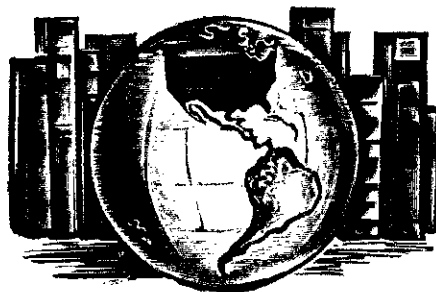


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THE

CHILD OF THE BAY:

—OR, THE—

OLD SAILOR'S PROTEGE.

A TALE OF ENGLAND, INDIA AND THE OCEAN.

~~~~~  
BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.  
~~~~~

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY FREDERICK GLEASON,
FLAG OF OUR UNION OFFICE...MUSEUM BUILDING, TREMONT STREET.

1852.

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*Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1851, by F. GLEASON, in the Clerk's Office  
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## THE CHILD OF THE BAY.

### CHAPTER I.

THE OLD SAILOR AND HIS PROTEGE.

It was a bright, beautiful morning in early summer. From out the gently undulating bosom of the English Channel the golden day-kings arose in all his splendor, and away danced the sparkling beams, gilding the wave-tops with a rich, moulten vermillion, as they leaped and frolicked on their westward course. At the entrance of the Channel, between Brest and Land's End, a cluster of the happy sunbeams were suddenly stopped in their wayward course by the towering canvass of a British frigate, whose wake was scarce yet obliterated from the bosom of the broad Atlantic. These sunbeams were welcome messengers to the ship's crew, seeming to beckon them on to their old homes in "Merrie England," but the wind that came down with them would have been more welcome from another quarter, for it came upon the ship from the exact point towards which she would have sailed, and in a moment after the morning beams tipped her spars with their light, her head was turned upon the French coast.

For half an hour the frigate stood on upon the larboard tack, and then she put about and stood a "long leg" towards her native coast. As soon as the starboard tacks were aboard, the sheets hauled snugly aft, the yards braced sharp to the wind, and the backstays set up, the crew disposed themselves in small knots about the deck, or huddled together about the bow ports, watching with eager gaze the dim outlines of the bold headland of Devonshire. When, a short time before sunrise, the magic cry of: "Oho! oho! Old England's coast, oho!" had sounded from the foretopgallant crosstrees, and went echoing through the old ship, hundreds of hearts had leaped joyously beneath the reverberations of the shout, and souls that had been long pent up within the narrow confines of ship-board began to swell with the bright hope that already painted to the imagination the forms and features of kindred and friends. 'Twere an easy matter now to see who were those whose hearts were bound to England by the ties of kith and kin. Upon the coast of France they had hardly bestowed a single thought, and if they looked at it at all, it was merely with that sort of a glance which the anxious traveller gives

the last milestone that marks the way towards his journey's end, while upon the dim, hazy blue ahead, half distinguishable from the sky and water, they gazed with that look of fond endearment which tells that the heart has already flown away in advance. At every port-hole that opened upon the rising coast they gathered with earnest, thoughtful looks, and even when called for the moment to perform some trifling duty, their heads would remain turned towards the endeared spot, even as the magnet retains its affinity for the point of its polar home.

Some there were upon the frigate's deck who took little note of the opening land ahead. It was not yet clearly enough defined to minister to their curiosity, and beyond that single feeling no thought of it dwelt within their bosoms. Like all other lands, it offered them a source of recreation and amusement, but their hearts turned not to it with a warmer feeling.

Upon the topgallant-forecastle, with his arms folded upon his breast, and his eyes bent towards the land that was looming through the hazy mist along on the lee bow, stood a young man in a passed-midshipman's uniform. He was twenty years of age, and though yet so young, it would not have puzzled an expert seaman to have seen at a glance that he was an older sailor than officer—that he came not into the king's service "through the cabin windows," but that he wore the sheath-knife and marline-spike long before he mounted the belt and sword of an officer. He was tall—as tall as any of the seamen around him—and what he may have lacked in beauty of person was more than made up in the harmony that marked his contour. If his hands were large, his arms and chest gave them easy support. If his features were not handsome in their mouldings, there was a boldness of outline that gave to them a decided stamp of nobleness, while from the large, dark eyes, flashing and burning with a soul-lit flame, beamed a light that no true man would be ashamed to own. A cluster of nutbrown curls rolled down upon either temple, and sweeping away over the ears they almost hid beneath their

glossy coils the laced collar of the coat, while the brow, above which they parted in their wavy course, betrayed the stern, yet kindly impulses that had birth in the brain beneath.

By the young man's side, with his huge hands stuck within the waistbands of his trowsers, with half a glance upon the distant shore, while half a glance seemed to be playing askance upon the bold features of his companion, stood an old weather-beaten sailor, over whose silvered head full threescore years had poured their quota of sunshine and storm. He was not so tall by half-a-head as the young officer by his side, though, perhaps, he might once have "stood him inch for inch;" for the peculiar bowing of his short legs, and the immense thickness from breast to back and from shoulder to shoulder, might seem to indicate that his whole corporeal frame had for years been settling more firmly together. His face was a true index to the whole man. There were some lines there that betrayed feelings deep and powerful—lines in which a friend might have seen the sunshine of a kind and noble heart, self-sacrificing in its generous impulses, and in which an enemy would have seen the lightning of a soul that brooked no insult—that seldom forgave a wrong. Yet, the general tone of that old sailor's face was tuned to friendship, and he was never more happy than when in the society of something that he loved. For fifty years he had stood at his post before the roaring broadsides and iron hail of French, Spanish, and Portuguese, and beneath the fire and smoke of India he had fought for the English crown. Age may have taken somewhat from the elasticity of the man's limbs, but it had detracted nothing from the iron strength of the sinew and muscle.

Such was old Paul Marline, the boatswain of H. B. M. frigate "Dunkirk," and the young man by his side was Osmond Maxwell

[SEE ENGRAVING.]

a youth who knew no home but the blue ocean, and who knew no earthly guardian save the old sailor who now stood by him. Paul Marline had learned the youth to "hand, reef, and

steer;" he had borne him in his arms from many a bloody deck, and he had nurtured him when none else cared for him, and yet the *protege* had now gained a station far in advance of his foster parent.

Sixteen months previous to the opening of our story, two of the Dunkirk's boats had been sent in pursuit of a Bengal pirate. The officer who commanded the launch was killed at the first fire of the buccaneers, and as the dismayed men were about to pull back, her young cockswain, Osmond Maxwell, seized the fallen officer's sword, and urged the boat's crew on to the chase. The presence of such a spirit nerved them again to their duty, and the launch moved on, overtook, and captured the pirates ere the other boat came up. For this heroic act, the admiral rated young Maxwell to a midshipman's berth, and before his ship left the Indian Ocean he had passed a most thorough examination, and now only awaited his arrival at Portsmouth for a lieutenant's commission.

"Paul," said the young officer, turning to the old boatswain, "so that is the coast of England?"

"Yes, Osmond (the old man had not yet learned to handle his *protege's* name with a *mister*), that is the coast of Old England. See that peak there, loomin' up like a floatin' gull, just over the cathead?"

"Yes."

"That's Eddystone."

Maxwell gazed a few moments at the lighthouse thus pointed out to him, and after running his eyes again along the coast, he uttered, in a sort of meditative mood, but yet half directed to his companion:

"Old England! And perhaps upon her soil breathe those of my own blood. Perhaps beneath the sunshine of her heavens my own kindred were born and lived; and mayhap, too, her green sod covers the earthly remains of those who may even now look down from the spirit world upon me, and recognize in poor Osmond Maxwell one whom they knew not in this world. Perhaps a brother—perhaps a sister—and perhaps a parent."

"Well, Osmond, I do know 'bout that," returned old Paul, in a tone and manner that seemed strongly to indicate a tendency of thought and feeling that seldom ventured beyond the sphere of his own ken. "As near as I can reckon your life-log, you was born somewhere in the Bay of Bengal—'t any rate, you was a small fish when you run thwart my hawse, not more 'n a year old."

"But even if I were born in the Bay, Paul, it is very likely that I must have had parents?" remarked the young man, with a smile.

"Why, yes—in course you had a father, an' a mother, too, but then that's no reason as they should be in England, you know?"

"No, Paul, I did not think so. I said they might be in the spirit world."

"*Spirit* world," iterated the old man, with a half vacant and half inquiring look at his companion.

"Heaven, Paul—I mean in heaven."

"Ah, now I understand. Well, it's more'n likely that they be in heaven. But, Osmond, whoever they was, they loved you as well as I have."

Here the old man's mind seemed to be diving back into the past. Gradually his still bright eye grew brighter with the thoughts that worked within, and wiping the cuff of his jacket across his lids, he continued:

"I can't help but thinkin' 'twas your mother who got the last look at you afore I found you. You was lashed on to a r'yal yard wi' a piece o' female dress. There's no mistake about that. Then there was pieces of hair caught in the nip o' the foot-rope that was too long for a man's hair. The yard was too small for both, an' *she* let go rather than have you—"

"There, there, Paul," interrupted Osmond, as the bright drops began to gather in his eyes, "you needn't tell it to me again. I know how kind you have been to me, and I shall yet be able to return it, if my life is spared. But of one thing I am assured: I am English born."

"In *course* you is. Did you ever know a gull to sing like a lark?"

"No, Paul, I never did."

"Then did you ever know of one's bein' larned to sing?"

"No."

"Just so a Frenchman, or a Spaniard, or any other outlandisher, never talked king's English like you."

The young officer smiled at the perfect assurance with which the old boatswain drew his simile, and being unwilling to cross his old guardian's argument, and, moreover, feeling inwardly assured that he *was* English, he made no further remark on the subject.

"Ready about!" at this instant sounded from the quarter-deck, and in a moment more the old boatswain's whistle was piping "all hands to tack ship."

The reader is already aware of the main features in the present position of Osmond Maxwell. His entrance upon the stage of active life had been under the care and guidance of old Paul Marline. About nineteen years previous to his introduction into our story, Paul Marline, then a quarter-master on board a seventy-four, had been sent, in company with a lieutenant, to take the soundings off the western shore of Edmonstones, in the Bay of Bengal. They had a heavy Ganges lighter, and after sounding along the shore, they ran around the southern point of the island. Paul was heaving the lead, and while in the act of gathering the line in his left hand his eye happened to catch an object, a quarter of a mile to the southward, which attracted his attention. He laid the coiled line back upon the rail, and placing his hand over his eye, so as to form a more contracted focus, he gazed off upon the floating mass. He was convinced that there was something human about it, and after a little persuasion, he obtained permission to lower the boat and pick it up. The wind had been setting strongly up the bay

for several days, and whatever the object might be, Paul was assured that it had come from some distance at sea; but when he at length reached it, his stout heart beat more quickly as he found it to be a male child, not over a year old, lashed to a royal yard with a knotted strip of female dress. The thick garments of the child had kept the light spar from rolling in the water, and life was yet clinging to its throne.

By dint of much exertion the infant was restored to consciousness, and as the old sailer held it in his lap, it put forth its little hand to his neck and smiled a sweet smile upon him. In that single, simple smile, there was a sunbeam that never faded from Paul Marline's beating heart, and from that moment his every affection was centered in the little innocent he had saved from the cold grave of Bengal's Bay. He had nurtured it with a father's and a mother's care, and whatever ship he sailed in, must enter his protegee upon its ration books. Paul had sailed under the brave Maxwell, and for that old admiral he named his child, and as it grew in years it promised a fame as enduring as that of its departed namesake. Its mind grasped after knowledge, and the officers took pleasure in ministering to its wants, and during the three years that Paul had been on board the Dunkirk, young Maxwell had had every opportunity for advancement. Captain St. Moorey took a peculiar fancy for the youth, and the circumstance of the capture of the pirates to which we have already alluded, had brought him into the favorable notice of the admiralty.

Paul Marline had been so long on the India station, and had become so expert a pilot among the rivers and harbors, that he had been retained there, so that now he was returning to England for the first time, since Osmond Maxwell had been taken under his charge.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE BROTHER'S MISSION.

**A**N hour after the frigate had dropped her anchor in the harbor of Portsmouth, young Maxwell was sent for to attend the captain in the cabin. When Osmond entered the cabin, he found his commander in company with a gentleman, named Sir Philip Hubert, who had come a passenger from Calcutta, and two stranger officers who had come off from the shore.

This Sir Philip Hubert was a man somewhere in the neighborhood of fifty years of age, rather stout, but not corpulent, in his build, with a broad head, and a face not very pleasing, nor yet very forbidding, in its expression. Perhaps the suns of thirty Indian summers had given a harshness to his face which was not natural to his heart, or perhaps that apparent harshness was only the result of some recent troubles that had worked his soul up to a sort of habitual, cold reserve. But, be that as it may, his title of baronet did not make him a true gentleman, nor did his general tone of feature present anything that would tend to a desire on the part of a stranger to court his friendship.

"Mr. Maxwell," said the captain, after the

young man had been introduced to the two officers from the shore, "I believe this is the first time you have ever seen the shores of Old England?"

"It is, sir," replied Osmond, at the same time casting a furtive glance at Sir Philip Hubert, whose restless eyes had been fastened upon him from the moment on which he had entered the cabin.

"Ah, do your parents reside in India?" asked one of the officers, a Captain Fitz Roy.

"No, sir," replied the young man, in a slightly embarrassed manner.

Captain St. Moorey saw his young officer's embarrassment, and turning quickly to Fitz Roy, he remarked:

"Mr. Maxwell, sir, has but little idea of any parentage. When he was first found by the man who has proved a true father to him, he was being nursed upon the cold, rough bosom of the Bay of Bengal. That was nineteen years ago. You know old Paul Marline, who was for so long a time Admiral Maxwell's signal quarter master?"

"Yes, I remember the old sea-dog well," returned Captain Fitz Roy.

"Well, he it was who found the child, then not over a year old, floating upon a royal yard."

"Not over a year old, did you say?" uttered Sir Philip Hubert, with a sudden start.

"So old Marline says," answered the captain, gazing with surprise at the strange expression that rested upon the baronet's features.

"Did you ever hear of any circumstance cotemporary with that which might throw any light upon the matter?" St. Moorey continued, as the idea suggested by his question flashed through his mind.

"O, no, no," Sir Philip quickly answered, while he strove hard to keep back the expression of his real feelings. "I was only wondering that an infant could have lived for a moment in such a situation."

"It was strange, that's true," the captain returned, "but the child's clothing served to keep its head above water, and thus the spar bore it along." Then turning to Fitz Roy, he continued:

"So you will see, sir, that Mr. Maxwell owes his preferment solely to his own manhood and seamanship."

"It's a pity our navy had not more such," Fitz Roy said, as he instinctively put forth his hand and grasped the youth a second time in token of his esteem. "There is no navy in the world where the officers are better seamen than in our own, but at the same time there is need of reform."

Maxwell bowed politely at the compliment of the post-captain, and then St. Moorey said:

"I have sent for you, Mr. Maxwell, to inform you that you may make your preparations for an immediate visit to London. Captain Fitz Roy informs me that your commission has already been filed by the admiralty, and you will be drawn for service in a month or two at the farthest. I have despatches to send to the lords, and you can take them along with you, get your commission, spend a few weeks in the great metropolis, and then await orders."

"I am under the deepest obligations, sir, for

your kind consideration," Maxwell returned, "and now, I would ask a favor at your hands?"

"Name it."

"It is, that Paul Marline might accompany me?"

"Well, I don't know about that," mused Captain St. Moorey. "It should be the boatswain's duty to see the ship stripped before he leaves her."

"O, let the old fellow go," interposed Fitz Roy. "He's been knocked about so long in the Indian Ocean, 'twould be too bad to keep him here to stripship. Let him go, St. Moorey, and you shall have one of the dock boatswains for that."

"Well, Osmond," said his commander, "you may tell old Paul to pack up."

"Thank you, sir. And now when shall I start?"

"To-morrow morning. You will take the post-route to Winchester and from thence on to Windsor, where you will find Lord Wilton, for whom you will take letters. From there you may take the river. So you may make your arrangements as soon as possible. Sir Philip, here, will be your travelling companion. Remember, Osmond," the captain continued, with a smile, "this is to be your *coup d'essai*, and I hope it will be a favorable one among the lords of the admiralty."

The young officer bowed low in response to his commander's kind wishes, and in a moment afterwards he withdrew from the presence of his superiors.

"That's a fine looking fellow, St. Moorey," emphatically remarked Fitz Roy, a moment after Osmond had gone.

"Yes, he is," returned St. Moorey; "and I can assure you that his looks do not belie him. A truer gentleman, or a more thorough seaman, does not tread the king's deck, and your own eyes must have told you that his arm is befitting the best sword in the kingdom. I tell you, Fitz Roy, young Osmond has good English blood in his veins. From the moment that he began to comprehend the nature of things about him, his mind has betrayed a stamp



Osmond Maxwell, the Child of the Bay, and old Paul Marline.—See Chap. I, p. 8

of nobility that belongs not to the common herd, and though his parents were probably lost with the ship in which he was wrecked, yet, could the truth be known, I am confident he would turn up the scion of a noble stock."

"Did you say it was nineteen years since he was found?" asked Sir Philip.

"Yes, about that."

"And he was then only a year old?"

"He could not, from old Paul's account, have been far from that. He could not stand alone, at any rate."

"You have no clue to the name of the vessel in which he was wrecked, I suppose?" continued Sir Philip, with an anxiety that made itself manifest above all his apparent efforts to conceal it.

"No," returned St. Moorey, regarding his interlocutor with an inquisitive glance; "but if I am not mistaken, old Paul has a clue to it. By the way, Sir Philip—I never noticed it before—but I declare, there is somewhat of a resemblance between the young man and yourself."

"He bear a resemblance to me?" uttered the baronet.

"I' faith, he does, most assuredly," ventured Fitz Roy, as he cast a sweeping glance over the features of Sir Philip.

"Well, I never should have noticed it if you had not mentioned it," the baronet said, with an apology for a smile. "Some freak of nature, I presume, for he cannot be connected with our family, as I never had any children, and my brother Walter only had one, and that was a daughter."

"No," said Fitz Roy, "he cannot then of course belong to your family, for I know Sir Walter's family affairs well. But I declare, the more I think of it, the more I can trace the family resemblance in the youth. By the way, Sir Philip, how did you leave your brother?"

"Ah, captain," returned the baronet, with a melancholy look, "poor Sir Walter is dead; and I—I am the sole cause of the sad event."

"You, Sir Philip?"

"Yes. Two years ago I was taken with the tropical fever, and having no relatives to settle up my affairs, I sent for my brother to come out. He came. My own long residence in the Indies had so injured my constitution to the climate that I weathered the fever, but, alas! my poor brother took it, and fell a speedy victim to its malignity. For that reason I am returning to my native country, after an absence of over twenty-four years, to take charge of his estate, and be a father to the orphan daughter he has left to mourn his untimely death."

"Poor Sir Walter!" murmured Captain Fitz Roy, in a tone of real sorrow. "He was a good man, and his king has lost a noble soul from his realm, while in his circle of immediate friends has been left a vacancy that will not easily be filled."

"Your eulogy is a just one," Sir Philip said, as he wiped a tear from his eye; "and I, who have been so long away, can hardly hope to fill his place. I forwarded the news of his death to his daughter a month before the Dunkirk sailed, so the painful duty of breaking the melancholy intelligence to her is at least spared me."

For some time after Sir Philip ceased speaking there was a dead silence in the cabin. Sir Walter Hubert was extensively known, and the news of his death cast a shade over the officers' spirits. He had retired from the navy several years before, and accepted from his sovereign the lordship of Colford, and up to the time of his departure for the Indies he had held, and filled with ability, a seat among the lords of the admiralty. The family was originally from the North Riding of Yorkshire, but shortly after Walter entered the navy, his brother Philip removed to India, and the death of an elder sister without issue, left the two brothers the only surviving members of a once powerful family. Now one of the brothers had gone, and the old barony had but one representative, and how the honors set on his shoulders, the readers shall ere long know.



## CHAPTER III.

## OLD PAUL'S SUSPICION.

NEVER was there a prouder man, or one more happy and thankful, than was old Paul Marline on the next morning, as he stood by the side of his generous protege on the quarter-deck. His boatswain's uniform was most elaborately neat, and it was donned with a scrupulous exactness that well became an old naval disciplinarian. His golden "call," a present from old Admiral Maxwell, was tucked half way into a small pocket on his left breast, and secured about his neck by a chain of the same metal, said chain being a gift from the foremast hands of the Dunkirk. Next to his noble protege, old Paul looked upon his whistle and chain as the laurel wreaths of his life; and well he might, for while one told how highly he was esteemed by his superiors, the other gave proof of the love which was borne him by those who were under his immediate control.

"Paul, what are you looking at so earnestly?" asked Osmond, as he noticed the old man's eyes flashing with a steady, but anxious gaze.

"I'm just takin' an observation o' that fellow under the break o' the poop," answered

Paul, in a low tone, without even removing his gaze.

"What; at Sir Philip?"

"Yes."

"Well, do you see anything particularly interesting about him?"

"Maybe yes, and maybe no. 't any rate, I've seen that feller's top-hamper afore," replied Paul, in a meditative mood; and, after a moment's silence, he continued, as he removed his gaze to the face of his companion:

"I tell you, Max., the cut o' that chap's jib looks kind o' familiar like."

"Very likely," returned Osmond; "for Sir Philip has resided in India a good many years."

"An' he's the brother of Rear Admiral Hubert, aint he?"

"Yes."

Again, Paul Marline turned his gaze towards Sir Philip, and after a few moments' pause, he said, in a sort of puzzled manner:

"There's somethin' in his buntin', Max., that I can't make out. I know it's Sir Philip Hubert, but blow me if he don't look like somethin'

't I've got laid up here (the old man tapped his head), an' just now I can't overhaul it. Yer see, Max., I've got two sep'rate lockers in my old top-piece. One on 'em is where I keep everything kiled away reg'lar shipshape, an' I can overhaul anything that's in there afore the ball 'd come out of a thirty-two pounder after the primin' was burnt. In t'other locker I throws everything in kind o' careless like, 'cause ye see, I don't care whether I ever find it agin or not. Now that Sir Philip's number I've throwed in to this careless locker, an' smash my top-lights if I can make it out."

"They say he looks like me, Paul," said Osmond, in a kind of suggestive manner, for though the young man had reasons for being interested on account of his own observation of Sir Philip's manner, yet he knew that questions would only tend still more to puzzle his old friend, and so he determined to let the matter work out of the "careless locker" as best it might, feeling assured that he should see it when it did come out.

"Looks like you!" uttered the old sailor, as he gazed upon the youth with a beam of fond admiration. "So does a Bengal junk look like the king's yacht—'cause why? 'Cause they've both got sails, an' both set in the water, that's all. Be sure," continued Paul, in a regretful tone, "the turnin' of his figger-head is a *leetle* like yours, but that aint anything. 'Taint that 'at's in my noddle, Max."

"Then you can't make it out, Paul?"

"No, not now; but p'raps it'll turn up afore long."

Young Maxwell turned his eyes towards the spot where Sir Philip stood, but he found that gentleman's gaze bent fixedly upon himself, and turning away, he took a turn forward. In Sir Philip Hubert's appearance there was nothing to attract his attention, or excite an unwonted emotion, but it was in the baronet's strange manner towards himself, and in Paul's unaccountable ideas, that Osmond found food for pointless surmises. But of one thing he was satisfied, not only by Captain St. Moorey's assurance, given to him half an hour before, but by the instinc-

tive reasoning of his own soul—that the object of his somewhat anxious curiosity was no relation of his, either by blood or circumstance; and with this conviction he tried to dismiss the matter from his mind, leaving it for Paul to fathom the mystery, if any there was.

"Mr. Maxwell, the captain wishes to see you, sir," said the orderly, who had just come from the cabin door.

Osmond nodded a silent assent to the marine's message, and followed him aft. When he entered the cabin, he found the captain alone.

"Mr. Maxwell," said St. Moorey, "the boat for Southampton will be ready in half an hour. Is your baggage ready?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then the second cutter will take you ashore at once. Here is a package of letters for Lord Wilton, at Windsor. You will find him at the castle, which will give you a good opportunity of seeing the noblest structure in England. This package is for the admiralty, and Lord Wilton will give you full directions for finding its destination. Now here," continued the captain, as he took from a heap of documents at his side a small, neatly folded package, "is a parcel for the Lady Rosalind Hubert, the daughter of the late Sir Walter, Lord Colford. It is from the Governor General of India, but why he did not send it by Sir Philip, the uncle of the lady, I cannot tell. The governor knew that Sir Walter's brother was coming in my ship, but yet he gave the package to me, with the request that I would see it safely delivered. Perhaps it contains something which the lady might wish to keep private, even from her uncle, and as that uncle is now her guardian, it may be that the governor feared he might take the liberty, *ex officio*, of opening it, had it been entrusted to him. At any rate, I shall place it in your care, and you can either deliver it in person, or procure its safe delivery in some other way. Fitz Roy tells me the lady is handsome, Maxwell, so you had better look to your heart."

The captain smiled as he spoke, and passed the packages over to the young officer, who also

smiled as he took them, and then immediately replied:

"My heart is pretty secure, sir—at least against the charms of the daughter of Lord Colford. However, as long as I have the privilege, I believe I shall make her acquaintance."

A few more remarks were passed, and after receiving more full directions for the management of his business, young Osmond took his leave, and made preparations for starting on his trip to London. The second cutter was soon called away, Sir Philip Hubert, Osmond, and Paul Marline saw their luggage safely in the boat, and then took their seats in it, and in a moment more they were rowed swiftly away from the old frigate.

It was a beautiful morning, and Southampton water was literally alive with the many winged craft that dotted her fair bosom. Sailboats, pleasure yachts, bumboats, and lumbering luggers were passing to and fro in rapid succession, and the small lighter schooner in which our friends had taken passage from Portsmouth was surrounded on her way by her aquatic companions. The wind was favorable, and the lighter went merrily on her way, now luffing almost into the wind to avoid a heavy brig that was coming down, and again keeping away to clear some heavy lugger that was running across the bay.

"Aint that fellow astern makin' a si'nal for us to heave-to?" asked old Paul, who had had his eyes turned towards a small yacht that was right in their wake.

The captain of the lighter cast his eyes towards the yacht, and after a moment's examination, he quickly uttered, as he shoved his helm down:

"They be. Somebody wants to speak us. Shall I heave-to?"

This latter question was addressed to Maxwell, and having been assured that they should reach Southampton in time for the post, the young officer gave his consent. The lighter was accordingly brought up into the wind, and in ten minutes the yacht had thrown a line on board.

"Is there a Sir Philip Hubert on board?" asked the skipper, of the yacht.

"That's my name," returned Sir Philip, as he stepped to the rail, and in a moment more a man whom he at once recognized, came up from the trunk cabin of the yacht.

"Ah, Sir Philip," exclaimed the stranger, as he extended his hand over the rail, "you are the very man."

"Lucival! Well, that's fortunate," said the baronet, as he grasped the extended hand. "I had expected to have found you in London."

"Yes, and that's where I expected to meet you," returned the man, whom Sir Philip had called Lucival, and who, by the way, was a well dressed, dandyish-looking fellow, with an immense whisker and mustache above which could only be seen a broad nose, a pair of sharp black eyes, and the lower portion of a contracted brow.

"But you see, Sir Philip," he continued, "I found amusement in Portsmouth, and so I remained to wait your arrival there, but, egad, I like to have missed you, after all. I saw the boat put off this morning, and of course, I supposed you were coming ashore, nor did I discover my mistake till the lighter was under way."

Here the conversation between Sir Philip and Mr. Morgan Lucival took a lower key, so as not to be overheard by those around, and once the quick, keen glance which the latter gentleman cast towards Maxwell, showed pretty conclusively that part of their conversation, at least, was concerning him.

Old Paul Marline stood by Osmond's side, and when Mr. Lucival cast that glance towards the young officer, the old sailor caught his eye, and for a moment the two—Paul and Lucival—regarded each other with startled interest. Mr. Morgan Lucival evidently experienced a certain degree of uneasiness beneath the eye-shot of the old man, but with an effort he threw off the perturbation, and very calmly stroked back his glossy mustache as he turned towards Sir Philip. A few moments more they conversed in a low tone, and then, Sir Philip having assented to some proposition made by his companion, they separ-

ated, and the yacht's line was cast off, while the lighter filled away and stood on her course, the yacht, meanwhile, falling slightly astern, and then keeping along nearly in the lighter's wake.

For full five minutes after the two vessels had separated did old Paul Marline keep his eye fixed upon the yacht, and then, with a slight motion towards his young protege, he leisurely walked forward. Maxwell caught the old man's meaning, and with an apparent unconcernedness that might not awaken the curiosity of any one else, he followed.

"Max," said the old boatswain, leaning over the rail, and working a plaited knot in the end of the jib-downhaul, "there's somethin' in the wind, d'ye know it?"

"What now, Paul?" asked Maxwell, who saw by the old man's manner that he had some new suspicion on his mind.

"D'ye notice the look o' that monkey, 'board the yacht, when he clapped his eye on you so sharp?"

"Yes, and I suppose Sir Philip was saying something about me."

"Very likely, but d'ye see how he shivered in the wind when he caught sight o' my old fig'r-head?"

"Was that it?" returned Osmond, with considerable interest. "I noticed him tremble, but I didn't know what was the matter."

"Yes, he saw me."

"And do you know who he is?"

"I think I know him, an' if his name is Mister Morgan Lucival, then blow me 'f I b'lieve mine is Paul Marline, that's all."

"But who then is he, Paul?"

"There I'm run hard an' fast ashore, Max," returned the old sailor, in a sorely perplexed manner. "I can't for my life tell who he is, though if he had them bloody whiskers off I think I could make him out. But there's one thing I do know, Max. I've seen him afore, an' his name wan't Lucival, neither."

"There's something curious about this," uttered Osmond, in a meditative manner, at the same time looking his companion thoughtfully in the face.

