

THE LITTLE ARCADE

FREIGHTED WITH TREASURES FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

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A CHILD OF FORTUNE.

By ARTHUR HAMILTON.

CHAPTER I.

IN SEARCH OF LODGINGS.

Not many minutes walk from Broadway, situated on one of the cross streets intersecting the great thoroughfare, is a large building not especially inviting in its aspect, used as a lodging and boarding-house. It is very far from fashionable, since, with hardly an exception, those who avail themselves of its accommodations belong to the great class who are compelled to earn their bread before they eat it. Mechanics, working-men, clerks on small salaries, seamstresses, and specimens of decayed gentility, all find a place beneath its roof, forming a somewhat miscellaneous assemblage. It must not be supposed, however, that perfect equality exists even here. It is often remarked, that social distinctions are more jealously maintained in the lower ranks than in the higher. Here, for instance, Alphonso Estace, a dashing young clerk, who occupies the first floor front, looks down with hauteur upon the industrious mechanic, who rooms in the second story back. Mademoiselle Fanchette, the fashionable modiste, occupying the second story front, considers it beneath her dignity to hold much intercourse with Martha Grey, the pale seamstress, whose small room at the head of the third landing affords a delightful prospect of the back yard. Even the occupants of the fourth story look down, which, indeed, their elevated position enables them to do, upon the basement lodgers across the way.

Mother Morton is the presiding genius of the establishment. She is a stout, bustling woman, of considerable business capacity, one of those restless characters to whom nothing is so irksome as want of occupation, and who are never more in their element than when they have a world of business on their hands, with little time to do it in.

Mrs. Morton is a widow, having, with characteristic despatch, hustled her husband out of the world in less than four years from her wedding day. Shortly afterwards, being obliged to seek a subsistence in some way, good luck suggested the expediency of opening a boarding-house. Here, at length, she found scope for her superabundant energies, and in the course of seventeen years had succeeded in amassing several thousand dollars, in the investment of which she had sought advice from no one, but acted according to the dictates of her own judgment. These investments, it must be acknowledged, proved to have been wisely made, affording a complete refutation, in one case, at least, of the assertion often made, that women have no business sense.

Why Mrs. Morton should have had the title of mother, so generally conferred upon her, is not quite clear. She had never been blessed with children. It might have been her simple propensity for Nature had moulded her when in a generous mood, but at all events for many years, she had been known by the name of Mother Morton.

Our landlady required promptness on the part of her lodgers in the payment of their bills. She had no mercy on those whom she suspected of fraudulent intentions. In such cases she had but one remedy, and that a most efficacious one—immediate ejection. When, however, no such design was suspected, and failure to make the regular payment proceeded from sickness or misfortune, she had been known to manifest great kindness and consideration. When, for example, Martha Grey, the young seamstress, was stricken down by a fever, induced by overwork, Mother Morton attended her faithfully during her illness, and so far from making an extra charge, even remitted her rent for the time she had been ill.

With these preliminary words our story begins. The dinner hour had passed. The lastlinger at the table had left the scene of de-vas-

tation, which he had contributed to make, and the landlady, who superintended the clearing away, had just sent away the last dish, when her attention was arrested by a faint ring of the door bell. Hastily adjusting her dress before the glass, she proceeded to answer the summons in person.

Opening the door, she saw standing before her a young girl of perhaps fourteen, and a man, who, though but little over forty, looked nearly ten years older. The little girl is mentioned first, in spite of her youth, and the filial relation which she bore to her companion, she was the spokesman, and appeared to feel that the responsibility in the present instance fell upon her. There was a curious air of protection in her manner toward her father, as if the relationship between them

some twelve feet square, scantily provided with furniture. Its dreariness was, in some measure, relieved by a good supply of light—there being two windows.

The girl was evidently accustomed to look on the bright side of things; for, instead of spying out the defects and inconveniences of the apartment, her face brightened, and she said, cheerfully, "Just what we want, isn't it, papa? See how bright and pleasant it is."

