

FICTION

Oliver Optic

Work and Win

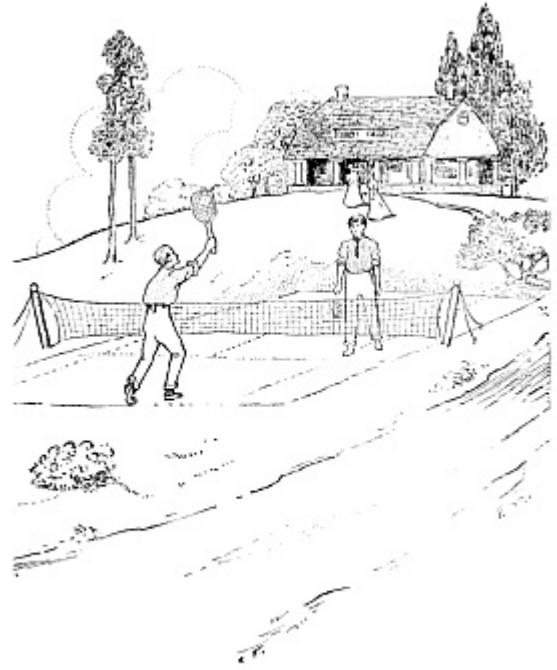
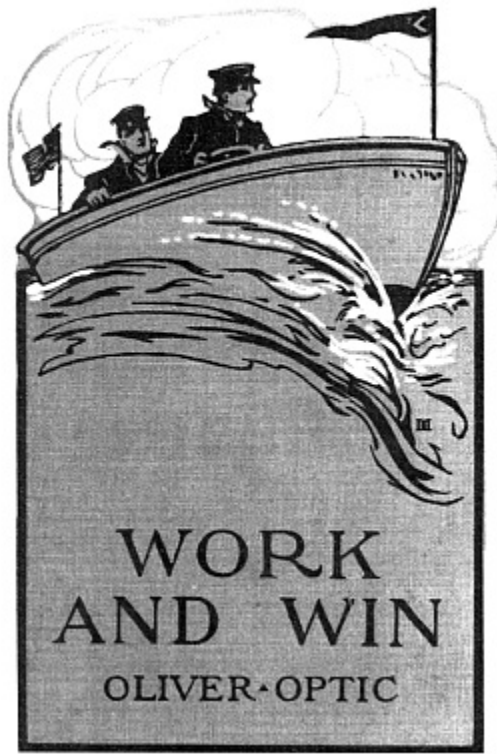
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FICTION





William T. Adams

WORK AND WIN

OR

NODDY NEWMAN ON A CRUISE

A Story for Young People

BY

OLIVER OPTIC

AUTHOR OF "BOAT CLUB," "ALL ABOARD," "NOW
OR NEVER," ETC., ETC.

NEW YORK
HURST & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

To

MY YOUNG FRIEND,

Edward C. Bellows,

THIS BOOK

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

IN the preparation of this volume, the author has had in his mind the intention to delineate the progress of a boy whose education had been neglected, and whose moral attributes were of the lowest order, from vice and indifference to the development of a high moral and religious principle in the heart, which is the rule and guide of a pure and true life.

The incidents which make up the story are introduced to illustrate the moral status of the youth, at the beginning, and to develop the influences from which proceeded a gentle and Christian character. Mollie, the captain's daughter, whose simple purity of life, whose filial devotion to an erring parent, and whose trusting faith in the hour of adversity, won the love and respect of Noddy, was not the least of these influences. If the writer has not "moralized," it was because the true life, seen with the living eye, is better than any precept, however skilfully it may be dressed by the rhetorical genius of the moralist.

Once more the author takes pleasure in acknowledging the kindness of his young friends, who have so favorably received his former works; and he hopes that "WORK AND WIN," the fourth of the Woodville Stories, will have as pleasant a welcome as its predecessors.

WILLIAM T. ADAMS.

HARRISON SQUARE, MASS.,
November 10, 1865.

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WORK AND WIN;
OR,
NODDY NEWMAN ON A CRUISE.

CHAPTER I.

THE MISCHIEF-MAKERS.

"HERE, Noddy Newman! you haven't washed out the boat-house yet," said Ben, the boatman, as the young gentleman thus addressed was ambling down towards the river.

"Hang the boat-house!" exclaimed Noddy, impatiently, as he stopped short in his walk, and seemed to be in doubt whether he should return or continue on his way.

"You know what Miss Bertha says--don't you?"

"Yes, I know what she says," added Noddy, rubbing his head, as though he were trying to reconcile his present purpose, whatever it was, with the loyalty he owed to Bertha. "I suppose it don't make much difference to her whether I wash out the boat-house now or by and by."

"I don't know anything about that, my boy," said the old man. "Miss Bertha told me to find some regular work for you to do every day. I found it, and she say you must wash out the boat-house every morning before nine o'clock. If you don't do it, I shall report you to her. That's all I've got to say about it."

"I calculate to wash out the boat-house."

"You've only half an hour to do it in, then. You've not only got to wash it out every morning, but you have got to do it before nine o'clock. Them's the orders. I always obey orders. If Miss Bertha should tell me to tie you up, and give you as big a licking as you deserve, I should do it."

"No, you wouldn't."

"I haven't got any such orders, mind ye, Noddy; so we won't dispute about that. Now, go and wash out the boat-house like a good boy, and don't make any fuss about it."

Noddy deliberated a few moments more. He evidently disliked the job, or did not wish to do it at that particular time; but Miss Bertha's influence was all-powerful; and though he would have fought, tooth and nail, against anything like compulsion on the part of Ben, he could not resist the potent spell which the name of his young mistress cast upon him.

"Hang the old boat-house!" exclaimed he, as he stamped his foot upon the ground, and then slowly retraced his steps towards the boatman.

"Hang it, if you like, Noddy, but wash it out first," said Ben, with a smile, as he observed the effect of the charm he had used to induce the wayward youth to do his duty.

"I wish the boat-house was burned up!" added Noddy, petulantly.

"No, you don't."

"Yes, I do. I wish it was a pile of ashes at this moment."

"Don't say so, Noddy. What would Miss Bertha think to hear you talk like that?"

"You can tell her, if you like," replied Noddy, as he rushed desperately into the boat-house to do the disagreeable job.

Noddy Newman was an orphan; and no one in the vicinity of Woodville even knew what his real name was. Two years before, Bertha Grant had taken the most tender care of him, after an accident by which he had been severely injured. Previous to that time he had been a vagabond, roaming about the woods and the villages, sleeping in barns and out-buildings, and stealing his food when he could obtain it by no other means. Efforts had been made to commit him to the poorhouse; but he had cunningly avoided being captured, and retained his freedom until the accident placed him under the influence of Bertha Grant, who had before vainly attempted to induce him to join her mission-school in the Glen.

Noddy had been two years at Woodville. He was neither a servant nor a member of the family, but occupied a half-way position, eating and sleeping with the men employed on the estate, but being the constant companion of Bertha, who was laboring to civilize and educate him. She had been partially successful in her philanthropic labors; for Noddy knew how to behave himself with propriety, and could read and write with tolerable facility. But books and literature

were not Noddy's *forte*, and he still retained an unhealthy relish for his early vagabond habits.

Like a great many other boys,—even like some of those who have been brought up judiciously and carefully,—Noddy was not very fond of work. He was bold and impulsive, and had not yet acquired any fixed ideas in regard to the objects of life. Bertha Grant had obtained a powerful influence over him, to which he was solely indebted for all the progress he had made in learning and the arts of civilized life. Wayward as he always had been, and as he still was, there was a spirit in him upon which to build a hope that something might yet be made of him, though this faith was in a great measure confined to Bertha and the old boatman.

He had a great many good qualities—enough, in the opinion of his gentle instructress, to redeem him from his besetting sins, which were neither few nor small. He was generous, which made him popular among those who were under no moral responsibility for his future welfare. He was bold and daring, and never hesitated to do anything which the nerve or muscle of a boy of fourteen could achieve. His feats of strength and daring, often performed from mere bravado, won the admiration of the thoughtless, and Noddy was regarded as a "character" by people who only wanted to be amused.

Noddy had reached an age when the future became an interesting problem to those who had labored to improve his manners and his morals. Mr. Grant had suggested to Bertha the propriety of having him bound as an apprentice to some steady mechanic; and, at the time of our story, she and her father were in search of such a person. The subject of this kind solicitude did not relish the idea of learning a trade, though he had not positively rebelled at the disposition which it was proposed to make of him.

He had always lived near the river; and during his residence at Woodville he had been employed, so far as he could be employed at all, about the boats. He was a kind of assistant to the boatman, though there was no need of such an official on the premises. For his own good, rather than for the labor he performed, he was required to do certain work about the boat-house, and in the boats when they were in use.

We could recite a great many scrapes, of which Noddy had been the hero, during the two years of his stay at Woodville; but such a recital would hardly be profitable to our readers, especially as the young man's subsequent career was not devoid of stirring incidents.

Noddy drew a bucket of water at the pier, and carried it into the boat-house. Ben, satisfied now that the work was actually in progress, left the pier, and walked up to the house to receive his morning instructions. He was hardly out of sight before Miss Fanny Grant presented herself at the door.

Miss Fanny was now a nice young lady of twelve. She was as different from her sister Bertha as she could be. She was proud, and rather wayward. Like some other young ladies we have somewhere read about, she was very fond of having her own way, even when her own way had been proved to be uncomfortable and dangerous. But when we mention Miss Fanny's faults, we do not wish to be understood that she had no virtues. If she did wrong very often, she did right in the main, and had made a great deal of progress in learning to do wisely and well, and, what was just as good, in doing it after she had learned it.

Fanny Grant walked up to the boat-house with a very decided step, and it soon appeared that she was not there by chance or accident; which leads us sorrowfully to remark, that in her wrongdoing she often found a ready companion and supporter in Noddy Newman. She was rather inclined to be a romp; and though she was not given to "playing with the boys," the absence of any suitable playmate sometimes led her to invite the half-reformed vagabond of Woodville to assist in her sport.

"You are a pretty fellow, Noddy Newman!" said she, her pouting lips giving an added emphasis to her reproachful remark. "Why didn't you come down to the Point, as you said you would?"

"Because I couldn't, Miss Fanny," growled Noddy. "I had to wash out this confounded boat-house, or be reported to Miss Bertha."

"Couldn't you do that after you got back?"

"Ben said I must do it before nine o'clock. I wanted to go down to the Point, as I agreed, but you see I couldn't."

"I waited for you till I got tired out," pouted Fanny; but she neglected to add that five minutes on ordinary occasions were the full limit of her patience.

"Hang the old boat-house! I told Ben I wished it was burned up."

"So do I; but come along, Noddy. We will go now."

"I can't go till I've washed out the boat-house."

"Yes, you can."

"But if Ben comes down and finds the place hasn't been washed out, he will tell Miss Bertha."

"Let him tell her--who cares?"

"She will talk to me for an hour."

"Let her talk--talking won't kill you."

"I don't like to be talked to in that way by Miss Bertha."

"Fiddle-de-dee! You can tell her I wanted you," said Fanny, her eyes snapping with earnestness.

"Shall I tell her what you wanted me for?" asked Noddy, with a cunning look.

"Of course you needn't tell her that. But come along, or I shall go without you."

"No--you wouldn't do that, Miss Fanny. You couldn't."

"Well, won't you come?"

"Not now."

"I can't wait."

"I will go just as soon as I have done washing the boat-house."

"Plague on the boat-house!" snapped Fanny. "I wish it was burned up. What a nice fire it would make!--wouldn't it, Noddy?"

The bright eyes of the wayward miss sparkled with delight as she thought of the blazing building; and while her more wayward companion described the miseries which he daily endured in his regular work, she hardly listened to him. She seemed to be plotting mischief; but if she was, she did not make Noddy her confidant this time.

"Come, Noddy," said she, after a few moments' reflection, "I will promise to make it all right with Bertha."

Noddy dropped the broom with which he had begun to sweep up some chips and shavings Ben had made in repairing a boat-hook.

"If you will get me out of the scrape, I will go now," said he.

"I will; you may depend upon me."

"Then I will go."

"Where is Ben, now?"

"He has gone up to the house."

"Then you run down to the Point, and bring the boat up to the pier. I am tired, and don't want to walk down there again."

Noddy was entirely willing, and bounded off like a deer, for he had fully made up his mind to disobey orders, and his impulsive nature did not permit him to consider the consequences. He was absent but a few moments, and presently appeared rowing a small boat up the river. At the pier he turned the boat, and backed her up to the landing steps.

"All ready, Miss Fanny!" shouted the young boatman, for his companion in mischief was not in sight.

Still she did not appear; and Noddy was about to go in search of her, when she came out of the boat-house, and ran down to the steps. Her face was flushed, and she seemed to be very much agitated. Noddy was afraid, from her looks, that something had happened to spoil the anticipated sport of the morning; but she stepped into the boat, and told him, in hurried tones, to push off.

"What's the matter, Miss Fanny?" he asked, not a little startled by her appearance.

"Nothing, Noddy; pull away just as fast as ever you can."

"Are we caught?" said he, as he followed Fanny's direction.

"No; caught! no. Why don't you row faster, Noddy? You don't pull worth a cent."

"I am pulling as hard as I can," replied he, unable to keep pace with her impatience.

"I wouldn't be seen here now for anything!" exclaimed Fanny, earnestly, as she glanced back at the boat-house, with a look so uneasy that it almost unmanned her resolute companion.

Noddy pulled with all his might, and the light boat darted over the waves with a speed which ought to have satisfied his nervous passenger. As they reached the point of Van Alstine's Island, a dense smoke was seen to rise from the boat-house on the pier; and a few moments later, the whole building was wrapped in flames.



CHAPTER II.

THE CIRCUS AT WHITESTONE.

"Do you see that?" exclaimed Noddy, as he stopped rowing, and gazed at the flames which leaped madly up from the devoted building.

"I see it," replied Fanny, with even more agitation than was manifested by her companion.

"I don't understand it," added Noddy.

"The boat-house is on fire, and will burn up in a few minutes more. I think it is plain enough;" and Fanny struggled to be calm and indifferent.

"We must go back and see to it."

"We shall do nothing of the kind. Pull away as hard as ever you can, or we shall not get to Whitestone in season."

"I don't care about going to Whitestone now; I want to know what all that means."

"Can't you see what it means? The boat-house is on fire."

"Well, how did it catch afire? That's what bothers me."

"You needn't bother yourself about it. My father owns the boat-house, and it isn't worth much."

"All that may be; but I want to know how it got afire."

"We shall find out soon enough when we return."

"But I want to know now."

"You can't know now; so pull away."

"I shall have the credit of setting that fire," added Noddy, not a little disturbed by the anticipation.

"No, you won't."

"Yes, I shall. I told Ben I wished the boat-house would catch afire and burn up. Of course he will lay it to me."

"No matter if he does; Ben isn't everybody."

"Well, he is 'most everybody, so far as Miss Bertha is concerned; and I'd rather tumbled overboard in December than have that fire happen just now."

"You were not there when the fire broke out," said Fanny, with a strong effort to satisfy her boatman.

"That's the very reason why they will lay it to me. They will say I set the boat-house afire, and then ran away on purpose."

"I can say you were with me when the fire broke out, and that I know you didn't do it," replied Fanny.

"That will do; but I would give all my old shoes to know how the fire took, myself."

"No matter how it took."

"Yes, it is matter, Miss Fanny. I want to know. There wasn't any fire in the building when I left it."

"Perhaps somebody stopped there in a boat, and set it on fire."

"Perhaps they did; but I know very well they didn't," answered Noddy, positively. "There hasn't been any boat near the pier since we left it."

"Perhaps Ben left his pipe among those shavings."

"Ben never did that. He would cut his head off sooner than do such a thing. He is as scared of fire as he is of the Flying Dutchman."

"Don't say anything more about it. Now row over to Whitestone as quick as you can," added Fanny, petulantly.

"I'm not going over to Whitestone, after what has happened. I shouldn't have a bit of fun if I went."

"Very well, Noddy; then you may get out of the scrape as you can," said the young lady, angrily.

"What scrape?"

"Why, they will accuse you of setting the boat-house afire; and you told Ben you wished it was burned down."

"But I didn't set it afire."

"Who did, then?"

"That's just what I want to find out. That's what worries me; for I can't see how it happened, unless it took fire from that bucket of water I left on the floor."

Fanny was too much disturbed by the conduct of her boatman, or by some other circumstance, to laugh at Noddy's joke; and the brilliant sally was permitted to waste itself without an appreciative smile. She sat looking at the angry flames as they devoured the building, while her companion vainly attempted to hit upon a satisfactory explanation of the cause of the fire. Noddy was perplexed; he was absolutely worried, not so much by the probable consequences to himself of the unfortunate event, as by the cravings of his own curiosity. He did not see how it happened; and if a potent juggler had performed a wonderful feat in his presence, he could not have been more exercised in mind to know how it was done.

Noddy was neither a logician nor a philosopher; and therefore he was utterly unable to account for the origin of the fire. In vain he wasted his intellectual powers in speculations; in vain he tried to remember some exciting cause to which the calamity could be traced. Meanwhile, Miss Fanny was deliberating quite as diligently over another question; for she apparently regarded the destruction of the boat-house as a small affair, and did not concern herself to know how it had been caused. But she was very anxious to reach Whitestone before ten o'clock, and her rebellious boatman had intimated his intention not to carry out his part of the agreement.

"What are you thinking about, Noddy?" asked she, when both had maintained silence for the full space of three minutes, which was a longer period than either of them had ever before kept still while awake.

"I was thinking of that fire," replied Noddy, removing his gaze from the burning building, and fixing it upon her.

"Are you going to Whitestone, or not?" continued she, impatiently.

"No; I don't want to go to Whitestone, while all of them down there are talking about me, and saying I set the boat-house afire."

"They will believe you did it, too."

"But I didn't, Miss Fanny. You know I didn't."

"How should I know it?"

"Because I was with you; besides, you came out of the boat-house after I did."

"If you will row me over to Whitestone, I will say so; and I will tell them I know you didn't do it."