"Curious!" repeated Paul, letting go the jib downhaul, and bringing his clenched fist emphatically down upon the rail. "I tell ye, Max., there's some bloody willainy goin' on under all this. Now I wont take it on me to say 'at Sir Philip knows who he's got in tow, but if he *does*, then 'taint for no good, 'at they be sailin' together in this fashion. That big whiskered chap I see'd in Calcutta less 'n two years ago, I'm sartin of it, an' he come here in the Wongfau 'at got in from India a for'night ago.—Hallo! Luff, there!"

Paul's last exclamation was caused by a heavy schooner which was just tacking in, the line of the lighter's course, and as some of the crew came forward to flatten in the head sheets, our two friends suspended their conversation and walked aft.

Young Maxwell thought long and deeply upon what he had heard and seen, and he felt assured that there was indeed something mysterious, to say the least, in the position of Sir Philip Hubert. What it might be he could not divine. Old Paul would never have entertained a suspicion, without just grounds for it, and the youth gave much weight to his opinions, however vague they might be. He knew that the baronet was of a noble family, and that his standing in the kingdom was good, and also that he had come to England to succeed his deceased brother in the administration of his affairs; but yet he could not avoid the suspicion that all was not as it should be. Perhaps, Sir Philip was a dupe of this Lucival, without any evil designs of his own.

But of one thing Osmond ere long became convinced! He should never make out anything by his surmises, and trying to feel unconcerned about the matter, he thought to let it drop until circumstances should afford him an opportunity of sifting it out. But the subject was not so easily dropped, for ever and anon as the young man would turn his gaze casually towards Sir Philip, he would find that gentleman's eyes fastened upon him with a degree of meaning interest that started afresh all the mystified surmises he would have stilled.



## CHAPTER IV.

### A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

THE lighter arrived at Southampton over half an hour before the post-coach started for Winchester, so that Osmond had plenty of time for the transmission of his baggage. There were but few passengers in the coach, and they arrived in Winchester in season for an early dinner. Mr. Morgan Lucival was one of the number, but as he took a seat on the inside, while Paul and Osmond rode with the guard on the box, there was but little chance for the old sailor to "take an observation." At the hotel, however, where they took dinner, Paul had an opportunity to take a good look at the man, and though he was more than ever convinced that he knew him, yet he could by no manner of means clear up the fog that enveloped the affair.

The old boatswain had finished his meal, and was standing beneath the piazza, having just stowed away a generous piece of "pig-tail" in his mouth, when he felt some one touch him rather daintily upon the shoulder. With a kind of shuffling waddle, the old man turned upon his heel, and on casting up his eyes he beheld the massive whiskers and mustache of Mr. Morgan Lucival.

"Ah, venerable sailor-man," uttered Mr. Morgan Lucival, in an overstrained voice, as he pulled up the point of his starboard mustache, and looked vastly condescending upon the old naval veteran; "perhaps you have something to—ah—communicate. I have—ah, noticed your looks, and your conduct, sar, seems—ah—to indicate that you know me."

"Can't say as I do, sir," returned Paul, at the same time cocking a peculiar look out of his starboard eye. "Fact is, sir, your fig'r-head looked a leetle kind o' familiar, but that's all—though I won't say for sart'n but what if you had that ere top-hamper cleaned off 'm your face I might know ye. Can't call ye by name, now, though I'd bet my dinner's grog 'at I've seen ye afore."

"Sailaw-man, your advanced age—ah—entitles you to my—ah—consideration; but you are inclined to be—ah—somewhat impudent. You can call me Lucival, sar, and I think it is highly probable that you have seen me in—ah—Injaw. I've been in Calcuttaw, sar."

"Yes, an' it's more 'n likely 'at I have seen

## THE CHILD OF THE BAY.

you there. You say I may call you *Lucival*, did y'?" asked Paul, with one of those peculiar winks that mean a great deal more than words can express.

"Ah—yes."

"Well, 'spose'n I was to call that stagecoach a ship, would it be a ship?"

"Ah—sailaw-man, I don't comprehend your meaning."

Mr. Morgan Lucival elevated his eye-brows as he spoke, and it did not escape the keen observation of Paul that he was somewhat startled by the dubious simile.

"Well," returned the old man, with the utmost coolness, "I just *do* comprehend your meanin'. You mean as I should think your name is *Lucival*?"

"Ah—your deduction is correct."

"Yes. Well, I hope you be *all* correct, that's all; but blow me 'f I b'lieve it."

The whiskered gentleman cast a searching glance at the old man's features, and seeming to withhold half a dozen exclamations that rose to his lips, he at length said:

"I see you don't know me. You—ah—perhaps mistake me for some gentleman—ah—you have seen somewhere. Coincidence of feature, probably—or—ah—else you. Yes, I see it—you thought you recognized some one else."

Mr. Morgan Lucival turned daintily away as he spoke, but ere he did so, Paul Marline caught the flash of his dark eye, as a wicked light beamed forth from it, and at the same moment a passing gust of wind parted the whisker on the left cheek, and the old man's quick glance detected a deep, broad scar, just below the ear. Paul brought his huge hands nervously together, and bent his head in hard thought.

"Ha! now I've overhauled him," the old boatswain exclaimed, as he raised his eyes, and followed the departing form of the suspicious individual. "Oho, Mister Lucival, so you've been soundin' me, have ye? Now I can make out your true colors. You wanted to know whether I knew ye. Well, I'm glad I didn't just then, for I cert'nly should 'a blowed if I had. You feel safe now, I s'pose, 'cause you

think them hairs cover up your bloody phiz. Well, go it, my sweet 'un." These old hands 'ave laid *one* sweet thirty-six 'cross your back, an' blow me 'f I don't b'lieve they'll lay alongside o' ye agin afore long."

Thus muttered old Paul to himself, as the object of his meditations walked out of sight, and it was not until quite a crowd had collected about near him, that he recovered from the effect of the discovery he had made. The old sailor was somewhat nettled when he saw the people gazing so earnestly upon him, but in a moment he observed the respectful deference with which their gaze was blended, and he felt proud of the mark. Twenty hands were instinctively raised to the respective hats of their owners as Paul looked up, and with a grateful look he returned the salutation.

The old veteran's heart beat with a thrill of pleasure, as he saw that his very appearance commanded the respect of his countrymen, and turning towards some half dozen respectable looking tradespeople, he said:

"I give ye a good day, my masters. It's been a long time since I've set foot in Old England afore to-day, an' I'm just takin' an observation like, ye see."

"You've seen some service, I should judge, old man," said one of the tradesmen, in a respectful manner.

"Atween fifty an' sixty years, sir," replied Paul; and then, with a look of pride which was certainly pardonable, he continued: "The French, the Dutch, the Spanish, the Dane, an' the bloody Turk 'ave all had a shot at my old hulk, but it's good for Old England yet, an' is likely to be for a good many years to come."

"Three cheers for the *old boatswain*!" shouted one of the crowd, and three hearty, whole-souled huzzas rent the air.

They came from the very hearts of those who uttered them, and as old Paul gazed upon his countrymen, he drew the sleeve of his jacket across his eyes to wipe away a tear, and then, in his deep-toned voice, he cried:

"Now three for *Old England*!"

The shout went up, and its tones brought Os-

mond Maxwell to the door. He soon comprehended the matter, and letting old Paul have cut his burst of national enthusiasm, he approached him and laid his hand on his shoulder.

"Ah, Max.," uttered the old man, forgetting everything else in the thoughts of the discovery he had made, "you are just the man. I've made him out, from truck to kelson."

"Made him out? Who, Paul?"

"The chap with the whiskers."

"Aha! and who is he?"

"Just what I thought. A reg'lar willain."

"And you know him?"

"Yes, Max., just like a si'nal-book. They aint a goin' any further wi' us, be they?"

"No. Sir Philip takes the Surrey post from here, and I suppose Mr. Lucival accompanies him."

"Then you just come out o' the way a bit, an' I'll tell you about 'im."

Old Paul turned to the people who still stood around, and taking off his cap he scraped a sort of silent farewell, which was answered by a fresh burst of huzzas, and then he followed Maxwell into the house.

"Them's *English* hearts, Max.," said the old man, as they reached the reading-hall.

"Yes, and true ones, I should judge."

"You may say that. Ah, Max., you'll find a good many such in old England."

"And a good many villains, Paul."

"That's the truth, an' that Lucival's one o' 'em," said Paul, while a shadow flitted across his open countenance.

"Now, Paul," said Maxwell, as soon as they were out of earshot from those around, "what have you learned about this fellow? for, to tell the truth, since Captain St. Moorey gave me that package for the young lady, Rosalind Hubert, I have begun to have some strange suspicions."

"Let's see," commenced the old man, running over his fingers by way of certainty in his chronological calculation, "there's three years I've been bo'sn o' the Dunkirk, then there was four years I was si'nal quarter-master o' the Suxsex. It was seven years ago, Max. I was

chief bo'sn's mate o' the old Thunderer. Admiral Beauchampe had his red flag at our main truck, an' a better man, or a better sailor, never hi'sted the British buntin'. Well, we'd been on a cruise down to the south'rd, an' had just cast our moorin's at the mouth o' the Hoogly, when a boat come off, with a dozen officers from the Gov'nor-General, arter a man as had been doin' up a murder ashore. It seems there was a half-pay so'ger o' some kind 'at kept a kind of a moored bumboat at one o' the lighter piers, an' his wife lived and bunked wi' 'im in the boat. Well, one night a sailor come aboard the bumboat—no, he want a sailor, Max., for all he wore the king's frock—he was a willain, a sneekin' willain. Well, he went aboard the boat, an' murdered the old so'ger, an' then he tried to murder the woman, but she jumped overboard and swum ashore. The bloody thief knew 'twas no use to give chase, so he just took all the money—ye see he knowed where 'twas, 'cause he'd seen 'm have it—an' then he hauled his wind an' run. Well, these shore officers come aboard as soon as we had got our hooks down, an' there was a lot o' so'gers an' a woman wi' 'em. Old Beauchampe knowed in a minute there was somethin' to pay, an' so he took the wisit kind o' civil like, an' axed the officers into his cabin. Arter they'd been in there a little while, the old admiral come out an' had all hands called to muster. I was stationed on the forecas'le, ye know. I allers prided myself on my call, 'cause there wa'nt a whis'lo' in the fleet 'at you could hear further nor mine. Well, as I was sayin', just as I passed the call for all hands to muster aft, I happened to cock my starb'rd eye down the fore-hatch, an' what should I see but one o' the fore-to-mast hands just skulkin' away under the water-tanks. Now my first idee, Max., was to take a rope's end an' rowse 'im out o' that—then thinks I—ye know, Max., second thoughts is best?"

"Yes," answered Maxwell.

"And old Paul Marline don't think for noth'n, neither."

"That's true, Paul," the young man returned, while a smile, in spite of his anxious curiosity, lit up his features.

"Well," the old man continued, as he cast his eyes about to see that no one was overhearing them, "I knowed 'at as long as the sweet 'un was in there I had 'm, so I just let him be an' reported all up from for'rd. Then the purser's stew'rd began to call the roll. The old 'ooman stood close to the capst'n, an' as the men, one arter another come 'round, she took an observation o' their faces, but she let 'em pass wi'out any trouble. Bime by they called for *Bunk Walland*, but there wa'nt no Bunk Walland come. 'Where is he?' says the admiral. 'I'll find him, sir,' says I. 'That's right, Paul,' says he. He allers called me Paul—kind o' familiar like, ye see. Well, I just put about an' steered for the fore-hold, an' ye'd better believe, Max., 'at Mister Bunk Walland come out o' that quick—an' no sooner 'd he put his foot on the quarter-deck 'an the old 'ooman give a jump rite up in the air like a shot porpus. 'That's the man!' says she, in a reg'lar scream.

Mister Bunk Walland tried to come the innocent, but 'twan't no go. P'raps if he hadn't sneaked away so he'd stood a better chance, but 'twas all over wi' 'im now. They knowed he was the murderer, an' so they lugged 'im off."

"Spin it quick, Paul," interrupted Maxwell, "for the coach is at the door."

"Well, so I will. 'Taint but a few words. Mister Bunk Walland was put into the boat, an' till he got ashore he acted as docile as a chicken, but just as they shot up into the dock he parted the lashin' on his arms an' jumped overboard. One o' the so'gers struck 'im wi' his cutlass, an' cut 'im right across the larb'rd cheek, but the willain got clear by swimmin' under the wharf. Now, Max., that Mister Morgan Lucival is nobody but *Bunk Walland*! There!"

"Are you sure of this, Paul?"

"Just as sure as I am 'at I'm Paul Marline."

"Ah, there's the coach."

## CHAPTER V.

### A VILLAIN ON THE CHASE.

THE route from Winchester to Windsor, at the time of which we write, was somewhat tiresome and tedious. Not that the scenery lacked interest, or that the way was destitute of objects calculated to excite the admiration, and even veneration, of the traveller; but the mail contract obliged the post-coaches to remain at Winchester, three days in the week, till after noon, and then the route to Windsor had to be made that night.

When the coach left the hotel there were only two passengers inside, both strangers, and Maxwell and Paul on the outside, together with the mail guard and driver. Sir Philip and Mr. Lucival had remained behind for the more direct route, as they said, through Surrey.

"How happened you to discover that this man, who calls himself Lucival, was the villain who murdered the bumboat man?" asked young Maxwell of the old man, as the coach reached the open country outside of Winchester.

"Why," returned Paul, "you see the bloody scamp mistrusted 'at I knowed 'im, an' so he put on a bold face an' hailed me. He talked a

sort o' outlandish jargon, an' made all sorts o' strange idecs, 'cause I'd looked at 'im so sharp. Well, he turned away wi' the idee 'at I didn't know him, an' just at that moment I caught his eye, an' the wind blowed open his whisker, an' I seed the scar on his larb'rd cheek 'at the so'ger made wi' the cutlass. But I knowed him, Max., afore I seed the scar, for the look he give me wi' that eye o' his'n was just enough to nab him. I knowed them colors like a si'nal-book."

"There's something strange about this affair," uttered Maxwell. "Can it be possible that Sir Philip knows the real character of his companion?"

"Well, I don't know 'bout that," returned Paul, with a dubious shake of the head. "It's more nor likely 'at he don't—but then what can he be doin' wi' such a feller, any how?"

"Perhaps he has contrived to ingratiate himself into Sir Philip's good graces by palming himself off as some travelling gentleman," suggested the young man, more by way of advancing a possibility, than by expressing an opinion.

"You mean, he's been tryin' to come the so'ger over Sir Philip?"

"Yes, Paul."

"Yes—well—maybe so," fell from the old man's lips, in a tone which plainly indicated that it came from an unwillingness to dispute Maxwell's ideas, especially as he could not confidently do so. "But, look here, Max.," he continued, "what was all that whisperin' an' si'nalizin' about? An' then what is Sir Philip so skulky about?"

These were questions that Maxwell could not answer, and he did not feel that he could even hazard an opinion, so he thought, rather than to speak.

At this moment the driver turned in his seat, and ventured a remark to old Paul, and in a few moments the veteran was in his element, expatiating upon the ascendancy of the royal navy over everything else in the world.

Maxwell was thus for a few moments left to his own thoughts. He dwelt with an unwonted degree of interest upon the circumstances that had transpired, and at length he found himself propounding to his own mind the query as to the manner in which the affair could affect him. He knew not how to explain the matter to himself. He could only tell that it had stirred up his soul with an exciting anxiety, and that he would, if possible, reach the bottom of it. Not only was there a certainty of Lucival's being a villain—and this alone would have been little—and not only was there something suspicious in his connection with Sir Philip, but about the baronet himself there was a suspicion, which, however dark and dubious it might be, was a suspicion still. To be sure, it was a mere nebula in the sea of uncertainty, but yet the thought, the idea, had fastened itself upon the young man's mind, and nothing short of an entire clearing up of the mystery could throw it off. Whether such an event might ever happen remained yet to be seen.

Maxwell would have preferred to remain master of his own reflections, at least, for a while

longer, but the mail guard evinced a decided *penchant* for conversation, and at length the young officer threw off his selfish mood and joined with him; nor did he repent his condescension, for the guard was thoroughly acquainted with English life and manners, having been for many years a police officer, and in his conversation, Maxwell found much to interest and instruct. The various points of interest on the route were as the pages of a primer to the guard; and to one in our hero's position, his explanations and remarks were not only timely, but they were really serviceable; for one who felt himself an Englishman, and, yet, at the age of twenty years, was entering the kingdom for the first time, most assuredly needed a thoroughly versed traveller for his own information.

Thus passed the time till nightfall. A light, fleecy vapor, that had been gradually gathering and working its way up from the vales and meadow lands, now reached its shadowy curtain into the heavens, so that the gentle stars were shut out from their vigils, and though not really gloomy in its aspect, yet the night was darker than usual. The coach had entered the confines of Berkshire, and the driver was urging his horses on, so as to reach the inn where he was to change horses, and allow his passengers to obtain their suppers, when the mail guard, who had taken a seat by the side of Maxwell, above the driver's box, suddenly stopped in his conversation and bent his ear towards the road over which they had come.

A noise which would scarcely have fallen upon the ears of the common traveller, was sure to arouse the ever watchful vigilance of the guard of the English mail, for ere the railways began to gird the kingdom with their iron bands, there was no point towards which the cupidity of the highwayman was more attracted than towards the mail-bags; but the introduction of Mr. Palmer's plan of contracting with the regular stage-coaches for its conveyance, under the immediate care of a guard, had somewhat obviated this danger, though not entirely.

"Do ye hear that, sir?" asked the guard, after listening for several moments.

"To what do you allude?" asked Maxwell, who had heard nothing in particular.

"Do you not hear that curriele behind us?"

"I hear a wagon of some kind," returned Maxwell, as the sound of distant wheels for the first time fell upon his ear, "but I am not able to tell what it is."

"No, I suppose not," remarked the guard, with a smile. "You, whose only accent to awaken alarm is the sound of the waking tempest, or the roar of the enemy's cannon, cannot be expected to know the nature of our shore contrivances from their mere sound."

"Don't ye let that go so, Max.," interrupted old Paul, who had caught the remark of the guard, and who had thereupon turned quickly in his seat. "Tell 'im the roar o' the enemy's guns is *music* to every true English sailor. There aint no alarm in them things, no more 'n there is in the pipe to grog."

Maxwell smiled at the old man's sensitiveness on this particular point, and turning to the guard, he remarked:

"The old man has faced the enemy's guns for over fifty years, sir, and of course, you will yield him that point?"

"Certainly, and with pride," returned the guard, as he raised his hat respectfully to the old boatswain.

"Sometimes, p'raps," said old Paul, rather apologetically, for he was moved to a sense of his whimsicality by the guard's affability, "there be a few hearts 'at beat rather quick time when they see an enemy's line-o'-battle ship loomin' up to wind'rd, but when the first broadside comes there aint no more fear. Ev'ry Englishman's a lion arter the enemy burns his first powder."

Paul turned, after this explanation, to resume his conversation with the driver, and Maxwell remarked to his companion:

"You alluded to the sound of those wheels; what is there strange about them?"

"Why, I have been listening to them for some time back, and there is something curious, to say the least, in their movement. It is a curriele, as you can observe by its sound, for it has only two wheels, and is evidently drawn by two horses. For the last half hour it has followed very near to us, and though perfectly able, yet it does not pass, but contrives to maintain just about such a distance in our rear."

"And what do you judge from that?" asked Maxwell.

"Simply that some one is dogging the coach," answered the guard, as he again bent his ear towards the point from whence the sound proceeded. "There, do you notice that? They are walking their horses now, though you are aware that they have level ground on which to travel."

The stage-coach was now ascending a gentle eminence, and the driver had allowed his horses to come to a walk, and now that the circumstance had been pointed out to him, the young man could easily perceive that whoever were following them had also hauled their animals up to a walk.

"What's the matter aloft, there?" asked old Paul, again turning towards those who were seated above him. "Anything hove in sight astern?"

"No, nothing in particular," returned Osmond. "We only heard a carriage of some kind, and my friend here has been explaining to me what it is."

"Larnin' to make out shore si'nals, eh?" uttered Paul, with a chuckle, again resuming his look-out ahead.

"Never mind," the guard said, as he settled back into his seat, "we shan't haul up in the course of fifteen minutes, and then, if the curriele passes, we can make it out."

Although the guard had evidently resolved upon bestowing no more attention upon the following sounds, yet his mind, habitually trained to such watchfulness, would bend in that direction, and his conversational powers were propor-

tionally crushed. The vehicle still followed, at about the same distance as when first noticed, and while yet the young officer listened, a sudden suspicion flashed across his mind, and it came, too, in a somewhat tangible shape. The image thus called up in Osmond's brain had a form and feature, and it also—a circumstance rare with sudden suspicions—had somewhat of reason upon which to rest. A few moments he reflected upon the circumstances attending the route thus far, and then turning towards his companion, he remarked, in as careless a tone as possible:

"You said that was a curriele behind us."

"Yes, sir."

"With two horses?"

"Yes."

"And have you any idea of where such a vehicle might be obtained?"

"O, anywhere in the large villages through which we have passed," answered the guard, and then placing his finger's ends upon his forehead, as if to aid him in concentrating his thoughts, he continued, to himself:

"Let's see—Bingle had no curriele in his stable. Wyman had one, but *he* had only one horse. Withers had no carriages at all in. All gone to the race at White Church. It must have come from Winchester."

"Winchester, did you say?" quickly asked Osmond, as he eagerly caught the guard's last remark.

"Yes—it must have come from Winchester, or else it has come in from some of the cross-roads, which is very probable—though at all events, I think it is somebody following the coach."

Again Maxwell sank back into his own thoughts, which seemed to have been rendered more pointed from the information he had just obtained, but in a few moments more the twinkling lights ahead announced that the village was near, and ere long, the coach came to a stop in front of the inn where the passengers were to take supper.

"Driver," asked Maxwell, "how long shall we stop here?"

"Well," replied the functionary thus addressed, in his peculiar matter-of-fact manner, "got to change the mail—take supper—see to the horses—pick up two passengers. It'll be over half an hour."

"And how far is it to Windsor?"

"Eight miles an' a half."

Maxwell took old Paul by the buttonhole of his jacket, and led him one side.

"Paul, we are followed by some one."

"Followed, eh?" returned the old man, gazing with upraised eyebrows at the face of his protegee, just revealed by the light of the coach lamp. "Then there *was* somethin' astern?"

"Yes, Paul, and I have reason to believe that it is *us* they are after. The guard thinks the carriage that has been in our wake must have come from Winchester."

"Blow me, Max., 'f I don't believe you're right. That Mister Morgan Lucival aint satisfied wi' his look at me."

"Yes, and there's something more than that, you may depend, Paul," returned Maxwell, as he bent his head a moment in deep thought.

"It's me they be after, if anybody, for cert'nly nobody wants you, Max."

"Perhaps not, but nevertheless, who overhauls Paul Marline, must weather Osmond Maxwell's broadside first."

"God bless you, Max.," exclaimed the old man, as he grasped his companion by the hand. "We'll sink or float, just as God's willin', but it'll be alongside o' each other, wont it?"

"Yes, it will, Paul," Maxwell said, from the bottom of his heart. "Yes, it will. The gale cannot blow that shall separate us, till the Almighty's call shall summons one of us to heaven. But supper is ready—now you go in and eat yours, while I stand and watch outside; and when you've done, you can relieve me. If Sir Philip or his villanous companion, one or both, are following us, we shall have the weather-gage of them, for the quick ear of the guard has detected them, when no one else on the face of the earth would have noticed that there was any one at all in our wake. Go, now, and

bear a hand, Paul, for I'm as hungry as a half-rationed foretopman."

With a characteristic "Ay, ay, sir," the old sailor obeyed without further remark, and as soon as he had disappeared within the house, Maxwell set himself upon the watch. The young man listened attentively for the approach of the carriage he had heard behind the coach, but though he waited patiently for over ten minutes he heard nothing from it. This circumstance more than ever confirmed him in the suspicions he had entertained, and when Paul came at length to relieve him, he stated the weight which the non-appearance of the curriele had on his mind, but left it to the old sailor's own judgment to follow such a course as he saw fit.

For a few moments after Maxwell had gone in to his supper, old Paul remained standing just where his protegee had left him, but ere long he muttered to himself:

"'Taint no use stan'in' here, 'cause 'f them fellers be follerin' us they wont be likely to show 'emselves. I know what it is. That ere bloody willain, Mister Bunk Walland, or *Lucival*, as he calls 'imself, is just afear'd o' me, 'cause I knows 'im, an' he thinks to clap a stopper on my tongue. I'll just haul my wind out o' this an' git somewhere so as to take an observation, that's what I'll do."

About a hundred rods from the inn, from which point the village lights had first been distinguishable to the travellers, there was an abrupt curve in the road, where it swept around a small wood-crowned knoll. Old Paul had noticed it as he came along, and towards this point he turned his steps. Ere he reached it, however, he clambered over the hedge and took his way along through the field beyond, keeping as near in towards the hedg: as possible, until he came to the foot of the knoll. Here he listened a moment, but hearing nothing, save the light moaning of the wind through the foliage above him, he crept up to the summit, and turned his head towards the road. To eyes so inured to darkness as were Paul Marline's, the present sable curtain presented no insurmountable ob-

stacle to his vision, though of course he found some difficulty in following the course of the road at a distance of more than one or two rods. The old man placed his open hand above his eyes, contracted his brows till the lids almost met, and then began to define the objects ahead of him. Two or three minutes had he remained thus, and was upon the point of giving up, when he detected a dark object just looming up above a clump of shrub-oaks which grew by the roadside, and presently he made out a second object like the first. Moving the branches gently on either side, so as to make as little noise as possible, Paul crept down the opposite slope of the hill towards the shrub-oaks.

As the old man neared the spot, he settled upon his hands and knees, and at length found a place where he could peep through the hedge, and it required but a moment to reveal to his gaze a light, open vehicle, to which were attached two horses, and containing two men. One of them, in a voice which Paul had never before heard, was just asking a question, the gist of which the old man could not gather, but the other's answer assured him:

"O, no," returned the second occupant of the curriele, in a voice which Paul at once recognized as that of Mr. Mergan Lucival, "that wouldn't do, for the old bo'sn knows me, or at any rate, he suspects me, and if I should show myself he'd haul his wind and run."

"Vell, 't don't matter," said the first speaker, in a careless sort of a tone; "'spose I can tip his vink alone. I've tip'd a Bow-street afore now ven I hadn't half the chance. You pay-an' I'll vork. You'll be satisfied an' so vill hi—that't the hidee."

"Yes, so that you stop his glab. I've got business on my hands, and if he does know me, and I'm sure he does, he'll blow, and I'll be nabbed."

"[An' that 'd be a finish, wouldn't it?]" rather consolingly remarked the cockney. "But don't be honeasy. I'll dows the bo'sn vile you goes on to Lunnun, an' I vont blow, you may be sure."

Here the conversation settled into a common-

place monotony, and until the post-horn announced that the coach was about to start Paul heard no more of interest, and creeping back by the way he had come, he reached the inn just as the mail-guard was clambering up into his seat.

"See anything, Paul?" asked Maxwell, who yet stood upon the ground.

"Yes, an' heard, too. But you'll have to wait till we drop anchor in Windsor, 'cause ye see that guard man's got his own seat agin, an'

we can't talk. It'll be werry pleasant when you hear it, Max."

The coach started on its way, and once or twice during the remainder of the route, the sound of following wheels were heard. Maxwell was taciturn and thoughtful with anxiety and doubt, but old Paul, who was alone the present object of threatening evil, went again into his yarn-spinning with the driver, as though nothing had happened.

## CHAPTER VI.

AN ENEMY BOTH SUBTLE AND POWERFUL.

AT the hotel in Windsor, Maxwell obtained a double-bedded apartment, into which both himself and Paul had their baggage carried, and as the night was already far advanced when they arrived, they soon sought their room. The old man seated himself in a chair, and placing his broad hands upon his knees, he related to his protegee all that he had seen and heard from his hiding place behind the hedge. Maxwell's eyes snapped and sparkled as his companion continued, and over his face swept a variety of unwonted emotions. Had the meditated evil been aimed against himself, he would have only been nerved to a feeling of utter defiance; but that it was meant for the head of the old man who had been to him a father and constant protector, roused the tiger in his bosom, and the moment Paul had closed his narrative, the youth exclaimed:

"I'll not see Lord Wilton, till this villain is in my clutches; but I'll not spill his blood—the earth shall not be cursed with its noisome stream. The hangman's rope shall be his death."

"Don't be rash, Max.," said Paul, in a tone and manner that showed his course of action was laid out, "for this Mister Lucival will be off for Lunnun afore you or I can clap a stopper on 'im, an' as for 'tother willain, I shall know 'im afore he can hurt anybody. The best thing we can do, is to let Lucival go, 'cause maybe, by keepin' sight o' him, we may make out some o' the rest o' 'em. He aint alone, Max., you may depend on 't."

"No, I think not," returned Maxwell, in a thoughtful mood, but seeming to have coincided with the old man's ideas.

"I know he aint. I tell ye, Max., there's a reg'lar plot—a real willanous plot, in this ere affair."

"There's one thing I'm glad of, at any rate," Maxwell said.

"What's that?"

"That Sir Philip has nothing to do with this matter."

"Then you think he hasn't?"

"Certainly I do, Paul. Lucival has evidently excused himself away from the baronet, in

order to get you out of the way without his knowledge, for though there is something strange about Sir Philip, yet I think that as far as his connection with this villain is concerned, he is a dupe rather than an accomplice. Probably Lucival is afraid that you will inform Sir Philip of his real character."

Old Paul gazed at Maxwell for a full minute without speaking, his mind, the while, seeming to dwell with his own thoughts, rather than with what his companion had said; but at length he uttered, in slow, measured, and peculiarly emphasized accents:

"Yes—well—hope you be correct, Max. At any rate, I shan't argufy on that p'int. If Sir Philip be innocent I shall be—glad, that's all."