Thus applied to, by her father answered, "Yes, certainly," and relapsed into his former abstraction.

"I think," said the young girl, addressing the landlady, "that we will engage the room; that is," she added, with hesitation, "if the rent isn't too high."

"Oh, no; but your baggage. You will need to bring that."

"We have not much to bring. We shall get it to-morrow."

"You will board yourselves?" asked the landlady.

"Yes, I shall cook. I am quite used to it," was the grave reply.

"At any rate you won't feel like it to-night. I will send you up some supper."

"Thank you," said the child, her face lighting up gratefully; "I am sure you are very kind," and she held out her hand in instinctive acknowledgment.

If Mother Morton had before been prepossessed in her favor, this act, so frank and child-like, completed the conquest of her tender heart.

"I am very glad," said she, quite enveloping in her own broad palm the little hand which the child extended; "I am very glad, my dear child, that you are going to live here. I think I shall like you."

"How kind you are!" said the child, earnestly. "Everybody is kind to father and me," and she turned toward her parent, who was gazing abstractedly from the window.

"Your father does not say much," said Mrs. Morton, unable to repress her curiosity.

"He has a great deal on his mind," said the child, lowering her voice, and looking curiously to see whether he heard her; but the report of a pistol would scarcely have disturbed him, so profound seemed his meditations.

"Oh!" said the landlady, somewhat surprised; "business, is it?"

"No," said the child; "not exactly business."

Observing that the landlady looked thoroughly mystified, she added, quietly, "Papa has a great genius for inventing. He is going to make a discovery that will give him money and fame. He is thinking about it all the time, and that is the reason he doesn't say much. I wish he wouldn't think quite so much, for I am afraid it will hurt him."

Mother Morton looked at the father with a sudden accession of respect.

"Perhaps there is something in him, after all," she thought. "There must be, or this little girl, who has a great deal more sense than many that are older, wouldn't believe in him so firmly. I suppose he's a genius. I've heard of such, but I never saw one before. I must think well of him for the child's sake."

"I hope your father'll succeed," she said aloud; "for you sake, my child, I am going down stairs now. Is there anything you would like to have sent up?"

"Nothing, thank you."

"One thing more. Your names, please?"

"My father's name is Robert Ford. My name is Helen."

"Good afternoon, Helen. I hope

you will like your new home."

"Thank you," said the child, and she went down stairs now, wondering a little at the sudden liking she began to feel for her young lodger.

CHAPTER II.

THE DREAMER.

The light of a June morning lent a warm and cheerful look to the broad streets, and under its influence even the dingy lanes and alleys looked a little less gloomy than usual. The spell which had lain upon the city during the night season was broken. Here and there might be seen a vegetable cart or a milk wagon rumbling through the streets of late so silent and deserted. Sleepy clerks unlocked the shops and warehouses, and swept them in readiness for the business of the day. Hackmen betook themselves to the steam-bus landings in the hope of obtaining a fare before breakfast. Creeping out from beneath old wagons and stray corners where they had been able to procure shelter and lodging, came the newsboys, those useful adjuncts to our modern civilization. Little time wasted they on the duties of the toilet, but shook themselves wide awake, and with the keen instinct of trade, hurried to the



"WE'LL TAKE THE ROOM," SHE SAID TO MOTHER MORTON.

were reversed, and he was the child. "You have lodgings to let?" she said, in a tone of inquiry.

"We're pretty full, now," said Mother Morton, looking with some curiosity at the eager face of the young questioner. "All our best rooms are taken."

"That makes no difference," said the young girl; "about the best rooms, I mean. We are not able to pay much."

She cast a glance at her father, who wore an abstracted look as if he were thinking of some matter quite foreign to the matter in hand. Catching her glance, and thinking that an appeal was made to him to aid, hurriedly, "Yes, my child, you are quite right."

"I wonder whether he's in his right mind," thought the practical Mrs. Morton. "The little girl seems to be worth two of him."

"I have one room in the fourth story," she said aloud, "which is now vacant. It is rather small; but, if it will suit you, you shall have it cheaper than that account."