Noddy considered the matter for a moment, and, perhaps concluding that it was safer for him to keep on the right side of Miss Fanny, he signified his acceptance of the terms by taking up his oars, and pulling towards Whitestone. But he was not satisfied; he was as uneasy as a fish out of water; and nothing but the tyranny of the wayward young lady in the boat would have induced him to flee from the trouble which was brewing at Woodville. He had quite lost sight of the purpose which had induced him to disobey Bertha's orders.

Our young adventurers had not left Woodville without an object. There was a circus at Whitestone--a travelling company which had advertised to give three grand performances on that day. Miss Fanny wanted to go; but, either because her father was otherwise occupied, or because he did not approve of circuses, he had declined to go with her. Bertha did not want to go, and also had an engagement.

Fanny had set her heart upon going; and she happened to be too wilful, just at that period, to submit to the disappointment to which her father's convenience or his principles doomed her. Bertha had gone to the city at an early hour in the morning to spend the day with a friend, and Fanny decided that she would go to the circus, in spite of all obstacles, and in the face of her father's implied prohibition. When she had proceeded far enough to rebel, in her own heart, against the will of her father, the rest of the deed was easily accomplished.

Noddy had never been to a circus; and when Fanny told him what it was,—how men rode standing up on their horses; how they turned somersets, and played all sorts of antics on the tight rope and the slack rope; and, above all, what funny things the clowns said and did,—he was quite ready to do almost anything to procure so rare a pleasure as witnessing such a performance must afford him. It did not require any persuasion to induce him to assist Fanny in her disobedience. The only obstacle which had presented itself was his morning work in the boat-house, which Bertha's departure for the city had prevented him from doing at an earlier hour.

To prevent Ben from suspecting that they were on the water, in case they should happen to be missed, he had borrowed a boat and placed it at the Point, where they could embark without being seen, if Ben or any of the servants happened to be near the pier. The boatman, who made it his business to see that Noddy did his work on time in the morning, did not neglect his duty on this occasion; and when Noddy started to meet Fanny at the appointed place, he had been called back, as described in the first chapter.

As he pulled towards Whitestone, he watched the flames that rose from the boat-house; and he had, for the time, lost all his enthusiasm about the circus. He could think only of the doubtful position in which his impulsive words to the boatman placed him. Above all things,—and all his doubts and fears culminated in this point,—what would Miss Bertha say? He did not care what others said, except so far as their words went to convince his mistress of his guilt. What would she do to him?

But, after all had been said and done, he was not guilty. He had not set the boat-house on fire, and he did not even know who had done the malicious act. Noddy regarded this as a very happy thought; and while the reflection had a place in his mind, he pulled the oars with redoubled vigor. Yet it was in vain for him to rely upon the voice of an approving conscience for peace in that hour of trouble. If he had not, at that moment, been engaged in an act of disobedience, he might have been easy. He had been strictly forbidden by Mr. Grant, and by Bertha, ever to take Fanny out in a boat without permission; and Miss Fanny had been as strictly forbidden to go with him, or with any of the servants, without the express consent, each time, of her father or of Bertha.

It is very hard, while doing wrong in one thing, to enjoy an approving conscience in another thing; and Noddy found it so in the present instance. We do not mean to say that Noddy's conscience was of any great account to him, or that the inward monitor caused his present uneasiness. He had a conscience, but his vagabond life had demoralized it in the first place, and it had not been sufficiently developed, during his stay at Woodville, to abate very sensibly his anticipated pleasure at the circus. His uneasiness was entirely selfish. He had got into a scrape, whose probable consequences worried him more than his conscience.

By the time the runaways reached Whitestone, the boat-house was all burned up, and nothing but the curling smoke from the ruins visibly reminded the transgressors of the event which had disturbed them. Securing the boat in a proper place, Noddy conducted the young lady to the large tent in which the circus company performed, and which was more than a mile from the river. Fanny gave him the money, and Noddy purchased two tickets, which admitted them to the interior of the tent.

If Noddy had been entirely at ease about the affair on the other side of the river, no doubt he would have enjoyed the performance very much; but in the midst of the "grand entree of all the horses and riders of the troupe," the sorrowing face of Bertha Grant thrust itself between him and the horsemen, to obscure his vision and diminish the cheap glories of the gorgeous scene. When "the most daring rider in the world" danced about, like a top, on the bare back of his "fiery, untamed steed," Noddy was enthusiastic, and would have given a York shilling for the privilege of trying to do it himself.

The "ground and lofty tumbling," with the exception of the spangled tunics of the performers, hardly came up to his expectations; and he was entirely satisfied that he could beat the best man among them at such games. As the performance proceeded, he warmed up enough to forget the fire, and ceased to dread the rebuke of Bertha; but when all was over,—when the clown had made his last wry face, and the great American acrobat had achieved his last gyration, Bertha and the fire came back to him with increased power. Moody and sullen, he walked down to the river with Fanny, who, under ordinary circumstances, would have been too proud to walk through the streets of Whitestone with him. If he had been alone, it is quite probable that he would have taken to the woods, so much did he dread to return to Woodville.

He pushed off the boat, and for some time he pulled in silence, for Miss Fanny now appeared to have her own peculiar trials. Her conscience seemed to have found a voice, and she did not speak till the boat had reached the lower end of Van Alstine's Island.

"The fire is all out now," said she.

"Yes; but I would give a thousand dollars to know how it caught," added Noddy.

"I know," continued Fanny, looking down into the bottom of the boat.

"Who did it?" demanded Noddy, eagerly.

"I did it myself," answered Fanny, looking up into his face to note the effect of the astonishing confession.



CHAPTER III.

A MORAL QUESTION.

NODDY dropped his oars, and, with open mouth and staring eyes, gazed fixedly in silence at his gentle companion, who had so far outstripped him in making mischief as to set fire to a building. It was too much for him, and he found it impossible to comprehend the depravity of Miss Fanny. He would not have dared to do such a thing himself, and it was impossible to believe that she had done so tremendous a deed.

"I don't believe it," said he; and the words burst from him with explosive force, as soon as he could find a tongue to express himself.

"I did," replied Fanny, gazing at him with a kind of blank look, which would have assured a more expert reader of the human face than Noddy Newman that she had come to a realizing sense of the magnitude of the mischief she had done.

"No, you didn't, Miss Fanny!" exclaimed her incredulous friend. "I know you didn't do that; you couldn't do it."

"But I did; I wouldn't say I did if I didn't."

"Well, that beats me all to pieces!" added Noddy, bending forward in his seat, and looking sharply into her face, in search of any indications that she was making fun of him, or was engaged in perpetrating a joke.

Certainly there was no indication of a want of seriousness on the part of the wayward young lady; on the contrary, she looked exceedingly troubled. Noddy could not say a word, and he was busily occupied in trying to get through his head the stupendous fact that Miss Fanny had become an incendiary; that she was wicked enough to set fire to her father's building. It required a good deal of labor and study on the part of so poor a scholar as Noddy to comprehend the idea. He had always looked upon Fanny as Bertha's sister. His devoted benefactress was an angel in his estimation, and it was as impossible for her to do anything wrong as it was for water to run up hill.

If Bertha was absolutely perfect,—as he measured human virtue,—it was impossible that her sister should be very far below her standard. He knew that she was a little wild and wayward, but it was beyond his comprehension that she should do anything that was really "naughty." Fanny's confession, when he realized that it was true, gave him a shock from which he did not soon recover. One of his oars had slipped overboard without his notice, and the other might have gone after it, if his companion had not reminded him where he was, and what he ought to do. Paddling the boat around with one oar, he recovered the other; but he had no clear idea of the purpose for which such implements were intended, and he permitted the boat to drift with the tide, while he gave himself up to the consideration of the difficult and trying question which the conduct of Fanny imposed upon him.

Noddy was not selfish; and if the generous vein of his nature had been well balanced and fortified by the corresponding virtues, his character would have soared to the region of the noble and grand in human nature. But the generous in character is hardly worthy of respect, though it may challenge the admiration of the thoughtless, unless it rests upon the sure foundation of moral principle. Noddy forgot his own trials in sympathizing with the unpleasant situation of his associate in wrongdoing, and his present thought was how he should get her out of the scrape. He was honestly willing to sacrifice himself for her sake. While he was faithfully considering the question, in the dim light of his own moral sense, Miss Fanny suddenly burst into tears, and cried with a violence and an unctiousness which were a severe trial to his nerves.

"Don't cry, Fanny," said he; "I'll get you out of the scrape."

"I don't want to get out of it," sobbed she.

Now, this was the most paradoxical reply which the little maiden could possibly have made, and Noddy was perplexed almost beyond the hope of redemption. What in the world was she crying about, if she did not wish to get out of the scrape? What could make her cry if it was not the fear of consequences—of punishment, and of the mean opinion which her friends would have of her, when they found out that she was wicked enough to set a building on fire? Noddy asked no questions, for he could not frame one which would cover so intricate a matter.

"I am perfectly willing to be punished for what I have done," added Fanny, to whose troubled heart speech was the only vent.

"What are you crying for?" asked the bewildered Noddy.

"Because—because I did it," replied she; and her choked utterance hardly permitted her to speak the words.

"Well, Miss Fanny, you are altogether ahead of my time; and I don't know what you mean. If you cry about it now, what did you do it for?"

"Because I was wicked and naughty. If I had thought only a moment, I shouldn't have done it. I am so sorry I did it! I would give the world if I hadn't."

"What will they do to you?" asked Noddy, whose fear of consequences had not yet given place to a higher view of the matter.

"I don't care what they do; I deserve the worst they can do. How shall I look Bertha and my father in the face when I see them?"

"O, hold your head right up, and look as bold as a lion--as bold as two lions, if the worst comes."

"Don't talk so, Noddy. You make me feel worse than I did."

"What in the world ails you, Miss Fanny?" demanded Noddy, grown desperate by the perplexities of the situation.

"I am so sorry I did such a wicked thing! I shall go to Bertha and my father, and tell them all about it, as soon as they come home," added Fanny, as she wiped away her tears, and appeared to be much comforted by the good resolution which was certainly the best one the circumstances admitted.

"Are you going to do that?" exclaimed Noddy, astonished at the declaration.

"I am."

"And get me into a scrape too! They won't let me off as easy as they do you. I shall be sent off to learn to be a tinker, or a blacksmith."

"You didn't set the boat-house on fire, Noddy. It wasn't any of your doings," said Fanny, somewhat disturbed by this new complication.

"You wouldn't have done it, if it hadn't been for me. I told you what I said to Ben--that I wished the boat-house was burned up; and that's what put it into your head."

"Well, you didn't do it."

"I know that; but I shall have to bear all the blame of it."

Noddy's moral perceptions were strong enough to enable him to see that he was not without fault in the matter; and he was opposed to Fanny's making the intended confession of her guilt.

"I will keep you out of trouble, Noddy," said she, kindly.

"You can't do it; when you own up, you will sink me to the bottom of the river. Besides, you are a fool to do any such thing, Miss Fanny. What do you want to say a word about it for? Ben will think some fellow landed from the river, and set the boat-house on fire."

"I must do it, Noddy," protested she. "I shall not have a moment's peace till I confess. I shall not dare to look father and Bertha in the face if I don't."

"You won't if you do. How are they going to know anything about it, if you don't tell them?"

"Well, they will lay it to you if I don't."

"No matter if they do; I didn't do it, and I can say so truly, and they will believe me."

"But how shall I feel all the time? I shall know who did it, if nobody else does. I shall feel mean and guilty."

"You won't feel half so bad as you will when they look at you, and know all the time that you are guilty. If you are going to own up, I shall keep out of the way. You won't see me at Woodville again in a hurry."

"What do you mean, Noddy?" asked Fanny, startled by the strong words of her companion.

"That's just what I mean. If you own up, they will say that I made you do it; and I had enough sight rather bear the blame of setting the boat-house afire, than be told that I made you do it. I can dirty my own hands, but I don't like the idea of dirtying yours."

"You don't mean to leave Woodville, Noddy?" asked Fanny, in a reproachful tone.

"If you own up, I shall not go back. I've been thinking of going ever since they talked of making a tinker of me; so it will only be going a few days sooner. I want to go to sea, and I don't want to be a tinker."

Fanny gazed into the water by the side of the boat, thinking of what her companion had said. She really did not think she ought to "own up," on the terms which Noddy mentioned.

"If you are sorry, and want to repent, you can do all that; and I will give you my solemn promise to be as good as you are, Miss Fanny," said Noddy, satisfied that he had made an impression upon the mind of his wavering companion.

His advice seemed to be sensible. She was sorry she had done wrong; she could repent in sorrow and silence, and never do wrong again. Her father and her sister would despise her if they knew she had done such a wicked and unladylike thing as to set the boat-house on fire. She could save all this pain and mortification, and repent just the same. Besides, she could not take upon herself the responsibility of driving Noddy away from Woodville, for that would cause Bertha a great deal of pain and uneasiness.

Fanny had not yet learned to do right though the heavens fall.

"Well, I won't say anything about it, Noddy," said she, yielding to what seemed to her the force of circumstances.

"That's right, Fanny. Now, you leave the whole thing to me, and I will manage it so as to keep you out of trouble; and you can repent and be sorry just as much as you please," replied Noddy, as he began to row again. "There is nothing to be afraid of. Ben will never know that we have been on the river."

"But I know it myself," said the conscience-stricken maiden.

"Of course you do; what of that?"

"If I didn't know it myself, I should feel well enough."

"You are a funny girl."

"Don't you ever feel that you have done wrong, Noddy?"

"I suppose I do; but I don't make any such fuss about it as you do."

"You were not brought up by a kind father and a loving sister, who would give anything rather than have you do wrong," said Fanny, beginning to cry again.

"There! don't cry any more; if you do, you will 'let the cat out of the bag.' I am going to land you here at the Glen. You can take a walk there, and go home about one o'clock. Then you can tell the folks you have been walking in the Glen; and it will be the truth."

"It will be just as much a lie as though I hadn't been there. It will be one half the truth told to hide the other half."

This was rather beyond Noddy's moral philosophy, and he did not worry himself to argue the point. He pulled up to the landing place at the Glen, where he had so often conveyed Bertha, and near the spot where he had met with the accident which had placed him under her kindly care. Fanny, with a heavy heart and a doubting mind, stepped on shore, and walked up into the grove. She was burdened with grief for the wrong she had done, and for half an hour she wandered about the beautiful spot, trying to compose herself enough to appear before the people at the house. When it was too late, she wished she had not consented to Noddy's plan; but the fear of working a great wrong in driving him from the good influences to which he was subjected at Woodville, by doing right, and confessing her error, was rather comforting, though it did not meet the wants of her case.

In season for dinner, she entered the house with her hand full of wild flowers, which grew only in the Glen. In the hall she met Mrs. Green, the housekeeper, who looked at her flushed face, and then at the flowers in her hand.

"We have been wondering where you were, all the forenoon," said Mrs. Green. "I see you have been to the Glen by the flowers you have in your hand. Did you know the boat-house was burned up?"

"I saw the smoke of it," replied Fanny.

"It is the strangest thing that ever happened. No one can tell how it took fire."

Fanny made no reply, and the housekeeper hastened away to attend to her duties. The poor girl was suffering all the tortures of remorse which a wrong act can awaken, and she went up to her room with the feeling that she did not wish to see another soul for a month.

Half an hour later, Noddy Newman presented himself at the great house, laden with swamp pinks, whose fragrance filled the air, and seemed to explain where he had been all the forenoon. With no little flourish, he requested Mrs. Green to put them in the vases for Bertha's room; for his young mistress was very fond of the sweet blossoms. He appeared to be entirely satisfied with himself; and, with a branch of the pink in his hand, he left the house, and walked towards the servants' quarters, where, at his dinner, he met Ben, the boatman.

CHAPTER IV.

NODDY'S CONFESSION.

THE old boatman never did any thing as other people did it; and though Noddy had put on the best face he could assume to meet the shock of the accusation which he was confident would be brought against him, Ben said not a word about the boat-house. He did not seem to be aware that it had been burned. He ate his dinner in his usual cheerful frame of mind, and talked of swamp pinks, suggested by the branch which the young reprobate had brought into the servants' hall.

Noddy was more perplexed than he had been before that day. Why didn't the old man "pitch into him," and accuse him of kindling the fire? Why didn't he get angry, as he did sometimes, and call him a young vagabond, and threaten to horsewhip him? Ben talked of the pinks, of the weather, the crops, and the latest news; but he did not say a word about the destruction of the boat-house, or Noddy's absence during the forenoon.

After dinner, Noddy followed the old man down to the pier by the river in a state of anxiety which hardly permitted him to keep up the cheerful expression he had assumed, and which he usually wore. They reached the smouldering ruins of the building, but Ben took no notice of it, and did not allude to the great event which had occurred. Noddy was inclined to doubt whether the boat-house had been burned at all; and he would have rejected the fact, if the charred remains of the house had not been there to attest it.

Ben hobbled down to the pier, and stepped on board the Greyhound, which he had hauled up to the shore to enable him to make some repairs on the mainsail. Noddy followed him; but he grew more desperate at every step he advanced, for the old man still most provokingly refused to say a single word about the fire.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Noddy, suddenly starting back in the utmost astonishment; for he had come to the conclusion, that if Ben would not speak about the fire, he must.

The old boatman was still vicious, and refused even to notice his well-managed exclamation. Noddy thought it was very obstinate of Ben not to say something, and offer him a chance, in the natural way, to prove his innocence.

"Why, Ben, the boat-house is burned up!" shouted Noddy, determined that the old man should have no excuse for not speaking about the fire.

Ben did not even raise his eyes from the work on which he was engaged. He was adjusting the palm on his hand, and in a moment began to sew as though nothing had happened, and no one was present but himself. Noddy was fully satisfied now that the boatman was carrying out the details of some plot of his own.

"Ben!" roared Noddy, at the top of his lungs, and still standing near the ruins.

"What do you want, Noddy?" demanded Ben, as good-naturedly as though everything had worked well during the day.

"The boat-house is burned up!" screamed Noddy, apparently as much excited as though he had just discovered the fact.

Ben made no reply, which was another evidence that he was engaged in working out some deep-laid plot, perhaps to convict him of the crime, by some trick. Noddy was determined not to be convicted if he could possibly help it.