"So shall I, Paul. But we'll turn in now, and in the morning we'll talk over the matter."

The old man knew that his protegee was fatigued, and without further remark he proceeded to divest himself of his clothes, and ere long the two shipmates were locked in that sweet slumber, the bars of which no sin can shake, and no guilt-heaved conscience unloosen.

The morning dawned, and with the first streams of yellow light, old Paul was "on his pegs." His movements aroused Maxwell, and it was agreed that they should take a walk before breakfast. After Paul had got his morning's grog he took Maxwell under his guidance, and together they took a turn down by the Thames. Everything in that old city possessed such interest for the young man that little was said on the subject of the events of the preceding evening, and until the hour for breakfast he feasted his eyes on the grand sources of curiosity that everywhere met his gaze.

After breakfast the young man made inquiries respecting Lord Wilton, and from one of the gentlemen in the reading-room, he learned that his lordship, having had company from London, had left Windsor Castle, and taken rooms at the hotel near the park. Maxwell felt a little anxious about leaving Paul, and would the old man have consented he would have had his company; but Paul was no hand

for high associations when not particularly invited, and assuring his protegee that there was no danger, and even laughing at the bare idea, he persuaded him to make himself easy on his account, so at as early an hour as he judged would be expedient, Maxwell left his old friend and took a coach for Lord Wilton's hotel.

Having been set down at the door of the hotel, our hero entered the hall, and having sent his card up, soon received a summons from one of his lordship's own servants to follow him. Maxwell was ushered into a sumptuous apartment, through the windows of which floated the fragrance of a thousand sweet-scented flowers, while around upon the carved walls were suspended some of the choicest paintings of the day. Lord Wilton arose from a deep-seated lolling-chair in which he had been reclining, and received the young officer with an air of cool politeness.

"Mr. Maxwell, Lord Wilton is at your service," said the gentleman, as he extended his hand.

"And I at Lord Wilton's," replied the young man, not at all abashed by the stern, and somewhat austere manner of his lordship. "I bear despatches, sir, from the Governor General of British India, and also a note from Captain St. Moorey."

"Aha," uttered his lordship, as he put forth his hands to receive the documents, his face relaxing somewhat of its sternness as he found his visitor entrusted with matters of such importance. "Be seated, Mr. Maxwell. There are books and papers."

Lord Wilton pointed to a table as he spoke, but ere Maxwell took the proffered seat, he had discovered that there was a third party in the room, and while his host was reading St. Moorey's letter, he could not but allow his eyes to rest for a moment upon the object that had so unexpectedly met his gaze.

Upon a low ottoman, in one of the deep alcoves that let in a gothic window, at the opposite side of the apartment, sat a female, who held upon her lap a large gilt-bound volume, the leaves of which she was busily engaged in



turning over, as if searching out some particular page. If her age had kept pace with the womanly developments that were visible in her face, then she must have been somewhere in the neighborhood of eighteen or nineteen years of age. The falling curls that swept down in sunny ringlets over her shoulders, partially hid the cheek and temple, but yet in the slightly Grecian profile the main features of the face were visible, and a man more deeply skilled in physiognomical beauty than was Osmond Maxwell would have hesitated ere he passed that face without bestowing upon it the second look. There was at the present time a shade of pensive melancholy overshadowing the fair features, but it detracted nothing from the life of the picture, but rather gave more soul, more depth, to the brow that sat like a regal gem above the beauties beneath. In form, the lady was neither small nor large, neither tall nor short, but if one might judge of the whole by the revealed parts, as she sat upon the ottoman, she would appear to possess one of those forms in which health leads grace by the hand, bold enough to command respect, and yet retiring enough to repel undue familiarity. She was arrayed in a simple black satin robe, in the bosom of which sparkled a diamond brooch, the only piece of jewelry that essayed to vie with her own personal charms, except we notice a small emerald that encircled one of her white fingers.

Upon this fair being, Maxwell might have gazed for an hour without realizing the presence of aught else, had not a motion of the lady's head brought her face towards him. He caught the soft light of her lustrous eyes, however, before they actually rested upon him, and then he turned his gaze towards Lord Wilton.

As his lordship read part way through St. Moorey's letter, the lines of his countenance began to resolve themselves into a more kindly look, but he raised not his eyes from the sheet till he had read it to the end. Then the gentle feelings that had been gradually growing upon his features warmed to a look of generous friendship, and as he laid the letter upon a table at his side, he arose from his seat, and approach-

ing his visitor, he extended his hand, saying, as he did so:

"My dear sir, I am under obligations to St. Moorey, for sending you to me, and I deem it an honor, sir, to make your acquaintance."

Maxwell's eyes grew moist beneath the generous kindness of the old noble, and his nother lip trembled as he returned:

"I know not the outward forms and expressions of your titled circles, my lord, but believe me, your kindness makes warm a heart that I trust will prove worthy of it."

"You have already proved yourself worthy the kindness of every Englishman, sir," Wilton replied. "St. Moorey has given me in his letter an epitome of your life, and you may rest assured that you will be received with respect by the lords to whom you are commissioned. If it so please you, you can remain in Windsor for several days to come, and during that time you may consider my hotel your home."

"I should be happy so to do, sir," Maxwell said, while his heart swelled with gratitude, "but I fear my business will call me away."

"O, no," returned his lordship, "I know the nature of the despatches you bear, and any time within a week will answer for their delivery; and besides, I will be responsible for your delay."

"But, sir, I have another package to deliver besides those to the lords of the admiralty, and I fear that in that quarter your excuse for me would be of little avail."

"O, yes, yes," Lord Wilton uttered, while a peculiar light overspread his countenance. "St. Moorey mentioned the circumstances. But perhaps I can help you out of that, too—at least, I will make the attempt. Rosa," he continued, turning towards the lady who sat in the alcove.

The lady arose from the low ottoman at the sound of Lord Wilton's voice, and laying her book aside, she advanced towards the gentlemen.

"Mr. Maxwell," said his lordship, allow me the pleasure of introducing to your acquaintance the Lady Rosalind Hubert. Rosa, this is an officer of our navy, just arrived from Calcutta."

"The daughter of Lord Colford?" uttered Maxwell, as he advanced a step.

"The same."

In the breast of Osmond Maxwell there were some strange emotions, as he felt the warm hand of Rosalind Hubert laid with a modest, yet frank grace within his own. Had his expectations prepared him for the interview, he might have counted upon the cost of his emotions, but as it was, they came whelming over his soul, with a power that utterly debarred him from concealing or mitigating them, and foremost among them all stood the image of that man who was to take her father's place as her earthly guardian; but the young man quickly quelled his exterior embarrassment, and in a tone and manner of open-hearted, gentle frankness, which a life on the ocean's cradling bosom gives to her noblest sons, he welcomed her to his acquaintance.

Rosalind Hubert gazed up into the face of the young officer as she heard the sound of his voice, and over her own fair features there swept a shade of some sudden thought. She did not tremble, nor did she hesitate in her manner, but there was an earnestness in her gaze—a sort of inquiring look, that marked her comport, which could not escape the notice of Osmond.

"You are from India, then, Mr. Maxwell?" said Rosalind, as soon as they were once more seated.

"Yes, lady. My ship anchored in Portsmouth only the day before yesterday."

"And did you know my father?" asked she, while a bright tear trembled in her eye.

"I did know him, lady, as one who was beloved by all his acquaintance, and his memory I know to be embalmed in the hearts of all who knew him."

"Yes, Mr. Maxwell, I believe it. A child may not speak without prejudice, but yet I can say from my heart, that I have lost a noble, generous and doting father. Heaven bless him, and give him a better home."

The fair girl wiped the tear from her cheek as she spoke, and though she thus let forth the silent messenger of her soul, yet her grief was

not of that kind that intrudes itself. A month had passed since she had first learned of her father's death, and the sorrow that had at first broke open the deep fountains of her soul's most bitter grief had now settled down into that calm resignation that marks the meek spirit of the Christian woman. The allusion to her departed parent had brought forth the tear, but it had now performed its holy mission, and the calmness of her social bearing was restored.

In an instant the young man marked the change, and in a tone now free from all constraint, save such as his native modesty imposed, he said:

"Had I known, lady, that you were here, I might have taken advantage of the circumstance, for I have a package for you."

"From my uncle?"

"No—it is from the governor general. Your uncle has already arrived."

"Sir Philip arrived?" uttered Rosalind, in a tone half of surprise, and half of disappointment, but without any manifestation of satisfaction.

"Yes," returned Maxwell, "he came in the coach with me as far as Winchester, but there he took the more direct route through Surrey."

"And he goes directly to London?"

"Yes, lady—so he told me."

"Then, my lord," said the lady, turning to Wilton, "I shall have to leave you at once, for it is absolutely necessary that I should be in London to receive my uncle, for you know he comes with the power of attorney, and much of the business, in its detail, will require my presence."

Lord Wilton remained in a deep thought for a moment, and then, in a kind of calculating manner which marked all his business, he said:

"Yes, I think you will have to go, Rosa, and did not circumstances prevent, I would accompany you. Chapplebar and Morduant are both in Bath, and I know not that it would be proper for you to wait their return, so—Ah, I had like to have forgotten—here is Mr. Maxwell, just in season. If you will accept his escort, I will let you go at once."

Rosalind smiled a silent assent to her host, and then turning to the young man, with the smile still upon her face, she said:

"If it would be no inconvenience to you, sir?"

"On the contrary, lady," returned Maxwell, with a slight tumultuousness of the bosom, but in an easy and graceful tone, nevertheless, "it would afford me a pleasure to be thus honored."

"And now, when shall we go, my lord?" asked Rosalind.

"That may be as it suits your convenience. My yacht is at your service at any time."

"Then let it be after an early dinner to-morrow," said the lady.

"That will do," replied Lord Wilton, "provided the wind and weather are favorable. You will dine with me to-morrow, Mr. Maxwell, and then my crew will take you to London; and, by-the-way, St. Moorey tells me in his letter, that old Paul Marline is with you."

"Yes, my lord."

"Then let him come. I have a peculiar respect for that old sea dog."

Thus matters were arranged between our hero and his new acquaintances, and after an hour's common-place conversation, during which Lord Wilton grew warmer in his admiration of the young officer, and during which, also, the first restraint of natural timidity between Maxwell and the lady had worn off, the youth took his leave, promising to call the next day, bring old Paul, and the package from the governor general, take dinner, and then start for London.

There were some curious emotions in the bosom of Osmond Maxwell, as he turned from Lord Wilton's hotel. The image of Rosalind Hubert floated through his brain, and with it came a host of others. Her almost heavenly loveliness, her mild and charming manner, her soft melancholy, and her orphan situation, were points that dwelt upon Maxwell's heart with a peculiar power. Then his thoughts reverted to Sir Philip, the man who was, for a time, at least, to sway the parental sceptre over her destinies. His mind, already wrought up to suspicion, now lost itself in a sort of doubt and anxiety that fairly surprised himself when he realized its full power; but however strange it may seem—and, indeed, we know not why it should be strange at all—he resolved that, if it laid in his power, he would protect her.

Poor Osmond Maxwell! When he told St. Moorey that his heart was strong, he knew not what subtle enemies might beset it. He had, from a vague suspicion, imagined a giant evil to be arrayed against Rosalind Hubert, and he had resolved to be her protector! He asked not himself whence came the feeling, but he probably thought it was only the natural result of a desire to befriend the lady, as he would have done towards any one else!

Such is the feeling which a man experiences but once in a life-time. It comes in the dark, and must kindle its own flame in the heart, and 'tis not until the flame mounts to a glowing light, that the mischievous incendiary is fairly discovered.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE MAN-TRAP.

**A**FTER Maxwell had left for Lord Wilton's, old Paul remained sometime in the reading-room, engaged in conversation with an elderly gentleman who had managed to work himself into the old sailor's good graces. Nearly an hour was passed in this way, when Paul's attention was arrested by the appearance of a dashing looking fellow, who sat on the opposite side of the apartment, and who pretended to be engaged in reading a newspaper which he held before him, but over the top of which his eyes would occasionally peep towards himself. The old man thought there was more meaning in these glances than mere curiosity could have excited, and therefore he began to inspect said individual with some degree of interest. He wore a light jockey hat, laid over on one side of the head, and inclining to cover the left eye, a light blue coat with bright buttons, and a pair of checked pants, which were strapped down to rather an antiquated pair of gaiters, while the face, flanked on either side by the well greased soap-locks that covered the ears, was of that kind which betrays no expression, no feeling, save the entire absence of heart or soul.

The old gentleman with whom Paul had been conversing had left, and, one after another, the people arose from the tables and went out, till at length the old man and the individual with the soap-locks were left alone. In a few moments the latter person folded his paper neatly up, and, perhaps in a state of mental abstraction—for the paper belonged in the hotel—put it in his pocket. Then, rising from his seat, he approached the old man, and with a cool, self-possessed assurance, remarked:

"Mister Paul Marline, I believe?"

"No, sir," returned Paul, not taking a fancy to the fellow.

"Vell, then I've hit the wrong 'un, that's all."

Paul started in his seat as he heard that voice. He could not be mistaken. He knew that 'twas the same gentleman whom he had heard in conversation with Lucival. He betrayed not a shadow of his knowledge, however, but pithily returned:

"My name's Paul Marline, sir, but there aint no mister to it."

"Vell, you is a qucer 'un," said the cockney, at his eyes slightly sparkled.

"And do you want anything wi' me?" asked Paul, rather crustily.

"Vell, can't say as I does, but there is a man down by the river as docs."

"Has he got any name?" the old man asked, while a look of indignant contempt mantled his face.

"He says 'is name is Maxwell, an' I should say as he was a hoffer o' the navy. He's aboard a yacht in the river, Lord Wilton's, I take it, an' he wants you to come down."

"So he sent you, did he?"

"In course he did, else I wouldn't 'a come. I vas comin' up to read the news, then goin' right back, an' so he thought I could tip the message an' show yer the way."

This story might have seemed plausible to the old man, had he not known with whom he was conversing. But as it was, he felt confident that the scamp had by some means learned that Maxwell had gone to Lord Wilton's, and deeming that no other name would command his more immediate attention, he had used it as a trap to get him out of the way; but he resolved to go, at all events, for he felt confident that he had the upper hands of his enemy, and, moreover, the spirit of adventure had not yet grown dim in his bosom. He felt confident of his own power against such a puny affair as was the cockney cut-throat, and he determined to let him show his colors, and then board and capture him, and hand him over to the law.

With such thoughts, Paul went up to his room, first having bidden the pretended messenger to wait for him a few moments, while he made preparations for the walk. He opened his chest, from which he took a ball of strong lanyard stuff, and having cut off two pieces, each about a fathom and a half in length, he placed them carefully in his pocket, and then opening the till he took out a brace of pistols, which he loaded and placed inside of his vest. Thus armed and equipped, he relocked his chest, and then descended to the reading-room, where he found the messenger awaiting his coming.

"Now, sir, if you be ready ve'll go," said the waiting man, as he arose from his seat, and cocked his hat over upon the other side of his head.

"I'm ready for most anything, so you can heave ahead as fast as you please," returned Paul, as he prepared to follow.

The cockney cast a furtive glance around him, as if to see that he was not observed in the old man's company by any one about, and then started towards the door. As they reached the sidewalk, Paul came up alongside of his conductor, but he had no remark to make, and so they walked a long distance in silence. The way led towards the eastern part of the town, and when they at length reached the river in that direction, the guide struck off as if to follow the water down.

"Say, my fine feller, how much further d'ye intend to run afore ye heave-to?" asked Paul, who had no desire to risk too much.

"Yer see that sharp mast, with a red flag, just over the swell there, doesn't ye?"

"Yes," replied Paul, looking in the direction pointed out.

"Vell, that ere's Lord Wilton's yacht, an' it's there as Mr. Maxwell is."

"Heave ahead, then," said Paul.

During the remainder of the way the old man kept a little back of the cockney, but by the time they had reached the suburban pier, to which the yacht was made fast, the old man really began to feel that he might be mistaken, with regard to the character of his companion. The cockney had walked on so easily, so coolly, and so utterly careless of everything but his own meditations, which had been interspersed with snatches from flash songs, and then the yacht, which was a perfect maritime beauty, looked so like the pleasure-craft of an English lord, and, above all, as Paul knew that Lord Wilton did own a yacht, he began to think that after all Maxwell might have sent for him. But yet he could not get over that voice, that peculiar tone he had heard the night before, and he resolved not to give over his suspicions nor his vigilance.

The yacht was secured to the wharf by a stern

and bow-fast, with her head down the river. The tide was just on the flood turn, and the wind, which blew pretty strong, was from the westward. Upon the deck of the vessel there were three men, dressed in a mongrel garb, who were standing by the larboard quarter rail, one of whom stepped over to the tiller as the two men hove in sight.

"Right hover the plank, sir," said the guide, as Paul stopped upon the wharf.

"Just you go aboard an' call Mr. Maxwell, 'f 'u please," returned Paul, casting a searching glance at the cockney.

"Vell, you is skittish," fell from the conductor's lips; "but howsomever, 't don't matter. Just you wait, an' I'll call 'im."

"Well, now that ere looks kind o' honest like, I'm blowed if 't don't," murmured Paul to himself, as the fellow went on board the yacht and descended to the cabin. "These ere cockneys talk so close alike, 'at arter all this ma'n't be the chap."

In a few moments the cockney returned to the deck, and stepping to the rail, he said:

"Mister Maxwell says, ask Mister Marline if he vont step down into the cabin."

"Well, I don't h'lieve 'at Max. ever put a mister on to my name,—but here's what goes."

So muttering to himself the old man stepped upon the plank and boarded the yacht. The entrance to the cabin was protected by a trunk, but the companion-way abaft, and towards this spot Paul made his way, but ere he placed his foot upon the ladder, an idea struck him, and bending over the companion-way, he called aloud for Maxwell. No answer was returned, and again he called, but with the same result, and he was upon the point of turning to confront the man who had brought him hither, when a heavy push, from both the cockney and the man who had taken his stand at the tiller, sent him headlong down the ladder. The old sailor had both hands resting on the sides of the trunk at the time he received the push, so that his fall was considerably broken, but yet it was several moments ere he could fully realize his whereabouts.

When he did come to, however, he found that he was safely in the cabin of the yacht, with a slight pain in the back of his head for a companion, and the way of egress locked against him.

Paul heard the grating of a rope over his head, and he knew that they were taking in their shore-fasts, and it was not many moments ere he heard the rattling of hoops along the masts, and the flapping of loosened canvass, and then, while yet he listened, the slight heeling of the vessel to port told him that she was off down the river.

"Well," murmured Paul to himself, "I'm blowed 'f 'u didn't do that up kind o' cool. But, my sweet sons o' thunder, you've got Paul Marline down here, an' I rayther think you'll find you've caught a tartar afore you git through wi' 'im."

Paul examined the door of the companion-way, without making any noise, and found it bolted upon the outside, but the panelling plainly showed that it would not take a very heavy blow to tear it from its hinges. He did not dare attempt this with his fists, however, for that would give an alarm before he could effect his purpose, and he was just turning to descend the ladder again, when the sound of his friendly conductor's voice struck his ear, and he stopped to listen.

"O, said that worthy, "I fell in with 'im in Winchester vere I'd gone, you know, to pad some of our swipes. I know'd 'im for all he'd been gone so long. It seems this ere old cove knows 'im, an' as Bunk's got a bit uv a prig in chance, he don't feel anxious to be nab'd just yet, so, ye see, he pays me vell to put the cove out o' the way."

"Vell, Nip, 'at's all right, but vere'll we drop 'im?" said another.

"Somevers atween 'ere an' Chertsey," replied the first speaker. "Soon 's ve shoot past Staines, ve'll put a junk o' lead through 'is 'ead, an' then sink 'im in the river."

"Werry kind in you, Mister Nip," uttered Paul, as he crept down the ladder, "werry kind, but we'll see who'll git the lead through the head."

The light came into the cabin through a skylight in the deck, and the old man began to look around him. The only moveable thing he could see, of sufficient weight for his purpose, was a long oaken bench that sat beneath the berths on starboard side. He took hold of it and moved it, and found, to his extreme satisfaction, that he could not have hit upon a better instrument. Having moved the bench to the centre of the cabin, he examined the priming of his pistols, and being assured that they would not fail him, he replaced them ready for immediate use, and then turned his attention towards the companion-way.

The conversation at the helm had ceased, and steps were heard of some one going forward. After listening for several moments, and hearing no more conversation, Paul became convinc-

ed that there was only one man abaft, and thinking he might not have a better opportunity he prepared to put his plan into execution.

He loosened the pistols in his bosom, and had just placed his hands upon the bench, when he was startled by the sound of some one unlocking the door of the companion-way. Quick as the lightning's flash went the best course of action through the brain of Paul Marline. With a noiseless movement he slid the bench back to its place, and then coiled himself up on the floor as though still insensible, with his pistol-hand clear, and his eye upon the door. Hardly had he thus disposed himself, when the door was slightly opened, but 'twas only for a moment, and then, with a low "All's right," he who had opened it shut it again, and the conversation was resumed at the helm.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE TRAGEDY ON BOARD THE YACHT.

PAUL might have experienced a little disappointment as his operations were thus for the time stopped, and he sorely blamed himself for having been so foolish as to be thus led into the cockney's man-trap; but he did not fear for the result, though he could not but confess that he felt somewhat uncomfortable, for he might be a mark for the villain's bullet at any moment, without knowing from what point he should receive the attack.

For ten minutes the conversation was kept up at the helm, and then it ceased, and in a moment afterwards Paul heard some one go forward. A minute he listened with his ear turned towards the companion-way, but he heard nothing save the rippling water, as it eddied in under the counters.

"Now, my sweet covey," muttered the old man to himself, "either I'll pilot this ere craft, or else I'll ship for 'tother world, that's all, but blow me if I'm hardly rigged for heaven yet."

While he thus mused, Paul moved the oaken bench back into the centre of the cabin, and then poising it in his hands, he levelled it to-

wards the door. The old man knew his own strength, and he looked upon the locked door, not as a thing upon which he was to try that strength, but merely to study the most expeditious mode of doing that which he knew he could perform. Paul balanced his weapon, and then gathering all his muscular power for the blow, he drew back, and with one bound he planted the end of the bench full upon the door. A stronger thing than that bar might not withstand such a blow as Paul Marline dealt, and with a single crash it flew bodily from both its bolt and its hinges, and would have been hurled over the low taffarel had it not brought up against the legs of Mr. Nip, who chanced to have the helm.

Quick as thought Paul hurled back the bench upon the cabin floor, and then seizing a pistol, he sprang upon the deck. He had left his cap behind him, and with his hoary locks streaming in the wind he confronted the villain who had thus entrapped him.

"Say your prayers, you ungodly willain!" shouted Paul, as he landed upon the deck.

"Say your prayers, for you'll never live to trap another man!"

Nip was startled by the suddenness of this unexpected movement, but with a presence of mind that showed him to be used to emergencies, he let go the tiller and drew a pistol from his pocket.

"No you don't," uttered Paul, as he saw the movement, and, suiting the action to the word, he seized the scamp by the arm and placed the muzzle of his pistol against Nip's temple.

"That's to free the world of a murderer, an' to save an honest man's life," said the old man, as he pulled the trigger.

The sharp report rang over the deck, and the murderous villain, without a groan, fell sideways across the tiller. His soul had fled, and one murder, at least, was kept back from the catalogue of his crimes.

All this had passed so quickly that the three men who were forward had not yet reached the quarter-deck, but as Paul turned, after he had released the form of Nip, he saw that they were coming towards him, but a quick glance assured him that they had no weapons in their hands. Instinctively the old man cast his eyes about him for a defensive weapon, for he would not trust his remaining pistol against three men, and his glance fell upon a stout musket leaning against the trunk. The thought flashed through his brain, that that contained the death-warrant which had been intended for himself, and quickly seizing it, he drew back the hammer, levelled it upon the foremost of his enemies, and pulled the trigger. He had not been mistaken in his conjecture, for a sharp report followed his movement, and the man at whom the weapon was aimed clapped his hand quickly to his breast and tottered against the rail.

Paul Marline clubbed the now empty musket and darted forward, but the two remaining villains, having seen the fate of their companions, were seized with a sudden panic, and rushing forward to the bows, they turned about and begged for mercy. Paul was too much excited, however, to listen to argument, and he dealt one of the men a blow upon the head that felled

him to the deck. The old man had only aimed for a stunning blow, however, having no desire to take more life than was necessary for the preservation of his own.

"Now," said Paul, turning to the remaining villain, at the same time drawing his pistol, "this ere's for you if 'u move a peg."

"O, for mercy sake, sir, don't kill me! I didn't—"

"Come, clap a stopper on that glab," interrupted the old man. "I haven't got time to argufy the matter, so just you lay yourself down on the deck. Down, I say, or I'll put this ball through your head!"

The fellow gazed a moment at the flashing eyes of the old man, and then at the muzzle of the pistol, and then, with a cowering cinge, he settled upon the deck. Paul seized him by the shoulders, and turning him over on his face, he drew the lines from his pocket which he had cut for the benefit of his companion-guide, and proceeded to secure his arms and legs. This having been accomplished he took the end of the jib-balyards, and in like manner secured the man whom he had stunned, and then, casting his eyes about to notice the position of the yacht, he ran aft to the helm.

The tiller had been kept steady by a comb upon which it rested, and the yacht had not yawed from her course. Paul found himself about half way between Windsor and Staines, and though on both sides there were numerous dwellings, and though there were several craft further down the river, yet no one seemed to have been attracted by what had occurred. At first the old man thought of running the yacht ashore, but as an observation of the course back to Windsor convinced him that he could lay the boat up to it, he concluded to jibe the sails and bring her up on the other tack. All the sheets led aft, and the evolution was easily performed, and ere long the yacht started back towards Windsor. The tide, which had begun to flow just as the yacht left the wharf, was now setting up pretty strongly, and Paul had it all in his favor.

The man who had received the charge of the

musket had fallen dead upon the deck, while the one who had been knocked down had recovered from the blow, and was conversing with his companion. Both the bound men struggled in their confinement, but the old boatswain's turns and knots were proof against their exertions.

In less than an hour the yacht neared the wharf where the reader first saw her, and as she began to pass the docks and piers the appearance of her helmsman attracted the attention of the people who were gathered about.

There he stood, that old man of over three-score years, his frost-seared head bared to the sweeping breeze, his eagle eye watching the throats of his white sails, and his right hand resting upon the sea-bird's helm. With an experience that never failed him, he calculated upon the force of the tide, and while yet the yacht was some rods below her pier he let go the sheets and put his helm down, and then turning his attention towards those who stood upon the wharf, he called for them to catch a line.

Half a dozen men sprang to obey his request, and leaving the helm he hastened forward, and gathering up the bow-line, which had been neatly coiled away, he threw it upon the pier, where it was caught by some of those who were ready, and in a few moments more the yacht was hauled alongside the landing. Paul went below to get his cap, and as he returned he met the eager gaze of the throng who had collected. A thrill of horror ran through the crowd as their eyes fell upon the blood-besmeared deck, and upon the corpses of the two dead men. Old Paul returned their gaze for a moment, and then leaping upon the pier, he turned to two gentlemen who were silent spectators of the scene, and said:

"I s'pose this looks kind o' strange, sirs, but there's two chaps there in the bows as can tell you somethin' about it. And now isn't there such a thing as a policeman within hail?"

While Paul was speaking, a police officer, attracted by the crowd, had come down upon the wharf, and ere long he was joined by two others, to whom the old man related his story, com-

mencing with the interview at the hotel. He would have told the whole, from the beginning, had not there been too many ears about, but as he had his own designs upon the course of Lucival, he chose for the present to keep that portion of the affair which related to him a secret.

The officers retained Paul in their company until they had searched the yacht, and at the first look upon the features of the dead men, they recognized them as two villains whom they had long had in view, but who had thus far kept too dark in their proceedings to justify apprehension, and the same opinion was immediately formed by the policemen with regard to the two other worthies, whom Paul had tied up for safe keeping forward. An introduction into the hold of the boat betrayed at once her real character, for it was found to be well stowed with quarter-casks of French brandy. The eyes of the officers sparkled as they saw this, for they found themselves in possession of a river-smugler that had long been an annoyance to the revenue.

Old Paul gave the officers his name, together with the place where he might be found, and then he was allowed to depart, with the injunction, however, to hold himself in readiness on the morrow to attend the coroner.

The old sailor then left the yacht, but he found some difficulty in working his way through the crowd, for all were anxious to behold the hero of the strange tragedy that had been enacted, but at length he managed to elbow his way along, and by dint of much exertion he reached a spot outside of the crowding, pushing throng, and with a quick step he started for his hotel, where he at length arrived in safety.

The moment Maxwell saw his old protector, he hastened towards him with a glad, beaming countenance, and grasping him by the hand, he was upon the point of uttering an exclamation of delight, when several spots of blood upon the old man's bosom arrested his attention.

"Blood! Paul, what does that mean?" Maxwell asked, while his cheek slightly paled.

"That, Max?" returned the old man, "why,

that's a villain's blood. Taint none o' mine. I've overhauled that ere chap."

"And you are not harmed?"

"Not a timber, Max."

"Thank God for that," fervently ejaculated the young man. "I have suffered more, Paul, within the last hour than I ever suffered before in my life. Something told me that you had been entrapped by the villains."

Paul Marline gazed into the features of his companion with a look of tenderness that made his old face, all rough and storm-beat as it was, as beautiful as the face of the setting sun. His whole big heart seemed struggling to leap forth that it might show its every feeling, and with a trembling lip, he uttered:

"I wish somethin' o' this kind could turn up ev'ry day, Max., for it does my old heart good

to know how much you love your old foster-father."

"I love you too well, Paul, to have you run into danger," Osmond returned. "But come, let us go to our room, for I would hear some account of this affair."