"I should like to see it," said the child. "Come, father," taking him by the hand and leading him as if she were the elder; "we're going up stairs to look at a room which, perhaps, we may like well enough to hire."

At the head of the fourth landing the landlady threw open a door, revealing a room,

Mother Morton had been interested in the child's behalf by the mingling of frank simplicity and worldly wisdom, which she exhibited and perhaps not least by the quiet air of protection which she assumed towards her father, for whom it was evident, she entertained the deepest and most devoted affection. An impulse, which she did not pause to question, led her to name a rent much less than she had been accustomed to receive for the room.

"One dollar and seventy-five cents a week," repeated the child. "Yes, that is reasonable. I think we had better engage the room; don't you, papa?"

"Eh?"

"I think we had better engage this room at one dollar and seventy-five cents a week."

"Oh, certainly,—that is, by all means, if you think best, my child. You know I leave all such matters to you. I have so many other things to think of," he added, dreamily, raising his hand to his forehead.

"Yes," said the child, softly; "I know you have, dear papa."

"We'll take the room," she said to Mother Morton, whose curiosity momentarily increased, "at the price you named, and will commence now, if you have no objection."



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A CHILD OF FORTUNE, By ARTHUR HAMILTON. commences in this number. We desire to call special attention to this serial as one of unusual strength.

AN EQUINE HINT. APPELLES, the Grecian artist, painted Alexander the Great on horseback. It appears that the monarch was not in a gracious mood...

ORIGIN OF A TIE. The Steinkerque cravat, so called, which has somewhat come into fashion again of late, has a historic origin.

A PET OF TWO CONTINENTS. Jumbo, the most distinguished dumb animal in the world, is gone, and it is no exaggeration to say that his death made many people actually sad for a time.

RIGHT READING. It cannot be too often pointed out that if young people wish to derive benefit from reading, they must do more than skim over the printed words.

WHAT WAITERS LIVE ON. RESTAURANT writers and hotel servants are like clocks—you must wind them up to make them keep good time.

SILLY DISPUTES. That old Greek, Demosthenes, was not only a brilliant orator but a witty lawyer.

dispute grew warm, ended in blows, and finally gave rise to a lawsuit.

By this time the audience were interested, and, when Demosthenes stopped, they begged him to continue and inform them how the judge decided the case.

THE DISTILLATION OF EXPERIENCE. HENRY WILSON was the eighteenth vice-president of the United States.

He was already burdened with a sharp experience of poverty and starvation. When after many years he had risen to the foremost ranks, he gave the workington, whose friend he was, the benefit of his experience, and from it he summed up these pithy deductions, in a famous speech.

'Believe in traveling step by step; do not expect to get rich at a jump. Slow and sure is better than fast and fimsy. Perseverance, by its daily gains, enriches a man more than fits and starts of fortune and speculation.

From bad to worse is a poor improvement. A crust is hard fare, but none at all is harder. Don't jump out of the frying-pan into the fire.

The man who was a shoemaker's apprentice for eleven years, never spent one hundred cents in the first two score years of his life, and yet lived to be vice-president of his country, has the best right in the world to take us by the button hole and whisper advice in our ears.

A PET OF TWO CONTINENTS. Jumbo, the most distinguished dumb animal in the world, is gone, and it is no exaggeration to say that his death made many people actually sad for a time.

At the time that the great Barnum was preparing to ship Jumbo to America in spite of the many obstacles thrown in his way, Minister Lowell said in a speech at a large public dinner that he was happy to say he believed the relations between England and America were undisturbed except in connection with Jumbo.

Jumbo has been exhibited to thousands of children in this country and many more in England. He was undoubtedly the largest beast on the face of the earth. He stood eleven and a half feet high, and weighed seven tons.

In infancy Jumbo was captured by a band of Arabs in Africa. He was brought across deserts on the backs of two camels lashed together, and was fed on camel's milk.

That was in the early part of 1862. For seventeen years the English children had petted him, and it was hard for them to part with the big fellow. But, when it became known that he was sold for ten thousand dollars, nearly all England protested against it.