"Ben!" shouted he again.

"Well, Noddy, what is it?"

"Did you *know* the boat-house was burned up?"

There was no answer; and Noddy ran down to the place where the sail-boat was hauled up. He tried to look excited and indignant, and perhaps he succeeded; though, as the old man preserved his equanimity, he had no means of knowing what impression he had produced.

"Did you know the boat-house was burned up?" repeated Noddy, opening his eyes as though he had made a discovery of the utmost importance.

"I did," replied Ben, as indifferently as though it had been a matter of no consequence whatever.

"Why didn't you tell me about it?" demanded Noddy, with becoming indignation.

"Because I decided that I wouldn't say a word about it to any person," answered Ben.

"How did it happen?"

"I haven't anything to say about it; so you mustn't ask me any questions."

"Don't you know how it caught afire?" persisted Noddy.

"I've nothing to say on that subject."

Noddy was vexed and disheartened; but he felt that it would not be prudent to deny the charge of setting it on fire before he was accused, for that would certainly convict him. The old man was playing a deep game, and that annoyed him still more.

"So you won't say anything about it, Ben?" added he, seating himself on the pier.

"Not a word, Noddy."

"Well, I wouldn't if I were you," continued Noddy, lightly.

Ben took no notice of this sinister remark, thus exhibiting a presence of mind which completely balked his assailant.

"I understand it all, Ben; and I don't blame you for not wanting to say anything about it. I suppose you will own up when Mr. Grant comes home to-night."

"Don't be saucy, Noddy," said the old man, mildly.

"So you smoked your pipe among the shavings, and set the boat-house afire--did you, Ben? Well, I am sorry for you, you are generally so careful; but I don't believe they will discharge you for it."

Ben was as calm and unruffled as a summer sea. Noddy knew that, under ordinary circumstances, the boatman would have come down upon him like a northeast gale, if he had dared to use such insulting language to him. He tried him on every tack, but not a word could he obtain which betrayed the opinion of the veteran, in regard to the origin of the fire. It was useless to resort to any more arts, and he gave up the point in despair. All the afternoon he wandered about the estate, and could think of nothing but the unhappy event of the morning. Fanny did not show herself, and he had no opportunity for further consultation.

About six o'clock Bertha returned with her father; and after tea they walked down to the river. Fanny complained of a headache, and did not go with them. It is more than probable that she was really afflicted, as she said; for she had certainly suffered enough to make her head ache. Of course the first thing that attracted the attention of Mr. Grant and his daughter was the pile of charred timbers that indicated the place where the boat-house had once stood.

"How did that happen?" asked Mr. Grant of Ben, who was on the pier.

"I don't know how it happened," replied the boatman, who had found his tongue now, and proceeded to give his employer all the particulars of the destruction of the building, concluding with Noddy's energetic exclamation that he wished the boat-house was burned up.

"But did Noddy set the building on fire?" asked Bertha, greatly pained to hear this charge against her pupil.

"I don't know, Miss Bertha. I went up to the house to get my morning instructions, as I always do, and left Noddy at work washing up the boat-house. I found you had gone to the city, and I went right out of the house, and was coming down here. I got in sight of the pier, and saw Miss Fanny come out of the boat-house."

"Fanny?"

"Yes; I am sure it was her. I didn't mind where she went, for I happened to think the mainsail of the Greyhound wanted a little mending, and I went over to my room after some needles. While I was in my chamber, one of the gardeners rushed up to tell me the boat-house was afire. I came down, but 'twasn't no use; the building was most gone when I got here."

"Did you leave anything in the building in the shape of matches, or anything else?" asked Mr. Grant.

"No, sir; I never do that," replied the old man, with a blush.

"I know you are very careful, Ben. Then I suppose it was set on fire."

"I suppose it was, sir."

"Who do you suppose set it afire, Ben?" said Bertha, anxiously.

"Bless you, miss, I don't know."

"Do you think it was Noddy?"

"No, Miss Bertha, I don't think it was."

"Who could it have been?"

"That's more than I know. Here comes Noddy, and he can speak for himself."

Noddy had come forward for this purpose when he saw Mr. Grant and Bertha on the pier, and he had heard the last part of the conversation. He was not a little astonished to hear Ben declare his belief that he was not guilty, for he had been fully satisfied that he should have all the credit of the naughty transaction.

"Do you know how the fire caught, Noddy?" said Mr. Grant.

"I reckon it caught from a bucket of water I left there," replied Noddy, who did not know what to say till he had felt his way a little.

"No trifling, Noddy!" added Mr. Grant, though he could hardly keep from laughing at the ridiculous answer.

"How should I know, sir, when Ben don't know? I tried to make him tell me how it caught, and he wouldn't say a word about it."

"I thought it was best for me to keep still," said Ben.

"This is very strange," continued Mr. Grant. "Who was the last person you saw in the boat-house, Ben?"

"Miss Fanny, sir. I saw her come out of it only a few moments before the fire broke out."

Noddy was appalled at this answer, for it indicated that Fanny was already suspected of the deed.

"Of course Fanny would not do such a thing as set the boat-house on fire," said Bertha.

"Of course she wouldn't," added Noddy.

"What made you say you did not think Noddy set the fire, Ben?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Because I think he had gone off somewhere before the fire, and that Miss Fanny was in the building after he was. Noddy was sculling off before he had done his work, and I called him back. That's when he wished the boat-house was burned down."

"It is pretty evident that the fire was set by Noddy or Fanny," said Mr. Grant; and he appeared to have no doubt as to which was the guilty one, for he looked very sternly at the wayward boy before him.

"I think so, sir," added Ben.

"And you say that it was not Noddy?" continued Mr. Grant, looking exceedingly troubled as he considered the alternative.

The boatman bowed his head in reply, as though his conclusion was so serious and solemn that he could not express it in words. Noddy looked from Ben to Mr. Grant, and from Mr. Grant to Ben again. It was plain enough what they meant, and he had not even been suspected of the crime. The boatman had seen Fanny come out of the building just before the flames appeared, and all hope of charging the deed upon some vagabond from the river was gone.

"Do you mean to say, Ben, that you think Fanny set the boat-house on fire?" demanded Mr. Grant, sternly.

"I don't see who else could have set it," added Ben, stoutly.

"I do," interposed Noddy. "I say she didn't do it."

"Why do you say so?"

"Because I did it myself."

"I thought so!" exclaimed Mr. Grant, greatly relieved by the confession.

Ben was confused and annoyed, and Noddy was rather pleased at the position in which he had placed the old man,

who, in his opinion, had not treated him as well as usual.

"Why didn't you own it before?" said Mr. Grant, "and not allow an innocent person to be suspected."

"I didn't like to," answered the culprit, with a smile, as though he was entirely satisfied with his own position.

"You must be taken care of."

"I am going to take care of myself, sir," said Noddy, with easy indifference.

This remark was capable of so many interpretations that no one knew what it meant--whether Noddy intended to run away, or reform his vicious habits. Bertha had never seen him look so self-possessed and impudent when he had done wrong, and she feared that all her labors for his moral improvement had been wasted.

Some further explanations followed, and Noddy was questioned till a satisfactory theory in regard to the fire was agreed upon. The boy declared that he had visited the boat-house after Fanny left it, and that she was walking towards the Glen when he kindled the fire. He made out a consistent story, and completely upset Ben's conclusions, and left the veteran in a very confused and uncomfortable state of mind.

Mr. Grant declared that something must be done with the boy at once; that if he was permitted to continue on the place, he might take a notion to burn the house down. Poor Bertha could not gainsay her father's conclusion, and, sad as it was, she was compelled to leave the culprit to whatever decision Mr. Grant might reach. For the present he was ordered to his room, to which he submissively went, attended by Bertha, though he was fully resolved not to be "taken care of;" for he understood this to mean a place in the workhouse or the penitentiary.



CHAPTER V.

SQUIRE WRIGGS AT WOODVILLE.

BERTHA was deeply pained at the reckless wrong which her *protege* had done, and more deeply by the cool indifference with which he carried himself after his voluntary confession. There was little to hope for while he manifested not a single sign of contrition for the crime committed. He was truly sorry for the grief he had caused her; but for his own sin he did not speak a word of regret.

"I suppose I am to be a tinker now," said Noddy to her, with a smile, which looked absolutely awful to Bertha, for it was a token of depravity she could not bear to look upon.

"I must leave you now, Noddy, for you are not good," replied Bertha, sadly.

"I am sorry you feel so bad about me, Miss Bertha," added Noddy.

"I wish you would be sorry for yourself, instead of me."

"I am--sorry that you want to make a tinker of me;" and Noddy used this word to express his contempt of any mechanical occupation.

He did not like to work. Patient, plodding labor, devoid of excitement, was his aversion; though handling a boat, cleaning out a gutter on some dizzy height of the mansion, or cutting off a limb at the highest point of the tallest shade tree on the estate, was entirely to his taste, and he did not regard anything as work which had a spice of danger or a thrill of excitement about it. He was not lazy, in the broad sense of the word; there was not a more active and restless person on the estate than himself. A shop, therefore, was a horror which he had no words to describe, and which he could never endure.

"I want to see you in some useful occupation, where you can earn your living, and become a respectable man," said Bertha. "Don't you want to be a respectable man, Noddy?"

"Well, I suppose I do; but I had rather be a vagabond than a respectable tinker."

"You must work, Noddy, if you would win a good name, and enough of this world's goods to make you comfortable. Work and win; I give you this motto for your guidance. My father told me to lock you up in your room."

"You may do that, Miss Bertha," laughed Noddy. "I don't care how much you lock me in. When I want to go out, I shall go. I shall work, and win my freedom."

Noddy thought this application of Bertha's motto was funny, and he had the hardihood to laugh at it, till Bertha, hopeless of making any impression on him at the present time, left the room, and locked the door behind her.

"Work and win!" said Noddy. "That's very pretty, and for Miss Bertha's sake I shall remember it; but I shan't work in any tinker's shop. I may as well take myself off, and go to work in my own way."

Noddy was tired, after the exertions of the day; and so deeply and truly repentant was he for the wrong he had done, that he immediately went to sleep, though it was not yet dark. Neither the present nor the future seemed to give him any trouble; and if he could avoid the miseries of the tinker's shop, as he was perfectly confident he could, he did not concern himself about any of the prizes of life which are gained by honest industry or patient well doing.

When it was quite dark, and Noddy had slept about two hours, the springing of the bolt in the lock of his door awoke him. He leaped to his feet, and his first thought was, that something was to be done with him for burning the boat-house. But the door opened, and, by the dim light which came through the window, he recognized the slight form of Fanny Grant.

"Noddy," said she, timidly.

"Well, Miss Fanny, have you come to let me out of jail?"

"No; I came to see you, and nobody knows I am here. You won't expose me--will you?"

"Of course I won't; that isn't much like me."

"I know it isn't, Noddy. What did you say that you set the fire for?"

"Because I thought that was the best way to settle the whole thing. Ben saw you come out of the boat-house, and

told your father he believed you set the building on fire. That was the meanest thing the old man ever did. Why didn't he lay it to me, as he ought to have done?"

"I suppose he knew you didn't do it."

"That don't make any difference. He ought to have known better than tell your father it was you."

"I am so sorry for what you have done!"

"What are you sorry for? It won't hurt me, any how; and it would be an awful thing for you. They were going to make a tinker of me before, and I suppose they will do it now--if they can. I wouldn't care a fig for it if Miss Bertha didn't feel so bad about it."

"I will tell her the truth."

"Don't you do it, Miss Fanny. That wouldn't help me a bit, and will spoil you."

"But I must tell the truth. They don't suspect me even of going on the water."

"So much the better. They won't ask you any hard questions. Now, Miss Fanny, don't you say a word; for if you do, it will make it all the worse for me."

"Why so, Noddy?"

"Because, according to my notion, I did set the building afire. If I hadn't said what I did, you never would have thought of doing it. So I was the fellow that did it, after all. That's the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

"But you didn't set it afire, and you didn't mean to do any such thing."

"That may be; but you wouldn't have done it if it hadn't been for me. It was more my fault than it was yours; and I want you to leave the thing just where it is now."

"But it would be mean for me to stand still, and see you bear all the blame."

"It would be enough sight meaner for you to say anything about it."

"I don't think so."

"I do; for don't you see it is a good deal worse for me to put you up to such a thing than it was for me to do it myself? Your father would forgive me for setting the fire sooner than they would for making you do it. I'm bad enough already, and they know it; but if they think I make you as bad as I am myself, they would put me in a worse place than a tinker's shop."

Noddy's argument was too much for the feminine mind of Miss Fanny, and again she abandoned the purpose she had fully resolved upon, and decided not to confess her guilt. We must do her the justice to say, that she came to this conclusion, not from any fear of personal consequences, but in order to save Noddy from the terrible reproach which would be cast upon him if she did confess. Already, in her heart and before God, she had acknowledged her error, and was sorrowfully repenting her misconduct. But she could not expose Noddy to any penalty which he did not deserve. She knew that he did not mean to set the fire; that his words were idle, petulant ones, which had no real meaning; and it would be wrong to let her father and Bertha suppose that Noddy had instigated her to the criminal act.

Fanny had not yet learned that it is best to cleave unto the truth, and let the consequences take care of themselves.

She yielded her own convictions to those of another, which no person should ever do in questions of right and wrong.

She sacrificed her own faith in the simple truth, to another's faith in policy, expediency.

The question was settled for the present, and Fanny crept back to her chamber, no easier in mind, no better satisfied with herself, than before. Noddy went to sleep again; but the only cloud he saw was the displeasure of Bertha. He was simply conscious that he had got into a scrape. He had not burned the boat-house, and he did not feel guilty. He had not intended to induce Fanny to do the deed, and he did not feel guilty of that. He was so generous that he wished to save her from the consequences of her error, and the deception he used did not weigh very heavily on his conscience.

He regarded his situation as merely a "scrape" into which he had accidentally fallen, and his only business was to get out of it. These thoughts filled his mind when he awoke in the morning. He was too restless to remain a quiet prisoner for any great length of time; and when he had dressed himself, he began to look about him for the means of

mitigating his imprisonment, or bringing it to a conclusion, as the case might require. The window would be available at night, but it was in full view of the gardeners in the daytime, who would be likely to report any movement on his part. The door looked more hopeful.

One of the men brought his breakfast, and retired, locking the door behind him. While he was eating it,—and his appetite did not seem to be at all impaired by the situation to which he had been reduced,—he saw Mr. Grant on the lawn, talking with a stranger. His interest was at once excited, and a closer examination assured him that the visitor was Squire Wriggs, of Whitestone. The discovery almost spoiled Noddy's appetite, for he knew that the squire was a lawyer, and had often been mixed up with cases of house-breaking, horse-stealing, robbery, and murder; and he at once concluded that the legal gentleman's business related to him.

His ideas of lawyers were rather confused and indistinct. He knew they had a great deal to do in the court-house, when men were sent to the penitentiary and the house of correction for various crimes. He watched the squire and Mr. Grant, and he was fully satisfied in his own mind what they were talking about when the latter pointed to the window of his chamber. He had eaten only half his breakfast, but he found it impossible to take another mouthful, after he realized that he was the subject of the conversation between Mr. Grant and the lawyer.

It seemed just as though all his friends, even Miss Bertha, had suddenly deserted him. That conference on the lawn was simply a plot to take him to the court-house, and then send him to the penitentiary, the house of correction, or some other abominable place, even if it were no worse than a tinker's shop. He was absolutely terrified at the prospect. After all his high hopes, and all his confidence in his supple limbs, the judges, the lawyers, and the constables might fetter his muscles so that he could not get away—so that he could not even run away to sea, which was his ultimate intention, whenever he could make up his mind to leave Miss Bertha.

Noddy watched the two gentlemen on the lawn, and his breast was filled with a storm of emotions. He pictured the horrors of the prison to which they were about to send him, and his fancy made the prospect far worse than the reality could possibly have been. Mr. Grant led the way towards the building occupied by the servants. Noddy was desperate. Squire Wriggs was the visible manifestation of jails, courts, constables, and other abominations, which were the sum of all that was terrible. He decided at once not to wait for a visit from the awful personage, who was evidently coming into the house to see him.

He raised the window a little, intending to throw it wide open, and leap down upon the lawn, when his persecutor entered the door. There was not a man or boy at Woodville who could catch him when he had the use of his legs, and the world would then be open to him. But the gentlemen paused at the door, and Noddy listened as a criminal would wait to hear his sentence from the stern judge.

"Thirty thousand dollars is a great deal of money for a boy like him," said Mr. Grant. "Of course he must have a guardian."

"And you are the best person in the world for that position," added Squire Wriggs.

"But he is a young reprobate, and something must be done with him."

"Certainly; he must be taken care of at once."

"I'm afraid he will burn my house down, as he did the boat-house. My daughter is interested in him; if it wasn't for her, I would send him to the house of correction before I slept again."

"When you are his guardian, you can do what you think best for him."

"That will be no easy matter."

"We will take the boy over to the court now, and then—"

Noddy did not hear any more, for the two gentlemen entered the house, and he heard their step on the stairs. But he did not want to know anything more. Squire Wriggs had distinctly said they would take him over to the court, and that was enough to satisfy him that his worst fears were to be realized. The talk about thirty thousand dollars, and the guardian, was as unintelligible to him as though it had been in ancient Greek, and he did not bestow a second thought upon it. The "boy like him," to whom thirty thousand dollars would be a great deal of money, meant some other person than himself. The court was Noddy's peculiar abomination; and when he heard the words, he clutched the sash of the window with convulsive energy.

Mr. Grant and Squire Wriggs passed into the house, and Noddy Newman passed out. To a gymnast of his wiry experience, the feat was not impossible, or even very difficult. Swinging out of the window, he placed his feet on the window-cap below, and then, stooping down, he got hold with his hands, and slipped down from his perch with about

the same ease with which a well-trained monkey would have accomplished the descent.

He was on the solid earth now, and with the feeling that the court-house and a whole regiment of constables were behind him, he took to his heels. A stiff-kneed gardener, who had observed his exit from the house, attempted to follow him; but he might as well have chased a northwest gale. Noddy reached the Glen, and no sound of pursuers could be heard. The phantom court-house had been beaten in the race.