After the two friends reached their room, Paul related the events of his adventure, to which his companion listened with unwonted interest, and without interruption. Of course the circumstance afforded an ample theme for discussion, and for a long time after the old man had concluded his recital, the two conversed earnestly upon its bearings; but they arrived at no conclusion, however, other than the determination that the end was not yet, and also that they would find that end when it did come.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE STRANGE PACKAGE.

IF there is in the world a pardonable pride, it is that kind which Paul Marline experienced when he received from Osmond the invitation from Lord Wilton, for him to take dinner with that nobleman. His old face beamed with an unusual glow, and his English heart grew big within his bosom, as he dwelt upon the honor thus conferred upon him.

At the appointed time on the next day, Osmond took the package with which he had been entrusted for the Lady Rosalind, and, accompanied by Paul, he entered a coach and drove off. Lord Wilton and his fair guest received them kindly, but it was some time ere Paul could feel at all easy in his present situation. His lordship saw where the trouble lay, and with that generous familiarity, which at once captivates the confidence and sets all timidity at rest, he soon managed to draw out the old man's conversational powers, and it was not long before Paul Marline felt himself almost as much at home as he would have done in his own mess-room on board the old Dunkirk frigate. A nobleman may sometimes feel a degree of pleas-

urable satisfaction in the society of those who, without low vulgarity, are yet ignorant of the hollow-hearted babble of fashionable life, for he can there rest upon the heart of his companions, and enjoy what he knows to be a reality in life.

With such feelings and sentiments as these, Lord Wilton conversed with the old seaman, and the intense interest with which he listened to Paul's homely yarns, showed how much he enjoyed them, and among other things Paul had to relate his adventure of the preceding day; but he had the good judgment not to lisp a word of the connection which Bunk Walland had with Sir Philip Hubert, nor did he intimate that Walland went by any other name; but yet, once or twice during the recital, he cast such a peculiar, meaning glance upon the fair girl who instinctively listened to his story, that she could not but feel that there were some hidden thoughts in the old man's bosom, the basis of which he had not revealed.

"Now I don't know," continued Paul, as he closed his tale, "but what this scrape 'll keep



me here too long. I was called this mornin' to spin my yarn afore some kind o' jury."

"The coroner's," said Lord Wilton, with a smile.

"Yes, yer lordship, that's it—an' now 'f they be goin' to try them fellers, I'm 'fraid they'll want me for evidence, went they?"

"Never fear for that," Lord Wilton replied. "The trial will come on before you leave London, and there will be no difficulty in summoning you there."

The subject of the adventure on the river led to his lordship's asking for the yarn about the circumstances that had led Bunk Walland to desire the old boatswain's death, and while Paul was spinning that, Maxwell handed to Rosalind the package he had brought. The lady broke the heavy seal by which it was guarded, and began to examine its contents.

The first that struck her eye was a small note, bearing upon its back the seal of the governor general of India. This she opened, and read as follows:

*"To the Lady Rosalind, daughter of Walter Lord Colford, K. B.*

"The enclosed package was entrusted to my keeping some time since by your father, to be forwarded to you in case of his death. It was his request that I would either send it by Captain St. Moorey, or by the hands of one of that gentleman's trusty officers. If there is any mystery in this affair, perhaps your father's package will solve it, for I cannot. Lord Colford (peace to his ashes!) is no more on earth, and hence I send it.

"Receive my best wishes for your prosperity, and believe me one who knows the loss which not only yourself, but the country, has been called upon to sustain in this bereavement.

SURREY, G. G. I."

There was a strange tremor shook the frame of Rosalind Hubert, as she finished reading this epistle, for it hinted at circumstances which even the governor general himself thought to wear an air of mystery.

"What moves you so, Rosa?" asked Wilton, as Paul concluded his yarn, at which point he had turned towards the fair girl just as she rested the open letter upon her lap after having read it.

"Read it, my lord," she said, as she handed him the letter.

Wilton took the epistle and read it through three times before he spoke, and then, while an expression of something like wonder rested upon his features, he said:

"Open your father's missive, Rosa."

Rosalind broke the seal with a trembling hand, and found within the envelope a letter and a folded document. The letter she opened first and read, in part, as follows:

[We omit that portion of the letter which related only to news, family affairs, &c.]

"And now, my dear child, I come upon a business which may need from me some explanation. Within I send you a duly executed and attested draft upon my banker for one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, that being all the ready money I have in deposit, and it is my earnest request that you have it immediately presented, and that you retain in your own hands, at your own use and disposal, the full amount thus drawn. If you require assistance in doing this, speak with Lord Wilton, or Chaplebar, and they will aid you.

"Now, what explanation shall I give for this seemingly strange proceeding? Perhaps I may be myself in a mystery, with regard to it, but still I believe the thing to be actually necessary. You know, my child, that I have ever turned a cold ear to the idea of *presentiments*, and have ever maintained their utter groundlessness. Then how shall I excuse myself when I tell you that all this is done from the ideas—or, perhaps, I may call them fears—that I have derived from such a source? I will attempt no excuse, Rosa, for I know you will readily carry out the business I thus give into your hands. Suffice it for me to say, that I *have* had such presentiments as make my soul strong in the belief that the

course I prescribe is necessary, and I know that you will do my wishes.

"This, Rosa, may be the last time you will hear from your father, for I feel the hand of that fearful disease, which has already brought my brother so low, but from which he now shows signs of recovery, laying its remorseless grasp on me. \* \* \*

"If my brother Philip survives me, he will return to England and take my place in our household, and I wish you to be governed by his counsel and advice—saving, of course, that your own moral mind will ever be your guide in matters of real moment. But remember, his presence will make no difference with regard to the draft on my banker. \* \* \*

"And now, my own dear child, farewell! Angels guard and bless thee, all happiness on earth be thine, and peace forever more.

From your own father.

WALTER HUBERT."

Several times during the perusal of this letter the tears came in such floods to the eyes of Rosalind, that she was obliged to wipe them away ere she could proceed, and when she at length finished it, she laid her pale brow forward upon her tiny hands and gave way to the emotions of her re-awakened grief. Lord Wilton looked upon her with an inquiring gaze, and when she raised her head and met his eyes, she reached forth to him her father's letter.

Wilton read Lord Colford's letter through in a calm, thoughtful manner, and when he had finished it he laid the ends of his fingers upon his brow in earnest meditation.

"Well, Rosa," said his lordship, as he looked up and met her anxious gaze, "I know not that I can offer any explanation of this which your mind has not already comprehended, and of course, my advice is, that you comply with your father's injunctions."

"Of course I must," returned Rosalind, who had now overcome the first burst of her passionate emotions, and whose mind dwelt anxiously on the mystery of the letter, "but, my

dear lord, what can it all mean? There is a strangeness about it which I cannot comprehend."

"Of course, my dear child, you would not comprehend that which even the writer himself acknowledges to be a mystery. Your father was evidently impressed so strongly with a desire for your welfare, and allowed that thought to take such possession of his mind, that, under the idea that he might never return, this thought, continually dwelling upon his mind, at length amounted to a reality. Therefore I should say, that, instead of there being any extraneous circumstances connected with his fears, his prescribed course with regard to the disposal of his cash funds was only the immediate result of a sincerely cherished desire for your own welfare; for even in the hands of his own brother he might not wish to place *all* your dependence."

"That idea is certainly in accordance with my father's regard for me," returned Rosalind, as her features threw off a portion of their anxiety, "but still it does appear strange."

During this time, Maxwell and old Paul had sat silent, but yet deeply interested, spectators of the scene. The young man had endeavored to appear totally regardless of what was passing, but the thing was utterly impossible. Wilton had noticed his manner, and he had also seen the unaccountable twitchings and changings of the muscles in the old boatswain's face, and a man of his discernment could not but see that in the bosoms of both his guests dwelt some peculiar sympathy, if not direct knowledge, that had a bearing upon the subject in hand.

"Rosa," he said at length, "our two friends, here, have been in India for a number of years, and perhaps, as they have already become acquainted with the bearing of your father's letter, it might not be out of place to read them that part relating to this business."

"That is just what I could wish, my lord," Rosalind returned, while at the same time she cast a glance upon our hero that had in it such a degree of confidence that he could not but feel its power penetrating his soul. For a moment Maxwell forgot the letter and its contents in the

memory of that beaming look, but ere he could actually lose himself in the mazes of the undefinable sensations that came crowding upon him, he was recalled to himself by Lord Wilton's preparations to read the letter.

His lordship read those portions of the letter which the reader has already seen, and during the process old Paul seemed to be sitting on the point of a marlinespike. He grew uneasy in his seat, gazed first at Lord Wilton, then at Rosalind, and then his eyes would rest upon the face of Maxwell, and when his lordship had concluded, it was only by an imperative glance from the young officer that he was prevented from giving utterance to his thoughts.

"There, Mr. Maxwell," said Wilton, as he folded the paper, "you have the *summum bonum* of Colford's letter. Do you not think my ideas of the matter are correct?"

"Undoubtedly, sir," replied Maxwell, "they are—though in truth, I think there is some hidden cause for his desire that the money should be drawn other than the one you mention."

"Then perhaps you are acquainted with some particulars that may have a bearing on the matter?" remarked Lord Wilton, with some earnestness of manner.

"No, sir—no particulars, though I must confess that I have grounds for thinking that Lord Colford entertained some fears that all might not be right; and, my lord, I know you will pardon me if I express this opinion without being able to explain at present my reasons for entertaining it."

"Of course, sir," Wilton said, "you are best acquainted with your own motives and reasons, and of course, too, you know the foundation of your suspicions. I am too well aware of the delicacies and intricacies of such situations to question you beyond what you feel prepared to explain."

"Beyond what I am *able* to explain, you might have said, my lord; for, to speak plainly, I could not utter one word of explanation without compromising a character with which I have at present nothing to do."

Lord Wilton cast a sidelong glance at Rosa-

lind, and then turned his gaze upon the speaking features of Maxwell. There was a gleam of strange light in his eyes as the last remark of the young man rested upon his mind, and the tone of his countenance plainly indicated that he fathomed its meaning.

"That's the *werry* idee," at this juncture uttered Paul Marline, who had sat in silence as long as possible, and who seemed to have taken from the remark of his protego a clue of discretion that might keep his tongue within bounds. "Yes, your lordship, Mr. Maxwell an' I 'ave both on us got suspicions; but let me tell ye one thing—an' I know ye wont blame me for the bit o' pride I feel when I say it," the old man continued, as he cast upon Maxwell a look of fond admiration, "there aint nothin' to fear for my leddy, sir, for I know 'at Maxwell's heart is in the right place, an' 'f he goes down to Lun-nun wi' her, she'll be sure to have a friend as wont desert her, sir; an'—I don't want to boast, sir—I think I've got a bit o' knowlege stowed away in my old head 'ut 'll make this matter all right afore long; but till I do overhaul that ere old locker o' mine, my leddy may feel perfectly safe wi' Mr. Maxwell. Excuse me, sir, an' you, too, my young leddy, 'f I've been too for'ard, but I'm old, an' I've seen a good many things afore now 'at might make even a lord and leddy glad to git the lift of an old man, even if he aint only a bo's'n in his majesty's service."

Lord Wilton smiled at the simple frankness of the old man, but upon Maxwell his words produced a different effect. They sent the rich blood mantling to his cheeks and temples as the honest speaker alluded to him in such flattering connection with Rosalind, nor did he dare to raise his eyes lest the emotions he could not keep back should be noticed; and upon the fair girl, too, the words had operated in a manner which might have convinced a student of physiognomy that her heart went deeper for its feelings than the mere words that had been spoken, or the idea their speaker had meant to convey.

But old Paul, in the simplicity of his whole-souled nature, saw not the havoc he had been making, nor did he know how seriously he had

"cracked the ice" that lay between two congenial hearts, only he knew that he had advanced an "idee," and seemed anxious to know how it was received. His old face was lighted up with an intense satisfaction, as his lordship said:

"I know that the lady will be safe under Mr. Maxwell's protection, and perhaps even you may be of service to her. But, at all events, there is a chance of your having the honor of escorting her as far as London."

As Lord Wilton spoke he drew out his watch, and after gazing at its face rather longer than was necessary for a mere observation of the time, he remarked, as he returned it to his pocket:

"Dinner will be ready in half an hour. Mr. Marline, I would like to see you in my library a moment."

As his lordship spoke, he arose from his seat and advanced towards the door; while old Paul, struck all aback by the movement, cast a half inquiring glance at Maxwell, as though he would be sure that it was himself who was actually wanted; but a nod from his young protego seemed to assure him, and with a nervous movement he followed Wilton out of the apartment.

As Wilton entered his private library, he moved a chair for Paul, and then, with a serious, thoughtful air, became seated himself.

"Marline," said he, while the old boatswain gazed upon him with a wondering expression, "you must excuse me if I seem inquisitive enough to question you rather particularly concerning this affair which has just turned up."

"Anything as your lordship pleased to ask I will answer, sir, if I can," replied Paul, seeming somewhat proud of the consequence that was being thus heaped upon him.

"Thank you, sir," said Wilton; "and now I would ask you if these suspicions which you express have not some connection with Sir Philip Hubert?"

"Yes, sir—they have."

Wilton's countenance betrayed the interest with which he received the answer, and then he said:

"I have a deep interest in all that concerns Rosalind Hubert, for her father and myself were old and long tried friends; and now, if you have no serious objections, I would be pleased to have you explain, if you can, in what manner these suspicions are founded?"

Paul devoted a few moments to an arrangement of his ideas, and then he delivered, in as clear and succinct manner as possible, the impressions which the appearance of Sir Philip had upon him, as well as the effect which the appearance of Maxwell had seemed to exercise upon the baronet's emotions.

"You say, Sir Philip left you at Winchester?" said Wilton, who had listened with the most intense interest to Paul's homely, but yet straight forward story.

"Yes, sir."

"And if I remember rightly, you said that the villain whom you shot yesterday followed you from Winchester?"

"Yes, sir," replied Paul, with a slight degree of hesitancy in his manner.

"Now tell me, Marline," continued his lordship, with some earnestness, "has not the man who hired this cut-throat to murder you some connection with Sir Hubert?"

"Why, as to that, sir—"

"Never mind the *whys*, Paul—only tell me what you know of the matter," interrupted his lordship, in a kind and affable manner.

"Well, then," said the old sailor, "there was some intimacy atween 'em, but this Wal-land goes by the name of Morgan Lucival, now, an' Osmond don't think as how Sir Philip knows his real o'racter."

"Lucival, did you say?"

"Yes, sir."

"Lucival—Lucival—Morgan Lucival!" murmured Wilton to himself; and rising from his seat he opened his secretary, and taking from thence a package of letters, he sat down again and began to look them over. At length he came to one that he seemed to recognize, which he opened and read.

"That's it," he said, as he refolded the letter, and placed it back among the rest, and then

turning to Paul, he continued—"That letter is one which I received from Lord Colford shortly after he arrived in Calcutta. In it, he speaks of this Lucival as Sir Philip's private secretary, whom he had had with him then about sixteen months, and whom, also, he thought to be a great scoundrel, but whom his brother still kept in his service on account of his extensive knowledge of the interior of the country, and the facility with which he spoke several of the native languages. Sir Walter describes him as a tall, impudent-looking fellow, with huge whiskers and mustaches; and somewhat of a deep scar on his left cheek."

"That's the man, exactly!" uttered Paul.

"Yes," returned his lordship, "and it was your description of him under the name of Bunk Walland, that first led my mind to the idea of his connection with the baronet; but why he should bring him to England is more than I can tell. Heavens! I hope it is not possible that Sir Philip can—No, I will not harbor such a thought till I have more evidence. Yet, there is a deep mystery about the whole affair that puzzles me."

"So it does me, sir," Paul said, "but I b'lieve I can fathom it yet."

"If you can do so, Marline, you will confer upon me one of the greatest favors imaginable."

"I shall keep a studyin', sir, and I think I shall be able to weather it yet."

"That's right. And now," said his lordship, while his features assumed again their earnest tone, "I have one more subject upon which I wish to question you. It is with regard to Osmond Maxwell."

"Then go on, sir," uttered Paul, while a sudden fire lit up his bold countenance, "for there aint a single tack in his whole life-log that I wouldn't tell with pride."

"Yes, I believe you, Marline, but I have heard the particulars of his life from Captain St. Moorey. It is of the circumstances connected with his infancy that I would ask. St. Moorey writes me that it is nineteen years ago since you found him—now can you tell me the exact date?"

"No, sir," replied Paul. "All I can remember is, 'at it was in the month of August, but I can't tell the date.'"

"He was floating on a royal yard, was he?"

"Yes, sir."

"Was there any mark upon the yard, by which you could discover the name of the vessel in which he was wrecked?"

"Yes, sir, there was."

"Ah! and what was it?" asked Wilton, with sudden earnestness.

"The ship's name was burnt on the starboard yard-arm—the *Ajax*."

Wilton turned suddenly away from the old boatswain, seized the letters, which lay by his side, with a nervous grasp, and folding them up, he replaced them in his secretary. When he returned to his seat he was as calm as ever, not did Paul know that he had been agitated.

"Marline," said his lordship, as he re-seated himself, "have you the clothes in which the child was dressed when you picked it up?"

"Ev'ry rag of 'em, sir. I rolled 'em up in a bundle an' tied it up in a nice Canton belcher, an' they're safe in my chest yet."

"And you will keep them safely, will you?"

"In course I will, sir, so long as I live, an' when Max., an' I parts company—an' noth'n' but death can do that, sir—I shall give 'em to him."

There was a tear in the old man's eye as he thought that he must, at some time, part with the object of his soul's most powerful affection, and as Wilton saw the glistening drop, he grasped the veteran by the hand, and earnestly exclaimed:

"You are a noble, generous fellow, Paul, and if the heart makes the man—and even a king is no man without one—then you need no high-born noble to give you the course for heaven. But come, we must join our friends, for it lacks but a few minutes of dinner-time. Keep your eyes open, Paul, and I shall be in London in the course of a week, when you can communicate to me the result of your observations, and in the meanwhile you need not say

anything to Mr. Maxwell about the conversation we have had concerning him. You will accommodate me in this, will you not?"

"Cert'nly, sir."

When Lord Wilton and Paul returned to the apartment where they had left their young friends, the former betrayed no emotions that could indicate that he had been engaged in a conversation of more than passing interest, nor did the old sailor, unless, indeed, it might have been seen in the somewhat meaning glance which he ever and anon cast furtively at his protegee. Of course, Lord Wilton did not deem it prudent to explain to Rosalind the suspicions he had re-

ceived, but he concluded to let the matter rest until it should develop itself.

Osmond Maxwell and Rosalind Hubert had spent half an hour together, and whatever may have been the subject of their conversation, they had thrown off all stranger feelings, and when Lord Wilton found them they were in very truth conversing through a double medium, for not only were their tongues busily employed, but from their eyes, too, there was sparkling a language that could not but leave its impress upon the memory of those who gave and received it. The head spoke from the tongue, but the heart uttered its sentiments from those keener orbs which lend silence to its advances.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE BANKER'S UNEXPECTED VISIT.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when Lord Wilton and his party took the coach for the yacht pier. The wind still continued westerly, and the tide was just upon the point of turning its full flood back into the German Ocean. Everything being thus favorable for the trip, there were but a few moments passed in parting adieus; and bidding the fair Rosalind all good fortune, and promising to see her as soon as his business would permit, Wilton resigned her for the time to the care of Maxwell, simply remarking, as he turned to step back on to the pier:

"Go directly to your father's banker, Rosa, and draw the money. Show him your father's letter, and then, if you see fit, you had better deposit it back in your own name, being careful to have it subject alone to your own order."

The fair girl promised so to do, and in a few moments more the shore-fasts were taken in-board, the sails hoisted, and as the yacht's head swung off, they started swiftly away. Lord Wilton stood upon the pier as long as he could keep the yacht within sight, and when, at length,

she was rounding the point that was to hide her from his vision, he waved his handkerchief in token of his fervent god-speed.

Merrily sped the beautiful boat on her course down the Thames. Rosalind was not entirely happy, nor yet was she sad, but her heart was enveloped in one of those clouds which, though they shut out the rays of the sun, yet tell by their golden edges that there is a sun beyond. The thoughts of the strange circumstances which had been lately poured into her life-cup served to keep her mind in a state of anxiety, and the more so, because she knew there were some things the knowledge of which had not been entrusted to her keeping. But though this latter consideration somewhat influenced the workings of her mind, yet she knew that those who held such knowledge were her true friends. Wilton she knew to be a friend, and then, as she cast her eyes upon the bold, kind features of Osmond Maxwell, something more than anything that had been spoken in words told her that *he*, too, was a friend in whom she could trust.

There was a feeling of peculiar satisfaction in the bosom of Rosalind Hubert as she came to this latter conclusion, and the thrill of gratification which she experienced, when she felt that Maxwell was her friend, even made the warm blood rush somewhat unwontedly to her brow, and for some time she dwelt in silence upon the emotions thus called up; but ere long she overcame the feelings that made her thus thoughtful, and entered into a conversation with Maxwell, which at length grew so deeply interesting, that all other thoughts, save those called forth by the remarks of her companion, were banished from her mind.

The young man told her of his early life, of his trials and his troubles, of his sunshine and his pleasures, and as he went on, from scene to scene, painting with a free touch and powerful hand the events of his life, his fair hearer began to find her heart being led away by the charm of his words. Her heart was one made for sympathy and for love, and where the soul of purity leads such a heart, its sympathy is sure to be only excited for the good and the noble, and then, if a love can follow, it seldom stumbles against a worldly consideration. The aim of such a love is a pure and noble heart, strong in its affections, and gentle in its holy impulses, and, like the fickle goddess of fortune, it knows no caste, no rank, nor worldly power.

Thus passed the time between Maxwell and Rosalind, save that occasionally old Paul would stop in his walk and make some passing remark upon the objects along shore, and sometimes, when he would catch the end of an adventure or simple narrative that fell from his protégé's lips, he would give his own evidence of the fact, or, by an earnest assurance endeavor to impress upon Rosa's mind that Maxwell had not taken to himself half the credit that belonged to him. Such assurance the fair girl invariably received with a grateful smile upon the old man, and a look of increasing admiration upon her companion.

By the time the yacht had come in sight of Kingston, the wind had hauled to the northward and blew more freshly, but without giving

more than a smart breeze. They were fast nearing the town when Maxwell was aroused from the subject of his conversation, by a loud hail on the larboard quarter, and casting his eyes in that direction he noticed a boat that had just met them in its course up the river.

"Is that Lord Wilton's yacht?" asked some one from the boat.

The captain of the yacht answered in the affirmative.

"Is the Lady Rosalind Hubert on board?"

The same answer was again returned, and requesting the yacht's captain to drop his foresail, the skipper of the stranger boat put his helm up and wore around upon the other tack. As the foresail of the yacht was lowered, her headway was considerably checked, and ere long the boat came up under her lee quarter, and as she grated alongside, an elderly gentleman leaped on board, and as he found himself safe on the yacht's deck he turned to the helmsman of the boat he had left, and ordered him to keep back for London.

"Lady Rosalind, I give you a good day," said the new-comer, as he advanced towards where the fair girl was seated.

"Mr. Montfort!" uttered Rosalind, as she arose and extended her hand, while a look of astonishment rested upon her beautiful features; but quickly remembering that he was a stranger to her companion, she turned towards Osmond, and said:

"Mr. Maxwell, allow me to introduce to your friendship, Mr. Montfort, my father's banker."

Maxwell had already started to his feet when Montfort's boat came alongside, and stepping forward he grasped the banker's extended hand. The old banker cast a searching glance upon the young man's features as he took his hand, and a quick shade of some passing emotion flitted across his face. Maxwell, too, instinctively fastened a keen look upon Montfort's face, as if he would read there the character with which Rosalind had to deal, but the countenance that met his gaze was open and kind in its generous

light, and he seemed to derive a source of gratification from the circumstance.

After a few remarks had been passed upon the usual topics that make up an introductory conversation, the banker turned towards the young lady, and remarked:

"You must be somewhat curious to know, my lady, what could have induced this strange visit?"

"Of course, sir," Rosalind returned, "I am somewhat anxious."

"Well, lady, your uncle Philip has arrived in London."

"So I was aware, sir—or, at least, I supposed so, for Mr. Maxwell accompanied him as far as Winchester on his way, and that is the occasion of my hastened return."

"Ah, I knew not that you had received the intelligence," Montfort said; and then, while a strange look of doubt overspread his features, he continued:

"And were you aware of the power with which he comes invested from your father?"

The strange look and the meaning tone in which the banker asked this question, startled Rosalind with a sudden fear, and gazing up into the face of her old friend, she returned:

"I knew, sir, that he came with powers of attorney, and with a sort of general supervision of my father's affairs."

A moment Montfort returned the earnest, inquiring gaze of the fair girl, and then, with an evident desire to render his intelligence as light as possible, he said:

"Your uncle called upon me this morning, in company with several legal gentlemen, and exhibited the instrument he held from your father, by which it appears that you are almost entirely under his control, he having the whole of Lord Colford's estates at his own disposal, and the only limit placed to his power is, the proviso that when you marry he shall relinquish to you the estates of Colford and Landsgrove, and also the family estate in Berkeley Square, retaining to himself and his heirs forever, the immense estates in Yorkshire."

"Well," murmured Rosalind, so deeply

buried in her own thoughts as to be hardly aware of what she said, "I could wish no more than that, for my father has always said, that if he died first he should settle the Yorkshire estates upon his younger brother."

"Yes, my dear lady," returned the banker, while the meaning that dwelt on his countenance lent additional weight to his words, "if *that* were to be faithfully carried out, you might be content."

"And can it be otherwise?" Rosalind asked, in astonishment.

"Most assuredly, it can," said Montfort; "for Sir Philip has full power over those very estates, and by the manner in which your father has left the business, he may dispose of them all, if he does so before your marriage, and hence, if he has the disposition, he might entirely disinherit you, even as effectually as your father could have done."

"O, sir, my uncle could never do that," the fair girl exclaimed, while a fearful shudder passed through her frame, and her cheek turned pale.

"I know not what he *might* do, lady, but this I do know; that he called upon me this morning for the purpose of having your father's funds, which, all told, amount to some hundred and fifty thousand pounds, transferred to himself."

"And did you do it, sir?" gasped Rosalind, as she laid her hand nervously upon the old banker's arm, and gazed earnestly into his face.

"No, I did not. I made an excuse for delaying the matter, being first determined to see you, and having hopes that, with some assistance, you might retain a small portion of it; for your father's salary is now cut off, and as your uncle will of course receive all the coming rents, such a course would leave you entirely at his will."

"Thank God, you did not comply with his request!" uttered Maxwell, in a tone so full of heartfelt thankfulness that Rosalind for a moment forgot her fears in the noble gleam that shone forth from her companion's generous soul.

"Can you obviate the difficulty, sir?" asked Montfort, in a quick, earnest manner.

"I have, thank Heaven, brought from India for the lady, that which *can* do it, sir," returned Maxwell. "She holds in her possession a draft upon you from Lord Colford's own hand, and bearing the signature and seal of the governor general as witness, for the full amount you hold in keeping."

"And have you the instrument with you?" asked Montfort, as he turned to Rosalind with a relieved expression.

"Yes, sir—here it is, and here, also, is the letter that accompanied it," answered the lady, as she handed them both to the banker.

Mr. Montfort took the papers and read them through, and then turning to Rosalind, he said:

"This takes a weight from off my mind. I will retain the draft, if you please, and immediately draw out the money."

"And," added the fair girl, "if you are willing, I wish you would still hold it in trust

for me, not for the present as my banker, but as my friend."

"That I will do with pleasure, lady, and, at some convenient season, I should like to understand this matter more fully."

The banker had cut his remarks short, for at that moment the yacht shot between the crowded lighters and sail-boats up to her landing, and in a few moments more he took his leave, promising that the funds in his hands should be safe from all encroachments save such as the lady should personally authorize.

Maxwell and Paul left their baggage on board the yacht for the night, and taking a coach, they accompanied Rosalind to her dwelling in Berkeley Square. What were the feelings of Rosalind Hubert, we will not attempt to describe. She was on her way to meet that man whom fortune had made her guardian, but whether in him she was to find a friend or foe she could not tell, but fear, however, bent gentle hope beneath its remorseless heel.

## CHAPTER XL.

THE GREEDY HAWK HAS POUNCED UPON HIS PREY.

ONE of the most splendid residences in Berkeley Square, was that of Lord Colford, though at the present time it was shrouded in the sable pall of mourning for its once loved master. The servants had loved Lord Colford, and now that they felt his loss they mourned for him with true affection for his memory.

In one of the large rooms that faced on the Square, the large, arched windows of which, reaching down to the floor, opened upon single trelliced balconies, sat Sir Philip Hubert. There was an expression of something like anxiety upon his contracted brow, and as the door closed after a receding servant, he started from his seat and commenced pacing the room. The long, close nap of the Turkey carpet swallowed up the sound of his nervous footfall, but the last streams of the slowly fading daylight revealed the powerful workings of his mind. A dozen times had he paced the distance from wall to wall, when he brought his hands quickly together, uttering, as he did so:

"What excuse can he have for thus delaying the transfer of those moneys? Surely my power

is sufficient, and the instrument from Walter fully authorizes me in it? To-morrow I will force him to it. Heavens! and is this the way they would treat Sir Walter's brother? Why, even the very servants dare to insult me with their disdainful looks, and they stare at me as though I were an applicant for charity instead of being their master. I wonder how the Lady Rosalind will receive me? I *hope* she will be tractable, for with her I would not be too imperative."

It might have been a smile that rested upon Sir Philip's face as he said this, but if it was, it was such a smile as one would hardly care to repose a confidence in. It might have been a stray day-beam, however, that just then fell athwart his features, for surely such a state of mind as his could not give the impress of a glad-some feeling. But, be that as it may, the expression soon passed away, and the same shade of strange, nervous anxiety took its place, nor was this relieved, nor did the baronet stop in his pacing walk, till the stopping of a coach at the door arrested his attention.