GENERAL NEWTON And his Greatest Engineering Feat.

The East River, as it is called, separates Long Island from New York City and is a western extension of Long Island Sound.

That part of the river abreast of the upper portion of Manhattan Island was a most difficult and intricate waterway by reason of rocks which, for the most part, just peeped above the water, but extended over large areas under the water at a slight depth.

Thus the channel was a tortuous one, and every trip a craft made up or down the East River incurred a heavy expense by reason of time, if in no other way. Indeed, many of the boats that were wrecked on the rocks that barred the way and suggested the name of Hell Gate to the dangerous sheet of water.

The names of some of these rock islets are singular: Pot Rock is one; the Frying-Pan and Bald-headed Billy are others; Way's Reef, Shell-draw, Hoy's Reef, Flood Rock, Diamond, and Hallett's Point reefs complete the catalogue.

It was not only a matter of rounding these rocks that made a passage difficult; the greater task was to escape the whirlpools and conquer the currents that were formed by the meeting of the waters from the bay and the sound. The waters swirled and rushed and foamed in a truly alarming way, that made the name of the vicinity most appropriate.

The blowing to atoms of Flood Rock, the worst of the remaining obstructions of the channel, was a great event in and around New York. It occurred on Saturday, October 10th.

Though probably all of the readers of the Argosy have heard of Hell Gate and of the blowing of the Hallett's Point reef in 1876 and Flood Rock recently, they probably have no conception of the gigantic proportions of the undertaking, and the amount of thought, ingenuity, inventive skill and engineering talent that were called for to effect the destruction of these reefs.

In 1851 the first work was done tending toward making a clear passage through the East River. Citizens of New York raised \$13,000. The work was put into the hands of Mr. Malliet, who proceeded to put charges of blasting powder into the rocks above water and fire them by electricity.

Singularly enough, Congress appropriated \$20,000 during the following year toward carrying on this work. Most of this was applied to Pot Rock, which was lowered only two feet, and then all work was abandoned until 1866.

In that year General Newton, of the United States Engineers, was given charge of the undertaking, and he at once proceeded to business scientifically and correctly. First surveying the rocks, he made his report, outlining his plan and the cost of the first installment of the work.

The work on Flood Rock is the best example of the process. In 1875 the general erected his shops and derricks on Flood Rock and set the men to work to blast a shaft straight down through the solid rock.

When the vertical shaft had been sunk to a depth of sixty-five feet, the miners began to blast out tunnels in every direction, until their aggregate length under the nine acres of reef was four miles, and the supporting columns of rock numbered 477.

Visitors and miners going down numbered 477, and hats as a protection against the water that streamed copiously through the roof, and ran in noisy streams down the descending floor to the main shaft, whence it was pumped out; torches were lighted to pierce the inky darkness that filled the place, and the cavernous surroundings, and the thought of the rushing waters above one's head made the excursion a most fearful one to the timid visitor.

When at last, a few months ago, the tunneling was completed, the work of charging the mine was begun. Holes were everywhere drilled into the roof to the number of 14,000, each nine feet deep

and five feet apart. This done, two cartridges, about two feet long and like a small brass cannon in appearance, were put into each. One cartridge was filled with what is known as "rackerock," the other with dynamite.

To each of the dynamite cartridges a wire was attached, and these wires all made connections with a main wire running up the shaft. The idea was that when the electric spark would set off a dynamite cartridge, the shock of the explosion would fire the "rackerock," and drive it further up into the roof, and the maximum of explosive force would thus be attained, and an additional force would be started upward.

When at last all the cartridges were in place and all the connections made, the workmen, the donkeys that had been down underneath the water for years, and the machinery and tools, were all brought to the surface, and the water was let in. When the mine was completely flooded, everything that was portable was removed from the little island. The high derrick that had hoisted ten after ten of rock for ten years was left standing with a flag waving from the top.