CHAPTER VI.

NODDY'S ENGAGEMENT.

WHEN Noddy reached the Glen, he had time to stop and think; and the consequences of the sudden step he had taken came to his mind with tremendous force. He had fled from Miss Bertha, and all the comforts and luxuries which had surrounded him at Woodville. He was a vagabond again.

It was a great deal better to be a vagabond than it was to be an inmate of a prison, or even of a tinker's shop. He had committed no crime; the worst that could be said of him was, that he was a victim of circumstances. It was unfortunate for him that he had used those petulant words, that he wished the boat-house was burned down, for they had put the idea into Fanny's head. He did not mean to kindle the fire, but he believed that he had been the cause of it, and that it was hardly fair to let the young lady suffer for what he had virtually done.

He was sorry to leave Woodville, and above all, sorry to be banished from the presence of Miss Bertha. But that had already been agreed upon, and he was only anticipating the event by taking himself off as he did. He would rather have gone in a more honorable manner than running away like a hunted dog; but he could not help that, and the very thought of the horrible court-house was enough to drive him from the best home in the world.

He walked up to a retired part of the Glen, where he could continue his retreat without being intercepted, if it became necessary, and sat down on a rock to think of the future. He had no more idea what he should do with himself, than he had when he was a wanderer before in these regions. Undoubtedly his ultimate purpose was to go to sea; but he was not quite ready to depart. He cherished a hope that he might contrive to meet Bertha in some of her walks, and say good-bye to her before he committed himself to his fortunes on the stormy ocean.

While he was deliberating upon his prospects, a happy thought, as he regarded it, came to his mind. He could turn somersets, and cut more capers than any man in the circus company which he had seen on the preceding day. With a little practice, he was satisfied that he could learn to stand up on the back of a horse. A field of glory suddenly opened to his vision, and he could win the applause of admiring thousands by his daring feats. He had performed all sorts of gyrations for the amusement of the idlers about Woodville, and he might now turn his accomplishments to a useful purpose--indeed, make them pay for his food and clothing.

Noddy had no idea that circus performances were not entirely respectable; and it seemed to him that his early training had exactly fitted him to shine in this peculiar sphere. It might not be decent business for Mr. Grant and Bertha, but it was just the thing for him. Whitestone was a very large town, and the circus was still there. He had not a moment to lose; and, under the impulse of his new resolution, he left the Glen, intending to walk up the river to the ferry, a couple of miles distant.

Noddy went over the river, and reached the great tent of the circus company about one o'clock. He was rather disturbed by the fear that he might meet Squire Wriggs, or some of the constables; but all his hopes were now centred on the circus, and he could not avoid the risk of exposing himself. He boldly inquired for the "head man" of the establishment; but this distinguished functionary was not on the premises at that time; he would be there in the course of half an hour.

He walked down to a shop, and having a small sum of money in his pocket, he obtained something to eat. On his return to the tent, the head man was pointed out to him. Noddy, as a general rule, was not troubled with bashfulness; and he walked resolutely up to the manager, and intimated to him that he should like to be engaged as a performer.

"What do you want, my boy?" demanded the head man, who was quite confident that he had mistaken the applicant's meaning, for it was hardly possible that a youth like him could be a circus performer.

"I want a place to perform, sir," repeated Noddy, who was entirely ignorant of the technical terms belonging to the profession.

"To perform!" laughed the manager, measuring him from head to foot with his eye.

"Yes, sir."

"What kind of business can you do, my boy?"

"Almost anything, sir."

"Do you ride?"

"No, sir; I'm not much used to standing up on a horse, but I think I could go it, after doing it a little while."

"Do you, indeed!" sneered the man. "Well, we don't want anybody that can do almost any kind of business."

"I'm used to this thing, sir," pleaded Noddy.

"Used to it! I suppose you want a place as a bill-sticker, or to take care of the horses."

"No, sir; I want to perform. If you will give me a chance to show what I can do, I think you'll have me," persisted Noddy, not at all pleased with the decided refusal he had received.

"Well, come in here," laughed the head man, who had no doubt that the applicant would soon be brought to grief.

It was almost time for the doors to be opened for the afternoon performance, and the man conducted Noddy to the ring, where he saw a number of the riders and gymnasts, all dressed in their silks and spangles to appear before the public.

"Here, Whippleby, is a young man that wants an engagement," said the manager to the man who had acted as ring-master when Noddy was present.

"What can he do?"

"Almost everything; but he isn't much used to riding."

Whippleby laughed, and the manager laughed; and it was quite evident, even to the aspirant for circus honors, that all present intended to amuse themselves at his expense. But Noddy felt able to outdo most of the circus people at their own profession, and he confidently expected to turn the laugh upon them before the game was ended.

"A versatile genius," said Whippleby.

"Just try him, and see what he can do," added the manager, significantly.

"Well, my little man, what do you say to a little ground and lofty tumbling," said Whippleby, winking at the performers, who stood in a circle around them.

"I'm at home in that," replied Noddy, throwing off his jacket.

"Good! You have got pluck enough, at any rate. Here, Nesmond, do something," said the ring-master to a wiry young man of the group.

Nesmond did what Noddy had seen him do the day before; he whirled over and over across the ring, like a hoop, striking his hands and feet alternately on the ground.

"There, youngster, do you see that?" said Whippleby.

"Yes, sir, I see it," replied Noddy, unabashed by the work which was expected of him.

"Now, let us see you do it."

Noddy did it, and if anything, more rapidly and gracefully than the professional man. The men applauded, and Nesmond--"the great American vaulter and tumbler"--looked exceedingly disconcerted when he saw his wonderful act so easily imitated.

"Try it again, Nesmond," said Whippleby.

The distinguished athlete went on for half an hour, performing his antics; and Noddy repeated them, though he had never before attempted some of them. Nesmond gave it up.

"Well, young man, you can do almost everything, but you are as clumsy and ungraceful as a bear about it. You need a little training on your positions, and you will make a first-class tumbler," said the manager.

The men had ceased to laugh, and even looked admiringly on the prodigy who had so suddenly developed himself. Noddy felt that his fortune was already made, and he was almost ready to snap his fingers at the court-house. Here was a chance for him to "work and win," and it was entirely to his taste.

The manager then questioned him in regard to his family connections; but as Noddy had none, his answers were very brief. He had no father nor mother, and he had no home; he was no runaway, for there was no one living who had any claim upon him. These answers were entirely satisfactory to the head man.

"What salary do you expect?" asked the manager, when he had assured himself there was no one to interfere with any arrangement he might make.

"What do you give?" asked Noddy.

"Well, we give different salaries, depending on the men."

"You have seen what I can do--what will you give me? Talk right up, or I shall have nothing to do with it," added Noddy, borrowing an expression from a highly respectable horse jockey, who had a language of his own.

"I'll give you your board and clothes, and your dresses for the first season."

"Nothing of that sort for me," replied Noddy, promptly. "I want to know how much I am to have in hard cash."

"Very well; I'll give you five dollars a week, and you find yourself."

Five dollars a week looked like a large salary to Noddy, though it was not one-fourth of what the distinguished Mr. Nesmond received, and he immediately closed the bargain.

"I'll put you on the bills for the next town we visit. What's your name?"

"Noddy Newman."

"What?"

The embryo performer repeated his name.

"That won't do; you must have a better name than that. Arthur De Forrest--how will that suit you?"

"First rate," replied Noddy, who was very accommodating in minor matters.

"We show in Disbury to-morrow night, and you must be ready to do your business then, Mr. De Forrest," added the manager. "After the performance this afternoon Mr. Whippleby will give you a few lessons."

"But where shall I get a dress?"

"I will furnish you one, and take it out of your salary. You had better put it on when you practice, so as to get used to it."

Noddy was highly pleased with all these arrangements, and could not help congratulating himself on the happy thought which had induced him to join the circus. It was true, and he could not help noticing it, that the men around him were not such people as Mr. Grant, and others whom he had been in the habit of seeing at Woodville. All of them swore terribly; their breath smelt of liquor, and they talked the language of a depravity to which Noddy, with all his waywardness, was a stranger. There were boys no older than himself in the company, but they did not seem a whit less depraved than the older ones.

Though the novice was not a young man of high aims and purposes, he was not much pleased with his companions. He was what they termed "green," and it was quite plain to him that there would be a fight before many days had passed by, for he was too high-spirited to submit tamely to the insults which were heaped upon him.

During the afternoon performance, he stood at the gates of the ring, where the horses enter; and Mr. Whippleby sent him before the public for the first time, to bring out a whip which had been left there.

"Noddy Newman!" shouted a boy among the spectators.

The young athlete heard his name, and too late he remembered that he had exposed himself to the gaze of the constables, who might by this time be in search of him. During the rest of the afternoon he kept himself out of sight; but the mischief had already been done.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RING-MASTER.

WHEN the performance was over, Noddy, with the assistance of one of his companions, dressed himself in "trunk and tights," and appeared in the ring to take his first lesson in graceful movements. He could turn the somersets, and go through with the other evolutions; but there was a certain polish needed--so the ring-master said--to make them pass off well. He was to assume a graceful position at the beginning and end of each act; he must recover himself without clumsiness; he must bow, and make a flourish with his hands, when he had done a brilliant thing.

Noddy had not much taste for this branch of the profession. He did not like the bowing and the flourishing. If the feat itself did not please the people, he could not win them by smirking. He was much pleased with his costume, and this kept him good-natured, under the severe training of the ring-master, for a time. Mr. Whippleby was coarse and rough in his manners. During the show he had been all grace and elegance, and did not use any big words, but now he was as rough as a bear, and swore like a pirate. He was just like a cat's paw,--he kept the sharp claws down while the dear people were present; but now he thrust them out.

Noddy found the "business" was no joke. Mr. Whippleby did not so regard it, now that the training had commenced; and the novice found that he had placed himself under a very tyrannical master. He made his bows and flourished his arms, with all the grace he could command for a time; but he did not come up to his severe teacher's standard.

"Do that again," said Mr. Whippleby, with savage emphasis. "Don't hurry it."

Noddy did it again, as slowly as he could; but he was apparently just as far from perfection as before.

"If you don't do better than that, I'll put the whip around your legs!" shouted the impatient ring-master. "One of the mules could do it better."

"I did it as well as I could," replied Noddy, rather tartly.

"You will do it better than that, or your legs will smart. Now do it again."

Noddy obeyed. He did not think the ring-master really intended to strike him with the long whip he held in his hand, but supposed he was so much in the habit of threatening the clown with the lash, that he did it now from the force of habit. His last attempt did not satisfy Mr. Whippleby, who stormed at him more furiously than before.

"Do you think I have nothing better to do than waste my time over a blockhead like you? I haven't had my bitters yet. Now do it again; and if you fail this time you will catch it."

Noddy turned his somerset; but he had hardly recovered himself before he received a smart cut from the whip in the tenderest part of his leg. There was a young lion in the novice, and a blow from any man was more than he could endure. He expressed his mind in regard to the outrage with such freedom, that Mr. Whippleby lost his temper, if he ever had any to lose, and he began to lash the unfortunate youth in the most brutal manner.

Noddy, finding there was no satisfaction to be obtained by facing the ring-master, fled from the spot, leaping up on the seats where the spectators sat. He was maddened to fury by the harsh treatment he had received; and thirsting for vengeance, he seized whatever missiles he could find, and hurled them at his persecutor. His legs seemed to be on fire from the effects of the blows he had received. He rubbed them for a moment, while he hurled the most bitter denunciations at the ring-master.

"Now, come down, and try again," called Mr. Whippleby, who did not seem to be much disconcerted by what had taken place, when he had in some measure recovered his equanimity.

"No, I won't!" replied Noddy.

"Have you got enough, Mr. Arthur De Forrest?"

"I will give *you* enough before you get through."

While this colloquy was going on, the manager appeared in the ring. Whippleby laughingly told him what had happened, and he seemed to be much amused by it; but the ring-master had certainly changed his tone at the appearance of the "head man."

"Come, my boy, come down, and let me see how well you do your business," said the manager.

"I've had enough of it," replied Noddy, as he returned to the ring. "I'm not a horse, and I'm not going to be treated like one."

"That's your initiation, my boy," said Whippleby. "We always try new beginners in that way, to find out what they are made of."

"You will find out what I'm made of, if you hit me again with that whip."

"I know now. You won't need any more, if you try to do what you are told."

"I'm not going to be whipped, whether I try or not," added Noddy, doggedly.

"You shall not be whipped, my boy," said the manager. "Now show me your ground act."

The novice was about to comply,--for he had already come to the conclusion that the "head man" would protect him,--when he saw two men enter the tent. They did not belong to the company, and Noddy was quite sure he had often seen them in Whitestone.

"We don't allow visitors in here now," said the manager.

"We come on business. There is a boy here that we want to find," replied one of the men.

"You must leave the tent," said the manager, rather sharply.

"I am a constable, and there is a boy about here that I want."

"What's his name?"

"They call him Noddy Newman."

"What do you want of him?"

"That's my business," answered the constable, rudely. "The boy came into the ring this afternoon during the show, and I suppose he belongs to the company."

"That's the fellow!" exclaimed the other constable, pointing to Noddy, who was trying to take himself off without being noticed.

"That's Arthur De Forrest," interposed the manager.

"No, it isn't; I've known him this five years," said the man who had recognized the culprit.

Both of them walked towards Noddy, with the intention, apparently, of laying violent hands on him; but the young gentleman in "trunk and tights" was not prepared to yield up his personal liberty, and he retreated.

The officers were in a position where they could stop him from leaving the tent by either of the two entrances; and Noddy, finding his exit prevented, seized a rope which was hanging down by the centre-pole, and climbed up out of the reach of his pursuers.

"What do you want of me?" demanded the young athlete, as he perched himself in a comfortable position on the "slack-rope," which was suspended to the pole.

"We shall not do you any harm, my boy," said one of the officers.

"What do you want of me?"

"There is good news for you; and you are wanted over at Squire Wriggs's office."

"I know ye! You want to take me to the court-house. You can't humbug me," said Noddy, fully confirmed in his suspicions by the conduct of the men.

"We won't hurt you."

"You want to take me up."

"No, we don't; we only want to take you up to Squire Wriggs's office. It's all for your good."

"No, you don't," replied Noddy. "You can't cheat me."

"We don't want to cheat you. We are only sent to find you. We will not arrest you."

"I know better. You can't fool me. I heard Squire Wriggs say he wanted to take me up to the court-house; and you don't catch me near no court-house. I know what you mean."

"You are mistaken, my boy. Come down, and I will tell you all about it."

"When I do, you let me know," replied Noddy, who felt so secure from arrest in his present quarters that he expressed his mind with perfect freedom.

"We promise not to arrest you," persisted the constable who did the talking. "We have been looking for you all day."

"You may look another day, if you like," added the defiant refugee. "You want me for setting fire to the boat-house; but I am not to blame, if I did do it."

"We don't know anything about the boat-house; Squire Wriggs has a lot of money for you."

"You can't catch an old bird in any such trap as that," answered Noddy, shaking his head significantly.

The officers used all their powers of persuasion to induce him to come down; but Noddy, satisfied that they had been sent by Squire Wriggs, was fully persuaded that they were trying to deceive him. The story about a "lot of money" for a poor boy like him, who had not a friend in the world, was too absurd, in his estimation, to be entertained for a moment. He had heard the squire speak to Mr. Grant about thirty thousand dollars; but such a sum was beyond his comprehension. He did not believe any man, not even the owner of Woodville, had so much money; and of course it was nothing to him.

The constables got out of patience at last; and though they showed no signs of anger or malice, they exhibited an intention to catch him, which was much worse. One of them commenced the ascent of the pole in the centre of the tent. The circus people, who seemed to be in full sympathy with Noddy, remained neutral, for the intruders were officers of the law, and it was not prudent to oppose them.

Noddy perceived the object of his pursuers, and grasping one of the tent-ropes, he scrambled up to the very apex of the canvas structure, and crawled through the aperture around the pole. From this point he slid down to the short poles, and then dropped upon the ground, before the man in the ring could pass round to the outside of the tent. Dodging under the curtains, he reached the place which served as a dressing-room. Removing his "trunks," he hurried on his clothes, and rushed out into the open air again.

His persecutors were not in sight, and he did not lose a moment in putting a safe distance between himself and them. Precisely as a well-educated duck or other water-fowl would have done, he hastened to the river, as his most natural element. He had made a complete circuit of the town in his flight. He did not dare to show himself to a living being; for it seemed to him just as though the whole country was after him. When he reached the river, he sat down on the bank, exhausted by his efforts and by the excitement of the afternoon.

"I reckon I've got about circus enough," said he to himself,--for there was no one else to whom he could say it. "That Whippleby is worse than a heathen. I don't like any of them."

He rubbed his legs, which were not yet done smarting; and the pain seemed to be an emphatic protest against circuses in general, and the "Great Olympian Circus" in particular. But whether he liked the circus or not, it was no longer safe for him to remain with the company. He had taken "French leave" of the manager, and had cheated him out of the tights which enveloped his body from neck to heels. This thought reminded him that they did not feel at all comfortable, and he wished the manager had his own again.

Having abandoned the circus profession in disgust, he wondered what he should do next. It was useless for him to stay in the vicinity of Woodville; and the only safe plan for him to adopt was, to go away to some other part of the country, or go to sea at once. He could not tolerate the idea of leaving without letting Bertha know where he was. The officers were on his track, and he could not hope always to escape them. The court-house was terrible, and prompt action was necessary.

He must have a sight of Bertha, even if he did not speak to her; and at the risk of being captured, he determined to stay in the neighborhood of Woodville till the next morning. Near the place where he sat there was a skiff moored to the bank. He hauled it in, and took up the oars. He did not mean to steal it, only to borrow it till the next morning. With this comfortable reflection he cast off the painter, and pulled over to the other side of the river.

It was now quite late in the evening. He had not eaten any supper, and, like other boys, he was always hungry at

meal times. He wanted something to eat; and it occurred to him that there were generally some crackers and cheese in the locker of the Greyhound, and he rowed down to her moorings. He found what he wanted there, and made a hearty supper. He was satisfied then, and soon went to sleep in the stern-sheets of the sail-boat.

