore was turned toward us, every glass was produced and fixed upon our motions.

Fritz and I stepped into our boat and pulled for the brig. In another minute we were upon her deck. The captain,

with the simple frankness of a British seaman, welcomed us cordially. After leading us into his cabin, he begged us to explain to what good fortune he owed a visit from residents upon a coast generally deemed uninhabited, or the abode of the fiercest savages.

I gave him an outline of the history of the wreck, and of our sojourn upon these shores. I spoke to him, too, of Miss Montrose, and of the providential way in which we had been the means of rescuing her from her lonely position.

"Then," said the gallant officer, rising and grasping Fritz by the hand, "let me heartily thank you in my own name, and in that of Colonel Montrose. It was the hope of finding some trace of that brave girl that led me to these shores. The disappearance of the *Dorcas* has been a terrible blow to the Colonel. Yet though for three years no word of her or of any of those who sailed in her has reached England, he has never entirely abandoned all hope of again hearing of his daughter. I knew this, and a few weeks ago, when I was about to leave Sydney for the Cape, I found three men who declared themselves survivors of the *Dorcas* and said that their boat of four which left the wreck, was the only one which, to their knowledge, reached the land in safety. From them I learned all particulars, and applying for permission to cruise in these latitudes, I sailed in hopes of finding further traces of the unfortunate crew. My efforts have been rewarded by unlooked-for success."

One of the officers was now dispatched to the yacht with a polite message, and the mother, Jenny, and the boys were presently on board.

Our kind host greeted them most warmly, and he and his officers vied with each another in doing us honor. They proved indeed most pleasant entertainers, and the time passed rapidly away. At luncheon the captain told us that there had sailed with him from Sydney an invalid gentle-

man, Mr. Wolston, his wife, and two daughters; but that, though the sea voyage had been recommended on account of his health, yet it had not done Mr. Wolston so much good as had been anticipated, and he had suffered so greatly from the effects of the storm which had driven the *Unicorn* into the Bay for repairs, that he had been eager to rest for a short time on land.

We were anxious to meet the family, and in the afternoon it was decided that we should pay them a visit. Tents had been pitched under the shady trees, and when we landed we found Mr. Wolston seated by one of them, enjoying the cool sea breeze. He and his family were delighted to see us. So much did we enjoy their society that evening found us still upon the shore. It was too late then to return to Rockburg, and the captain kindly offered tents for those who could not find room in the yacht. The boys spent the night on land.

That night I had a long and serious consultation with my wife, as to whether or not we really had any well-grounded reason for wishing to return to Europe. It would be childish to undertake a voyage thither simply because an opportunity offered for doing so.

My dear wife assured me that she desired nothing more earnestly than to spend the rest of her days in a place to which she had become so much attached, provided I, and at least two of her sons, also wished to remain.

From the other two she would willingly part, if they chose to return to Europe, with the understanding that they must endeavor to send out emigrants of a good class to join us, and form a prosperous colony. She added that she thought the island ought to continue to bear the name of our native country, even if inhabited in future time by colonists from England, as well as from Switzerland. I heartily approved of this excellent idea, and we agreed to mention

it, while consulting with Captain Littlestone on the subject of placing the island under the protection of Great Britain.

After breakfast it was proposed that Captain Littlestone should bring his ship round to Safety Bay, that we might receive a visit from him and his party at Rockburg—where we invited the invalid, Mr. Wolston, and his family, in hopes that his health might benefit by a comfortable residence on shore.

No sooner was this plan adopted, than Fritz and Jack hurried off in the canoe to prepare for their reception. They were followed in more leisurely style by the brig and our yacht.

But what words can express the amazement of our guests, when, rounding the Rocky Cape at the entrance, Safety Bay, the beautiful domain of Rockburg lay before them. Still greater was their astonishment, as a salute of eleven guns boomed from the battery on Shark Island, where the royal standard of England was displayed and floated majestically on the morning breeze.