Early in the morning of the eventful day people began to gather in crowds on the shore wherever a good point of view could be had; crafts of every sort crowded the river, keeping, however, at a perfectly safe distance. Flags floated from every building in sight, and 75,000 people waited expectantly for the spectacle of the rock to be pulled ashore in a boat. Then a hush fell upon all the gazers, and eyes were strained hard to catch the first movement of the waters.

On the Long Island shore Gen. Newton and his party were gathered. His little daughter Mary was there, she who had set off the great explosion of '76.

At 11:55 she touched the button that completed the electric circuit and sent the spark on its way to the thousands of cartridges in the mine.

A dull, crackling noise was heard as if lightning were at work beneath the water. A tremor passed through the earth and out around the point a gigantic wall of froth rose high in air with peaks and pinnacles like a mountain range. Up and up it went, column after column, and five hundred feet high. Then slowly and gracefully it sank down, getting dark and black as it descended. There was the old derrick on its side, and there was the rock as of yore, only now, it and all beneath it were a mass of shattered rock, ready to be lifted and carried off at pleasure.

The genius who planned all this work and directed its progress, was born in Virginia in 1823. After being graduated at West Point in 1842, he was made Assistant Professor of Engineering at the academy.

He rose steadily through all the grades from lieutenant to major, and, during the war, from brigadier-general of volunteers to major-general of the regular army. During the war his services were gallant and important, and as a result of these that his steady promotion was accorded him.

It will be for his great engineering feats that he will be especially remembered, and his talents in this line, unclouded by any failure, place him at the head of the mining engineers of his country.

JESSE NEWMAN SMITH.

THE CONFIDENCE OF STRENGTH.

Let us be like the bird, one unfasten'd alight Upon a twig that swings; He feels it yield, but sings on, unaffected, Knowing he has his wings.

GOLDEN THOUGHTS.

We let our blessings grow moldy and then call them curses. Pride has two seasons—a forward spring and an early fall.

No declination is so eloquent as the final influence of a good example. Favors of every kind are doubted when they are specially conferred.

A man's character is like a fence—it cannot be strengthened by whitewash. A noble part of every true life is to learn to undo what has been wrongly done.

God is tantalizing temptation to evil though in many formal prayers. Love is never lost. If not reciprocated, it will flow back and soften and purify the heart.

A lie is like a brush heap on fire—it is easier to let it burn out than to try to extinguish it. Pure religion and undefiled is "ministering," not the other thing, "being ministered unto."

A decent behavior is not to be sought with friends, Successes, and a stranger recommends. A man ought to keep his friendship in constant repair. I look upon a day as lost in which I do not make a new acquaintance.

Commend us to a man who holds his faith, whatever it be, with a manly grip, and dares to defend it in a manly way—"speaking the truth in love." It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich or poor according to what he is, not according to what he has.

I look with scorn upon the selfish greatness of this world, and with pity on the most gifted and prosperous in it. God has given us power, but I look with reverence on the obscure man who suffers for the right, who is true to a good but persecuted cause.



GENERAL NEWTON

A SEASONABLE SONG.

Gaily chattering to the clattering
Of the brown nuts downward patterring.
Leap the nuttree, nut and nuttree,
Drop the apples red and yellow,
Drop the russet pines and mellow,
Drop the red leaves all the day.

IN A NEW WORLD;
OR,
Among the Gold Fields of Australia.

By HORATIO ALGER, Jr.,

Author of "Facing the World," "Do and Dare,"
"Ragged Dick," "Luck and Pluck," etc.

Synopsis of Forging Changers.

HARRY VANE came from America to Australia as the assistant and protégé of Professor Henry Dewey, a geologist. After the loss of their ship and a prolonged stay on an uninhabited island, they at last reached Australia. The Professor returns home at once, but Harry and Jack a sailor boy, elect to remain and seek their fortunes at the mines. They become acquainted with Dick Fletcher, a miner who volunteers to guide them to the mines. Obed Stockpile, a kindly Yankee, completely unsuspecting of their designs, becomes a thief, and is expelled from the company; but the next day he turns up as a member of a notorious band of bushrangers, who seize the goods and money of the travelers. They send Obed on the way to the stocks as a prisoner. The preceding chapter describes the trial of one of the band on a charge of treachery to his company. The accused is unanimously voted to death. When a report is made, and he is about to fulfill his sentence, when a report rings out, and he would be executed were not being spared by a bullet.