Fortunately for him he waked up about daylight, and was not seen by any of the early risers at Woodville. Appropriating the rest of the crackers and cheese for his breakfast, he got into the skiff and rowed up to the Glen, where he hoped, in the course of the forenoon, to see Bertha.



CHAPTER VIII.

GOOD-BYE TO WOODVILLE.

BERTHA often walked to the Glen before breakfast, and Noddy expected to find her there on the present occasion. As she did not appear, he followed the path toward Woodville, and actually reached the lawn which surrounded the mansion before he thought of the danger he incurred. But it was breakfast time in the servants' quarters, and he was not seen.

Keeping on the outskirts of the lawn, where he could make good his retreat in case of necessity, he walked nearly around to the pier, and was so fortunate as to discover Bertha at the turn of a winding path, near his route. The sight of her filled him with emotion, and brought to his mind the remembrance of the many happy days he had spent in her presence. He could hardly restrain the tears which the thought of leaving the place brought to his eyes, though Noddy was not given to the feminine custom of weeping.

"Miss Bertha," said he, as she approached the spot where he stood.

She started back with alarm; but he stepped forward from the concealment of the bushes, and with a smile of pleasure she recognized him.

"Why, Noddy, is that you?" said she, walking towards the spot where he stood.

"It's me, Miss Bertha; but I suppose you don't want to see me now."

"I am very glad to see you. What did you go away for?"

"Because they were going to put me in the court-house."

"In the court-house!" exclaimed Bertha, who was better acquainted with legal affairs than her pupil.

"Yes, for setting the boat-house afire."

"I don't think they intended to take you to the court-house."

"O, I know they did. I have had two constables after me; but I got away from them. Besides, I heard Squire Wriggs say they were going to take me to the court-house. I heard him say so myself."

"Perhaps it is so," said Bertha, musing. "Squire Wriggs came to see father yesterday morning. They went out together, and were speaking of you as they left the house."

"I'm glad you didn't have anything to do with it," said Noddy, delighted to find that Bertha was not one of his persecutors.

Then, with the utmost simplicity, and apparently with the feeling that he was a persecuted youth, he told her everything that had occurred from the time he first saw Mr. Grant and Squire Wriggs on the lawn.

"I don't know what my father's plans are," said Bertha, sadly; "but he thinks it is no longer safe to permit you to roam about the place. He is afraid you will set the house on fire, or do some other terrible thing."

"But I wouldn't, Miss Bertha," protested Noddy.

"Why did you do such a wicked thing?"

"I couldn't help it."

"Yes, you could, Noddy. That's only making a bad matter worse. Of course you could help setting a building on fire."

"It wasn't my fault, Miss Bertha," stammered he; "I can't explain it now--perhaps some time I may; and when you understand it, you won't think so bad of me."

"If there is anything about it I don't know, why don't you tell me?" added Bertha, mystified by his strange remark.

"I can't say anything now. Please don't ask me anything about it, Miss Bertha. I'm not half so much to blame as you think I am; but I set the fire, and they are after me for it. They have used all sorts of tricks to catch me; but I'm not going into any court-house, or any tinker's shop."

"What tricks do you mean?"

"They said they had a lot of money for me, and that Squire Wriggs wouldn't do me any harm."

"Well, I don't know anything about that. Father went over to Whitestone with Squire Wriggs, after you ran away. He went over again last night, after he came from the city, and I haven't seen him for more than a moment since."

"He is going to send me to the court-house," said Noddy, fully satisfied that Bertha knew nothing about the proceedings of her father. "I am going to sea, now."

"To sea, Noddy?"

"Yes, I'm going to work and win, as you told me, and when I come back I shall be respectable."

Bertha had her doubts on this point. She had almost lost all hope of her *protege*, and she did not think that a voyage in the fore-castle of a ship would be likely to improve his manners or his morals.

"I can't let you go, Noddy," said she.

"I must go; if I stay here they will put me in prison. You don't want to see me put in prison, Bertha."

"I don't."

"Then what can I do? The officers are after me this moment."

"But I shall have to tell my father that I have seen you."

"You may do that; and you may tell him, too, that it won't be any use for him to try to find me, for I shall keep out of the way. If they catch me they will be smarter than I am," added Noddy, confidently.

"I want to see you again, Noddy, after I have talked with father about you. I don't believe he intends to send you to prison."

"I know he does. I come over here to see you before I went away. I couldn't go without seeing you, or I shouldn't have come. I may never see you again, for I shan't run any more risks after this."

Bertha said all she could to induce him to meet her again; but the cunning youth was afraid that some trap might be set to catch him, and he assured her that this was positively his last appearance at Woodville for the present. He was satisfied that Mr. Grant had taken the case into his own hands, and that she could not save him if she would.

"Now, good-bye, Miss Bertha," said he, wiping a tear from his face.

"Don't go, Noddy," pleaded she.

"I must."

"You haven't any clothes but those you have on, and you have no money."

"I don't want any. I can get along very well. Won't you shake hands with me before I go?"

"Certainly, I will," replied she, giving him her hand. "You will not let me do anything for you now?"

"You have done more than I deserve. Good-bye, Miss Bertha," said he, pressing the hand he held.

"Good-bye, Noddy," replied she. "Good-bye, if you must go."

"There comes your father," exclaimed he, as he bounded off into the grove with the speed of an antelope.

"Was that Noddy?" asked Mr. Grant, as he joined Bertha a few minutes later.

"Yes, father."

"Why didn't you tell me he was here, Bertha?"

"He came but a few moments ago. He came to bid me good-bye."

"Where is he going?"

"He is going to sea. He says you intend to take him to the court-house."

"This is very unfortunate. A most remarkable event in regard to the boy has occurred, which I haven't time to tell

you about now. It is very important that I should find him at once."

"I don't think you can catch him. He is very much afraid of being sent to prison."

"I had no intention of sending him to prison," laughed Mr. Grant.

"But he heard Squire Wriggs say he must take him over to the court."

"That was for another matter--in a word, to have a guardian appointed, for Noddy will be a rich man when he is of age."

"Noddy?" exclaimed Bertha.

"Yes; but I haven't a moment to spare. I have been at work on his affairs since yesterday morning. They are all right now; and all we want to enable us to complete the business is the presence of the boy."

"Poor fellow! He is terribly worked up at the idea of going to the court-house, or even to a tinker's shop, as he calls it."

"Well, he is running away from his own fortune and happiness; and I must find him."

"I hope you will, father," said Bertha, earnestly, as Mr. Grant hastened away to organize a pursuit of the refugee.

All the male servants on the place were summoned, and several started off in the direction in which Noddy had retreated. The boatman and others were sent off in the boats; and the prospect was, that the fugitive would be captured within a few hours. As our story relates more especially to the runaway himself, we shall follow him, and leave the well-meaning people of Woodville to pursue their investigations alone.

When Noddy discovered Mr. Grant, he was satisfied that the gentleman saw him, for he quickened his pace, and walked towards the place where he stood holding Bertha's hand. He ran with all his might by the familiar paths till he reached the Glen. There were, at present, no signs of a pursuit; but he was confident that it would not be delayed, and he did not even stop to take breath. Rushing down to the water, he embarked in the skiff, and rowed up the river, taking care to keep in shore, where he could not be seen from below.

Above Van Alstine's Island, he crossed the river, and began to work his way down; but the white sails of the Greyhound were seen, with all the boats belonging to the estate, headed up stream. They were chasing him in earnest, and he saw that it was not safe to remain on the river.

"Do you know where Mr. Grover lives?" he asked of a ragged boy who was fishing on the bank of the river.

"Below Whitestone?"

"Yes."

"Will you take this boat down there?"

"I will," replied the boy, glad of the job, and willing to do it without any compensation.

Noddy had taken off the tights belonging to the circus company, and rolled them up in a bundle. In order to be as honest as Bertha had taught him to be,--though he was not always so particular,--he engaged the boy to leave them at the circus tent.

The boy got into the boat, and began his trip down the river. Noddy felt that he had been honest, and he was rather proud of the record he was to leave behind him; for it did not once occur to him that borrowing the boat without leave was only a little better than stealing it, even if he did return it.

The servants at Woodville and the constables at Whitestone were on his track, and he had no time to spare. Taking a road leading from the river, he walked away from it as fast as he could. About three miles distant, he found a road leading to the northward; and thinking it better to suffer by excess of prudence than by the want of it, he took this direction, and pursued his journey till he was so tired he could go no farther.

A farmer on the road gave him some dinner; and when he had rested himself, he resumed his walk. At sunset he reached a large town on the river, where he felt safe from pursuit until he saw the flaming hand-bills of the Great Olympian Circus, which was almost as bad as meeting one of the constables, for these worthies would expect to find him at the tent, and probably were on the watch for him.

Noddy was too tired to walk any farther that day. He wanted to reach some large seaport, like New York or Boston,

where he could find a vessel bound on a foreign voyage. He was almost afraid to go to the former city, for he had heard about the smart detectives they have there, who catch any person guilty of crime, though they never saw him before. He had told Bertha that he intended to go to sea; and he was afraid that Mr. Grant would be on the watch for him, or set some of these detectives to catch him, if he went there.

It was almost time for the steamers for Albany, which went up in the night, to reach the town, and he determined to go on board of one, and proceed as far up the river as he could with the small sum of money in his possession. He soon found the landing-place, and presently a steamer came along.

"Where do you want to go, boy?" asked one of the officers of the boat.

"I want to go to Albany; but I haven't money enough to pay my fare."

"How much money have you got?"

"Thirty-five cents. I will go as far as that will pay my fare."

"That will only be to the next landing-place."

"Couldn't you give me some work to do, to pay my fare up to Albany?"

The officer happened to be rather pleased with Noddy, and told him he might stand by and help land the baggage at the stopping-places. He gave the little wanderer some supper in the mess-room, after the boat got off, and Noddy was as grateful as though the man had given him a gold mine. When the steamer made another landing, he worked with all his might, and was highly commended for his skill and activity.

And so he passed the night, sleeping between the stoppages, and working like a mule at every landing. In the morning the boat reached Albany, and the officer gave him his breakfast with the engineers. Noddy felt safe from pursuit now; he went on shore, and walked about the city, thinking what he should do next.



CHAPTER IX.

AN ATTEMPT TO WORK AND WIN.

BOSTON was two hundred miles distant, and Noddy was principally excited to know how he should get there, for he had decided to ship in that city. It would take him a week to go on foot, and his funds were now completely exhausted, so that he could not pay his fare by railroad. If he could neither ride nor walk, the question was narrowed down to a point where it needed no further consideration.

"Here, boy, do you want a job?" said a gentleman, coming out of a dwelling with a valise and a large bundle in his hands.

"Yes, sir; thank you, sir," replied Noddy, springing forward, and taking the heavier articles, without giving the gentleman the trouble to state what he wanted of him.

This incident seemed to solve the problem for him. He could remain in Albany long enough to earn a sufficient sum of money to pay his fare to Boston. He followed the gentleman to the railroad station, and handed the valise to the baggage-master. The gentleman gave him a quarter of a dollar for his services. It was a liberal return for the short time he had been employed, and a few more such jobs as that would soon put him in funds.

Noddy was sanguine now that he could earn money with entire ease, and all the difficulties which had beset him began to disappear. There was something exceedingly pleasant in the idea of being independent; of putting his hand into his pocket and always finding some money there which had been earned by his own labor. It was a novel sensation to him.

"Work and win!" exclaimed he, as he walked out of the railroad station. "I understand it all now, and I may thank Miss Bertha for the idea."

In the enthusiasm of the moment, he began to consider whether it would not be better to remain on shore and amass a fortune, which he believed could be done in a short time. He could carry bundles and valises till he got money enough to buy a horse and wagon, when he could go into the business on a more extensive scale. The road to fortune was open to him; all his trials and difficulties had suddenly vanished, and he had only to reach out his hand to pluck the golden harvest.

The rattling of a train which had just arrived disturbed this pleasant dream, and Noddy hastened back to secure the fruit of his brilliant resolution. There were plenty of gentlemen with bags and valises in their hands, but not a single one of them wanted any assistance; and some of them answered his civil salutation with insult and harshness. The experiment did not work so well as he had anticipated, for Noddy's great expectations led him to believe that he should make about half a dollar out of the arrival of this train, instead of which he did not make a single cent.

"Work and win; but where are you going to get your work?" said Noddy to himself.

No more trains were to arrive for some hours, and he posted himself in the street, asking for a job whenever there was the least prospect of obtaining one. At noon, Noddy was hungry, and was obliged to spend half his morning's earnings for a coarse dinner, for his circumstances did not permit him to indulge in the luxury of roast beef and plum pudding. During the afternoon he lay in wait for a job at the railroad stations, and in the most public places of the city. But the sum of his earnings was only five cents.

"Work and win!" said he. "Sum total of day's work, thirty cents; not enough to buy what I want to eat. It don't pay."

If work did not pay, stealing certainly would not; and we are happy to say, Bertha Grant had done her duty by him so faithfully, that he did not feel tempted to resort to any irregular means of obtaining a subsistence. If work did not pay, it was only because he could not obtain it. He had not yet struck a productive vein. He had been a fishing a great many times; but when he had no success, he neither concluded that fish were not good, nor that there were no fish in the river.

There was a train to arrive, after dark, from New York city, and he determined to make one more effort to improve his fortunes. As the passengers came out of the station with small parcels of baggage in their hands, he offered his services to them. His heart almost leaped with rapture when a gentleman handed him a small carpet-bag, and told him to follow to the Delavan House. He took the bag, and then, to his horror, he discovered that the gentleman was Mr. Grant!

What had brought him to Albany? As Noddy's sphere of observation was confined to the little world of his own affairs, he concluded that the owner of Woodville must be there for the purpose of arresting him. Probably some of

those smart constables had traced him to the town where he had embarked for Albany. Again the horrors of the court-house, the jail, and the tinker's shop were present to his mind. He had taken the valise, and was now following Mr. Grant to the hotel. It was dark at the place where he had received the carpet-bag, otherwise he would have been recognized.

Noddy had no doubt in regard to the correctness of his conclusions; and he could not help thinking that a great man, like Mr. Grant, was taking a good deal of pains to capture a poor boy, like him. His arrest was a matter of a great deal more consequence than he had supposed, which made it all the more necessary to his future peace and happiness that he should escape. The bag tied him to his persecutor, or he would have run away as fast as he could. He could not carry off the baggage, for that would subject him to another penalty, even if he had been dishonest enough to do such a thing. He decided to follow Mr. Grant to the hotel, drop the bag, and run.

"Boy, do you know where the police office is?" said Mr. Grant, suddenly turning round upon him.

"No, sir," replied Noddy, whose natural boldness prompted him, when fairly cornered, to face the danger.

"What! Noddy?" exclaimed Mr. Grant. "I came to look for you."

"Thank you, sir," replied Noddy.

"You were a foolish fellow to run away. I'm not going to hurt you; neither is anybody else."

Noddy was not a little astonished to find Mr. Grant, in his own homely terms, "trying it on" in this manner. It was not strange that the constable, or even Squire Wriggs, should resort to deception to entrap him; but he was not quite prepared for it from the upright proprietor of Woodville. If he was wanted "bad enough" to induce a gentleman of wealth and position to make a journey to Albany after him, it was the very best reason in the world why he should get out of the way as soon as possible.

"How is Miss Bertha, sir?" asked Noddy, who did not know what else to say.

"She is quite well, and feels very badly now at your absence. You have made a great mistake, Noddy," replied Mr. Grant.

"Is Miss Fanny pretty well, sir?"

"Very well. We don't wish to injure you, or even to punish you, for setting the boat-house on fire. The worst that I shall do will be to send you----"

"Is Ben any better than he was?" continued Noddy, fully satisfied in his own mind in regard to the last remark.

"Ben is very well," said Mr. Grant, impatiently. "Now, you will come with me, Noddy, and not try to run away again."

"How is Mrs. Green and the rest of the folks?" asked Noddy, fully resolved that even Mr. Grant should not "pull wool over his eyes," as he quaintly expressed his view of this attempt to deceive him.

"She is well. Now come with me, Noddy. I will give you a good supper, and you shall have everything you need. Your circumstances have changed now, and you will be a rich man when you are of age."

"Have you heard from Mr. Richard lately, sir?"

"Never mind Richard, now. Come with me, Noddy. If you attempt to run away again, I shall be obliged to hand you over to a policeman."

That looked much more like it, in Noddy's opinion, and he had no doubt of Mr. Grant's entire sincerity in the last remark.

"I will follow you, sir," replied Noddy, though he did not intend to continue on this route much farther.

"You understand that I am your friend, Noddy, and that no harm shall come to you."

"Yes, sir; I understand that."

"Come here now, and walk by my side. I don't want to call a policeman to take charge of you."

Noddy did not want him to do so either, and did not intend that he should. He placed himself by the side of his powerful persecutor, as he still regarded him, and they walked together towards the hotel. The young refugee was nervous and uneasy, and watched with the utmost diligence for an opportunity to slip away. As they were crossing a street, a hack, approaching rapidly, caused Mr. Grant to quicken his pace in order to avoid being run over. Noddy,

burdened with the weight of the carpet-bag, did not keep up with him, and he was obliged to fall back to escape the carriage.

"Here, boy, you take this bag, and follow the owner to the hotel, and he will give you something," said Noddy to a ragged boy at the corner of the street.

Without waiting for an answer, he darted down the cross street, and made his best time in the rush for liberty.

The boy, to whom Noddy had given the bag, ran over the street, and placed himself behind Mr. Grant, whom he judged to be the owner of the baggage.

"Where is the other boy?" demanded Mr. Grant.

"Gone down State Street to find ten cents he lost there," replied the wicked boy. "I'll carry your bag, sir."

"But I want the boy! Which way did he go?" said Mr. Grant, in hurried tones.

"Down there, sir. His mother'll lick him if he don't find the ten cents he lost. I'll carry the bag."

But Mr. Grant was unwilling to trust his property to the hands of such a boy, and he immediately reclaimed it.

"I want that boy!" exclaimed Mr. Grant, in great agitation. "Which way did he go?"

"Down there," replied the ragged boy, pointing down a street in exactly the opposite direction from that taken by the fugitive.