The sun had sent its last ray over that great city, and its golden point yet rested upon the dome of old St. Paul's, when one of the footmen threw open the door of the apartment in which the baronet stood, and in a moment more Rosalind Hubert, followed by Maxwell and Paul Marline, entered. The eyes of the fair girl met those of the man before her; she had never seen her uncle, but those features could not be mistaken, for, save the dark brown of India's sun, they were almost the counterpart of her father's, and stepping forward, she uttered, in trembling accents:

"Sir Philip."

"You are right, lady," he answered. "And do I speak with the Lady Rosalind, the child of my departed brother?"

"You do, sir."

"Then let me wish thee God's blessing, my dear niece," said Sir Philip, and as he spoke, he bent forward and impressed a kiss upon her fair brow.

Rosalind Hubert started as she received that kiss, but wherefore she knew not, only she knew that it inspired her with no confidence in him who gave it; but quickly overcoming the feeling that she cared not should be seen, she said, as she turned towards the door, where her companions stood, and who, from the deep shade that fell over them, had not yet been recognized:

"But, I forget myself, uncle. Here are two of my friends who have been my guard from Windsor, and I doubt not that to you they are already acquaintances."

"Ah, Mr. Maxwell," uttered Sir Philip, in no very gratified tone, as the young officer stepped forward. "This is an honor I had not anticipated."

"Neither had I, sir," replied Maxwell, as he took the baronet's hand, "but as the Lady Rosalind learned of your arrival at a moment when her friends in Windsor were unable to accompany her to London, I gave to myself the pleasure of accepting an invitation from Lord Wilton, to be her escort, so Marline and myself have seen her—"

"*Marline!*" uttered the baronet, starting back as though he had seen a ghost. "*Paul Marline here!*"

"An' is there anything surprisin' in that, sir?" asked old Paul, as he cast a glance upon Sir Philip that made him recoil still more. "I hope there be noth'n' in the face of old Paul Marline, as should make an honest man afraid of 'im."

The baronet gazed a moment upon the old man, and then swallowing his emotions with a powerful gulp, he said:

"Ah, yes—Paul Marline. Excuse me, sir, if I seemed rude; but the coincidence is so remarkable that—ah—really I was startled, sir. A dream—a dream was at the bottom of it. I dreamed last night that you murdered me in this very room. It was so vivid, so life-like, that the moment I saw you I felt again the deadly stab of your knife."

Sir Philip turned towards his niece as he closed this dubious explanation, and assuming a bland smile, he said:

"You must be fatigued, my dear, and trusting that you will join me at supper, I will grant you what you must of course desire—leave to withdraw to your own room."

Rosalind cast a searching look into the face of her uncle, but she could only see the gleam of a kindly-looking smile, and then turning towards Maxwell, she said:

"Of course, Mr. Maxwell, you will consider yourself at home here, and Mr. Marline, also. I will join you in the evening."

"Perhaps, my dear Rosalind," interrupted Sir Philip, ere the young man could reply, "the gentlemen have friends elsewhere who claim their attention."

"Of course, my uncle," the fair girl said, hardly knowing how to construe Sir Philip's interruption, "the gentlemen will be their own judges of that, though, if I am correctly informed, I wot that neither of them have even acquaintances in London other than ourselves."

"You can retire, if you wish, Rosalind," Sir Philip returned, in rather an abrupt and authoritative manner.



"But I do *not* wish to retire, Sir Philip," she answered, with considerable piquancy, "until I learn whether my friends accept the hospitality I have extended to them."

The baronet's features betrayed considerable emotion as he heard this reply, and an angry answer was upon his lips, but instantly crushing it, he said, with a cool, self-possessed haughtiness:

"You forget, Rosalind, that it is *I* who am to extend the hospitalities of this house for the present. Of course I shall not *turn* these gentlemen from *my* door. There, you need make no reply. I will look well to your welfare."

Rosalind Hubert could not have spoken at that moment if she would. Her heart leaped with one wild thrill of shame and injured pride, and then sank back heavily in her bosom, and casting upon Osmond Maxwell a look of imploring anguish, she turned quickly away from the apartment. As the door closed upon her, Maxwell heard a deep, heart-rending sob, but that was all, and on the next moment he turned towards the man who had thus dared to trample upon the rights and feelings of the orphan.

"If you have further *business*, gentlemen, I am at your service, and for your trouble in accompanying my niece to her home you have my thanks."

Paul Marline gazed with all his power of thought into the face of Sir Philip as he thus spoke, but that idea that was locked up in his memory he could not reach, and turning to his protegee, he said:

"Max., Max., come away. Let's baul our wind out o' this afore I board that man, for blow me 'f I can stan' it any longer. I shall strike 'im 'f 'u stay here."

Young Maxwell spoke not a word in reply to the baronet, but with a look that might have pierced a savage, he turned from the man he had so much reason to despise, and followed Paul from the house.

For some distance, after the two friends had left the house, they walked in silence. The night had already set in, and the vast city had drawn upon its street lamps for light.

"Max.," said old Paul, shortly after they had left Berkeley Square on their way towards the old city, "what d'ye think now of Sir Philip Hubert?"

"He is a scoundrel, Paul—a heartless scoundrel."

"An' how can we circumvent him?"

"There is a way, my old father," replied Maxwell, "in which every villain can be circumvented, and a just God will not make an exception in favor of Sir Philip."

"I hope not, Max.; but aint it kind o' strange 'at Sir Walter should 'ave given such power to his brother?"

"O, no, Paul. Lord Colford evidently thought his brother a different man, and of course, whatever may have been the real intentions of Sir Philip, he took good care that nothing but his smooth log should be shown. Philip, you know, is a younger brother, and, as is often the case, he may have felt himself cut off from some of his just rights by the advancement of Walter, and, with a mind naturally grasping and avaricious, made still more severe and selfish by his long estrangement from his native country, he now exercises his power without a care for aught but his own ends. No, Paul, I think Sir Philip managed to deceive his brother most shamefully."

"Well," the old man said, "I hope we can keep the weather-gage of him, for blow me 'f I wouldn't risk my own life afore I'd see Miss Rosalind come to harm through that villain's means."

"She *shall not* come to harm," uttered Maxwell, with vehement energy. "I *swear* she shall not!"

For a moment the old man gazed into the face of his protegee, as the peculiar tones of this last remark fell upon his ear, and while a sudden flash, as of some new-caught idea, passed over his features, he uttered:

"Max., remember the leddy is the daughter of a lord."

"Well, Paul, what of that?" returned Maxwell, returning his companion's gaze with a curious look.

"O, nothing, Max., only ye know 'at some times—'at is, Max., ye know 'at you aint only a young leftenant, an', ye know, shore regulations is as bindin' as aboard a man-of-war. The leftenants can't mate with the admiral. Ye know that, Max."

"I understand what you mean, Paul," the young man returned, with some emotion; but he said no more, for the old sailor's words had awakened a strange set of thoughts and feelings in his bosom, and until they arrived at a hotel, to which Maxwell had been directed by Captain St. Moerey, little more conversation passed, save casual remarks upon the various objects that met their gaze.

When Osmond Maxwell laid his head upon his pillow that night, it was a long time ere sleep visited his eyelids. Rosalind Hubert and her newly arrived uncle floated before his mental vision, and the scene of the early evening dwelt harshly upon his mind. A thousand plans, half-formed and vague, swept through his brain, but not one could he fasten upon as feasible. Sir Philip was too firmly seated in his power to be affected by him, and Rosalind, alas! was bound by chains which he might not break. Then came a thought—an idea—that floated dimly, fitfully before him, and while yet its vapory presence, lacking form and feature, hovered over him, he fell into the arms of the sleep-god, and dreamed of Rosalind Hubert.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE HAWK AT BAY.

**M**R. LAWRENCE MONTFORT stood behind the counter of his banking house on the day after he had met Rosalind Hubert upon the river. Drafts and deposits were coming in in rapid succession, money changed hands by thousands, and a single bit of printed paper, with the mere scrawl of "Lawrence Montfort" upon its face, made good the possessor for a fortune. Business was at its height when Sir Philip Hubert entered the banker's office, and, after several vain attempts, he managed to catch Montfort's ear.

"Any draft on the house, sir?" asked Montfort, in his laconic, business manner.

"No, sir," returned Sir Philip. "I came to have that business arranged of which I spoke to you yesterday."

"In one moment, sir, I will be at your service," the banker said, as he received a draft from one of his customers, which he immediately cashed, and, as soon as this was done, he turned to the baronet, and requested him to step into a private room.

"Now, sir, I am at your service," said Mont-

fort, as he closed the door of his private office, after himself and Sir Philip had entered, at the same time waving his visitor to a seat.

"You know my business, of course?" the baronet said, as he took a seat.

"I know no man's business but my own, sir," was the somewhat tart reply of the banker, who seemed not to like his visitor's manner.

"Then, sir," said Sir Philip, while an angry flush overspread his features, "I will inform you once more. I have come to have the funds of my brother, Walter Hubert, more generally known as Lord Colford, transferred to myself. You have already seen the documents which authorize me to demand this, and I trust you will find excuse for no further delay. The amount, I believe, is one hundred and fifty thousand pounds."

"Not a single penny, sir," returned Montfort.

"Do you mean, sir, that you will not transfer the money?"

"I mean, Sir Philip, that I have no money of your brother's."

"Do not trifle with me, Mr. Montfort," uttered the baronet, while a sudden misgiving blanched his cheek. "You have money that *did* belong to my brother, though now it belongs to me."

"Every penny that Lord Colford had in my hands has been drawn out by virtue of his own drafts, Sir Philip, so your business with me is at an end."

The baronet started from his seat with a fearful emotion, and laying his hand upon Montfort's shoulder, he asked, in a husky voice:

"Do you speak the truth, sir?"

"I never speak otherwise, sir."

"Then, by heavens!" exclaimed the baronet, as he started back and gazed into the banker's face, "'tis a base forgery! Let me see it, sir! Let me see it!"

"Let you see what, sir?"

"The draft, sir, upon which this hundred and fifty thousand pounds were drawn. Let me see its face instantly, for I know it to be a forgery."

"I am unable to conceive, Sir Philip," returned the banker, without letting his feelings master him, "in what manner you deem my business is done. I never make a practice of opening my vaults to the gaze of mere curiosity. Now if you possess drafts or orders upon me from Lord Colford, then you may claim an investigation, but otherwise you will not urge me further."

For a moment the baronet's fierce emotions overcame his power of utterance, but, at length, sinking into a chair, he said:

"Mr. Montfort, this is no time for trifling. You know that I hold full power from my brother over all his property, and though in the deeds this particular money, as being held by you, is not mentioned, yet you *know*, sir, that it comes within the meaning of the instrument."

"But I tell you, sir, that I hold not a penny subject to even Lord Colford's direct draft."

"You *did* hold it, sir."

"So I *have* held millions."

"Will you tell me to whom you paid this money, Mr. Montfort?" asked Sir Philip, with

a calmness that resulted from the crushing of his selfish hopes.

"When I receive a genuine draft, I seldom notice who *presents* it, so long as the signature is worth the money," returned Montfort; and then rising from his seat, he added:

"Now, sir, you know all that I can communicate, and at any time that you wish to favor me with the transaction of business, I shall wait upon you with pleasure, but at present I am otherwise engaged."

"And will you not show me this draft, sir, which you pretend came from Lord Colford?" asked Sir Philip, while his cheek blanched and his nether lip trembled.

"I cannot, sir," calmly replied Montfort.

"Then, Mr. Montfort, I shall at once institute legal proceedings against you," exclaimed the baronet. "I will see if English law cannot bring you to your senses."

The old banker cast a curious glance into the passion-wrought features of Sir Philip Hubert, and as he laid his hand upon the door-knob, he said, in a calm, meaning tone:

"Sir Philip, the English law is somewhat like a very powerful medicine; a man may take it, as a last resort, for the removal of some obstruction, but he should be very careful that his system is strong enough to come forth alive from its effects. Or, again, it is like the fire which the man built in his barn to annihilate the vermin. He forgot that his own building was in the greatest danger from his hasty remedy."

A moment Sir Philip Hubert gazed into the calm features of the old banker, but he quailed before that honest look, and without a word he left the building.

Half an hour later than the meeting between Montfort and Sir Philip, Rosalind Hubert received a summons to attend her uncle in the apartment where he met her on the evening previous. She was not long in complying with the request, and as she entered the room, Sir Philip bade her be seated. She met not her uncle with that buoyant, cheerful look with which she was wont to greet her friends, but her brow was clouded by a gloomy sorrow, and her

eyes rested upon her guardian with distrust and doubt. There were traces of weeping, too, upon her fair features, and as she awaited now her uncle's pleasure, there was a kind of hopeful expression beaming from her countenance, seeming to indicate that this meeting might exhibit some generous feeling in the bosom of the baronet upon which she could fasten her respect, if not a portion of her love.

"Rosalind," said Sir Philip, after gazing at his ward for several moments in silence, "are you acquainted with your father's monetary affairs?"

"But very slightly, uncle," answered Rosalind, looking up into her uncle's face with an anxious gaze.

"Did you know of his having any money in the hands of Mr. Lawrence Montfort?"

"Yes, sir, he has always held the services of Mr. Montfort, as his banker."

"And do you know if Mr. Montfort held any of these funds at the time of your father's death?"

"Yes, sir, he did."

"And now, Rosalind," continued Sir Philip, with much earnestness, "do you know whether there has ever been a draft received from your father for this money?"

"Mr. Montfort could explain this matter to you much better than I can," returned Rosalind.

"I ask you, lady, if you have the least idea of where that money is, and you will show your discretion by answering me without evasion."

Sir Philip said this in a harsh, imperative tone, and at first the bitter grief of the fair girl's soul started up from its resting place, but on the next moment the rich blood came mantling about her face, and the pride of her father came to her aid.

"Sir Philip," she said, in a tone of fearless rectitude, "I never *evade* the truth. You have asked me a question concerning a business which has rested solely in the hands of the banker, and I have referred you to that banker for all the information you desire. Such information as you need he will doubtless give you."

"And do you, too, beard me!" exclaimed Sir Philip, in a flood of passion. "Do you dare to insult me thus! I *have* been to the banker, and he tells me that he has not a penny in his hands of your father's funds—that it was all drawn out by a draft from Lord Colford, and when I asked to see that draft he refused me. Now I tell thee, girl, there is a conspiracy here against me. Either Mr. Montfort has uttered a base lie, or else that draft is a forgery! You know something of this, and by my authority I demand an immediate explanation?"

Again Rosalind struggled hard to keep back the flood that surged within her bosom, and gazing her uncle full in the face, she replied:

"Such authority, sir, as my father gave you you will exercise as you may see fit, but you will not surely so soon begin to trample upon the rights of others in its execution. If Mr. Montfort has told you aught, then he has told the truth, and if he desires that aught should be kept a secret for the present, then he has reasons for it. But of one thing I can assure you; if the banker has not that money in his hands then I know not where it is."

Sir Philip Hubert started from his chair and commenced pacing the room in a most excited manner. The cool bearing of his ward had cut him to the quick, but he had sense enough not to pour out all his anger as it came boiling up from his soul, and so he endeavored to walk it off. Whatever may have been his ultimate aims, he felt assured that the money he had expected had been by some means placed beyond his grasp. It was a considerable sum—an independent fortune in itself—and thus to lose it was an event not easily to be borne. At length the baronet stopped in front of his niece, and in a hissing tone, he said:

"Lady, you will rue the moment you first resolved to thwart me. I *know* that you have a hand in the removal of this money, and that even you hold some control over it. But think not that such a course as you and Montfort have begun will avail you, for you know full well that every penny of your father's real estate is in my hands, and you shall ere long know to what

effect my power may be used. I have not taken upon myself the duty of leaving my business in India to attend to my brother's affairs for the purpose of being insulted and brow-beaten at every turn, nor have I come here without first being assured that I was vested with an authority commensurate with the office I hold. You can retire now, but before you go, I wish you to understand that if I am constrained to the exercise of authority in my guardianship over yourself, it is you who have forced me to it."

Rosalind Hubert turned from her uncle and sought the seclusion of her own room, and when once more within its walls, her overburdened, bursting heart sent forth its flood of pent-up anguish in bitter, scalding tears. She would have fled from the dwelling where she had basked in the sunshine of peace so long, but which was now darkened by the pall of harsh-toned tyranny, but she knew not whither to flee. Friends she had, but she dared not yet tell them of the cloud that had risen over her house—she shrank from giving to the cold, criticizing world the tale of wrong that was done her father's memory, and with her heart all crushed and bruised beneath the heel of the tyrant uncle's will, she felt that she must weep in secret. Lord Wilton would not be in London for a week, and she knew she could not go to him. And then, when he did come, what could he do? What power had he to oppose the will of him who acted beneath the legal authority so fatally given by her father!

"Stop!" uttered the grief-stricken girl, as she started up from the seat into which she had thrown herself, and gazed a moment into the vacancy before her. "He is my friend. I know he is noble and generous, and I fear not to trust him. He already knows it all."

A sudden beam of hope lit up the fair girl's

features as she thus spoke to herself, and stepping to the bell-rope she gave it a nervous pull. A servant soon answered the call, and Rosalind bade her bring up the morning's paper.

"Is James in the house?" she asked, of the servant, as the paper was brought.

"Yes, ma'am," returned the waiting-woman.

"Then tell him to come to my room soon."

The servant promised to obey, and as she withdrew, Rosalind opened the paper and ran her eyes over the list of arrivals. At length her countenance gleamed with a ray of satisfaction, and turning to a small inlaid escritoire, she opened it, and laying aside the paper she drew forth her implements for writing and penned a brief note, which she placed in a neat envelope, sealed it, and then directed it, and in a few moments more one of the footmen entered her presence, having, however, first knocked upon the door and received permission so to do.

"James," said Rosalind, as the man made his appearance, "I believe I can trust you with a secret?"

"Yes, ma'am, you can," returned the footman, with an honest, frank expression; "there be'a'nt a servant in the house as you mayn't trust your life wid, ma'am."

"I believe you, James," the lady replied, while a shade of gratification passed over her fair face. "And now," she continued, "I wish you would take this note to its direction, and be sure, will you, that it is delivered?"

"I will, ma'am," the servant answered, and with a bow, he retired to perform his mission.

"The servants love me yet," murmured Rosalind to herself, as the door closed upon the departing footman. "Surely all is not dark so long as love is mine. The love of an honest heart is of more worth than the golden adulations of a flattering noble."

## CHAPTER XIII.

A CELESTIAL SUNBEAM, AND A NIGHT-CLOUD.

OSMOND MAXWELL had delivered the despatches with which he was entrusted, and received his lieutenant's commission, and had had the satisfaction of being highly complimented by the lords of the admiralty. Old Paul had accompanied him, and his aged heart beat with a pleasure as deep and sparkling as was that which filled the bosom of his protege, when the latter was made the recipient of the most flattering encomiums, for the old man could not but feel that it was himself who had made Maxwell a sailor, though he always asserted that nobody but God could have made such a man.

It was nearly dark when Maxwell returned to his hotel, and as he entered the office the clerk handed to him a note, which, he said, had been left for him. Instinctively the young man turned towards a light to open the missive, when a cypher on the seal arrested his attention, and instantly recognizing a portion of the Colford arms, he turned the note and again glanced at the superscription. A quick flush passed over his face as he noticed the delicate hand in which

it was written, and calling for a light, he went at once to his room, whither he was followed by old Paul, and after seating himself he broke the seal, and read as follows:

"MR. MAXWELL:

"My heart is pained that I should thus be called upon to address one who is comparatively a stranger to me; but yet the task is rendered more easy in that I have not to explain the painful circumstances that have conspired to render such a step necessary. You, Mr. Maxwell, are already partially aware of my situation, but, alas! that situation is becoming more and more dangerous to my peace, and as you are the only one in London to whom I can now look for advice—Wilton being in Windsor, and others to whom I might have looked having left the city for the season—and believing that you have some knowledge which I do not possess, I could wish that you would call and see me. Something tells me that you can assist me, or, at least, that you can advise.

"Come this evening if your business will per-

mit, and in doing so, I know that your own generous heart will repay you for the trouble—mine is already crushed and broken beneath the wrongs of one who should be my protector,

"ROSALIND HUBERT."

"Well, Max., what 'ave ye got there 'at makes ye tremble so?" asked Paul, as the young man rested the open note upon his knee, after he had read it through.

"I will read it to you, Paul;" and so saying, he read the note aloud.

"Of course you'll go, Osmond."

"Certainly," replied the young man, "and O, that I knew of some power by which to thwart the villain."

Old Paul started to his feet and paced the room for several moments in agitated, perplexed thought. His hands were clasped in an agony of struggling suspense, and swayed to and fro, while his brow was contracted so that the long, gray eye-brows overlapped the upraised lashes. For full five minutes the old man thus stumped up and down the room, and at the end of that time he stopped, and in a tone of petulant disappointment, exclaimed:

"It's no use! I can't overhaul it to save my life. O, Osmond, if I could *only* think where I've seen Sir Philip, in India, I *know* I could clap a stopper on 'im. I could cut 'im out without firin' a gun."

"And can you not think what it is?" asked Osmond, seeming, by his nervous manner, as though he would himself dive into Paul's brains and drag forth the lost secret.

"No, Osmond, not even a variation of it."

"Well," returned the young man, "then we must trust to fortune for the clearing up of this mystery. But I must attend to the lady's request now, and meanwhile, Paul, you will keep your eyes open about you, for Lucival must be in London, somewhere."

"I only hope he'll try it once more," said the old man, with a significant shake of the head.

Osmond was not long in preparing for his visit, and having observed the way well when

he came from Berkeley Square, he easily found the house he sought. One of the servants answered the bell, and upon our hero's inquiring for the Lady Rosalind, he was immediately shown into the hall.

"This way, sir," said the footman, at the same time casting a furtive glance about him, and as he spoke, he led the way up a flight of stairs which ascended from the extremity of the hall, and traversing a long corridor, he stopped at a door which he opened and bade the visitor to enter.

Osmond found himself in an elegant boudoir, every department of which gave evidence of its feminine occupancy, but he had not many moments to observe the tastefulness of things about him, ere the door opened and Rosalind Hubert stood in his presence. There was a sudden flush of gratefulness suffused the features of the fair girl as she beheld the kind face of young Osmond, and stepping eagerly forward, she extended her hand.

"I thank you, sir, for this kindness," she uttered, as she gazed with simple confidence into the features of her visitor.

"And I, fair lady, have cause for thanks in that you have honored me with your friendship and confidence," returned Osmond, still holding the warm hand that had been placed within his own.

"I know of none other upon whom I could have called, sir," Rosalind said, as she took a seat. "I have friends in London, but none beside yourself could help me now, for I would not that they should yet know of the manner in which my uncle has behaved. Ah, Mr. Maxwell, I little thought that I should ever have come to such abject bondage."

"Bondage!" repeated the young man. "Why, surely your uncle has not control over your actions? He has not dared, so soon, to trample upon your rights and feelings?"

"Listen, sir, and you shall hear," the fair girl said, and she went on to explain the exact nature of Sir Philip's authority, showing that though he had not directly the power of the old feudal guardians, yet that indirectly his will

was positively imperative, and only one thing in the whole catalogue of her natural rights could she call her own: that was, the disposal of her own hand, but even that he might virtually prevent if he was so disposed. She then related the incidents of her last interview with her uncle, concerning the draft from her father, and as she closed she could not repress the tears that started forth in memory of the harsh, dark threats she had received.

A moment after she ceased speaking, Osmond remained entirely overpowered by the indignation that raged within his bosom, but soon sweeping away the bitter emotion, he said, while a look of tender regard resumed its predominance:

"Lady, there must be some means of escape from this cruelty. Let not your heart yet sink in despair, for if there be a power on earth that can thwart your base guardian in his motives, I will hunt it up. I am not wholly without the means of doing this, even now, but I would not strike a blow till I can see well my aim."

"O, sir," uttered Rosalind, seeming to be inspired with a new hope by the words and manner of her companion, "do you think that this man's power can be broken?"

"I can *hope*, lady—and hope, too, with good grounds for that hope."

"Then I, too, may hope," uttered Rosalind. But O, such fearful threats as have come from his lips have almost made me mad. I may misconstrue his meaning, but I have reason to believe that he intends to drag me with him to India. He has already given notice to all my father's old servants that their term of service will expire with the present week. He has taken a statement of all the articles of furniture, plate, and pictures in the house, together with their probable value, and, if he sees fit, *he has the power to sell them all!*"

A few moments Osmond bent his head in thought, and then he said, in a tone of something like anxiety:

"I will not hide from you, lady, the fact, that I believe your uncle capable of doing anything that can minister to his own selfish motives. There is a mystery about him which I cannot

at present solve, though I do believe that when it is solved it will work to the overthrowing of his villainous projects. Lord Walbourn, of the admiralty, has given me to-day, some strange rumors that have reached them of Sir Philip's doings in India, but though several investigations have taken place before the Court of Directors, yet nothing has been brought to light with regard to the accusations against him. Rumors of robberies and even murders, have been attached to the baronet's name, and though the proof seemed almost conclusive against him, yet he has escaped them all, nor did he even shrink from such investigation as was instituted against him. He is a strange man, Rosalind."

Maxwell himself started as he found the last word had escaped his lips, for though that simple name had rested upon his heart, yet he meant not to have used it so familiarly; but he had spoken it, and he would not have recalled it if he could.

"It is strange," returned Rosalind, while a gleam of light, that could have had no connection with the subject of conversation, flashed athwart her features, lending to her cheeks a crimson tint, and to her eyes a sparkling brilliancy. "It is most strange that such things could have been, and yet that my father should have entrusted to him this power over his estates."

Osmond Maxwell started in his seat as these words fell from his companion's lips, and for a moment he gazed fixedly upon her face, as if upon that fair tablet he would gather his thoughts.

"By my faith, lady," he exclaimed, "the man who is base enough to treat you thus, is base enough to *forge* the certificates of his power."

Rosalind started, and grasped at the straw thus thrown out, but in a moment the faint glimmer of additional hope thus called forth faded away, and she mournfully replied:

"Alas! Mr. Maxwell, I have not a chance for hope there. The instruments my uncle bears are unmistakably genuine, and they have already been subjected to the proper authorities

and duly recognized. They bear the seals of both my father and the well-known attorney who drew them up, together with several responsible witnesses. No, no, they are genuine—too genuine!"

"Then," returned the young officer, "we must depend solely upon our hopes of impeaching Sir Philip's character, and if he be proven a criminal, his power is surely at an end. Cheer up, lady, for something bids me hope that this can be done."

For a moment, Osmond's mind dwelt upon the baronet's connexion with the villain Lucival, and also upon the trepidation he had manifested when he met old Paul on the previous evening, and with an energy almost amounting to confident assurance, he continued:

"I *can* do it, Rosalind, if there be justice in England."

"And I know there is, sir, O, I know there is," the fair girl exclaimed, as Maxwell's assurance fell upon her ears. Then gazing up into the features of her companion, while the grateful tears began to start forth in glistening, pearly drops, she continued:

"You know not what a weight your assurance has taken from my heart, and believe me, my kind friend, that my heart's best gratitude shall ever be yours."

"So my memory will at least be enshrined in one warm, noble heart," murmured the young man, while a tremor shook his frame, and a soft sadness overspread his features. "I shall soon be once more upon my native element—the howl of the tempest and the roar of the night-wind will again be my sleep-song, and the canopy of God the only roof to give me shelter; but my heart will turn back to this land and swell with a sweet emotion, when I feel that it holds the regard, even, of one so fair, and that I hold her *gratitude* is a still sweeter thought. I will rend this galling chain, lady, even though its links seem so firmly knitted about you now, and the thought that I have thus aided you will be a warm, sun-lit spot in the life-picture of my memory."

Rosalind Hubert gazed up into the features of the man who thus spoke, and for a moment she dwelt upon the soul of nobleness that shone forth like the first beams of the fair Aurora. Whether the charm lay in the strange emotion that moved her features, or whether it lay in the warm tear that glistened in her eye, cannot be told, but there was a charm that started Maxwell's soul from its wonted depths, and, upheld in his purpose by a power he had never before experienced, he started up from his seat and stood by the side of his companion. He did not fall upon his knees, for that was a position his proud heart had never taught him to assume, save when he spoke to his God, but taking one fair hand in his own, while the rich light sparkled from his eyes, he said:

"Pardon me, Rosalind, that I take such an occasion as the present for an avowal which, until this moment, I knew not that I should ever give to the ear of a living soul, but the heart knows no bounds of conventional limit, and if I offend, I shall trust you for pardon. I love you, Rosalind—not madly, as some have ere now professed, but with a love that has been lighted upon the altar of an honest heart—a love kindled by the first pure smile you bestowed upon me, and fanned to a flame by the communion I have since held with your pure, good soul—a love that can sacrifice everything but honor for the happiness of its object, and which received your image as the first upon its tablet. That love I give to you. If you can give it a reciprocal welcome in your own heart, O, bless me with the avowal, and if you cannot, then tell me, and though it might shut the portals of my love forever against the intrusion of such another visitant, yet it shall not estrange our hearts from the union of *friendship* which even now unites them."

Gently rolled the tears from the drooping lids of the fair girl, and they rested upon her bosom as rests the morn-lit dew upon the waning rose. Her hand trembled in its prison, but sought not the liberty which it might easily have gained. A moment the words she had heard went thrilling through every avenue of her soul, and then



raising her eyes to the face of him who gazed upon her, she murmured:

"Osmond, when I saw your face to-night, I felt that I saw one in whom I could trust my every hope of happiness. You have asked of me the truth, and I cannot keep it back nor evade it. My poor heart, I fear, has nestled itself away in your keeping ere I was aware that it had flown from its wonted rest. I do believe it can rest there in happiness, nor have I the wish to recall it."