CHAPTER XIV.
ELECTION OF A NEW CAPTAIN.

The excitement among the bushrangers was intense. Simultaneously they started forward, and two of them, bending over, lifted the body of their prostrate leader. But he was already dead. The bullet had reached his heart, and probably he never knew what had happened. Robert Graham, the man who had caused his death, stood erect and unflinching.

He threw his weapon upon the ground, and his arms, and, in a tone devoid of fear: "Comrades, do as I did. I will do what you will. I could not help doing what I did. It was either my brother's life or his. Sandy was innocent of the crime charged against him. He had no thought of treachery, though he did mean to leave your ranks. Is there any one among you that would stand by and see his brother murdered before his eyes when he had the means of preventing it?"

The bushrangers looked at each other in doubt. They had at first accepted the captain's statement that Sandy Graham was a traitor. His brother's explanation of his attempted desertion put a new face on the matter. Then, again, there was not one among them that had not tired of their despotic leader. Alive, he had impressed them with fear, and held them in strict subordination, but he was far from popular, and had no real friends among them. So, though they were startled and shocked, there was no one to shed a tear over the dead. It was a moment of doubt when a leader was wanted.

"Well," said Robert Graham, after a pause, "what are you going to do with me? I wait your pleasure."

"He ought to be served as he served the captain," said Fletcher, who disliked Graham, and had always been a toady to Captain Stockton.

"I say no," rejoined Rupert Ring, a man of medium height, but of great muscular development. "It was a terrible deed, in England, whom I have a brother, but here, whom I have not seen for fifteen years, is it Sandy Graham's shoes, I would have done the same."

There was a half murmur, which seemed like approval.

"And after all," continued Ring, "though Sandy Graham was a fair fellow, he is not the first man that has been begotten by a fair face."
"No, no!" was heard from several of the bushrangers.

"I don't wish to speak ill of the dead, but he drew the reins too tight at times. He forgot that we have rights!"

Again there was a murmur of assent. It was evident that he was carrying his comrades with him.

"I move, therefore, that we pass over Robert Graham's death as one to which he was impelled by brotherly affection, and that we restore Sandy Graham to his place in our ranks, on condition that he does not repeat the offence. Those who agree with me, hold up their right hands."

All hands were raised except that of Fletcher.

"Release the prisoner!" said King, turning to the two attendants.

Instantly the rope was cut, the dark cloth was removed, and Sandy Graham, a tall, athletic, good-looking fellow, stepped forth, his face pale from the terrible strain to which he had been subjected.

"Comrades, brothers!" he said, in a voice indicating deep emotion. "I thank you for giving me back my life. It shall be devoted to your service."

The first to press forward, and grasp his hand convulsively was his brother, Robert Graham.

"Robert," said Sandy, "but for your brave attack I should have been wincing instead of him," and he pointed, with a shudder, to the dead captain.

"For your sake, Sandy," said Robert, solemnly, "I have shed human blood. To save your life, I have been on the verge of murdering a man."

"No, Robert, you cannot be called that, any more than if you had shed blood in self defence."

Their conversation was interrupted by Rupert Ring.

"Comrades," he said, "the captain is dead. We can do nothing without a leader. We should appoint one at once."

Here Fletcher pushed forward.

"I am the oldest in service among you," he said. "I was the trusted friend of Captain Stockton. I submit that I have the best claim to be your leader."

But among bushrangers, as in other communities, the man who is the most anxious to secure office is very apt to be left in the lurch. Now, it happened, that Fletcher was by no means a favorite in the band. He was sly and sneaking in his methods, carrying favor with the captain, even at the expense of manliness and self-respect, and there were serious doubts as to his courage. If he had been wiser, he would not have made a boast of his standing with the late leader, for the men were heartily tired of his tyranny, and resolved to elect some one in his place who bore no similarity to him.