But Mr. Grant was too wise a man to follow. He was in search of a policeman just then. As these worthy functionaries are never at hand when they are wanted, of course he did not find one. He called a carriage, and ordered the driver to convey him with all speed, and at double fare, to the police office. On his arrival, he immediately stated his business, and in a few hours the whole police force of the city were on the lookout for poor Noddy Newman.

The object of all this friendly solicitude was unconscious of the decided steps taken by Mr. Grant; but he ran till he had placed a safe distance between himself and his potent oppressor. He saw plenty of policemen in his flight, but he paid no attention to them, nor even thought what a powerful combination they formed against a weak boy like himself. He was satisfied, however, that he must leave the city; and when he was out of breath with running, he walked as nearly on a straight course as the streets would permit, till he reached the outskirts of the city.

"Stop that heifer!" shouted a man, who was chasing the animal.

Noddy headed her off, and she darted away in another direction. Our refugee was interested in the case at once; for he could not permit any horned beast to circumvent him. He ran as though he had not run before that evening, and brought the wayward animal up in a corner when the man came to his assistance.

"You are a smart boy," said the drover.

"That's so," puffed Noddy, modestly.

"If you haven't got nothin' better to do, I'll make it wuth your while to help drive these cattle down to the keers," added the man.

As Noddy had nothing better to do, he at once accepted the offer, without even stipulating the price. They started the heifer again, and she concluded to join the drove which was in the adjoining street. It was no easy matter to drive the animals, which were not accustomed to the ways of the city, through the streets, and Noddy won a great deal of credit for the vigor and agility with which he discharged his duty. They reached the ferry boat, and crossing, came to the "keers," into which the young drover assisted in loading the cattle.

His employer gave him a quarter of a dollar, which hardly came up to Noddy's expectations; for it seemed to him like working very hard, and winning very little for it. The man asked him some questions about his home. Noddy told as much of the truth as suited his purpose, and concluded by saying he wanted to get to Boston, where he could find something to do.

"O, you want sunthin to do--do ye?" replied the drover. "Well, I'll give you your victuals, and what clothes you want, to help me drive."

This was not exactly Noddy's idea of "work and win," and he told the drover he wanted to go to sea.

"I'll tell you what I'll do. You may go down to Brighton, and help take keer of the cattle in the keers, and I'll take keer

of you on the way."

Noddy was more than satisfied with all these "keers," and he promptly accepted the offer. In half an hour the train started, and he was on the way to Brighton, which is only a few miles from Boston.

CHAPTER X.

POOR MOLLIE.

NODDY'S duty on the journey to Brighton was to assist in keeping the cattle on their feet. When the poor animals become weary, they are disposed to lie down; but they are so closely packed that this is not possible for more than one or two in a car; and if one lies down he is liable to be trampled to death by the others. The persons in charge of the cattle, therefore, are obliged to watch them, and keep them on their feet.

The train occasionally stopped during the night, and was several times delayed, so that it did not reach its destination till the middle of the following forenoon. The drover provided him a hearty breakfast in the morning, and Noddy was in no haste. The future was still nothing but a blank to him, and he was in no hurry to commence the battle of life.

When he arrived at Brighton he assisted in driving the cattle to the pens; and then, with half a dollar, which the drover gave him for his extra services, he started for Boston, whose spires he could even then see in the distance. He reached the city, and from the Mill Dam--the long bridge he had just crossed--he walked to the Common. Being quite worn out by two nights of hard work, and the long walk he had just taken, he seated himself on one of the stone benches near the Frog Pond. It was a warm and pleasant day, and he watched the sports of the happy children who were at play, until his eyelids grew heavy, and he hardly knew the State House from the Big Tree.

For a boy of his age he had undergone a severe experience. The exciting circumstances which surrounded him had kept him wide awake until his physical nature could endure no more. Leaving the seat he had occupied, he sought out the quietest place he could find, and stretching himself on the grass, went to sleep.

It was nearly sunset when he awoke; but he felt like a new being, ready now to work and win at any business which might offer. He wandered about the streets of the city for two hours, and then ate a hearty supper at a restaurant. It was too late to do anything that night, and he asked a policeman to tell him where he could sleep. The officer, finding he was a friendless stranger, gave him a bed at the station-house.

In the morning he made his way to the wharves, and during the long day he went from vessel to vessel in search of a berth as cabin-boy. He asked for this situation, because he had frequently heard the term; but he was willing to accept any position he could obtain. No one wanted a cabin-boy, or so small a sailor as he was. Night came on again, with a hopeless prospect for the future; and poor Noddy began to question the wisdom of the course he had taken. A tinker's shop, with plenty to eat, and a place to sleep, was certainly much better than wandering about the streets.

He could not help thinking of Woodville, and the pleasant room he had occupied in the servants' quarters; of the bountiful table at which he had sat; and, above all, of the kindness and care which Miss Bertha had always bestowed upon him. With all his heart he wished he was there; but when he thought of the court-house and the prison, he was more reconciled to his fate, and was determined to persevere in his efforts to obtain work.

It was the close of a long summer day. He had been wandering about the wharves at the north part of the city; and as the darkness came on, he walked up Hanover Street in search of a policeman, who would give him permission to sleep another night in the station-house. As he did not readily find one, he turned into another street. It made but little difference to him where he went, for he had no destination, and he was as likely to find a policeman in one place as another.

He had gone but a short distance before he saw a crowd of ragged boys pursuing and hooting at a drunken man who was leading a little girl ten or eleven years of age,--or rather, she was trying to lead him. Under ordinary circumstances, we are afraid that Noddy would have joined the ragamuffins and enjoyed the senseless sport as well as any of them; but his own sorrows raised him above this meanness in the present instance, and he passed the boys without a particle of interest in the fun.

He was going by the drunken man and the little girl, when one of the boldest of the pursuers rushed up and gave the man a push, which caused him to fall on the pavement. The young vagabonds raised a chorus of laughter, and shouted with all their might. The little girl, who was evidently the drunkard's daughter, did not desert him. She bent over him, and used all her feeble powers to assist him to his feet again.

"My poor father!" sobbed she; and her heart seemed to be broken by the grief and peril which surrounded her.

The tones with which these words were spoken touched the heart of Noddy; and without stopping to consider any troublesome questions, he sprang to the assistance of the girl. The man was not utterly helpless; and with the aid of

Noddy and his daughter he got upon his feet again. At that moment another of the unruly boys, emboldened by the feat of the first, rushed up and grasped the arm of the little girl, as if to pull her away from her father's support.

"Don't touch me! Don't touch me!" pleaded the grief-stricken girl, in tones so full of sorrow that our wanderer could not resist them, if her vagabond persecutor could.

He sprang to her assistance, and with one vigorous and well-directed blow, he knocked the rude assailant halfway across the street, and left him sprawling on the pavement. Noddy did not wait to see what the boy would do next, but turned his attention to the poor girl, whose situation, rather than that of her father, had awakened his sympathy.

"What is your father's name?" asked Noddy, who proceeded as though he had a sovereign remedy for the miseries of the situation.

"Captain McClintock," sobbed the little girl, still clinging to her father, with no sting of reproach in her words or her manner.

"Don't cry, little girl; I will do what I can for you," said Noddy, warmly. "I can lick those boys, if I can't do anything more."

"Thank you!" replied the afflicted daughter. "If I can only get him down to the vessel, I shall be so glad!"

"Want to fight?" shouted the young ruffian, whom Noddy had upset, coming as near the party as he dared.

"I'll give you fight, if you come near me again," replied the champion of the poor girl.

"Come on, if you want to fight," cried the little bully, who had not the pluck to approach within twenty feet of his late assailant.

The crowd of boys still shouted, and some of them carried their hostility so far as to throw sticks and stones at the little party; but as long as they kept at a respectful distance, Noddy did not deem it wise to meddle with them, though he kept one eye on them, and stood ready to punish those who ventured too near.

"Come, Captain McClintock," said he, as he attempted to lead the drunken father, "let's go on board."

"Heave ahead, my hearty!" replied the captain, as he pressed forward, though his steps were so uncertain that his two feeble supporters could hardly keep him on his feet.

The remarkable trio passed down Fleet Street, and, after many difficulties and much "rough weather," reached the head of the wharf, where the little girl said her father's vessel lay. They were still closely followed by the merciless ragamuffins, who had pelted them with stones and sticks, until the patience of Noddy was severely tried.

"Come, my boy, now we'll--hic--now we'll go and--hic--go and take something 'fore we go on board," said the drunken captain, suddenly coming to a dead halt in the middle of the street.

"O, no, father!" cried the daughter; "let us go on board."

"Something to take, Mollie, and you shall--hic--you shall have some--hic--some soda water."

"I don't want any, father. Do come on board."

"You are a good girl, Mollie, and you shall--hic--you shall have some cake."

"Not to-night, father. We will get it in the morning," pleaded poor Mollie, trembling with apprehension for the consequences which must follow another glass of liquor.

"Come, Captain McClintock, let's go on board," said Noddy.

"Who are you?" demanded the inebriated man.

"I'm the best fellow out; and I want to see your vessel."

"You shall see her, my boy. If you are--hic--the best fellow out, come and take something with me," stammered the captain.

"Let's see the vessel first," replied Noddy, tugging away at the arm of the drunken man.

"She's a very fine--hic--fine vessel."

"Let me see her, then."

"Heave ahead, my jolly roebuck. I've got some of the best--hic--on board zever you tasted. Come along."

Noddy and Mollie kept him going till they reached the part of the wharf where the captain's vessel was moored; and the end of their troubles seemed to be at hand, when the boys, aware that their sport was nearly over, became very bold and daring. They pressed forward, and began to push the drunken man, until they roused his anger to such a degree that he positively refused to go on board till he chastised them as they deserved. He had broken away from his feeble protectors, and in attempting to pursue them, had fallen flat upon the planks which covered the wharf.

Mollie ran to his assistance; and as she did so, one of the boys pushed her over upon him. Noddy's blood was up in earnest, for the little girl's suffering made her sacred in his eyes. He leaped upon the rude boy, bore him down, and pounded him till he yelled in mortal terror. Some of the boldest of the ragamuffins came to his relief when they realized how hard it was going with him, and that he was in the hands of only one small boy.

Noddy was as quick as a flash in his movements, and he turned upon the crowd, reckless of consequences. One or two of the boys showed fight; but the young lion tipped them over before they could make up their minds how to attack him. The rest ran away. Noddy gave chase, and in his furious wrath felt able to whip the whole of them. He pursued them only a short distance; his sympathy for poor Mollie got the better even of his anger, and he hastened back to her side. As he turned, the cowardly boys turned also, and a storm of such missiles as the wharf afforded was hurled after him.

By this time two men from the vessel had come to the assistance of the captain, and raised him to his feet. He was still full of vengeance, and wanted to chastise the boys. The young ruffians followed Noddy down the wharf, and he was compelled, in self-defence, to turn upon them again, and in presence of the drunken man he punished a couple of them pretty severely. One of the sailors came to his aid, and the foe was again vanquished. The appearance of a policeman at the head of the wharf now paralyzed their efforts, and they disbanded and scattered.

"You are a good fellow!" exclaimed Captain McClintock, extending his hand to Noddy as he returned to the spot.

"The best fellow out," replied the little hero, facetiously, as he took the offered hand.

"So you be! Now come on board, and--hic--and take something."

"Thank you, captain. I should like to go on board of your vessel."

"Come along, then, my jolly fellow," added the captain, as he reeled towards the vessel. "You are a smart little--hic--you are a smart little fellow. If you hadn't--hic--licked them boys, I should--hic."

Noddy thought he did "hic;" but with the assistance of the sailors, the captain got on board, and went down into his cabin. His first movement was to bring out a bottle of gin and a couple of glasses, into which he poured a quantity of the fiery liquor. He insisted that Noddy should drink; but the boy had never tasted anything of the kind in his life; and from the lessons of Bertha and Ben he had acquired a certain horror of the cup, which had not been diminished by the incidents of the evening. He could not drink, and he could not refuse without making trouble with his intoxicated host.

But Mollie saw his difficulty, and slyly substituted a glass of water for the gin, which he drank. Captain McClintock was satisfied, and overcome by his last potion, he soon sank back on the locker, and dropped asleep. With the assistance of the mate he was put into the berth in his state-room, to sleep off the effects of his debauch.

"I'm so grateful to you!" exclaimed Mollie, when all her trials seemed to have ended.

"O, never mind me."

"Where do you live?"

"Nowhere."

"Have you no home?"

"No."

"Where do you stay?"

"Anywhere."

"Where were you going to sleep to-night?"

"Anywhere I could."

"Then you can sleep here."

Noddy was entirely willing, and one of the eight berths in the cabin was appropriated by the mate to his use.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SCHOONER ROEBUCK.

"WHAT is your name?" asked Mollie, when the arrangements for the night were completed.

"Noddy Newman."

"Noddy? What a queer name! That isn't your real name--is it?"

"Yes, I never knew any other."

Mollie was certainly a very pleasing young lady, and Noddy had become quite interested in her, as we always are in those to whom we are so fortunate as to render needed assistance. She had a pretty face, and her curly hair might have challenged the envy of many a fair damsel who was wicked enough to cherish such a feeling. There was nothing rough or coarse about her, and one would hardly have expected to find so lady-like a person in such a situation in life.

We make this statement in apology for the interest which Noddy took in the little maiden. The service he had rendered her was quite sufficient to create a kindly feeling towards her; and then she was so pretty, so modest, and so gentle, that his sympathy grew into admiration before she went to her little state-room. Mollie asked him a great many questions about his past life, and Noddy told her all he knew about himself--about Bertha, Fanny, and others at Woodville. He did not tell her about the affair of the boat-house, though he determined to do so at some future time, if he had the opportunity.

In return for all this information, Mollie told him that the schooner in which they then were was called the Roebuck; that she belonged to her father, and that they were bound to the Sandwich Islands, where the vessel was to run as a packet between certain islands, whose names she had forgotten. Captain McClintock belonged in the State of Maine, where Mollie's mother had died two years before. Her father had some property, and learning that there was a good chance to improve his fortunes at the Sandwich Islands, he had built the Roebuck for this purpose.

As these distant islands were to be his future home, he was to take his only child with him, and he had fitted up a state-room in the cabin, next to his own for her special use. Mollie told Noddy how much pleased she was with all the arrangements, and how happy she had been on the passage to Boston, where the Roebuck was to pick up an assorted cargo for the port of her destination. Then she wept when she thought of the terrible scenes through which she had just passed in the streets. She said her father did not often drink too much; that he was the very best father in the whole world; and she hoped he never would get intoxicated again as long as he lived.

Noddy hoped so too; and when the little maiden had finished her story, he thought she was almost equal to Miss Bertha; and he could not think of such a thing as parting with her in the morning, again to buffet the waves of disappointment on shore.

"Does your father want a boy on board of the vessel?" asked he.

"I don't know. Do you want to go with us?" said Mollie, with a smile which spoke the pleasure the thought afforded her.

"I should like to go with you first-rate," replied Noddy. "I want to do something, and earn some money for myself. I want to work."

"Then you shall go with us!" exclaimed Mollie. "Out where we are going is a nice place to get rich. My father is going to get rich out there, and then we are coming home again."

Poor child! She knew not what the future had in store for them.

The bells of the city rang for nine o'clock, and Mollie said she went to bed at this time.

"Can you read, Noddy?" asked she.

"Yes, some."

"I always read my Testament before I go to bed; I promised my mother, years ago, that I would; and I like to do it, too. I suppose you read your Testament every night--don't you?"

"Sometimes; that is, I did once," replied Noddy, in some confusion, for he could not help recalling the teachings of Bertha on this subject.

"Well, we will read it together. You would like to--wouldn't you?"

"Yes; I don't care if I do."

There was a want of enthusiasm on his part which was rather painful to the little maiden; but she got the Testament, and when she had read a few verses aloud, she passed the book to Noddy, who stumbled through his portion, and she then finished the chapter. She bade him good night, and retired to her state-room, leaving her new-made friend to meditate upon the singular events of the evening.

He did not meditate a great while--he never did. His thoughts were disposed to stray from one subject to another; and from the little maiden, he found himself wondering whether Mr. Grant had finished searching for him in Albany, and whether Miss Fanny had "let the cat out of the bag" yet. Noddy was too tired and sleepy to think a great while about anything; and he turned into his berth, and went to sleep.

Early in the morning Noddy was on his feet. He went on deck, and found that the Roebuck was a beautiful vessel, almost handsome enough to be a gentleman's yacht. He went upon the wharf, where he could obtain a fair view of her bow, and he was sure she would make good time with a fair breeze. When he had satisfied himself with the examination, he was more than ever inclined to go out in her.

When he went down into the cabin again, Mollie was there, setting the table for breakfast. She looked as fair and as fresh as a country maiden. She gave him a very friendly greeting.

"Do you do these things, Mollie?" asked he.

"O, yes; I always work, and do what I can. I like to do something."

"How old are you, Mollie?"

"Eleven last May."

"But you can't do this work when you are out at sea."

"O, yes, I can."

"You will be seasick."

"I never was sick, and I have been to sea a great deal with my father."

"How is the captain this morning?"

"I don't know; I haven't seen him yet," replied she, looking very sad, as she thought of her kind father's infirmity.

Captain McClintock soon came out of his state-room. He looked pale and haggard, and seemed to be thoroughly ashamed of himself for what he had done the evening before, as he ought to have been. Mollie sprang to him, as he stepped out of his room, and kissed him as lovingly as though he had never done a wrong thing in his life. He glanced at Noddy, as he entered the main cabin, and with a look of astonishment, as though his connection with the events of the previous evening were a blank to him.

The captain did not say a word to Noddy, which made the boy feel as though he was an intruder in the cabin; and when he had the opportunity, he went on deck, leaving Mollie to say whatever the circumstances required in explanation of his presence.

"I will never do it again, Mollie," said the fond father, as he kissed his daughter. "I am very sorry, and you must forgive me, my child."

He was a penitent man, and felt how great was the wrong he had done the poor child. He had taken her out to walk, and to see the sights of the city, and had become intoxicated. He remembered the whole scene, when the boys had chased him; and to Mollie, whom he loved with all his heart, he was willing to own his fault, and to make her happy by promising never to do the wrong again.