A glow of surprise and pleasure beamed on every countenance. Poor Wolston's spirits appeared to revive with the very idea of peace and happiness to be enjoyed in such a home. In the event of his ultimately deciding to settle altogether among us, Mr. Wolston proposed that his son should leave the Cape and join our colony.

With sincere satisfaction I welcomed this proposal, saying that it was my wish and that of my wife to remain for the rest of our days in New Switzerland.

“New Switzerland forever!” shouted the whole company enthusiastically.

“Long life and happiness to those who make New Switzerland their home!” added Ernest, to my great surprise.

“Won't somebody wish long life and prosperity to those who go away?” inquired Jenny, with a pretty, arch look.

“Much as I long to return to England and my father, my inclination will waver if all the cheers are for New Switzerland!”

“Three cheers for England and Colonel Montrose,” cried Fritz; “success and happiness to those who return to Europe!” While the vaulted roofs rang with the cheering elicited by this toast, a glance from Jenny showed him how much she thanked him for appreciating her wish to return to her father, notwithstanding her attachment to our family.

“Well,” said I, when silence was restored, “since Fritz resolves to go to England, he must undertake for me the duty of bringing happiness to a mourning father by restoring to him this dear daughter, whom I have been ready to regard as my own by right of her being cast on the shores of my island. Ernest chooses to remain with me. His mother and I rejoice heartily in this decision, and promise him all the highest scientific appointments in our power to bestow. And now what is Jack’s choice? The only talent I can say he possesses is that of a comic actor, and to shine on the stage he must needs go to Europe.”

“Jack is not going to Europe, however,” was his reply. “He means to stay here. When Fritz is gone he will be the best rider and the best shot in New Switzerland, which is the summit of his ambition.”

“A good school is exactly what I want,” said Franz. “Among a number of students there is some emulation and enthusiasm, and I shall have a chance of rising in the world. Fritz will probably return here some day; but it might be well for one member of the family to go home altogether. As I am the youngest I could more easily than the rest adapt myself to a different life. My father, however, will decide for me.”

“You may go, my dear son,” I replied; “and God bless all our plans and resolutions. The whole earth is the



Lord's, and where, as in His sight, you lead good and useful lives, there is your home."

Deep emotion stirred every heart as the party separated for the night. Many felt that they were suddenly standing on the threshold of a new life. As for myself, a weight was rolled from my heart, and I thanked God that a difficulty was solved which, for years, had oppressed me with anxiety.

Captain Littlestone allowed as much time as he could spare. It was necessarily short, so that incessant movement and industry pervaded the settlement for several days. Everything was provided and packed up that could in any way add to our children's comfort on the voyage, or benefit them after their arrival in England. A large share of my possessions in pearls, corals, furs, spices, and other valuables were added to enable them to take a good position in the world of commerce.

Fritz had previously made known to me, what indeed was very evident, the attachment between himself and Jenny. I advised him to mention it to Colonel Montrose as soon as possible after being introduced to him, and ask for his sanction to their engagement. I, on my part, gladly bestowed mine, as did his mother, who loved the sweet girl dearly, and heartily grieved to part with her.

On the evening before our separation, I gave to Fritz the journal in which, ever since the shipwreck, I had chronicled the events of our life, desiring that the story might be printed and published.

"It was written, as you well know," said I, "for the instruction and amusement of my children, but it is very possible that it may be useful to other young people, more especially to boys. Children are, on the whole, very much alike everywhere, and you four lads fairly represent multitudes who are growing up in all directions. It will make

me happy to think that my simple narrative may lead to some of these to observe how blessed are the results of patient continuance in well doing, what benefits arise from the thoughtful application of knowledge and science, and how good and pleasant a thing it is when brethren dwell together in unity, under the eye of parental love.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Night has closed around me. For the last time my united family slumbers beneath my care.

To-morrow this closing chapter of my journal will pass into the hands of my eldest son.

From afar I greet thee, Europe! I greet thee, dear old Switzerland!

Like thee, may New Switzerland flourish and prosper—good, happy, and free!

THE END.







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