Rupert Ring smiled slightly as he heard Fletcher's modest claim.

"Comrades," he said, "you have heard Fletcher's appeal. It is true that he is the oldest in service among you. It is for you to consider whether that entitles him to the post of leader. Those of you who are in favor of Dick Fletcher as your leader will signify it by raising your right hands."

Fletcher's eye wandered anxiously around the circle. To his chagrin not a single hand

concern with. All of us have faults and no doubt grave ones."

Fletcher, till now, had sulked in silence. He was terribly disappointed that he had been passed over, and Rupert Ring promoted to the place of chief, but since it was so, he felt that it was politic to stand well with the new administration.

"Captain Ring," he said, extending his hand, "let me be the first to congratulate you on your election as our captain."

Ring smiled slightly. He had never liked Fletcher.

"I accept your congratulations, Fletcher," he said, "and condole with you on your own disappointment. We can't all be leaders."

"I hope to enjoy your favor, as I did that of Captain Stockton," continued Fletcher, smoothly.

"That will depend on yourself," said Ring shortly.

"I would like to suggest that the two boys—here Fletcher turned in the direction where Harry and Jack had been standing, and ejaculated in dismay, 'I don't see them. What has become of them?'"

"They have taken advantage of the excitement and confusion to run away, I fancy," said the new captain quietly.

This was quite true. Just after the fatal shot had been fired, and the attention of all had been taken up by the tragedy, Harry had whispered to Jack, "Now's our time to escape, Jack. Follow me!"

"I'm with you," responded Jack promptly,

"Hold on, Harry," he said, panting, "I am all out of breath."

Harry instantly slackened his speed.

"Look back, Jack!" he said anxiously, "see if you can discover any one pursuing us."

"I see no one," answered Jack, after a prolonged look.

"They have other things to think of," said Harry. "The murder of their captain has put all thoughts of us out of their heads."

When the excitement had subsided a little, I am afraid they will look for us. How terrible it was!" he added with a shudder.

"Yes," returned Jack. "I saw that man—the captive's brother—lift his weapon and point at the captain. Almost before I could speak it was discharged and the captain fell. He must have been killed instantly."

"I little thought what lay before me when I left home," said Harry.

"I wish I knew what lies before us now," said Jack.

"I am afraid our prospects are rather dark. We must take care at any rate not to fall again into the hands of the bushrangers. I am most afraid of that man Fletcher. If he could have his way, he would show us no mercy."

"Let us go on again!" said Jack. "I only stopped to catch my breath."

"You are right, Jack. The farther we get away from the bushrangers the better."

Before them rose a steeply wooded hill. The way had become difficult with the scrub bushes that filled up the distance between the trees. The latter were no longer the same which they had hitherto encountered, the tall and stately eucalyptus, but were smaller and wider branched.

"We can't make our way here, Harry," said Jack, despondently.

"O yes, we can. Besides, don't you see, the rougher and more difficult the way, the less are we likely to be followed. I am willing to go through a good deal to save capture."

"So am I," answered Jack. "You are always right. Push ahead and I'll follow."

For three or four hours the boys kept on their way. They surmounted the hill, and found a clearer country. Finally, turning to the right they came upon an open tract. By this time it was growing dark, and the boys were feeling both fatigued and hungry.

"I think we can rest now, Jack," said Harry.

With a sigh of relief Jack threw himself on the ground.

"This is worse than any work I did on shipboard," he said.

"I don't think it is likely to cure you of your love for the sea, Jack," he said. "Though I have never followed you for sea-life, I confess I would rather be on the deck of a good staunch ship than here."

"Harry," said Jack anxiously, "when do you think we shall find something to eat? I am terribly hungry."

"So am I, Jack. It's the hard walk that has increased our appetite."

"I have often thought I might be able to find an open boat without any crew to get out, but I never expected to be caught in such a pickle on land."