Mollie then told him about her conversation with Noddy, and of the boy's desire to go to sea with them. Captain McClintock remembered in part what the boy had done for them; and Mollie supplied what he had not seen, or had forgotten.

"Why, yes; we want a cabin-boy. I should have shipped one at home, if I could have found the right one," replied the captain. "You say he is a good boy?"

"I know he is. He wants to work."

"Does he know anything about a vessel? I want one who can go aloft, and shake out the top-gallant sail."

"He is used to boats and the water."

"Well, we will see what he is good for, after breakfast."

"I hope you will take him, for we have become fast friends."

"If he is good for anything, I will, Mollie. Call him down. Here comes the doctor with the grub."

The "doctor" was the black cook of the Roebuck, who was now descending the companion-way with the morning meal. Noddy was called, and Captain McClintock spoke very kindly to him. He inquired particularly into his knowledge of vessels, and wanted to know whether he would be afraid to go aloft. Noddy smiled, and thought he should not be afraid. He ate his breakfast with a boy's appetite, and then the captain took him on deck.

"Do you see that fore-top-gallant yard?" asked the captain.

"Yes, sir, I see it," replied Noddy, who had been thoroughly instructed in these matters by the old man-of-war's-man of Woodville, though he had no practical experience in seamanship, even on as large a scale as a topsail schooner, which was the rig of the Roebuck.

"Well, my boy, that's a pretty high place. Should you dare to go up there?"

"I think I should," answered Noddy.

"Let me see you do it."

"Now?"

"Yes. I want to see what you are good for. If we can't make a sailor of you, it won't be worth while to take you out to the Pacific. Let me see how long it will take you to run up to that fore-top-gallant yard."

Noddy started. Captain McClintock was evidently satisfied that it would make the boy dizzy; and that, perhaps, if he had to do this kind of work, he would not care to make a voyage. Mollie stood by her father's side, deeply interested in the experiment, and fearful that her heroic friend would fail to meet her father's expectations, thus depriving her of a pleasant companion on her long voyage.

The candidate for a position on the Roebuck skipped lightly forward to the fore-shrouds of the vessel, ran up, as chipper as a monkey, to the mast head, then up the fore-topmast rigging to the yard. Planting his feet in the foot-ropes, he danced out to the port yard-arm. At this point he astonished the spectators below by performing certain feats which he had seen at the Great Olympian Circus. Descending from the yard, he grasped the main-topmast stay, and ran over upon it to the main-topmast, and then made his way to the deck by the main-topmast back-stay.

"You'll do, my boy!" said the captain, emphatically. "You will make a smart sailor."

"Am I to go with you, sir?" asked Noddy.

"Yes, if you like."

"What will you give me?"

This was a more difficult question; but the captain finally agreed to give him eight dollars a month, and to advance money enough to buy him an outfit. Mollie actually danced about the deck with joy when the terms were arranged, and it was certain that Noddy was to go on the voyage.

The boy's work had been carefully stated by the captain. He was to take care of the cabin, wait upon the captain and his daughter at table, and do duty forward when required. He was to have a berth in the cabin, and was not to be in either watch, unless the vessel became short-handed.

"Now we shall be happy!" exclaimed Mollie, who had already formed many plans for the long and lonely cruise.

"I think we shall. Do you know when we sail, Mollie?"

"Perhaps to-day; perhaps not till to-morrow."

"I want to write a letter to Miss Bertha before we go."

"That's right, Noddy; never forget your friends. I will give you pen, ink, and paper, by and by."

In the forenoon Captain McClintock took the young sailor ashore, and purchased for him a supply of clothing. Noddy always dressed like a sailor at Woodville. This was Ben's idea, and it was quite proper, as his work was in the boats. His new garments were not strange to him, therefore, though they were much coarser than those he wore.

After dinner the captain went on shore alone to do his business, and Noddy wrote his letter. About five o'clock he returned, and poor Mollie was dreadfully grieved to find that he was partially intoxicated. He immediately gave the order to get under way, and went down into the cabin, leaving the mate to haul the vessel out of the dock.

Noddy made himself as useful as possible, and in a short time the Roebuck was clear of the wharf. The captain came on deck again, when the jib was hoisted, and the sails began to draw. The voyage had actually commenced, and Noddy did not believe that Mr. Grant and the constables would be able to catch him.



CHAPTER XII.

THE DRUNKEN CAPTAIN.

"Lay aloft, and help shake out the fore-topsail," said the captain to Noddy, who was standing by the wheel-man, watching the movements of the vessel. "Be lively! What are you staring at?"

The captain's tones were stern and ugly. He had evidently taken another glass of gin since he came on board. He was sufficiently intoxicated to be unreasonable, though he could walk straight, and understood perfectly what he was about. Noddy did not like the harsh tones in which the order was given, and he did not move as lively as he would have done if the words had been spoken pleasantly. He had not yet learned the duty of prompt obedience, be the tones what they may.

He went aloft, and helped the men who were at work on the topsail. As soon as the sheets were hauled home, the captain hailed him from the deck, and ordered him to shake out the fore-top-gallant sail. Noddy had moved so leisurely before, that the command came spiced with a volley of oaths; and the cabin-boy began to feel that he was getting something more than he had bargained for. He shook out the sail, and when the yard had been raised to its proper position, he went on deck again.

The Roebuck was dashing briskly along with a fresh southerly breeze; and if Noddy had not been troubled with a suspicion that something was wrong, he would have enjoyed the scene exceedingly. He had begun to fear that Captain McClintock was a tyrant, and that he was doomed to undergo many hardships before he saw his native land again.

"Don't be troubled, Noddy," said Mollie, in a low tone, as she placed herself by his side at the lee rail. "My father isn't cross very often."

"I don't like to be spoken to in that way," replied he, trying to banish a certain ill feeling which was struggling for expression in his words and manner.

"You mustn't mind that, Noddy. That's the way all sea captains speak."

"Is it?"

"It is indeed, Noddy. You must get used to it as quick as you can."

"I'll try," answered the cabin-boy; but he did not feel much like trying; on the contrary, he was more disposed to manifest his opposition, even at the risk of a "row," or even with the certain prospect of being worsted in the end.

Mollie, hoping that he would try, went aft again. She knew what her father was when partially intoxicated, and she feared that one who was high-spirited enough to face a dozen boys of his own size and weight, as Noddy had done in the street, would not endure the harsh usage of one made unreasonable by drinking. Some men are very cross and ugly when they are partially intoxicated, and very silly and good-natured when they are entirely steeped in the drunkard's cup. Such was Captain McClintock. If he continued his potations up to a certain point, he would pass from the crooked, cross-grained phase to that of the jolly, stupid, noisy debauchee. Entirely sober, he was entirely reasonable.

"Here, youngster!" called the captain, as he stepped forward to the waist, where Noddy was looking over the rail.

"Sir," replied Noddy rather stiffly, and without turning his head.

"Do you hear?" yelled the captain, filled with passion at the contempt with which he was treated by the boy.

"I hear," said Noddy, turning round as slowly as though he had a year in which to complete his revolution.

"Swab up that deck there; and if you don't move a little livelier than you have yet, I'll try a rope's end to your legs."

"No, you won't!" retorted Noddy, sharply, for he could endure a whipping as easily as he could a threat.

"Won't I?" cried the captain, as he seized a piece of rope from one of the belaying pins. "We'll see."

He sprang upon the high-spirited boy, and began to beat him in the most unmerciful manner. Noddy attempted to get away from him, but the captain had grasped him by the collar, and held on with an iron grip.

"Let me alone!" roared Noddy. "I'll knock your brains out if you don't let me alone!"

"We'll see!" gasped Captain McClintock, furious with passion and with gin.

Unfortunately for him, he did see when it was too late; for Noddy had laid hold of a wooden belaying pin, and aimed a blow with it at the head of his merciless persecutor. He did not hit him on the head, but the blow fell heavily on his shoulder, causing him to release his hold of the boy. Noddy, puffing like a grampus from the violence of the struggle, rushed forward to the forecastle.

The captain ordered the sailors to stop him; but either because they were not smart enough, or because they had no relish for the business, they failed to catch him, and the culprit ran out on the bowsprit. The angry man followed him as far as the bowsprit bitts, but prudence forbade his going any farther.

"Come here, you young rascal!" shouted the captain.

"I won't," replied Noddy, as he perched himself on the bight of the jib-stay.

"Come here, I say!"

"I'll go overboard before I go any nearer to you. I'm not going to be pounded for nothing."

"You'll obey orders aboard this vessel," replied the captain, whose passion was somewhat moderated by the delay which kept him from his victim.

"I'm ready to obey orders, and always have been," answered Noddy, who had by this time begun to think of the consequences of his resistance.

"Will you swab up the deck, as I told you?"

"I will, sir; but I won't be whipped by no drunken man."

"Drunken man!" repeated the captain. "You shall be whipped for that, you impudent young villain!"

The captain mounted the heel of the bowsprit, and was making his way up to the point occupied by the refractory cabin-boy, when Mollie reached the forecastle, and grasped her father in her little arms.

"Don't, father, don't!" pleaded she.

"Go away, Mollie," said he, sternly. "He is impudent and mutinous, and shall be brought to his senses."

"Stop, father, do stop!" cried Mollie, piteously.

He might as well stop, for by this time Noddy had mounted the jib-stay, and was halfway up to the mast head.

"He called me a drunken man, Mollie, and he shall suffer for it!" replied Captain McClintock, in tones so savage that the poor girl's blood was almost frozen by them.

"Stop, father!" said she, earnestly, as he turned to move aft again.

"Go away, child."

"He spoke the truth," replied she, in a low tone, as her eyes filled with tears, and she sobbed bitterly.

"The truth, Mollie!" exclaimed her father, as though the words from that beloved child had paralyzed him.

"Yes, father, you have been drinking again. You promised me last night--you know what you promised me," said she, her utterance broken by the violence of her emotions.

He looked at her in silence for an instant; but his breast heaved under the strong feelings which agitated him. That glance seemed to overcome him; he dropped the rope's end, and, rushing aft, disappeared down the companion-way. Mollie followed him into the cabin, where she found him with his head bent down upon the table, weeping like an infant.

Noddy leisurely descended from his perch at the mast head, from which he had witnessed this scene without hearing what was said; indeed, none of the crew had heard Mollie's bitter words, for she had spoken them in an impressive whisper.

"Well, youngster, you have got yourself into hot water," said the mate, when the boy reached the deck.

"I couldn't help it," replied Noddy, who had begun to look doubtfully at the future.

"Couldn't help it, you young monkey!"

Noddy was disposed at first to resent this highly improper language; but one scrap at a time was quite enough, and he wisely concluded not to notice the offensive remark.

"I'm not used to having any man speak to me in that kind of a way," added Noddy, rather tamely.

"You are not in a drawing-room! Do you think the cap'n is going to take his hat off to the cabin-boy?" replied the mate, indignantly.

"I don't ask him to take his hat off to me. He spoke to me as if I was a dog."

"That's the way officers do speak to men, whether it is the right way or not; and if you can't stand it, you've no business here."

"I didn't know they spoke in that way."

"It's the fashion; and when man or boy insults an officer as you did the captain, he always knocks him down; and serves him right too."

Noddy regarded the mate as a very reasonable man, though he swore abominably, and did not speak in the gentlest tones to the men. He concluded, therefore, that he had made a blunder, and he desired to get out of the scrape as fast as he could. The mate explained to him sundry things, in the discipline of a ship, which he had not before understood. He said that when sailors came on board of a vessel they expected more or less harsh words, and that it was highly impudent, to say the least, for a man to retort, or even to be sulky.

"Captain McClintock is better than half of them," he added; "and if the men do their duty, they can get along very well with him."

"But he was drunk," said Noddy.

"That's none of your business. If he was, it was so much the more stupid in you to attempt to kick up a row with him."

Noddy began to be of the same opinion himself; and an incipient resolution to be more careful in future was flitting through his mind, when he was summoned to the cabin by Mollie. He went below; the captain was not there--he had retired to his state-room; and his daughter sat upon the locker, weeping bitterly.

"How happy I expected to be! How unhappy I am!" sobbed she. "Noddy you have made me feel very bad."

"I couldn't help it; I didn't mean to make you feel bad," protested Noddy.

"My poor father!" she exclaimed, as she thought again that the blame was not the boy's alone.

"I am very sorry for what I did. I never went to sea before, and I didn't know the fashions. Where is your father? Could I see him?"

"Not now; he has gone to his state-room. He will be better by and by."

"I want to see him when he comes out. I will try and make it right with him, for I know I was to blame," said Noddy, whose ideas were rapidly enlarging.

"I am glad to hear you say so, Noddy," added Mollie, looking up into his face with such a sad expression that he would have done anything to comfort her. "Now go on deck; but promise me that you will not be impudent to my father, whatever happens."

"I will not, Mollie."

Noddy went on deck. The Roebuck had passed out of the harbor. She was close-hauled, and headed to the southeast. She was pitching considerably, which was a strange motion to the cabin-boy, whose nautical experience had been confined to the Hudson River. But there was something exhilarating in the scene, and if Noddy's mind had been easy, he would have been delighted with the situation. The mate asked him some questions about the captain, which led to a further discussion of the matter of discipline on board a vessel.

"I want to do well, Mr. Watts," said Noddy. "My best friend gave me the motto, 'Work and Win;' and I want to do the very best I know how."

"I don't think you have begun very well. If you are impudent to your officers, I can assure you that you will work a great deal and win very little. Neither boy nor man can have all his own way in the world; and on board ship you will

have to submit to a great many little things that don't suit you. The sooner you learn to do so with a good grace, the sooner you will be comfortable and contented."

"Thank you, Mr. Watts, for your good advice, and I will try to follow it."

"That's right," replied the mate, satisfied that Noddy was not a very bad boy, after all.

Noddy was fully determined to be a good boy, to obey the officers promptly, and not to be impudent, even if they abused him. Captain McClintock did not come on deck, or into the cabin, again that night. He had probably drunk until he was completely overcome, and the vessel was left to the care of Mr. Watts, who was fortunately a good seaman and a skilful navigator. Noddy performed his duties, both on deck and in the cabin, with a zeal and fidelity which won the praise of the mate.

"Captain McClintock," said Noddy, when the master of the vessel came on deck in the morning.

"Well, what do you want, youngster?" replied the captain, in gruff and forbidding tones.

"I was wrong yesterday; I am very sorry for it, and I hope you will forgive me this time."

"It is no light thing to be saucy to the captain."

"I will never do so again," added Noddy.

"We'll see; if you behave well, I'll pass it by, and say nothing more about it."

"Thank you, sir."

The captain did not speak as though he meant what he said. It was evident from his conduct during the forenoon, that he had not forgotten, if he had forgiven, Noddy's impudent speech. He addressed him rather harshly, and appeared not to like his presence.

In the forenoon the vessel passed Highland Light, and before night Noddy saw the last of the land. There was a heavy blow in the afternoon, and the Roebuck pitched terribly in the great seas. The cabin-boy began to experience some new and singular sensations, and at eight bells in the evening he was so seasick that he could not hold up his head.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE SHARK.

FOR two days Noddy suffered severely from seasickness, and Mollie was full of tenderness and sympathy. Captain McClintock still mocked the poor child's hopes, and still broke the promises which should have been sacred, for he was intoxicated each day. On the second, while Noddy was lying in his berth, the captain, rendered brutal by the last dram he had taken, came out of his state-room, and halted near the sick boy.

"What are you in there for, you young sculpin?" said he. "Why are you not on deck, attending to your duty?"

"I am sick, sir," replied Noddy, faintly.

"Sick! We don't want any skulking of that sort on board this vessel. You want to shirk your duty. Turn out lively, and go on deck."

"But he is sick, father," said Mollie.

"Go away, Mollie. You will spoil the boy. Come, tumble out, youngster, or I shall bring down the rope's end," replied the captain.

The daughter pleaded for her patient; but the father was ugly and unreasonable, and persisted in his purpose. Noddy did not feel able to move. He was completely prostrated by the violence of his disagreeable malady; and five minutes before, he would not have considered it possible for him to get out of his berth. He must do so now or be whipped; for there was no more reason in the captain than there was in the main-mast of the schooner. He was not able to make any resistance, if he had been so disposed.

It was very hard to be obliged to go on deck when he was sick, especially as there was no need of his services there. He raised his head, and sat upright in the berth. The movement seemed completely to overturn his stomach again. But what a chance this was, thought he, to show poor Mollie that he was in earnest, and to convince her that he had really reformed his manners. With a desperate struggle he leaped out of his berth, and put on his jacket. The Roebuck was still pitching heavily, and it was almost impossible for him to keep on his feet. He had hardly tasted food for two days, and was very weak from the effects of his sickness.

He crawled on deck as well as he was able, followed by Captain McClintock, who regarded him with a look of malignant triumph. Poor Noddy felt like a martyr; but for Mollie's sake, he was determined to bear his sufferings with patience and resignation, and to obey the captain, even if he told him to jump overboard. He did what was almost as bad as this, for he ordered the sick boy to swab up the deck--an entirely useless operation, for the spray was breaking over the bow of the Roebuck, and the water was rushing in torrents out of the lee scuppers. But Noddy, true to his resolution, obeyed the order, and dragged his weary body forward to perform his useless task. For half an hour he labored against nature and the elements, and of course accomplished nothing. It was all "work" and no "win."

A boy who had the resolution and courage to face a dozen angry fellows as large as himself, certainly ought not to lack the power to overcome the single foe that beset him from within. Noddy was strong enough for the occasion, even in his present weakly condition. It was hard work, but the victory he won was a satisfactory reward.

The captain's vision was rather imperfect in his present state, and he took it into his head that the foretop-gallant sail was straining the topmast. Mr. Watts respectfully assured him the topmast was strong enough to stand the strain; but the master was set in his own opinion. Apparently his view was adopted for the occasion, for he ordered Noddy to go aloft and furl the sail. Mollie protested when she heard this order, for she was afraid Noddy was so weak that he would fall from the yard. The cabin-boy, strong in the victory he had just won, did not even remonstrate against the order; but, with all the vigor he could command, he went up the fore-rigging. He was surprised to find how much strength an earnest spirit lent to his weak body.