"Gentle being," said the happy man, as he sank upon the sofa by the side of her whose hand he held, "often, as I have sat and gazed upon the gemmed sky of fair India, have I wondered if those myriad stars sent forth from their beams the destinies of men, and at such times I would essay to seek out one that might have smiled its life-tale upon my ocean cradle. Far away in the eastern heavens, but just elevated above the horizon, reposed a quiet star, all alone by itself, seeming to dwell within the light of its own twinkling face, and upon that isolated sky-gem I fastened my fate. When the broad Atlantic opened its bosom to my England-bound course, that star sank from my sight, and I saw it not again. I felt sad when I saw that my angel-eye had sank from its watch, but I looked not in the heavens for another; but now, dearest, kindest girl, I have found a beacon more bright, more glorious by far. In the heaven of my life a star has arisen that shall shed its light upon my way, even as the sun guides God's planets on their trackless course. It shall warm my soul with the spring-tide of a glorious hope, and nought but the hand of Him who guides all things towards their end can strike it from its throne upon my heart."

Rosalind drank in the words that fell with a sweet music upon her ears, and wiping away the happy tears from her eyes, she uttered, in tones of heaven-lent melody:

"I am happy, now. The oak to which my heart has clung from childhood up has been stricken down, but God has given me a new guide, a new stay, a new sun to light my path, a new goal towards which my soul shall aim in its onward course."

And thus they sat, and thus they talked. Two honest, truthful, loving hearts had met upon the great ocean of humanity—they had beat together, and had at length mingled their sweet waters of love, and like as two neighboring waves, when brought within some narrow strait, they had lost their individual identity in a perfect unison.

An hour passed away with the rapidity of thought. Maxwell glanced at his watch, and yet he lingered. The heavy bell of St. Pauls struck eleven, and as the tones of its iron tongue died away, the young man started from his seat.

"We must part now, dearest," he said, "but ere long I shall see you again, and in the meantime, rest assured that you have two friends at work for your redemption from the evil that has fallen upon you. Paul Marline wears beneath that homely, rough exterior a heart as noble as ever beat in human bosom, and his services in this affair will be of much effect. And now, for the present, I must bid you adieu. There is a God in heaven, Rosalind, and to his care I leave you. Blame me not for this act. There."

As Maxwell spoke, he bent his head and imprinted a warm kiss upon the fair brow that was turned towards him, and the happy smile of joy that rested upon him, assured him that he was not blamed.

Rosalind rang for a servant, and in a moment more the young man was lighted to the hall by the same stairway as that which he had ascended, and as his foot touched the hall-pavement, he thought he could discern two objects in the obscurity ahead, and as he advanced his first impressions were confirmed, for he distinctly saw them glide across the passage, and the sound of an opening and shutting door fell on his ear.

This circumstance somewhat startled Maxwell, for he at once knew that, whoever they were that had thus mysteriously disappeared, they had had an opportunity of recognizing him, for the rays of the servant's lamp fell directly upon his face, and revealed his every feature; but he made no remark to the servant,

only to thank him for his attention, and soon after he stood upon the sidewalk.

One of those seemingly endless fogs that sometimes hang over the great metropolis made damp and dark the atmosphere, giving to the street lamps the appearance of dim ghosts just peering around the corners of the streets and lanes, and making the distant candle-lit windows look like the gaunt spectres of some desolate bog.

The chill dampness struck upon the face of Osmond Maxwell, but he noticed it not—he dwelt only in the moments that had just passed, and so entirely was he lost to all about him that he heard not the cat-like tread that followed his footsteps. He had left Berkeley Square far behind him, and was just turning the corner of a narrow street when the proximity of another pedestrian became apparent, and instinctively he turned aside to let the stranger pass, but the following footfall ceased as he momentarily stopped, and he was in the act of turning to see if his ear had deceived him when he received a blow upon the head from some heavy club, and with a faint sensation, as of some starry beams playing before his eyes, he lost himself and fell over upon the pavement.

All consciousness was not gone, however, for he realized that some one was tying his hands behind him, and that his feet were being lashed together at the same time, and ere long, though he had not the power of physical motion or speech, he knew that he was being lifted into some sort of a carriage, which was driven swiftly away.

Here, amid the confused rattle of the pave-

ments, he gradually sank into utter unconsciousness, and when he awoke to a sense of things about him once more, he knew, by the peculiar motion of the fabric which sustained him that he was upon the water. His sensations were of pain in his head and limbs. The blow he had received still rang with a deadening noise through his brain, and the cords upon his arms and legs were sunk deep into the swollen and inflamed flesh. His tongue was parched with a burning thirst, and an incipient fever seemed kindling in his blood.

After one of two vain attempts, Maxwell succeeded in rolling over, and as his power of reasoning began to assume its throne he found that he was lying in a rude bunk. Gradually his mind became clearer, and from the sound of the water, as it rippled against the planks at his side, he knew that he was in the after cabin of some small, clumsy vessel.

At length, determined to ascertain, if possible, where he was, and for what, he strained his lungs to call for assistance. At best his voice was weak, but yet he knew that it could be heard on deck. Again and again he called, but no one answered him. He writhed and labored to loosen the cruel cords, but all his efforts were vain—they cut deeper and deeper at every struggle, and at length he groaned in utter despair. All was dark as Erebus about him! On he sailed, he knew not whither, and, at that moment, he would have cared not, so that the cruel torture of his bonds was taken from his limbs. But even that was denied him, and his heart sank exhausted into the darkness of an almost hopeless night!



## CHAPTER XIV.

PAUL'S LOST SECRET SUDDENLY RETURNS TO HIM.

OLD Paul Marline felt considerable anxiety when ten o'clock struck, and no Maxwell had returned. Eleven o'clock at length fell upon his ears from the giant sentinel of St. Paul's, and the old man started from his chair, determined to seek his protege. With this idea he went to his room and procured his pistols, and having donned a light overcoat, he started forth on his mission. He knew not what could have detained Maxwell after ten o'clock, but when another hour had passed away he felt assured that some evil or mishap had befallen him. He knew they both had enemies in the city, and he knew, too, that there were those whose personal safety was at stake while himself and the young officer had an eye on them.

With these assurances Paul felt confident that Maxwell's prolonged absence was not of his own free will, and as a first resort he bent his steps towards Berkeley Square. It was near midnight when he reached the dwelling of Sir Philip Hubert, but he found all the lights extinguished, and after standing for several moments undecided what course to pursue, he concluded

that he would not disturb the family, for the young man had of course left there; and with such thoughts he turned back again, but with the determination, however, that if Maxwell did not return he would call early in the morning.

As Paul started to retrace his steps, he stopped the first watchman whom he met, and inquired of him if he had seen any one answering to the description he gave of his young protege. From all whom he met he received a decided negative until he had got half-way back, when, as he put the same question to a watchman who stood leaning against a lamp post at the corner of a narrow street, he was informed that no such man had been exactly *seen*, but that in all probability there had been some one carried off down towards the river.

"How long ago was it?" asked Paul.

"'Bout 'alf an 'our," returned the watchman.

"What did ye see? What was they doin'?" the old man asked, in a hurried, anxious manner.

"Vell, I should say as how they was liftin'

summat into a wagon, an, likely 'twas a man. P'raps he'd tumbled down an' 'urt 'im, an' p'raps summat 'ad knocked 'im down. They druv off for the river as soon 's they'd boosted 'im."

"An' didn't ye follow 'em? Didn't ye try to stop 'em?" exclaimed Paul.

"Stop 'em! Vy, they vas 'alf way down the street. They vasn't stealin' as I knows on, nor they vasn't goin' for to set nobody's 'ouse afire," the watchman answered, in a cool, matter-of-fact manner. "If we should stop ev'ry wheicle as happens to pick up a drunken man in Lunnun this time o' night, we should be in nice bus'ness, *we* should."

"O, you lubber!" uttered Paul, between his clenched teeth, as he turned down towards the river.

"P'raps you'd like to be a Charley," called out the watchman, without moving from his rest against the lamp-post.

Paul paid no attention to the remark, however, but hastened on towards the river, and for some time he hunted along the docks in search of some one who could give him any light on the subject of his search; but the night was dark, and being unacquainted with the intricacies of the docks and landings, he was forced to give up his search till morning.

Little sleep visited the eyes of Paul Marline that night, for he was now fully assured that Maxwell had been foully dealt with, and an agony, such as only a parent can feel for a beloved child, burned in his bosom. With the first streaks of morning he arose from his bed, and made preparations for a renewal of his search. His first steps were towards the dwelling of Sir Philip, and when he reached the house he ascended the marble steps, and gave the bell knob a quick, nervous pull.

"I want to see Lady Rosalind Hubert," said Paul, as a servant opened the door.

"She is not up yet," returned the servant.

"But I must see her, at any rate. Aint you the man 'at brought that letter for Mr. Maxwell?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then send word to the leddy 'at old Paul Marline wants to see her, an' I know she'll come," said the old man, with considerable earnestness.

A ray of intelligence shot across the face of the servant as he heard this, and showing Paul into one of the front rooms, he promised to attend to his wishes. Fifteen minutes had he waited patiently for the coming of the lady, when the same door by which he had entered was opened, and Sir Philip Hubert walked into the room. The baronet started as his eyes fell upon the form of the old boatswain, and for a moment he trembled like an aspen, but quickly calling his impudent authority to his aid, he uttered:

"Pray, fellow, to what am I indebted for this visit?"

"You aint indebted to *me*, sir. I came to see Miss Rosalind."

"Then you can go back from whence you came," returned Sir Philip. "The lady is not yet up, and if she were you could not see her. There is the door, sir."

"Yes, an' there is the leddy," Paul said, as Rosalind entered by a door at the other end of the apartment, at the same time rising from his seat and advancing a step towards the fair girl.

Sir Philip turned as Paul spoke, and as his eyes rested upon the new comer, a quick flash of anger passed over his face, and waving his hand in an imperative manner, he said:

"Rosalind, your presence is not wanted here."

"But I was sent for, sir," the girl replied, in a firm, decided tone—for at the sight of Paul at this early hour, a fearful dread seized upon her mind, and she forgot the power of her uncle in its whelming influence.

"Miss Rosalind," said Paul, taking no heed of her uncle's harsh remark, "I come to ask you if—"

"Silence, sir!" thundered Sir Philip, trembling with rage, "and leave my house ere I have you kicked out; and you, Rosalind," he continued, turning to his niece, "go back to your room! Back, I say!" and as he spoke, he

stepped forward and laid his hand roughly upon the fair girl's arm.

Old Paul Marline forgot that he was in a gentleman's parlor—he forgot that his boatswain's warrant gave him no power now; he only knew that a helpless orphan was oppressed, that a cowardly villain had laid violent hands upon her, and, with his soul all on fire, he sprang quickly forward, and seizing the baronet by the arm, he dashed him to the floor.

"There, you mean, contemptible willain," entered the old man, "that's for darin' to put your cowardly hands on a poor orphan girl. Now tell me, leddy," he continued, placing his feet heavily upon the breast of the fallen man, "was Mr. Maxwell here, last night?"

"Yes, yes."

"An' what time did he go away?"

"At eleven o'clock," returned Rosalind, and then laying her hand tremblingly upon Paul's arm, while all thoughts of her uncle were forgotten, she asked:

"Has any harm come to him? O, for heaven's sake, tell me."

"I don't know, ma'am. He haint come back yet; but don't be alarmed—I'll find him yet."

Rosalind was upon the point of speaking, when Sir Philip, who had almost instantly recovered from the effects of the blow he had received in falling, shook off the foot of the old man, and sprang to his feet.

"Go, lady," quickly exclaimed Paul, as he sprang between Rosalind and her uncle. "Go, and I will let you know when I find him."

With a faint cry the poor girl cast one look at the livid face of her uncle, and then fled from the room.

"Now, villain, take your death!" cried the baronet, as he drew from his pocket a pistol, as soon as the door closed behind his niece.

But Paul was too quick-sighted for such a movement, for with a sudden bound he seized the pistol that had been drawn against him, and at the same moment drew one from his own bosom. As he wrenched Sir Philip's pistol from his grasp, the eyes of the two men met. Sir Philip Hubert was utterly mad with the

fierce passion that came hissing from every feature, and Paul, too, was stirred to a vengeful wrath, but the instant he met that demoniac flash that fired the eyes of his enemy, he started back as though a thunderbolt had crashed at his feet.

The old boatswain uttered no exclamation, he made no remark. Every shade of wrath had passed from his features, and a burning, flashing, sparkling light, astounding and wonder-laden, overspread his face.

"You shall be made to suffer for this, sir," hissed Sir Philip, between his teeth. "By heavens! there's a gibbet in London."

An answer to this trembled upon Paul's lips, but he gave it not utterance. He cast one more look at those features, and then opening the pan of Sir Philip's pistol he poured out the powder, after which he returned it. Then cocking his own weapon he took his cap and strode deliberately from the room. Upon the pavement he stopped for an instant, and then starting swiftly away, he uttered, in a quick, earnest manner:

"Now—now, Sir Philip Hubert, I've got ye hard an' fast. O, Max., if I only had *you* now, we'd make that baronet smart. O, the willain!"

Thus relieved of an idea which his good judgment had prevented him from giving to the ears of the baronet, Paul once more sought the river. He kept along to where the street came out in which he had met the watchman the night previous, and there he began to inquire of the boatmen if they had seen anything during the last night that looked like the impressment of a man from the shore. He had boarded a dozen lighters in his search, and at length, as he stepped upon the deck of a coal-lugger and put his question for the twentieth time, the man to whom he spoke hesitated in his reply. Paul's eyes sparkled with a new-found hope as he noticed this, and he put the question a second time.

"What time was it?" asked the collier.

"It must have been a little afore midnight," returned Paul.

"Well, there was a kind of a rumpus about that time aboard of a Gravesend lighter 'at laid just below us here, and soon after she hauled out into the stream an' put down the river."

"And d'ye know anything 'bout the chaps aboard the lighter—what they were?"

"Rather hard coves, I should reckon," replied the collier. "They was either drinkin' or fightin' all the time after they hauled in."

"When did they haul in?"

"Let's see—'twas the day afore yesterday."

"And did any one board her from the city?"

"I seed only one man, and he com'd just at dark last night. He was a tall, black-whiskered chap, with a bunch o' hair on his upper lip."

"Bunk Walland, by all that's true!" ejaculated Paul, as he heard this description.

"Was yees talkin' about the lighter that laid over here jist?" asked one of the collier's crew, coming up at that moment.

"Yes," was Paul's quick reply.

"Well, then, here's a pinknife I'm jist afther pickin' up from the landin'. P'raps, yer honor, yees 'll know it?"

Paul took the penknife, and at once recognized it as Maxwell's, and then turning to the skipper of the collier, he asked:

"Was there any name on the lighter's stern?"

"No, sir."

"Was there anything about her looks by which you could tell her?"

"Yes. She had a big letter G on the peak of her mains'l, done in black paint."

Paul thanked them kindly for the information they had given him, and placing half a crown in the hands of him who had found the knife, he called for a cab and ordered the driver to leave him, as quickly as possible, at the office of the chief of the police.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE CHASE, AND ITS RESULTS.

IT was nearly fifteen minutes after Maxwell had given up in despair of receiving any assistance in his misery, though to him it seemed an age of torment, that he was aroused to a glimmer of hope by the sound of some one descending a ladder near him, and in a moment more the light of a lantern shone into the bunk in which he lay. With a painful effort he turned over upon his side, and made out to distinguish the outlines of a human form standing near him.

"For humanity's sake, sir, whoever you be, take these cruel cords from my limbs!" faintly exclaimed Maxwell, as he saw that the man was gazing into his bunk. "If I am to be murdered, let it be at once—do not kill me by inches thus!"

The man stood a moment, as if undecided what to do, and then he turned and re-ascended the ladder. Again Maxwell gave himself up to despair, and groaned in the bitterness of his sufferings; but ere many moments had passed the sounds of descending footsteps were again heard, and this time there were two men.

"We isn't obliged to keep the poor fellow in sufferin' as I knows on," remarked one of them, as he reached the floor.

"No," returned the other, "there's no need o' that."

"I say, shipmate," exclaimed the man who held the lantern, "find your ruffles a little uncomfortable, eh?"

Maxwell felt his heart swell at this unfeeling remark, but he had good sense enough to keep his indignation to himself, and in an imploring tone, he said:

"They are killing me, sir—literally drawing out my life in the most excruciating pain. For the love of heaven, either loosen them, or kill me at once!"

"Well, if we'll let you go on deck to take a bit of fresh air, will you promise not to make any noise? not to speak a word that can be heard outside o' the lighter?"

"Anything you may ask I will most solemnly promise, so that you loose these cords and let me breathe the pure air," exclaimed Maxwell, in return.

The man who held the lantern set it down, and having called his companion to his assistance, they lifted the young man from the bunk, and proceeded to cast off the cords from his feet and legs, after which they unloosened the pinions upon his arms.

"You'll just excuse me for this, sir," he of the lantern remarked, as he took the cord he had last cast off, and proceeded to bind Maxwell's wrists together in front, "'cause, ye see, we've got to look well to your honor, that ye don't get away from us."

The young man made no answer to this, for he saw that his captor was putting the cord on in such a manner that it would not pain him, and in a few moments he was told that he might follow them on deck.

As the cool night-breeze swept over the fevered brow of the prisoner his heart swelled with a new life, and though it had been with the greatest difficulty that he made his way up the ladder, yet when once seated on the low transom, with his limbs relieved of their torturing bonds, he felt almost as though he had not been so tortured.

The tide thus far had been on the flow, and as there was but little wind the lighter had made only a few miles headway, but shortly after Maxwell came on deck the tide turned upon the ebb, and with the wind from the north'rd and west'rd she began to lumber along with considerable rapidity. There was light enough from the moon, which was just rising, to enable our hero to distinguish the various objects on shore, but of course he knew nothing of the landmarks, and consequently had no means of telling where he was, only he knew that he was going down the river, as the moon, which made out to struggle through the fog, plainly indicated.

There were six men on the deck of the lighter, and the young officer was confident that they composed her whole crew, while he who had unloosened his bonds seemed to be the captain. There was no light about the deck, the helmsman being only guided by well-known objects upon the shore, so that Maxwell could see but little of the countenances of those about him,

but from the conversation and occasional exclamations that fell upon his ears he was not at a loss to tell that he was in the company of a precious set of villains.

Under the influence of the fresh air, with his blood now circulating freely through his veins, the fever began to leave the young man's system, and in the course of fifteen minutes after he came on deck, he felt greatly relieved. The skipper stood leaning against the quarter rail, close by the spot where the prisoner sat, and after the lighter had passed Woolwich, Maxwell turned to him and asked:

"Have you the charge of my person?"

"Well," returned the man thus addressed, in a sort of careless air, "I s'pose you're under my sailin' orders for the present."

"And will you tell me what you intend to do with me?"

"Guess you'd feel full as easy not to be too wise on that p'int," laconically returned the skipper.

"But you surely do not intend to murder me in cool blood!" uttered Maxwell, for the first time giving a real thought to such a probability.

"Couldn't say as to that, sir. I'm under orders from them as is better able to judge about such matters."

"Tell me that, at least," urged the young man; "for I am not coward enough to quail before mortal power. Is it your intention to kill me?"

"O, no," returned the skipper, in a tone as cool and unconcerned as though he had been arranging for the disposal of merchandize. "I aint goin' to kill you, only there's one thing I should think you might know. Your company isn't wanted in London, and them as has got you out o' the way will take pretty good care that you don't come back agin."

"But will you not tell me how far your orders go?"

"Couldn't possibly do it under any circumstances, but when it comes you'll know it, as the bo'sn's mate said to the man as was strip-pin' for a floggin'."

Maxwell saw that he should get nothing

further from the skipper of the lighter, and he determined to ask no more questions. His hope was not entirely gone, for in the course of his eventful life he had been nearer to the gates of death than he was now, and yet he had escaped. Something in his soul—a "still small voice" that whispered seemingly from the book of fate—told him that all was not yet lost. With reviving strength came renewed the hope that his destiny was not yet told upon earth.

Shortly after he ceased questioning the skipper, he felt the power of fatigue so strongly upon him that he laid his head back upon the taffarel, and fell into an uneasy, dreamy slumber. There was no point, no regularly defined idea to his dreams, but over him, and beneath him, and all about him, there seemed to be a black mass of tumultuous, contending storm-clouds, with only one break in the whole frowning, zoneless canopy, but from that one spot shone forth a single gleam of light that penetrated his soul with a glad some emotion. It seemed first to be his eastern star struggling through the clouds, but gradually it took a new, a brighter form, and the soft, beaming features of Rosalind Hubert looked forth upon him. How long he remained in this region of varying dreamland he had no means of determining, but when he awoke it was from a rough shake of his shoulders, and he found the morning sun had already gained considerable advance in its diurnal journey.

"Come, sir, you'll have to go below for a spell," said the skipper, with his hand still upon the young man's shoulder. "That ere town off there is Gravesend, an' I expect the revenue officers 'll board us. Now I want you to *partic'larly* remember 'at you are a sick man 'at we is carryin' out to Sheerness. You'll do it quietly, I s'pose?"

The manner in which this was spoken plainly indicated that there was such a thing as forcing the prisoner to do this bidding, and readily assenting to the proposal, Maxwell went below and turned into his bunk. In the course of fifteen minutes a boat came alongside, but there was only one officer, and he passed the lighter with-

out coming into the cabin, and after he had gone the young man was again permitted to go on deck.

It was now past nine o'clock, the lighter having made only about twenty-five miles since she hauled out from the dock in London, but the wind had now freshened to a good breeze, and the tide, for the last three hours, had been in her favor. Maxwell had again taken his seat upon the transom, and was engaged in watching the various buildings upon the shore when the skipper came aft and touched him upon the arm. Now that daylight had revealed the features of the man who held him in charge, Maxwell could not but shudder as he viewed them. Upon every lineament of them the word "*villain*" was written as plainly as mortal hand could have done it, and there was that coldness and heartlessness about them that revealed a character befitting the hired murderer.

"Well, shipmate," said this specimen of depraved humanity, without other expression than that of a determined recklessness, "we'll be out at sea in a little while, an' as I've no objections to any man's prayin' afore he dies, you can have the privilege, but you'd better begin pretty soon."

"Thou heartless, lying villain," exclaimed Maxwell, starting to his feet, "you told me that you were not going to kill me!"

"Neither is I," returned the skipper. "I's only goin' to lash your legs once more, an' then give you a chance to swim across the German Ocean, that's all."

The heart of Osmond Maxwell recoiled in horror from the idea of such a death, but ere he could utter a reply the skipper had turned upon his heel and walked forward.

Fifteen minutes more passed, and Sheerness Fort was brought in sight upon the starboard bow. The skipper again came aft and ordered the lighter to be brought up to a north-east course, and just as the sheets had been belayed the helmsman's attention was arrested by the appearance of a large yacht which had just passed Leigh on its way down the river, and turning to his superior, he remarked:

"Wonder what that chap's doin' out here?"

"What is that?" asked the skipper.

"That yacht."

The skipper looked a moment upon the coming boat, and then said:

"Some pleasure party, I s'pose, from Greenwich. She'll land on Sheppey Island."

"No," returned the helmsman, after watching the stranger for a few moments, "she's hauled her wind, an' is stan'in' this way."

The skipper went below and got his spyglass, and after a few moments' observation, he turned to his helmsman, and remarked:

"She's nothin'. Only four men aboard—bound 'round on to the Essex coast somewhere."

The lighter lumbered along through the water, while the yacht, with every ray of canvass on, came rapidly cutting her way through the waves, and in the course of half an hour she had ranged up alongside, about two cables' lengths to the windward.

"What does that mean?" uttered the helmsman.

As he spoke the yacht had put up her helm, and eased off her sheets, and as her head paid off, she seemed aiming to run under the lighter's stern. Maxwell was for the time forgotten by the skipper, or he would have surely been ordered below, and as he now got sight of the yacht's deck his heart leaped with a wild, delirious bound, for he recognized it at once as Lord Wilton's. Every fear was gone, every pain was forgotten, for he knew that he had friends near at hand.

The yacht came cutting through the water under the lighter's stern, and in a moment more she put down her helm, and ere the skipper was hardly aware of what was going on, she had grated along upon his lee rail. Up from the yacht's cabin came a score of the London police

with old Paul Marline at their head, and with a loud shout the old man sprang upon the lighter's rail and leaped down upon her deck. The skipper met him at the gangway and essayed to stop his progress, but with one blow of his huge fist Paul felled him upon the main-hatch, and then sprang aft.

Osmond Maxwell put forth his bound hands, and with a heart overflowing with gratitude and joy, he fell upon his foster-father's bosom; but Paul spoke not till he had first cast off the corded manacles from the wrists of his protegee—then he clasped the young man to his bosom, and while the happy tears rolled down his furrowed cheeks, he exclaimed:

"Thank God, Max., you're safe!"

Maxwell raised his head and gazed into his protector's kind face, and while a gratitude that might not be spoken in words irradiated his features, he uttered:

"O, Paul, what do I not owe you. In half an hour I should have been lost to you forever, but you, *you* have saved me."

"There, there, Max.,—don't—you'll make me blubber like a child. We'll talk about it when we get back. Them willains 'll soon be bound, but I wont help do it, for I feel happy now, an' 'f I should put my hands on their mean bodies 'twould make me feel ugly."

In fifteen minutes the lighter's crew had been all bound and conveyed on board the yacht, and leaving their own boat under the charge of Paul Marline, the yacht's crew took charge of the lighter, to carry her back to London, and long before night the villains were safely lodged in the hands of the authorities; while Maxwell, hardly noticing the lameness of his limbs, sat within his own room at the hotel and related to Paul the circumstances of his adventure, and, in turn, received the old man's account of the manner in which he got upon the chase.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## A MOST STRANGE REVELATION.

**W**HEN Maxwell and Paul had finished their supper, the old man remarked to his protegee that he was going out for a few moments, and requested the young man to retire to his room and seek that repose which he so much needed. An hour passed away, and Maxwell was beginning to feel uneasy with regard to his foster-father's prolonged absence, when the door of his room was opened, and the object of his anxiety entered.

"Where have you been, Paul?" asked Maxwell, as his countenance lighted up.

"I've been to see a *leddy*, Max.," the old man returned, while a peculiar smile, half roguish in its expression, played around the corners of his mouth.

"A *lady*, Paul?"

"Yes, a *lady*."

Maxwell gazed into the old man's face, but though he spoke not, yet Paul knew the question he would ask, and in a somewhat serious tone, he continued:

"I've been to see Rosalind Hubert, Max., for I promised her this mornin' 'at I would let

her know as soon as I found you. An' I tell ye, Max., it did my old heart good to see how she smiled and wept by turns, when I told her 'at you was safe. Ah, Max., I'm afeared she aint all right here about you."

As the old man spoke, he placed his hand significantly upon his heart, at the same time bending upon his protegee a searching, meaning look.

A happy, grateful smile lit up the features of Osmond Maxwell, as he heard the old sailor's account of the manner in which Rosalind had received the intelligence of his safety, and in a frank tone, he said:

"I will conceal nothing from you, Paul; but if you think Rosalind's heart is not all right, then you are much mistaken. She *loves* me, Paul."

"Yes, yes, Max., I know that. Though I don't know 'at I was ever in love wi' anything but yourself an' the flag of Old England, yet it didn't take but half a look to tell me 'at the *leddy* was in love wi' you. It's a pity, Max., but then she hadn't ought 'o've done it. However, p'raps she'll soon get over it."

Maxwell could not resist the smile that broke over his features at the simple honesty of his old friend, but at length, while the smile left his face, seeming to settle back upon his glad-some heart, he returned:

"You do not understand the matter, Paul—Rosalind Hubert not only loves me, but I love her."

"So much the worse, Max."

"But I have told her that I love her, and she has confessed her love in return. She is mine, Paul, and I am hers."

A moment the old man gazed in blank astonishment upon the face of his protegee. That astonishment, however, began slowly to disappear, and gradually a light broke in that soon over-spread his features, and to himself he thought of the strange questions that Lord Wilton had put to him; but, without betraying the thoughts that moved him, he simply said:

"She's a noble girl, Max., an' if she is ever your wife, she'll have as good a husband as ever trod the earth."

"She'll have a *faithful* husband, Paul."

"That indeed she will," returned the old man.

For some time after this remark was made, the two companions remained given up, each to his own thoughts. Maxwell dwelt upon the fair being who had been the subject of the conversation, while Paul, if one might judge from the anxious glances which he furtively cast towards his protegee, was diving into a sea of point-less surmises on the subject of the strange manner in which Lord Wilton had questioned him concerning young Maxwell's childhood. At length the young lieutenant raised his eyes to the face of his companion, and said:

"Paul, all my hopes of happiness, or, at least, of immediate happiness, depend upon our weathering Sir Philip Hubert. I have pledged myself to the Lady Rosalind, that her uncle's power over her should be overcome."

"An' we can do it, Max."

"So I believe."

"But I *know* it, Max."

"*Know* it, Paul?"

"Yes, I've got the weather-gage of 'im, an' I can overhaul him at any moment."

"But tell me, Paul," exclaimed the young man, as he started from his seat, "you have not—"

"Yes, I have Max.," interrupted the old man. "I've opened that locker, an' I've found Sir Philip's number!"

"And do you know him for the villain you thought him?" asked Maxwell, as he grasped the old man's arm.

"I never told ye, Max., 'at I thought he was a villain."

"But you surely intimated it," uttered the young officer, in a sort of disappointed tone, while the shade of his hope grew a degree less distinct.

"P'raps I did," replied Paul; and then, taking Maxwell's hand from his arm, he continued: "Now you set down in your big chair agin, an' I'll spin ye the whole yarn, from be-ginnin' to end."

Maxwell did as his old friend had directed, and having stowed away a fresh quid of pigtail within his cheek—an accompaniment without which he seldom ventured any extended remarks—Paul settled himself back into his seat, and commenced:

"The first year 'at I was chief bo's'n's mate o' the old Thunderer—that is ten years ago—you was a small boy, Max., only ten years old, an' of course you don't remember many o' the particulars 'at turned up in that cruise. Our old ship had been ordered on to the coast o' Coromandel, to cruise arter a pirate 'at had been troublin' our East Indiamen, and arter cruisin' about for nearly a month we spoke a merchantman just off Madras 'at had been overhauled and robbed by this bloody pirate the day before, an' from her we learned 'at the scamps had hauled off towards the southern coast, arter they'd got all the plunder they wanted. Well, we got a pretty good 'scription o' the pirate's wessel from the skipper o' the merchantman, an' then we hauled our wind for the coast. P'raps you remember it, Max?"