"A good many things have happened to us to-day that we didn't expect," said Harry. "Do you know, Jack, it seems the longest day I ever spent?"

"I can see the same."

"This morning we set out with Obed, free from care. We have been captured by bushrangers, taken to their camp, seen the murder of their leader, escaped, and after walking for miles through a rough wilderness, here we are tired out and in danger of starvation."

"Don't say any more, Harry," said Jack faintly. "I can realize it without your description."

"I wish Obed were with us," said Harry, after a pause. "Perhaps he could find some way out of our trouble. He is an experienced man, and is used to roughing it. As for me, I feel helpless."

"Do you think there is likely to be any house near at hand where we could get food?"

"It doesn't look like it," said Harry, shaking his head.

"I don't think I should mind much being caught and carried back by the bushrangers, if they would give me a good supper," said Jack, ruefully.

"Poor Jack!" said Harry, compassionately. "I do believe you are suffering for food."



was raised save his own. There was a cheer of derision which brought an angry flush to his cheek.

Then a clear voice was heard. It was that of the young man, Wyman, whose conversation with the two boys has already been recorded.

"I nominate Rupert Ring for our leader," he said.

There was a chorus of approval, which emboldened Wyman to add: "as he can't very well put the question on his own nomination, I will do so. Those of you who want Ring for your captain, please hold up your right hands."

All hands were raised except that of Fletcher.

"That settles it," said Wyman, who was unversed in Parliamentary language. "I call for three cheers for Captain Ring!"

The woods echoed to the lusty cheers of the bushrangers. It was evident, from the general expression of satisfaction, that the choice was a popular one.

"Comrades," said the new captain, modestly, "I did not look for this promotion, as you may have thought from my taking the lead just now, but I saw that it was necessary for somebody to act. I don't know whether you have made a wise choice or not, but I will do my best to make you think so. Since I am your captain, it is my duty first to see that proper honor is paid to the remains of your late captain, whom sudden death has overtaken. You two, lift the body, and carry it into your cabin."

The two attendants did so.

"Prepare a coffin, and at daybreak we will commit him to the earth. Whatever else may be said of him, he was a brave man, and knew no fear."

"That is true," said Robert Graham, in a low voice.

"As to his faults, those we have no further

and no one noticed the two as they vanished among the trees.

"Shall I go after them, Captain Ring?" asked Fletcher in excitement. "I'll take another man, and scour the woods for them."

"It is not necessary," said Ring indifferently. "Let them go! They would only be in our way."

"But," protested Fletcher, "Captain Stockton meant to take them into the band. They are bright and smart boys, and would grow up into useful members."

"Heaven forbid!" said Ring earnestly. "Our lives are spoiled already, and we have no chance but to continue. Leave them to grow up innocent!"

"This is strange talk for a captain of bushrangers," said Fletcher, disappointed.

"Remember that I am your captain," retorted Ring sharply, "and don't attempt to interfere with me! Go, I would be alone."

Fletcher slunk away, mortified and disappointed. It was well for the two boys that he had not been elected captain.

CHAPTER XV.
LOST IN THE WOODS.

Yes, the two boys had escaped. When the excitement produced by the fatal shot was at its height, it had flashed upon Harry like an inspiration that then, if ever, was the time to escape. He knew that it would be at the risk of their lives, and but for one consideration, it is doubtful if he would have been willing to incur the peril of the attempt. But he felt that to stay was to run a risk as great, that of being compelled to join the ranks of the bushrangers, and of that he had a great dread.

The boys never stopped running till they had set him a mile between them and the camp of the bushrangers. Jack was the first to show distress.

Jack was ready to obey Harry, feeling much more confidence in his judgment and discretion than in the exceedingly foolishly followed his advice, and with a sailor's agility mounted the tree. Then shading his eyes with his hand, he looked earnestly, first in one direction, then in another.

"Wall, Jack," inquired Harry, anxiously, for he, too, appreciated the gravity of their situation.

"There was a pause; then Jack called out,