"No, not distinctly, Paul. I've come across

so many such scenes that those which transpired so far back as that, are rather mixed up and mingled indistinctly together in my memory."

"Well," continued Paul, "the next mornin' arter we got on to the coast, the lookout at the fore-t'gallant cross-trees reported 'at he could see the top-hamper of a craft just over a p'int of land 'at made out a little to the south'rd o' St. Thome. The capt'n called me aft an' ordered me to take a glass an' go aloft an' see 'f I could make out anything of her. So I took the glass, an' I hadn't no sooner got it levelled, than I knowed 'at them spars—I could see as far down as her main-top—belonged to the pirate 'at the merchant skipper had described to us. As soon as I told the capt'n this, he ordered the top-gallant s'ills and r'yals to be taken in, an' in half an hour we doubled the p'int, and there, sure enough, 'bout half a mile up a little stream, lay the wery chap. We know'd 'at the old frigate couldn't git up there, so we called away the barge an' the three cutters, an' with about fifty men, all told, we started off in the boats. Our first luff had charge o' the first cutter, an' I was with 'im. Of course we expected nothin' but 'at the pirate 'd fire into us, but instead 'o that they lowered their boats an' put for the shore, an' as soon as our first luff saw this game, he orderud all hands to land an' give chase. The willains turned an' fired about a mess-pan full o' musket balls at us, an' then run like mad. One of our middies was killed on the spot, an' one or two of the men was wounded, but 'at only made i worse for them, for the moment the middy fell ev'ry one o' the frigate's men swore they'd be revenged, an' after 'em we started.

"About four cables' lengths from the shore there was a small steep hill, an' over this most o' the pirates steered, but four on 'em hauled their wind an' went 'round it on the larb'rd hand, an' without noticin' who followed in my wake I give 'em chase, but when I got 'round the hill I found myself in rather a tick'lish mess. Right ahead there was a deep jungle swamp, which separated me from them as had

gone over the hill, an' I had the satisfaction o' finding myself fetched up all stan'in' wi' four o' the pirates to deal with; but in a minute more I found 'at old Jack Collar, one o' the capt'ns of our fore-top, had followed me, an' I felt a good deal better. The moment the pirates fetched up agin the jungle swamp they turned, an' one on 'em I saw was the capt'n. I knowed him, 'cause he wore reg'lar swabs. Well, Jack an' I both fired, but as bad luck would have it, we both aimed at the same man; howsomever, he fell, so that left us only three to deal with. The three pirates fired, an' Jack got one o' the balls in his left arm, but I wasn't touched, an' Jack didn't notice his hurt much, for he drew his other pistol an' let rip at the bloody willain nearest to 'im, an' we had the satisfaction of seein' him tumble on his beam-ends. I hadn't fired my second pistol yet, 'cause I wanted it for a sure aim, an' just as the two men as was left fired agin, I took the chance an' fired, too, an' my ball did nobly, for it knocked down its man; but when I turned to look at Jack, I found him settin' on the ground wi' his head in his lap. I didn't stop to speak to him, howsomever, for I saw the pirate capt'n comin' towards me, an' whippin' out my cutlass I stood ready for him. He struck a blow at my head as he came up, but I fended it off, an' then at it we went. He was savage, an' so was I. His cutlass was the longest, but mine was the heaviest. He fought like a tiger, but I soon saw 't I was his better wi' the cutlass, an' at last, just as he fetched a real ugly lunge at my breast, I give his cutlass a blow 'at broke it short off at the hilt. In course, I was sure I had 'im then, an' 'f I'd struck soon enough I should, but the infernal willain had another pistol, an' jumpin' back, while I stopped a second to take breath, he drew it an' let drive at me. The ball struck me just below the right knee, an' I dropped, an' just then I heard a shout behind me, an' in a few moments half a dozen of our men came up, but the pirate capt'n took to the jungle as soon as he see 'em, an' we lost 'im. Poor Jack Collar never spoke agin, for he had a ball right through his head;

but my hurt was easily fixed, as the bone wasn't shattered much, an' in the course of a couple o' months I was on my pegs agin. You remember that, Max.?"

"Yes," returned Maxwell, in breathless suspense; "but go on—go on, Paul."

"Well, we got the pirate's brig, an' thirty-one o' the pirates themselves, an' we only lost six men. Now, Max., who d'ye think that pirate capt'n was?"

"Who? Who, Paul?" uttered Maxwell, while by the nervous clutching of his hands he seemed to hold himself in his place.

"Osmond Maxwell, it was nobody but Sir Philip Hubert!"

"Do you speak honestly, Paul? Do you mean this?" asked the young man, almost afraid to trust the evidence of his own senses. "Do you mean that Sir Philip Hubert and this pirate captain are one and the same person?"

"It's just as true as there's a God in heaven," returned the old man.

Maxwell knew from Paul's manner that he not only spoke the truth, but that he was confident of his strange recognition, and for some time he dwelt upon the event in silence. At length he said, in a somewhat disappointed manner:

"And you, Paul, were the only one who recognized him, or rather, saw his face distinctly at that time?"

"I'm the only one living."

"O, I'm afraid that the villain will get clear of your single testimony. You remember what Lord Walbourn told us concerning the manner in which he had escaped a dozen such accusations as this."

"Yes, I know all that," returned Paul. "But I tell ye, Max., 'at we can bring him up with a round turn now. I know 'twas Bunk Walland 'at got me off, an' got you off, too—an' I know 'at he was with Sir Philip ten minutes afore you left the house last night. Now we'll let the willains rest till Lord Wilton comes, an' then we'll put the whole bus'ness into his hands, an' 'f he can't overhaul Sir Philip with all these p'int's o' the compass for a leadin' wind, then I'll go back to the Indies an' never set foot in England agin, that's all, Max."

"Well," returned the young man, after a few moments' deliberation, "I don't think you'll be obliged to do that. God will not surely let such a villain escape."

And with this hope, if not conviction, Maxwell retired to his rest, for his limbs were weary and sore, and his mind tired beneath the varied weight that lay upon it.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE STRANGER, AND HIS EXTRAORDINARY MISSION.

ON the next morning, though Maxwell was by no means severely indisposed, yet he requested that his breakfast might be brought to his room. Old Paul, under the influence of a habit which he could not shake off, had already eaten his morning's meal, and so while his protegee was engaged in the same occupation, he sat near by poring over the columns of the morning's paper. The young man had nearly finished his meal, when an exclamation from the old man made him start.

"What is it, Paul?" he asked, at the same time laying down an egg-glass which he held in his hand.

"Just read *that*," returned Paul, as he handed over the paper and pointed out the paragraph that had arrested his attention.

Maxwell took the paper and read as follows:

"REAL ESTATE FOR SALE.—We are requested to state upon authority of the present holder, that the splendid estate in Berkeley Square, lately belonging to Lord Colford, now deceased, will be immediately sold, together with all the furniture, plate, pictures, &c. &c. If not sold within three days from date at private sale, the

same will be disposed of under the hammer, the holder being under the necessity of immediately returning to India.

P. S. As a mere settlement of the estate is the only object in view, this chance will afford a rare bargain to some gentleman who is desirous of purchasing an eligible city residence."

"There, what d'ye think o' that, Max?" uttered Paul, as the young man rested the paper upon his knee.

"I think if Sir Philip is not soon brought up he'll escape us yet, for he evidently intends to make his escape from England as soon as possible."

Hardly had Maxwell spoken, when there came a rap upon the door.

"Walk in."

"There be two gentlemen below as wants to speak wid ye, sur," said one of the footmen, poking his head in at the door.

"Well, clear away these dishes, and then show them up," returned Maxwell.

It was but the work of a moment for the servant to remove the salver upon which the young officer's breakfast had been served, and in a

few minutes afterwards, Lord Wilton entered the apartment, accompanied by an aged stranger.

"My dear Maxwell, I am glad to find you looking so well," exclaimed his lordship, as he grasped the young man by the hand. "I have heard of your yesterday's adventure, and I feared you might have fared worse."

"No, my lord," returned Maxwell, not a little flattered by the friendly manner of so distinguished a noble; "thanks to my kind old foster-father, I got off in safety."

Wilton extended to Paul a friendly greeting, and then turning to where stood the stranger, he said, as he led him towards the young officer:

"Mr. Marmaduke, allow me to make you acquainted with Mr. Maxwell, the young officer of whom I have told you. Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Godfrey Marmaduke."

Mr. Godfrey Marmaduke was a pale, sickly looking man, with a look of uncommon intelligence. He wore a gray suit of short clothes, peculiar to the lower grade of the Yorkshire gentry, his head being ornamented by a huge white periwig which ended behind in a long, neatly bound queue. His eyes sparkled with a peculiar light as he took Maxwell by the hand, and at the first glance our hero was assured that he saw a man in whom he might trust as a friend.

"Have you seen the morning papers, Mr. Maxwell?" asked Lord Wilton, after the usual salutations between our two friends and Mr. Marmaduke had been passed.

"Yes, my lord," returned Maxwell, "I had just laid one of them down as you were announced."

"Sir Philip is commencing in good earnest," remarked Wilton.

"He is, indeed," returned Maxwell; "and we must be on the alert if we would prevent his infamous designs. Have you seen Mr. Montfort, yet?"

"Yes, I called upon him last evening, in company with Mr. Marmaduke. I have been made acquainted with all Sir Philip's proceedings thus far, and," continued his lordship, at

the same time casting upon Maxwell a meaning, half-smiling glance, "I saw the Lady Rosalind last evening, and from her I gained an inkling of the proceedings of some one else, who, it seems, has some peculiar designs with regard to her welfare."

"Lord Wilton," stammered the young man, while the rich blood mounted in a crimson flood to his somewhat pale face.

"There, you needn't be ashamed of what you've done, my boy," exclaimed Wilton, with a good-natured smile. "I happened to be in the house last night when Paul came with his message, though he knew it not, and I could not but observe the effect which his intelligence had upon her mind, and so, my dear fellow, I had the curiosity to question Rosa rather particularly; the result of which was, that I learned that, while her uncle was trying to rob her of her property, *you* had actually stolen away her heart."

"And I trust, my lord, that you will not blame me for that which I have done," uttered Maxwell, gaining courage from the kind manner of his lordship.

"O, not by any means," Wilton said. "You have given your own heart in return, and as the lady seems satisfied with the exchange, I suppose the matter must rest there for the present. But, you know Sir Philip must first be disposed of, for you may never hope to arrive at the consummation of such a project till his power is overcome."

"And that *can* be done, sir!" exclaimed Maxwell, with much energy. "We have the most conclusive proofs of his connection with the cowardly attempts upon our lives, and Paul has recognized him as a base villain of an old stamp."

"Ah," uttered Wilton, turning to the old sailor, "and have you found your lost secret, Paul?"

"Yes, sir—I know the villain just like a signal-book."

"Then let's have it," returned Wilton, as he turned his chair about, and disposed himself in a listening position.

Old Paul cleared his throat, and then span

the yarn of his adventure with the pirates on the coast of Madras, during which Lord Wilton and Marmaduke exchanged many and significant glances, seeming the while to be most deeply interested. At its conclusion, Maxwell said:

"Now, Lord Wilton, can you not, with all these circumstances, contrive to bring the villain to justice?"

"Not yet, not yet," returned his lordship, in a thoughtful mood. "I have another hold upon him now. He will not dispose of the property as easily as he imagines, for Mr. Marmaduke, here, has a full claim upon the Yorkshire estate, and he also holds Lord Colford's own bond and mortgage upon the estate which Sir Philip has advertised for sale. I assure you, Mr. Maxwell, that Marmaduke's visit to London at this time is most opportune, for, in days gone by, he has had some curious dealings with Sir Philip."

"O, sir," uttered Maxwell, while his face became bright beneath the flashes of the hope thus given him, "if Mr. Marmaduke can aid us in this, my lasting gratitude shall be his, and if ever fortune brings her wheel about to an opportunity, I will repay him with more than words. Do not place my feelings to a wrong motive, sir," the young man continued, as he noticed that Godfrey Marmaduke was regarding him with the most intense interest. "I assure you, sir, there is no selfishness in the feeling. Though I would give all but my own honest manhood for Rosalind's happiness, yet had I resolved upon freeing her from this base villain's power before I had dared to think of loving her. Throwing the peculiar position in which I stand to the lady out of the question, I would do only for her in this case what I would do for any unprotected orphan."

Old Godfrey's eyes sparkled with a strange light as the young man spoke, and grasping him by the hand, he uttered:

"I believe you, sir—indeed I do; and now let me assure you that if some unforeseen circumstance does not prevent the execution of my plans, Sir Philip will have opportunity to commit but little more of his wickedness."

"Blow me 'f I shouldn't like just to give 'im one more chance to put a ball through my knee," uttered Paul, doubling up both of his huge fists and laying them upon his knees, as though he even now anticipated the pleasure.

Lord Wilton smiled at the old sailor's earnest remark, and then laying his hand upon Maxwell's arm, he said:

"Now, Mr. Maxwell, we will let Sir Philip rest for a while, and enter upon a business which principally concerns yourself, and for which I have claimed Mr. Marmaduke's presence at the present time and place."

"A business relating to me, sir?" responded the young man in some surprise.

"Yes, Maxwell—and something, too, that cannot fail of proving highly interesting to one in your position."

Maxwell gazed at his lordship with a wondering look, and anxiously awaited an explanation.

"Paul," said Wilton, turning to the old sailor, "you told me, I believe, that it was nineteen years ago that you picked up the child, whom you have since reared to a man?"

"Nineteen years ago this summer, sir," replied Paul, opening his eyes wider than usual, "I picked 'im up in the Bay o' Bengal, an' there he sets, now. He was tossed about then without the power to help himself, but now he's a master o' the ocean, sir."

"Do you remember the name of the ship in which he was wrecked?"

"Yes, sir. It's just as I—"

Here the old man hesitated a moment, as though he might be revealing the fact of their former conversation, but at a motion from his interlocutor, he continued:

"The name o' the ship was burnt, in big, fair letters on the yard 'at the child was lashed to. It was the *Ajax*."

"That was the ship, was it not, Godfrey?" said Wilton, turning to Mr. Marmaduke.

"It was," replied that gentleman, while a marked agitation gave its tone to his features.

"You told me, I think," continued his lordship, again turning to Paul, "that you had

preserved the clothes which the child was dressed in, at the time you found him?"

"Yes, sir—ev'ry rag on 'em. They're in my chest now, just in the next room."

"And did you also preserve the strip of cloth with which the child was lashed to the yard?"

"Yes, sir."

"Mr. Marmaduke, will you have the kindness to touch that bell-rope?" said Lord Wilton, to the old gentleman.

"My lord, what does this mean? What is this for?" uttered Maxwell, after old Godfrey had rang the bell, in a trembling, doubting, and half-fearful tone. "I conjure you, sir, to tell me what end you have in view?"

"Rest quietly for a few moments, my dear boy, and you shall know it all. Ask no questions yet."

The young man gazed first at the speaker, and then at Mr. Marmaduke. Upon the features of the former there was a happy, joyous expression, with a slight mixture of kind playfulness, while upon the face of the latter, there dwelt an earnest, absorbing interest, with a searching look fixed full upon his own face.

"Your pleasure, gentlemen," said a servant, at that moment putting his head in at the door.

"Conduct the female, who accompanied us, to this room," said Wilton.

The servant bowed and withdrew, and in a few moments returned and ushered in an old lady, whose form must have sustained the weight of half a century, at least.

"Hector," said Lord Wilton, as the female entered, "you remember the caution I gave you?"

"Yes, sir," replied she, as she cast her eyes about the room.

Wilton was upon the point of speaking, when noticed that Hector's eyes had rested upon Maxwell, but a new idea at that moment entered his mind, and he remained silent.

With an earnest, fixed gaze the woman regarded the young man for full two minutes—then she stepped forward, and, seeming to forget that the young lieutenant was a perfect

stranger to her, she placed her hand upon his brow, and laid the nut-brown curls back farther from his face. A moment more she gazed, while the youth, himself, trembled with a startling emotion, and then she said, in a measured, confident tone:

"Mr. Marmaduke, do you want more evidence than that?"

"I would ask for no more, Hector," the old gentleman replied; "but since it is at hand, let us have it all."

"Lord Wilton, I pray you, sir—"

"Stop, stop, my dear boy—this is my business, and you must let me carry it through to suit myself," interrupted Wilton, as Maxwell, all agitated and trembling, attempted to gain an explanation of the strange scene. Then turning to Paul, he continued:

"Now, Paul, bring us that bundle."

Had the old boatswain been ordered to level a gun upon his country's enemy, he could not have moved quicker to obey the order.

"Stop—don't untie it yet," uttered Wilton, as Paul returned with the bundle and began to unloosen the cord that bound it. "Hector, can you describe the kind of dresses which the child had when it left England?"

"Yes, sir, I think I can. But then, you know, it had such a lot of them, sir. There was no less than twenty frocks."

"But at sea, and especially in a storm, the child would have naturally had on its warmest clothing, Hector," intimated Wilton.

"Sure enough it would," returned the woman, and then clapping her hands in the joyousness of a lucky thought, she continued:

"All the woollen and flannel clothes that my lady had made for the babe I made myself, and I worked, with fine blue silk, the little fellow's first name on every one of them."

"And what was that name?"

"Osmond, sir."

"Just like a si'nal-book!" shouted old Paul, as he tore open the bundle and exhibited the clothes, which for nineteen years he had kept so faithfully. "I obeyed orders as far as I could, an' for 'tother name I give 'im the old admiral's. There 'tis—see it?"

As the old sailor spoke, he pointed out to Lord Wilton the simple name, "*Osmond*," upon the Scotch frock, and also upon two flannel under-garments.

"An' here's the strip o' cloth as Max., was lashed to the yard with," the old sailor continued, as he took out a long strip of cashmere stuff, which was knotted in the middle, and had a silver eye-hook upon one end.

"That was a piece of my lady's dress, I know," exclaimed Hestor, as she took the cloth and examined it. "It was one that her—"

"Never mind that, Hestor," interrupted Lord Wilton, and then turning to Mr. Marmaduke, he continued:

"Godfrey, mortal man could ask no more than this."

"Most assuredly not," returned Marmaduke.

"And you are satisfied?" continued Wilton.

"Satisfied? Why, my dear Wilton, I have been satisfied since first I placed my eyes upon the young man's countenance," said the old gentleman. "When he was but a day old his own mother was not more sure of his identity than I am at the present moment."

As Marmaduke closed, Lord Wilton arose from his seat, and taking the young lieutenant by the hand, he said, while the unfeigned joy of his heart was pictured upon his countenance:

"Mr. Maxwell, you must ere this have arrived at a conclusion of what we have in hand. When you were at my hotel in Windsor, your countenance told me that it was not impossible that I might fathom a secret that was hidden to you. St. Moorey's account of your early life placed my curiosity upon the *qui vive*, and when I heard from Paul all the particulars of your entrance upon his care I was sure that I knew your true birth and parentage, and now, my dear boy, I may give to you, without fear of disappointment, the joy of knowing that you are no longer the unknown, ocean-rocked foundling, but that you have a family name in England of which no man need be ashamed."

"And who, *who*, sir, were my parents?"

uttered Maxwell, trembling at every joint beneath the excitement of this astounding relation.

"You must pardon me for the present," Wilton returned; "but not many days shall roll over your head, ere you know it all."

"No, no, my lord," urged Maxwell, with his hand still trembling upon Wilton's arm, "do not keep me in suspense. O, I may surely know my father's name."

"Maxwell," said his lordship, in an earnest tone, "are you afraid to trust my judgment?"

"O, no sir—but I would—"

"One moment," interrupted Wilton. "I assure you, my young friend, that it is for your own benefit that I postpone this communication, and when all is explained, you will not wonder at it. Mr. Marmaduke has much to do with your affairs, and I have paid you this visit at the present time because he would be assured of your identity ere he moved in other matters that demand his immediate attention. And now, as those matters press upon our time, we must bid you a short adieu. You shall hear from me either to-day or to-morrow."

Maxwell would have spoken, but he knew not what to say. Godfrey Marmaduke grasped him by the hand, and bade him a hearty God's blessing, but even then he returned no answer, and when the door closed upon the retiring party, he sank back into his chair and gazed into the features of old Paul.

"An' shall we have to part company, Max?" uttered the old man, while his lip trembled, and his eyes glistened with a swelling tear-drop.

"Not on earth, Paul."

"Then, I'm still happy. But if they should take you away from me, Max., I shouldn't care how soon my old timbers were sunk in the ocean. My life would be of no use to me then."

Maxwell grasped old Paul's hand, and for a time he almost forgot the startling intelligence he had just received, in the noble love he possessed in the bosom of Paul Marline.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### AN IMPORTANT CAPTURE.

THE afternoon was drawing towards its close, and the Lady Rosalind Hubert sat by one of the front windows of her now desolate mansion, gazing abstractedly upon the passers-by. She looked paler than when we saw her last, for though friends had given her hope, yet her anxiety was constantly preying upon her. Thus she sat when a door of the apartment was opened, but even then she would not have turned from her gaze had not her name been pronounced by a voice which she recognized as her uncle's. With a cold shudder she turned her head, and noticed that her uncle was accompanied by a stranger.

"Rosalind," said Sir Philip, as he led the stranger forward, "I have the pleasure of introducing to your acquaintance an old friend of mine—Mr. Morgan Lucival."

Rosalind arose from her seat, and under the impulse of her natural politeness she extended her hand to the stranger, but as she met the keen flash of his dark eye, she could not but shrink instinctively from its basilisk-like power. She knew not that Mr. Lucival bore another

name—she knew not that she stood in the presence of Bunk Walland, but she *did* know that she would not trust the man before her.

"I take the more pleasure in introducing Mr. Lucival to you, my dear niece," continued Sir Philip, as his whiskered friend had exhausted his vocabulary of flattery, "because he is to be our travelling companion."

"Our travelling companion!" iterated Rosalind. "And whither?"

"To India, my dear," returned the baronet, with an almost demoniac smile.

"To India, sir! And are you to return so soon?" uttered the lady, while a strange light began to gather in her eyes.

"So soon, my dear," Sir Philip answered, "that the dawning of another week will see us upon the blue water. Our ship has already been cleared, and now lies at Gravesend awaiting her passengers."

"You leave your guardianship early, my uncle."

Rosalind pronounced this with as much calmness as she could command, but yet her eyes

fell before the gleam of the baronet's look, and after a moment's hesitation, Sir Philip said:

"I shall not prove unfaithful to the pledge I gave my brother. I shall not leave his only child behind me."

"Do you mean, Sir Philip, that I am to accompany you to India?"

"Most assuredly I do, Rosalind."

"Then," uttered the fair girl, while she strove hard to command the energy of her pride, "you will be disappointed in your calculations, for I shall not leave England."

"Be not too sure of that, lady," returned the baronet, with one of those self-confident looks that mark the successful villain. "I have been somewhat more expeditious in my arrangements than you imagine. This house, with all its accompaniments, is already spoken for, and at any moment I can receive the cash or East India stock in exchange. The other property is also under the care of those who will be faithful to our interests—so nothing now remains but for me to call upon my attorney and have the deeds of this property drawn up, and for you to make your arrangements as soon as possible. You probably understand me?"

"I understand what you say, Sir Philip, but you shall not thus drag me from my native land," Rosalind replied. "What you may do with my property is of little moment now, but you cannot dispose of me thus at your will. I have friends in London who are both able and willing to protect me."

"Ay, lady," the baronet uttered, while a sarcastic expression overspread his features, "I well know that you have friends who are *willing* to trample upon the wishes of your father, and I will not stop to point out the selfish *motives* which actuate them, but that they are *able* to defeat my will is not true. I shall depart for India in three days at the farthest, and, Rosalind, you will accompany me. I know who are your pretended friends, and as a source of consolation I may tell you that it is their unwarrantable intervention and meddling that has led me to hasten my departure."

Rosalind looked up into the face of her uncle

with a proud and flashing eye, for these base allusions to her friends had stirred up her soul more than would have aspersions against herself, and in a firm tone she said:

"Sir Philip, you may please yourself by maligning those who would befriend me, but let me assure you that under the eye of a just God your villainous fabric will surely fall to the ground. I will own that I have feared you, as the innocent child may fear the deadly viper, but I will not yet give up in despair. Though you be my father's brother, yet England will have one villain the less within her borders when you leave her soil."

"Egad," ejaculated Mr. Morgan Lucival, elevating his eyebrows, and gazing with a sort of coarse, sensual admiration upon the varying features of the proud girl, "demme if I don't admire your courage, my sweet lady. Really, Sir Philip, you are *too* severe, 'pon my honor you are. Ladies are not to be conquered in that way. Their tender hearts are not so strong as ours, and from us they should receive *love* rather than harshness."

This interposition of Mr. Lucival's had the effect of preventing an angry reply that was upon the baronet's lips, and after casting upon his niece a look that chilled her to the very soul, he said:

"You know not what it is, Mr. Lucival, to be the guardian of a stubborn girl. However, I must leave you for the present to make yourself comfortable as best you may, for this is the hour that I promised to call upon my attorney for the purpose of arranging the schedule of the property, and I trust, Rosalind," he continued, turning to the lady, "that you will at least have politeness enough to treat my guest with propriety. I shall return ere long."

As Sir Philip spoke, he turned to Lucival, and after whispering a hurried sentence in his ear he left the apartment.

Rosalind Hubert knew hardly how to act, as she found herself thus left alone with Lucival. Her first impulse was to leave the room, but she felt that such a movement might be uncalled for, and so she concluded to remain and suffer

for a while his disagreeable company, trusting that ere long an excuse would present itself for her leaving the gentleman to himself. For some time, Mr. Lucival turned his remarks upon the passing events of the day, but at length he seemed to gain a sort of assurance from his half-hour's acquaintance, and seating himself upon the sofa, by Rosalind's side, he said:

"I trust, my dear lady, that you will not persist in refusing to accompany us to India, for really I have set my heart upon the pleasure of your society. Ah, do not turn away from me, Rosalind, for I have already learned to look upon you as one whom I might dare to love."

"Sir!" exclaimed Rosalind, with almost breathless indignation, shrinking away from the man who thus insulted her feelings.

"Ah, lady," returned Lucival, in a sneaking, hypocritical tone, "you may think this sudden avowal strange, but your uncle has given me hopes of possessing you. He has even pledged his honor—"

"His honor!" uttered the fair girl, with utter disdain. "If you are one of his kith, sir, you well know how much dependence is to be placed upon such *honor*. And now, sir, if you lay claim to the least particle of that virtue, you will insult me no more with such language."

"Ah, dear Rosalind, do not thus break my heart. Do not thus crush every hope of happiness I possess. Ah, cruel lady, do smile upon me."

Rosalind cast upon the speaker a look of flashing indignation and scorn, but her feelings were too much excited to admit of her speaking, and with a sudden start she turned to leave the room.

"Surely, lady, you will not leave me thus?"

"Do not detain me, sir."

"No, no, sweet girl, I cannot lose you thus," Lucival exclaimed, as he sprang forward and caught Rosalind by the arm. "You must make me happy by your presence, even if you cannot return my love. Your uncle has promised me your hand, and thus I claim it."

"Take your hands from my arm, sir," shrieked the poor girl; as she struggled in the grasp of the comparatively powerful man.

"No, no, dear one, not unless you promise to remain quietly by my side," replied the heartless villain, as he drew the fair form back upon the sofa.

"Let me go, sir, or I shall scream for help! unhand me, villain, I say, unhand me!"

The poor girl struggled in vain to free herself from the scoundrel's grip, and already her arm began to pain beneath his vice-like hold.

"'Pon my honor," uttered Lucival, as he threw his right arm across her shoulders, "your anger makes you more beautiful than ever. I declare, I must snatch one kiss from those ruby lips."

As he spoke he drew the struggling girl still nearer, and as his breath struck upon her fair brow she gave one more effort, and uttered a sharp, quick cry. Neither of them had heard the opening of the outer door, for while the villain was too intent upon his purpose of retaining the girl, she was too excited to know anything save that she was struggling to free herself from the grip of the monster who held her.

"You need not scream, my pretty one, for nobody will hear you."

"But some one *has* heard her, thou murderous villain!" exclaimed a voice at the door.

Lucival started to his feet at the sound, and found himself face to face with Osmond Maxwell. The young lieutenant cast one look upon the villain, and seemed about to strike him, but he hesitated in laying his hands upon one so despicable. There was one who followed the youth, however, that had no such delicacy, for while yet Maxwell nervously hesitated, old Paul sprang forward, and with one blow of his powerful fist he felled the scoundrel to the floor, and at the same moment, Rosalind Hubert fell half fainting into her lover's arms. She spoke not, but in silence she wept over her delivery, and clung more closely to the noble youth who supported her.

"So much for Mr. Bunk Walland!" uttered

Paul, still standing with his fists clenched, while his right foot rested upon the breast of the fallen villain.

"Bunk Walland!" uttered Rosalind, in a faint, shrieking tone, as she shrinkingly gazed upon the prostrate villain. "O, Osmond, that cannot be the man who has attempted to murder both you and Paul!"

"Look up, dearest Rosalind," tenderly returned the youth, as he placed his hand upon her fair brow. "Do not tremble thus, for he can harm us no more."

"But O, tell me, Osmond, is that the man who would have murdered *you*?"

"Yes, Rosalind—but let that trouble you no more."

"O, heavens! and *he* my uncle's friend! What mystery—what horrible meaning, bath this!"

"By all the spirits of darkness, 'tis *Osmond Maxwell*!" at this moment gasped Walland, who had risen to a sitting posture, and been regarding the young man with starting eyes. "O, curses light upon their lubberly heads for this! Could they not have sunk the viper in the sea!"

"No, no, Mister Bunk Walland, Max. wan't born for that," uttered Paul, while he placed his foot again upon his lap to keep him down. "Did ye think I didn't know ye, yer

bloody willain? Now git up, for we've got some chaps outside 'at would like to scrape your acquaintance."

As the old boatswain spoke, he placed his golden whistle to his lips and blew a sharp call, and then turning to Rosalind, he said:

"I must keep Mister Walland company for a little while, but afore I go, Miss Rosalind, tell me 'f the willain has hurt ye?"

"No, no, my kind, faithful friend," uttered the fair girl, as she gazed into the old man's face with a look of beaming gratitude. "Thank God, I am free from harm."

At this moment the door of the apartment was opened, and half a dozen policemen entered.

"This is the willain, gentlemen," uttered Paul, as he seized Bunk Walland by the collar and dragged him forward.

The villain struggled and swore as the officers laid hold upon him, but his efforts for escape were in vain, and at length, finding that his struggles and his oaths were alike useless, he settled into a sullen silence, and having been placed in a coach, which stood in waiting at a short distance from the house, he was driven off towards the prison.

Half an hour later, Mr. Bunk Walland, *alias* Mr. Morgan Lucival, was fully committed on the charge of murder.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE HIGHWAY ROBBERY.

HERE, tremble no more, Rosalind.

Look up now, and be happy. The villain has gone, and thus one step is taken towards your redemption. Smile, dearest, for friends are about you."

Thus urged young Maxwell, as he held one fair hand in his, and gazed tenderly into the face of her he loved.

"There are smiles on my heart, Osmond," Rosalind returned, with a pensive frankness; "but they may not be *imagined* on my face at will. The scenes I have lately witnessed all conspire to give my features to the imaging of melancholy thought. You, Osmond, may not know the deep, bitter, burning shame that sears even now my soul. That my own uncle—my father's only brother, should thus be a villain—a blot upon God's footstool, is a source of painful anguish, and though I have much to hope for yet, I have much for which to mourn, and much to fear."

"No, not to *fear*, dearest."

"Yes, Osmond, I have much to fear."

"But the property is safe from his grasp.

He cannot sell your birth-right—your homestead."

"So Lord Wilton assured me," returned Rosalind; and then, as a renewed tremor shook her frame, she continued: "But that is nothing compared with the fate he has in store for *me*. Wilton told me that a third party had a claim upon my father's property, but, alas! none can claim me from my guardian, and he swears that I shall accompany him to India."

"Rosalind," uttered the youth, while a joyful light beamed forth from his bright eyes, "let not that threat make heavy your heart. Not an hour before I came here I left a man who swears that you shall *not* leave England."

"Ah, Osmond, but has he the power to make good his pledge?"

"So says England, dearest."

"Who, who is he?" uttered Rosalind, gazing tremblingly into her companion's face.

"The English king!"

"Then—then I am safe. If King George be my friend, I may despair no more. O, bless thee, dear Osmond, for this assurance."



As the fair girl spoke, she pillowed her head upon the bosom of the man she loved, and her soul sent forth its speechless gratitude in a burst of happy tears. Her worst fears had gone from her bosom.

Maxwell had intended to have informed Rosalind of the true character of her uncle—to have told her of his connection with Lucival, now known to her as Bunk Walland, and of his character as a pirate, but as he now gazed upon her tear-wet face, upon which the gleams of hope were beginning to brighten, he could not bear to pain her sensitive heart with the recital. He would not at present cast a shade over the lamp he had just lighted in her bosom, and he spoke to her only of his love. That was a happy theme, and beneath its influence the fair girl's face was beginning to bloom with the smiling rose-tints of joyousness, when she was startled by a footfall in the hall.

"'Tis my uncle's step," uttered Rosalind, as she instinctively shrank closer to her lover.

"Let him come, Rosalind," replied Maxwell, "and bear you with him yet a short time longer; but do not fear him."

Hardly had the youth spoken, when Sir Philip entered the room.

"Lucival, the young—"

The baronet was in a frenzy of excitement as he entered—his eyes were starting about wildly in his head, and in one hand he clutched a copy of a morning's Gazette. He had spoken thus far when his eyes rested—not upon the man whom he had left an hour before, but upon Osmond Maxwell. His arms dropped at his side, and for a full minute he gazed upon the young officer, while his features changed first to a marble hue, then to a sudden flush, and lastly they assumed a livid, choking expression, as though the fountain of wrath within would literally burst its way out.

"Again in my path! Again standing within my light!" Sir Philip uttered, while the paper he held was torn in pieces by the nervous clutching of his hands.

"I am in the house of the Lady Rosalind Hubert," returned Maxwell, not at all affected by the baronet's manner.

"Thou liest, thou cast-away, thou homeless, nameless foundling!" Sir Philip gasped. "This house is mine!"

The rich blood mounted to the temples of the young lieutenant, the veins in his neck swelled, and with his hands clenched till the nails almost penetrated his flesh, he started to his feet. At that moment he would not have been answerable for the villain's life, but an angel hand pulled him back, and quickly calling the better powers to his aid he subdued the tiger in his bosom, and casting upon the man before him a look of ineffable scorn, he said:

"'Tis fortunate, Sir Philip, that your base remark was directed to one who would not so lower himself as to strike you. If such be your weapons of attack, then no honest Englishman need fear you."

"By all the saints in heaven, young braggart, but *thou* shalt learn to fear me. And you, Lady Rosalind, shall atone for this. Now go to your room.——But stay! First tell me, where Mr. Lucival has gone?"

"I can inform you, sir," said Maxwell, in a calm, unruffled tone. "Some of his particular friends called for him during your absence, and he accompanied them out."

Sir Philip trembled violently as he heard this answer, nor was the keen glance that accompanied it at all calculated to allay his fears, and without speaking, he turned away to hide an emotion which he had not the power to conceal.

"I must leave you now, Rosalind," the young man whispered, "for my presence here longer would be of no use, and might lead to still more unpleasant results; but fear not." Then raising his voice, he continued, as he took his hat to depart:

"Adieu for the present, Rosalind. I shall see you again ere long. Adieu, Sir Philip."

"By heavens!" uttered the baronet, as the door closed upon the retiring form of the young man, "if he sees you again, he will do it on the morrow! Now go to your room and make your preparations, for, as I am a live man, you leave England in six-and-thirty hours!"

Rosalind awaited no second command, but

with a fleet step she left her uncle's presence and sought the quiet seclusion of her own apartment. There were no tears on her cheek now, for she feared the tyrant no longer. The assurance she had received was convincing to her mind, and with only one cloud to darken the stream of her happiness she sat down by her window and gazed off upon where the setting sun was gilding the horizon-borne clouds with its golden beams. Though all was so full of strong hope about her, yet she could not but feel a passing pang that her family name bore the blot of her uncle's base character.

As Maxwell stepped upon the marble slab that formed the door-stone of the house he had left, his attention was attracted by a villanous looking fellow who stood in a sort of hesitating mood upon the sidewalk. Said individual was dressed in a white felt hat, around which was bound a wide, black weed, a thin, short skirted coat, buttoned up to the throat, and a pair of black-and-white-striped pants.

The young man could not help scrutinizing the stranger rather closely, but his observation occupied only a moment, and then he stepped upon the sidewalk and started on his way. At the distance of a few rods, however, Maxwell cast his eyes once more towards the house, and saw the man who had excited his curiosity just entering Sir Philip's door. There was something curious about this, and feeling assured the stranger in the white hat was a polished villain, our hero naturally came to the conclusion that some new plan of evil was on foot.

"Max," said old Paul, after they had eaten their supper, "come, let's take a cruise around through the city. We've nothing else to do."

The young man readily assented to the proposal, and together they started. It was nine o'clock when they entered St. Giles. The atmosphere was pretty thoroughly impregnated with an eight-day fog, but yet the street lamps afforded ample light for safe guidance, and, conversing upon various topics, they had passed on through Holborn, Skinner, Newgate, Cheapside

and Cornhill, and were just entering Leadenhall-street, when Paul stopped suddenly, uttering, as he did so:

"D'ye hear that, Max?"

"What was it, Paul?"

"Why, I thought I heard somebody groan in'."

"Groaning? Where?"

"Hark!"

Maxwell stopped to listen, and in a moment a deep groan, apparently proceeding from a narrow, dark archway that led into the right, was distinctly heard.

"There, Max! didn't ye hear that?"

"Yes, I did, Paul. There's some one in distress there."

"In course there is, an' we'll just heave-to an' see who it is."

In accordance with this idea the two friends turned and entered the archway, but it was so dark and slippery that they had much difficulty in groping their way along.

"Hallo! Anybody here?" exclaimed Paul, who began to think that they had better have a true course if possible.

A faint "yes" was heard to the left.

"I'm blowed 'f there aint another crook here somewheres," uttered Paul. "That voice come from out this way, Max."

By dint of considerable exertion, Paul succeeded in finding a narrow, low, sewer-like hole in the stone wall, and in a moment more he had grasped the shoulders of a man.

"I've found him, Max! Come an' lend me a hand, an' we'll haul 'im out o' this an' git 'im into the light."

The young man hastened to old Paul's aid with as much alacrity as the darkness would allow, and together they drew the man out from the archway, and turned his face towards the nearest street-lamp.

"Great God!" uttered Maxwell, as his eyes rested upon the pale features of the man he had rescued. "Godfrey Marmaduke!"

"Mr. Maxwell!" faintly uttered the old



gentleman, as he opened his eyes, and seemed to recognize the voice he had heard.

"Run to the next square, Paul, and bring that coach that stood there when we came along. Take no refusal from the driver," Maxwell said, as he stooped down and raised Marmaduke's head upon his lap.

Old Paul was but a few moments in obeying the order, and as the old gentleman was lifted into the coach, the driver received directions to proceed at once to Maxwell's hotel.

As soon at Marmaduke had been conveyed to a suitable apartment, a physician was sent for, and when he arrived, Paul accompanied him to the bed upon which the old gentleman lay.

"Are you hurt in any place but the head, sir?" asked the physician, as he laid his hand upon the patient's brow.

"No, sir, nothing to speak of," replied Marmaduke, who was already considerably recovered.

"The only pain you experience is in the head, is it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, gentlemen," said the physician, turning to Maxwell and Paul, "your friend is not seriously injured. He has received somewhat of a blow upon the back part of the head, but the skull is not fractured—only a jar upon the brain. You may keep his head well bathed in cold water, and I should advise that he take no stimulating beverage till the pain leaves his brain. He will need no further aid."

Our hero was not a little gratified by the result of the doctor's investigation, and in the course of an hour after he had left, Mr. Marmaduke was able to sit up—the pain was gone from his head, and he felt nearly well.

"Now, Mr. Marmaduke," said Maxwell, as the old gentleman had arisen and taken a seat in a large arm-chair, "can you explain how this affair happened?"

"Yes, my young friend," returned Marmaduke. "I had just passed the point where

Cornhill continues on into Leadenhall-street, when a man stepped up to my side and asked me if I had the time of day with me. I turned to see who it was that thus spoke, when the villain struck me upon the back of the head with a short, heavy club. I fell upon the pavement, and knew that I was dragged into a damp, dark hole, but there I lost myself. When I came to a consciousness of my situation, my first thought was of my pocket-book, and upon feeling for it I found it gone! I had not the power to drag myself out of the hole into which the villain had shoved me, and had you not come to my assistance as you did, I must have died there, for the air was so damp and fulsome that respiration had already become next to impossible."

"And your pocket-book, sir! Did it contain ought of importance?" asked Maxwell.

"All the notes and mortgages against the Colford estates, sir," returned Marmaduke.

"Did you see the villain who assaulted you, so that you would know him again?" the young man asked, with nervous anxiety.

"Yes—we were close by a lantern."

"Did he wear a white hat?"

"Yes."

"A yellow, close buttoned coat?"

"Yes."

"Black-and-white-striped pants?"

"Yes."

"Then," exclaimed Maxwell, "Sir Philip Hubert is at the bottom of it! for I saw this same villain enter his door just before nightfall this afternoon."

"So I am confident," returned Marmaduke, without betraying any surprise. "I saw Mr. Montfort in the early part of the evening, and he informed me that Sir Philip had by some means become acquainted with the fact of my possessing those documents; but I thought not he would be so expeditious in his movements."

"And will this avail him, sir? Will it thwart your aims upon the baronet?" uttered Maxwell, while a fearful tremor shook his frame.

"It will not save him from the hand of justice," the old gentleman returned, while his eyes flashed with a fierce light. "He little dreams of the retribution that is in store for him, or of the hand that shall arrest his guilty steps.—My head at this moment, begins to whirl again."

As Marmaduke spoke, he pressed his hand

upon his brow, and soon sought repose again upon his bed.

"I only need sleep," he said, "to overcome my weakness. On the morrow I shall claim your company."

Maxwell and Paul saw their old friend well cared for by the servants, and then they, too, retired to rest.

## CHAPTER XX.

## DISCLOSURE OF VILLANY.

ANOTHER sun had rolled over the metropolitan heart of England, and another night had begun to draw its curtain over the great city. Within one of the large apartments of the Colford mansion stood Sir Philip Hubert. There was a fierce, fiend-like exultation upon his countenance, and yet there was a cowardly fear trembling there, too. By his side stood a marble-topped table, upon which burned a waxen taper, into the white blaze of which he was gazing with a steady eye. In his hand he held a small package of papers, which he seemed to clutch as though they might jump from his grasp. At length he selected one of the documents, and slightly loosening its folds, he applied one of its corners to the blaze.

"Thus," he murmured to himself, as the blaze caught the paper and began to envelop the sheet in its destructive embrace, "do I destroy the only barrier they can interpose. Ah, Mr. Marmaduke, you should have kept this secret to yourself if you would profit by it. There! that cancels the mortgage upon *this* estate. Now, here is a note! and thus I

liquidate it! Plot on, Lord Wilton, and you, too, young Maxwell—but you'll be sharp-scented, indeed, if you track me now. Within an hour I shall have the money for this estate, besides four hundred thousand pounds for mortgages on the others, and then I bid adieu to London with Rosalind in my company. There!"

As the baronet spoke, the last paper had been reduced to ashes, and then turning to the bell-rope, he summoned one of the servants to his presence.

"Did you call, sir?" asked a waiter, opening the door, and looking in.

"Yes. I expect two or three gentlemen to call in the course of half an hour, and I wish you to show them at once into this room."

The servant signified his assent, and in a moment more the baronet was alone again.

With nervous strides, Sir Philip began to pace the room. He only awaited now the coming of his attorney, and one or two money lenders, to complete the arrangements for his departure, but even though his plans were thus nigh

to their consummation, yet he could not feel that all was safe. There was an invisible, an undefinable something, that seemed to stand in his path with an upraised, menacing finger. He had learned of Lucival's fate, but though he had no fears that that individual would expose him, yet the circumstance by no means tended to add much to the quietness of his mind.

"Ha!" he uttered, as the sharp jingle of the door-bell struck upon his ear. "That must be the attorney."

As he spoke, he moved towards the door, to be in readiness to receive his guests. Already was his body in position for a polite bow, when the door was swung back, but Sir Philip made not his bow. He started back towards the centre of the room, and ere he could fully comprehend the scene, Lord Wilton, Godfrey Marmaduke, Osmond Maxwell, and old Paul Marline had entered his presence.

"Gentlemen," uttered the baronet, trembling from head to foot, "to what am I indebted for this visit?"

"Only a small amount of business we have to transact, my dear sir," replied Lord Wilton. "We learned that you were about to leave England, and we desired that this matter might be settled previous to your departure. Mr. Marmaduke, this is the present holder of the property."

This last remark was made to Godfrey Marmaduke, and as the baronet heard the name he started and turned pale; but he knew that he was now placed where brazen impudence could alone avail him, and he determined, let come what would, not to be again moved to a betrayal of his fears, and commanding all the self-possession that laid within his control, he turned to Mr. Marmaduke, and said:

"If you have business, sir, a speedy transaction of it will accommodate me much. And, sir, I would ask if the presence of those two men (pointing to a sofa where Maxwell and Paul had seated themselves) is necessary to such transaction?"

"It may be, Sir Philip," returned Godfrey, as he fixed upon the baronet a keen, searching look.

Sir Philip came very nigh losing his presence of mind, as he met Marmaduke's gaze, but with a powerful effort he kept his countenance.

"And there is one other whose presence we need," said Lord Wilton. "The Lady Rosalind Hubert."

"She is engaged, sir, and cannot come," the baronet said, with much coolness.

"But as she is a party much interested in this business, her presence becomes absolutely necessary. Therefore we will trust to the lady's own judgment," replied Wilton, and as he spoke he laid his hand upon the bell-rope.

"Bid the Lady Rosalind wait upon Lord Wilton in this apartment," ordered his lordship, as a servant opened the door.

"Lord Wilton," exclaimed Sir Philip, while his face colored with anger, "your conduct is becoming unwarrantable. I am master here, sir."

"Then you should perform a master's duty, sir," coolly returned Wilton.

There was a glance in the keen eye of his lordship, and a tone of lofty command in his bearing, that made Sir Philip cower, and he returned no answer to the last remark. In a few moments Rosalind entered the room, and as she beheld the kind face of Lord Wilton, she sprang forward and grasped his hand. Then her eyes wandered to where sat Maxwell and Paul, and with a blushing, half-trembling smile, she gave them each her hand. Upon Paul she poured a heartfelt blessing, but to the youth she spoke not. The swimming light of her eyes, and the gentle trembling of her warm hand in his, was all he received.

"Rosalind," said Wilton, "this is Mr. Marmaduke, from Yorkshire, one of your father's earliest, oldest, and best friends."

"Then may he prove a friend to the daughter," uttered Rosalind, as with a moistened eye she gave him her hand.

Godfrey Marmaduke said not a word in reply, but the grasp he gave that small, white hand had his whole heart in it.

"Now, gentlemen," uttered Sir Philip, "if you have finished your childish pantomime, I

trust you will at once to this most extraordinary business that must needs be transacted by so many wise heads."

"Take a seat, Sir Philip," said Marmaduke, as he drew a chair for himself. "Be seated, sir, and I will proceed."

From an almost imperceptible motion of Maxwell's Rosalind had seated herself upon the sofa by her lover's side. Wilton had taken a seat by the side of Marmaduke near the table, and with a nervous, anxious, uneasy movement, the baronet had drawn a chair up to the opposite side of the same table.

"Now, Sir Philip," commenced Godfrey Marmaduke, in a clear, firm tone, "I will open to you my business. Yesterday, sir, I held notes and mortgages to the amount of several hundred thousand pounds on the estates of Lord Colford, but now they are lost."

"Very likely," returned Sir Philip, in a sarcastic tone.

"Yes, sir, and it is true," continued Marmaduke. "I was robbed of them last night by some villain, who doubtless thought he had made a heavy lift in my document-stuffed pocket-book. But, of course, sir, their temporary absence will make but little difference in the arrangement of my business, for I have no doubt that I can regain them again. Now, sir, having seen that this estate was advertised for sale, and having also learned that you contemplated either disposing of the other estates, or mortgaging them, I called to request that you will for the present postpone your contemplated arrangements, for I can ill afford to lose the money I have loaned on this same property."

"Really, Mr. Marmaduke, this is a most remarkable piece of business," said Sir Philip. "The written instructions I received from Lord Colford make no mention of such bonds, and you must think me foolish indeed, if you aim to palm off such a flimsy, self-evident fraud upon me. No, sir—I shall wait no man's pleasure. If you have notes against Lord Colford, or mortgages upon the estates, you can present them; otherwise I shall pursue the even tenor of my way."

"But, my dear sir, you would not rob me of my all?" urged Marmaduke, as he bent a flashing glance upon the baronet.

"No, sir," replied Sir Philip, as he searched in the eyes thus bent upon him, as if for the purpose of translating some strange expression he caught there—"nor would I be robbed of what has been trusted to my keeping."

"Let me tell you how I came by those papers, and then you will believe me, sir," earnestly uttered the old gentleman.

"No, sir," returned the baronet, as he nervously consulted his watch; "I want none of your stories. My time is otherwise engaged at present; but if, at any time, you can present your claims in a tangible form, I will give them my consideration."

"But I must tell you the story, at all events," said the old gentleman, in a calm tone.

"I will not hear it, sir."

"Yes, you will," rejoined Marmaduke, while a peculiar twinkle played in his eyes.

Sir Philip started—moved his lips as if to speak—again gazed into the eyes before him, and then sank back into his chair, with a slight pallor overspreading his features.

"Many years ago, sir, before my hair had begun to turn beneath the frost of age, my only brother, younger than myself, purchased some shares in the East India Company's stock, and went out to India to seek his fortune. For many years all went on prosperously with him, but at length he fell under the evil eye of a reckless, wicked, spendthrift baronet, who had left England to escape his creditors. That baronet's name was *Guy Kolyvan*."

Sir Philip started to his feet at the words he had heard, but in a moment he sank trembling into his seat, murmuring, with the greatest difficulty, as he did so:

"Go on, sir. I have no doubt you will make a fine story of it."

"Well, sir," continued Marmaduke, "this Guy Kolyvan bore so near a resemblance, in his personal appearance, to my brother, that he was often mistaken for him, and at length he began to turn the remarkable similarity of fea-

tures to his own account. My brother had business on the borders of Bootan, and the villain Kolyvan followed close upon his heels, committing thefts, robberies, and even murder, on the way, and wherever he stopped he made himself known under my brother's name. For some of these wicked deeds my poor brother was apprehended. Persons whom Kolyvan had robbed, swore to my brother's identity as the robber, but by the testimony of his companions on the journey, he was enabled to prove an alibi in every case.

"Yet still this villain hung upon my brother's rear, boldly assumed his name, and under its cover carried on his deeds of blackness. Once that brother fitted out a cargo for Canton, and no sooner had he gone, than this villain Kolyvan took a brig and ran down on the coast upon a piratical expedition, and ere many weeks my brother's name was handed about branded as a pirate! and when he returned to Calcutta, several merchant captains swore that *he* had robbed them upon the high seas! But here again he proved an alibi, and was cleared, but such things could not long be borne, for people began to fear him, and ere long, a man whose heart knew no guile was shunned by all!

"Long trouble at length began to wear upon him, and, to add to his misery, his clerks left him. Here the villanous leech conceived the plan of finally robbing his victim, and to this end he contrived to foist into my brother's service a clerk as villanous as himself. This clerk was an expert penman, and was, moreover, conversant with many of the Hindoo tongues, and for a time my brother thought he had gained quite an acquisition in his services, and, after all, so artfully did this clerk conduct the operation, that his employer had no idea of the vast sums of money he was monthly losing. My brother had removed to a small estate on the river above Midnapour, and there he thought to escape the rumor that so harassed him.

"Thus passed several months, and at length, having been taken sick, and fearing that he might not live, my brother sent for me to come on and attend to the settlement of his affairs.

When I reached him he was partially recovering from his fever, but in less than a week I was taken down, and for several weeks I did not expect to survive. During that time, as my brother somewhat improved, I had my will drawn up, and also an instrument giving into his power the settlement of all my affairs in England, and received his promise that in case I should die he would return home and take my place. This clerk, Guy Kolyvan's tool and accomplice, drew up these writings, and left them in such a manner that convenient interpolations might be fraudulently made without detection. They were signed and sealed in due order, and placed in my brother's hands. But here the wheel of fortune turned. My brother received a severe relapse, and I recovered. That brother died, but the papers I had given him were nowhere to be found. I called upon the villanous clerk, but he swore he knew nothing of them. The next day after my brother died, I saw Sir Guy Kolyvan for the first time, and for a moment I thought I really beheld the spirit of the departed, but in an unguarded moment, he betrayed himself in a passing remark to the clerk, and then, like the crashing of a thunderbolt, the whole truth flashed upon my mind! I knew that I stood in the presence of the villain who had for so long a time been leeching out the very life-blood of my poor brother!

"That night, Guy Kolyvan struck me upon the head with a heavy club, and threw my senseless body into the river, thinking, no doubt, that the swarming crocodiles would instantly devour me. But God ordered it otherwise. The natives drew me to the shore, and I recovered, and at once started for Calcutta. There I learned that the news of my own death had been sent to England, and that *my brother had gone on, in the frigate Dunkirk, to settle my affairs, with full powers from me!* Of course, I saw the plot at a glance. Sir Guy Kolyvan's resemblance to the real deceased would easily pass him, and by means of the clerk he had received all the necessary intelligence relating to my family affairs. My sickness had so altered

me in feature, by removing my hair and sinking my cheeks, and the sun of India had so burned me, that I was not recognized, and fearing that if I made myself known, the intelligence might reach England before me, I kept it a secret, and in less than a week after the Dunkirk sailed, I was on my way home, and in two days after the frigate's anchor was dropped in Portsmouth I landed at Gravesend.

"Now, thou double-dyed—thou heartless,

creeping, blood-thirsty villain, dost know me!" cried the excited speaker, as he leaped from his chair and caught the baronet by the arm. "Look into these pale, wan features, and say if ye know my business now! Here, before God and man, I tear the mask from your face—I wrench from you my poor brother's name—and I give you—*Sir Guy Kolyvan* that ye are—to the hands of the law you have so long outraged!"

## CHAPTER XXI.

### CONCLUSION.

**DURING** the strange recital that had just been brought to a close, the guilty man had at times started up from his seat in a startling, maddened frenzy, but as often had he fallen beneath the scorching glance that was fixed upon him; but as the narrator now stood above him, with one hand upon his shrinking arm, his coward heart sank within him, his fortitude gave way, and with all his crimes hissing and scorching beneath the keen fire of exposure, he abjectly uttered:

"I've played my game! my trumps have deceived me! Lord Colford, *you've* beaten, and I know my life is the stake I've lost!"

At that moment, Walter Hubert, Lord of Colford, felt a trembling hand upon his arm, as he turned he met the gaze of his child. She had crept to his side—she had pillowed her head upon his bosom, and a joy, such as might have made an angel envious, thrilled through her as she fully realized that she was once again within the embrace of her father!

Rosalind still leaning upon his left arm, Lord Colford waved his hand toward old Paul,

and in a moment mere a dozen of the secret police entered the room.

"Here is your prisoner!" Colford said, and then turning to the fallen villain, he continued:

"And now, Guy Kolyvan, your game is truly up. Bunk Walland, or, as you introduced him to your service, Morgan Lucival, is already in prison. I seek not to exult in your downfall, but God knows that when you expiate your crimes upon the gallows, England will be rid of one of the most subtle, heartless villains, that ever blotted her soil."

"There, my dear child, look up now, and be happy," Lord Colford said, as the door closed upon the retiring forms of the police. "The clouds have swept past, and once more the sun rises upon your way. But here is another who is still in the dark," continued his lordship, as he led Rosalind to a seat, and then took the young lieutenant by the hand. "Osmond, I may now tell thee that which Wilton withheld, but had he told you then, you would have suffered a needless anxiety, for I was not prepared to reveal my own secret when you urged him to

tell you your parentage. My dear boy, you are the true and only child of Sir Philip Hubert. He was a noble man, and I believe he has left to England a noble son!"

"You, you then are my uncle!" uttered Osmond, as he tremblingly gazed into Colford's face.

"Yes, my boy, and I am glad of it. In a word I can tell it all. In three months after my poor brother arrived in India he went on for his wife. She, with her infant son, embarked in the *Ajax*. The ship was lost, and from that moment until a short time before his death, Sir Philip knew nothing of the fate of his wife and child. In Calcutta, however, I heard from one of the officers the particulars of the finding of a child many years before in the Bay of Bengal by one of the English sailors, and also, that the child was alive. These facts I communicated to my brother, and he died with the firm belief that his child *lived*! He left his blessing and the whole of his vast property for that child, if he was ever found, and even the plotting of Sir Guy Kolyvan has not touched your father's estates or stocks. That part of the plunder the villain had reserved for his return, when, in the character he had assumed, he expected easily to possess himself of it. One thing more I must explain, and then have done with them. The draft I sent on to you, my daughter, was done in obedience of the mandate I then explained. It was a presentiment so forcible that I could not resist it, and under the same influence, I had these notes and mortgages drawn up, payable to Godfrey Marmaduke, a man of my own imagination, intending to have forwarded them, together with an explanation, to my banker, but I did not send them, though I kept them in my possession."

"O," murmured Osmond, as he clasped his hands and looked towards heaven, "if the spirits in yonder world ever receive happiness from the deeds of earth, may my father's spirit know that his son will never dishonor the name he has left behind him!"

"Nobly spoken, my boy!" exclaimed Lord Colford, as he again grasped the young man's hand. Then turning to his daughter, he said:

"Come hither, Rosalind. There, my children, a power which earth may not check has united your hearts, and I, with a joy which can only be equalled by your own, thus unite your hands. Be happy, both!"

"And what shall make us unhappy, dearest?" exclaimed Osmond, as he clasped the fair girl to his bosom.

"Nothing, nothing!" murmured Rosalind, as she gazed up and met the flood of tender love that beamed from the eyes that rested upon her.

"Amen!" broke from the lips of Lord Colford, as he stepped forward and pressed the hands of the happy couple.

"Ah, my lord," returned Osmond, "how much of this do I not owe to you?"

"But very little, my boy," said Wilton. "Here is the one to whom you owe all." As he spoke, he laid his hand upon the head of Paul Marline.

"O, my father, my father!" exclaimed the youth, as he let go the hand of Lord Colford, and laid his head upon the shoulder of the faithful old sailor. "You are indeed a father to me, and as such shall I always love you. You have protected me thus far over life's ocean, but now I will protect you. I am rich and happy, and, Paul, you shall never leave me more. The same roof shall cover us while we live on earth."

"Then I am happy, too!" uttered old Paul, and wiping the streaming tears from his rough cheeks, he continued:

"O, how wise and good is God! 'at he has made this bright sun to sweep away the clouds of the storm an' the tempest. Wi' God at the helm, old Paul Marline and his friends need never fear for rocks or quicksands, for he never steers falsely!"

THE END.