The pitching of the Roebuck rendered the execution of the order very difficult to one unaccustomed to the violent motion of a vessel in a heavy sea; but in spite of all the trials which lay in his path, he furled the sail. When he came down to the deck, the captain had gone below again, and the weary boy was permitted to rest from his severe labors. Instead of being overcome by them, he actually felt better than when he had left his berth. The fresh air, and the conquest of the will over the feeble body, had almost wrought a miracle in his physical frame. The mate told him that what he had done was the best thing in the world for seasickness; in fact, earnest exertion was the only remedy for the troublesome complaint.

At supper-time Noddy took some tea and ate a couple of ship biscuits with a good relish. He began to feel like a new person, and even to be much obliged to the captain for subjecting him to the tribulations which had wrought his cure. The next morning he ate a hearty breakfast, and went to his work with the feeling that "oft from apparent ills our blessings rise."

The captain kept sober during the next five days, owing, it was believed by Noddy, to the influence of his daughter, who had the courage to speak the truth to him. Shortly after the departure of the Roebuck, it had been ascertained that, from some impurity in the casks, the water on board was not fit for use; and the captain decided to put into Barbadoes and procure a fresh supply. When the schooner took a pilot, on the twelfth day out, it was found that the yellow fever was making terrible ravages in the island; but the water was so bad on board that the captain decided to go into port and remain long enough to procure new casks and a supply of water. If he had been entirely sober, he would undoubtedly have turned his bow at once from the infected island.

The Roebuck came to anchor, and the captain, regardless of his own safety, went on shore to transact the business. The casks were purchased, but it was impossible to get them on board before the next morning, and the vessel was compelled to remain at anchor over night. The weather was excessively hot in the afternoon, but towards night a cool breeze came in from the sea, which was very refreshing; and Noddy and Mollie were on deck, enjoying its invigorating breath. The boat in which the captain had just returned lay at the accommodation ladder. The confinement of twelve days on board the vessel had been rather irksome, and both of the young people would have been delighted to take a run on shore; but the terrible sickness there rendered such a luxury impossible. They observed with interest everything that could be seen from the deck, especially the verdure-crowned hills, and the valleys green with the rich vegetation of the country.

If they could not go on shore, they could at least move about a little in the boat, which would be some relief from the monotony of their confined home. They got into the boat with a warning from Mr. Watts not to go far from the schooner, and not to approach any other vessel, which might have the yellow fever on board. Noddy sculled about on the smooth water for a time, till it was nearly dark, and Mollie thought it was time to return on board. As she spoke, she went forward and stood up in the bow of the boat, ready to step upon the accommodation ladder.

"Noddy, do you see these great fishes in the water?" asked she.

"Yes, I see them."

"Do you know what they are?" continued she, as she turned to receive the answer.

She was accustomed to boats, and her familiarity with them made her as fearless as her companion.

"I never saw any like them before," replied Noddy, still sculling the boat towards the Roebuck.

"What do you think they are?" added she, with one of those smiles which children wear when they are conscious of being wiser than their companions.

"I haven't any idea what they are; but they look ugly enough to be snakes."

"I've seen lots of them before, and I know what they are. I like you very well, Noddy; and I ask you, as a particular favor, not to fall overboard," said she, with a smile, at what she regarded as a very pretty joke.

"What are they, Mollie?"

"They are sharks, Noddy."

"Sharks!" exclaimed the boy, who had heard Ben tell awful stories about the voracity of these terrible creatures.

"Yes, they are sharks, and big ones, too."

"Sit down, Mollie. I don't like to see you stand up there. You might fall overboard," said Noddy, who actually shuddered as he recalled the fearful stories he had heard about these savage fish.

"I'm not afraid. I'm just as safe here as I should be on board the Roebuck. I've seen sharks before, and got used to them. I like to watch them."

At that moment the boat struck upon something in the water, which might have been a log, or one of the ravenous monsters, whose back fins could be seen above the water, as they lay in wait for their prey. It was some heavy body, and it instantly checked the progress of the boat, and the sudden stoppage precipitated the poor girl over the bow into the sea. Noddy's blood seemed to freeze in his veins as he realized the horrible situation of Mollie in the water, surrounded by sharks. He expected to see her fair form severed in twain by the fierce creatures. He could swim like a

duck, and his first impulse was to leap overboard, and save the poor girl or perish with her in the attempt.

A shout from the schooner laden with the agony of mortal anguish saluted his ears as Mollie struck the water. It was the voice of Captain McClintock, who had come on deck, and had witnessed the fearful catastrophe. The voice went to Noddy's soul. He saw the slight form of Mollie as she rose to the surface, and began to struggle towards the boat. The cabin-boy sculled with all his might for an instant, which brought the boat up to the spot; but he was horrified to see that she was followed by a monstrous shark. Noddy seized the boat-hook, and sprang forward just as the greedy fish was turning over upon his side, with open mouth, to snap up his prey.

Noddy, aware that the decisive moment for action had come, and feeling, as by instinct, that a miscalculation on his part would be fatal to poor Mollie, poised his weapon, and made a vigorous lunge at the savage fish. By accident, rather than by design, the boat-hook struck the shark in the eye; and with a fearful struggle he disappeared beneath the surface. Grasping the extended arm of Mollie, he dragged her into the boat before another of the monsters could attack her.

"O, Noddy!" gasped she, as she sank down upon the bottom of the boat, overcome by terror, rather than by her exertions,—for she had been scarcely a moment in the water.

"You are safe now, Mollie. Don't be afraid," said Noddy, in soothing tones, though his own utterance was choked by the fearful emotions he had endured.

"Our Father, who art in heaven, I thank thee that thou hast preserved my life, and saved me from the terrible shark," said Mollie, as she clasped her hands and looked up to the sky.

It was a prayer from the heart, and the good Father seemed to be nearer to Noddy than ever before. He felt that some other hand than his own had directed the weapon which had vanquished the shark.

"O, Noddy, you have saved me," cried Mollie, as she rose from her knees, upon which she had thrown herself before she uttered her simple but devout prayer.

"I am so glad you are safe, Mollie! But was it me that saved you?" asked Noddy, as he pointed up to the sky, with a sincere feeling that he had had very little to do with her preservation, though he was so deeply impressed by the event that he could not utter the sacred name of the Power which in that awful moment seemed to surround him, and to be in his very heart.

"It was God who preserved me," said she, looking reverently upward again; "but he did it through you; and I may thank you, too, for what you have done. O, Noddy, you have been my best earthly friend; for what would my poor father have done if the shark had killed me?"

Noddy sculled towards the Roebuck, for he knew that Captain McClintock was anxiously awaiting their return. When the boat touched the accommodation ladder, the anxious father sprang on board, not knowing even then that his daughter was entirely safe. He had seen Noddy draw her into the boat, but he feared she had lost a leg or an arm, for he was aware that the harbor swarmed with the largest and fiercest of the merciless "sea-pirates."

"My poor child!" exclaimed he, as he clasped her in his arms, dreading even then to know the worst.

"Dear father!" replied she.

"Are you hurt?"

"Not at all."

"Were there any sharks out there?"

"I guess there were!" replied she, significantly.

"One of them had just heeled over to snap at her," added Noddy. "I never was so frightened in my life."

"Good Heaven!" gasped the captain.

"I gave myself up for lost," said Mollie, shuddering, as she recalled that fearful moment.

"Well, what prevented him from taking hold of you?" asked Captain McClintock, who had not been near enough to discern precisely what had taken place in the boat.

"Noddy saved me, father. He jammed the boat-hook right into the shark's head. In another instant the creature would have had me in his mouth. O, father, it was such an awful death to think of—to be bitten by a shark!"

"Horrible!" groaned the father. "Noddy, your hand! You and I shall be friends to the last day of my life."

"Thank you, sir," replied the heroic boy, as he took the proffered hand. "I did the best I could; but I was so scared! I was afraid the shark would catch her in spite of me."

"God bless you, Noddy! But come on board, and we will talk it over."

Captain McClintock handed Mollie, still dripping with water, to Mr. Watts, who had been an interested spectator of the touching scene in the boat; and she was borne to the cabin amid the congratulations of the crew, with whom she was a great favorite.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE YELLOW FEVER.

MOLLIE went to her state-room, and changed her clothes; and she did not come out till she had kneeled down and poured forth another prayer of thanksgiving for her safety from the horrible monster that would have devoured her. Her father kissed her again, as she returned to the cabin. He was as grateful as she was, and he took no pains to conceal the emotions which agitated him.

"Now tell me all about it, Mollie," said he. "How happened you to fall overboard?"

"I was careless, father. Noddy was persuading me to sit down at the moment when I went overboard," replied she.

"I was afraid of the sharks as soon as I knew what they were; and I was thinking what an awful thing it would be if she should fall overboard," added Noddy.

"If I had minded you, Noddy, I shouldn't have been in danger."

The story was told by the two little adventurers, each correcting or helping out the other, till the whole truth was obtained. It was evident to the captain and the mate, that Noddy had behaved with vigor and decision, and that, if he had been less prompt and energetic, poor Mollie must have become the victim of the ravenous shark.

"You have saved her life, Noddy; that's plain enough," said Captain McClintock, as he rose and went to his state-room.

"You were smart, my boy, and you deserve a great deal of credit," added Mr. Watts.

"I don't mind that; I was too glad to get her out of the water to think of anything else."

"Well, Noddy, you did good work that time, and you have won a great deal of honor by it."

"You shall win something better than that, Noddy," said the captain, as he returned to the cabin with a little bag in his hand. "Here are ten gold pieces, my boy--one hundred dollars."

He handed Noddy the bright coins; but the little hero's face flushed, and he looked as discontented as though he had been robbed of the honor of his exploit.

"You shall win a hundred dollars by the operation," continued the captain.

"Thank you, sir, but I don't want any money for that," replied Noddy, whose pride revolted at the idea, however tempting the money looked to him.

"Take it, Noddy. You have done a good piece of work, and you ought to win something for it," added the captain.

"I don't want to win any money for a job like that, Captain McClintock. I am already well paid for what I have done. I can't take any money for it. I feel too good already; and I am afraid if I take your gold I should spoil it all."

"You are as proud as a lord, Noddy."

"I'm sure, if we had lost Miss Mollie, I should have missed her as much as anybody, except her father. I shouldn't feel right to be paid for doing such a thing as knocking a shark in the head. I hated the monster bad enough to kill him, if he hadn't been going to do any mischief."

"Then you won't take this money, Noddy?" continued the captain.

"I'd rather not, sir. I shouldn't feel right if I did."

"And I shouldn't feel right if you didn't. You don't quite understand the case, Noddy."

"I think I do, sir."

"No, you don't. Let me tell you about it. You have done something which fills me with gratitude to you. I want to do something to express that gratitude. I don't know that I can do it in any other way just now than by making you a little present. I don't mean to pay you."

"It looks like that."

"No it don't look a bit like it. Do you think I value my daughter's life at no more than a hundred dollars?"

"I know you do, captain."

"If I expected to pay you for what you have done, I should give you every dollar I have in the world, and every dollar which my property would bring if it were sold; and then I should feel that you had not half got your due."

"I don't care about any money, sir," persisted Noddy.

"Let me make you a present, then. It would make me feel better to do something for you."

"I'm sure I would do anything to accommodate you."

"Then take the money."

Noddy took it very reluctantly, and felt just as though he was stealing it. Mr. Watts joined with the captain in arguing the matter, and he finally felt a little better satisfied about it. When he realized that he was the honest possessor of so large a sum, he felt like a rich man, and could not help thinking of the pleasure it would afford him to pour all these gold coins into Bertha's lap, and tell how he had won them.

Mollie had something to say about the matter, and of course she took her father's side of the question; and the captain concluded the debate by assuring Noddy, if his daughter had to die, he would give more than a hundred dollars to save her from the maw of a shark, that she might die less horribly by drowning. On the whole, the cabin-boy was pretty well satisfied that he had won the money honestly, and he carefully bestowed it with his clothing in his berth.

Early in the morning Mr. Watts went on shore with a boat's crew, to commence bringing off the water casks. It required the whole forenoon to remove the old casks, and stow the new ones in the hold. About eleven o'clock the mate complained of a chilly sensation, and a pain in his back, which was followed up by a severe headache. He was soon compelled to leave his work, and take to his berth in the cabin. The next boat from the shore brought off a surgeon, who promptly pronounced the disease the yellow fever.

Before the Roebuck could get off, two of the sailors were attacked by the terrible malady. The only safety for the rest was in immediate flight; and the schooner got under way, and stood out to sea. The doctor had left ample directions for the treatment of the disease, but the medicines appeared to do no good. Mr. Watts was delirious before night. The two men in the fore-castle were no better, and the prospect on board the vessel was as gloomy as it could be.

Mollie stood by the sufferer in the cabin, in spite of the protest of her father. She knew what the fever was; but she seemed to be endued with a courage which was more than human. She nursed the sick man tenderly, and her simple prayer for his recovery ascended every hour during the long night. One of the men forward died before morning, and was committed to the deep by his terrified messmates, without even a form of prayer over his plague-stricken remains.

Towards night, on the second day out of Barbadoes, Mr. Watts breathed his last. By the light of the lanterns, his cold form was placed on a plank extended over the rail. Mollie would not permit him to be buried in his watery grave without a prayer, and Captain McClintock read one. Many tears were shed over him, as his body slid off into the sea. Noddy and Mollie wept bitterly, for they felt that they had lost a good friend.

There was only one more patient on board, and he seemed to be improving; but before the morning sun rose, red and glaring on the silent ocean, there were three more. Captain McClintock was one of them. There was none to take care of him but Mollie and Noddy; and both of them, regardless of the demands of their own bodies, kept vigil by his couch. More faithful nurses a sick man never had. They applied the remedies which had been used before.

On the following day two more of the crew were committed to their ocean graves, and despair reigned throughout the vessel. The captain grew worse every hour, and poor Mollie was often compelled to leave the bedside that he might not see her weeping over him. He soon became delirious, and did not even know her.

"O, Noddy," exclaimed she, when she fully realized the situation of her father, "I shall soon be alone."

"Don't give up, Mollie," replied the cabin-boy sadly.

"I have prayed till I fear my prayers are no longer heard," sobbed she.

"Yes, they are, Mollie. Don't stop praying," said Noddy, who knew that the poor girl had derived a great deal of hope and comfort from her prayers.

He had seen her kneel down when she was almost overcome by the horrors which surrounded them, and rise as calm and hopeful as though she had received a message direct from on high. Perhaps he had no real faith in her

prayers, but he saw what strength she derived from them. Certainly they had not warded off the pestilence, which was still seeking new victims on board. But they were the life of Mollie's struggling existence; and it was with the utmost sincerity that he had counselled her to continue them.

"My father will die!" groaned the poor girl. "Nothing can save him now."

"No, he won't die. He isn't very bad yet, Mollie."

"O, yes, he is. He does not speak to me; he does not know me."

"He is doing very well, Mollie. Don't give it up yet."

"I feel that he will soon leave me."

"No, he won't, Mollie. I *know* he will get well," said Noddy, with the most determined emphasis.

"How do you know?"

"I feel that he will. He isn't half so bad as Mr. Watts was. Cheer up, and he will be all right in a few days."

"But think how terrible it would be for my poor father to die, away here in the middle of the ocean," continued Mollie, weeping most bitterly, as she thought of the future.

"But he will not die; I am just as sure that he will get well, as I am that I am alive now."

Noddy had no reason whatever for this strong assertion, and he made it only to comfort his friend. It was not made in vain, for the afflicted daughter was willing to cling to any hope, however slight, and the confident words of the boy made an impression upon her. The morrow came, and the captain was decidedly better; but from the fore-castle came the gloomy report that two more of the men had been struck down by the disease.

There were but three seamen left who were able to do duty, and Mr. Lincoln, the second mate, was nearly exhausted by watching and anxiety. Fortunately, the weather had been fine, and the *Roebuck* had been under all sail, with a fair wind. Noddy had obtained a little sleep during the second night of the captain's illness, and he went on deck to report to the mate for duty. He was competent to steer the vessel in a light breeze, and he was permitted to relieve the man at the wheel.

He stood his trick of two hours, and then went below, to ascertain the condition of the captain. As he descended the ladder, he discovered the form of Mollie extended on one of the lockers. Her face was flushed, and she was breathing heavily. Noddy was appalled at this sight, for he knew too well what these indications meant.

"What is the matter, Mollie?" asked he, hardly able to speak the words from the violence of his emotion.

"It is my turn now, Noddy," replied she, in faint tones. "Who will pray for me?"

"I will, Mollie; but what ails you?"

"I am burning up with heat, and perishing with cold. My back feels as if it was broken, and the pain darts up through my neck into my head. I know very well what it means. You will take care of my poor father--won't you, Noddy?"

"To be sure I will. You must turn in, Mollie, and let me take care of you, too," said he, trying to be as calm as the terrible situation required of him.

He assisted the stricken maiden to her state-room, and placed her in her berth. Taking from the medicine chest the now familiar remedy, he gave her the potion, and tenderly ministered to all her wants. She was very sick, for she had struggled with the destroying malady for hours before she yielded to its insidious advances.

"Thank you, Noddy. I feel better now, and I shall soon be happy. Go now and see to my father; don't let him want for anything."

"I will not, Mollie; I will take first-rate care of him," answered Noddy, as he smoothed down the clothing around her neck.

"My father is the captain of the ship, you know," added she, with a smile. "He is a great man; bigger than any shark you ever saw."

Her mind had begun to wander already; and her patient nurse could hardly keep down his tears, as he gazed at her flushed cheeks, and smoothed down the curls upon her neck. She was beautiful to him--too beautiful to die there in mid

ocean, with none but rude men to shed great tears over her silent form. How he wished that Bertha was there, to watch over that frail little form, and ward off the grim tyrant that was struggling to possess it! She would not fear the pangs of the pestilence; she would be an angel in the little state-room, and bring down peace and hope, if not life, to the lovely sufferer.

Noddy felt as he had never felt before, not even when the dread monster of the deep had almost snapped up the slight form before him. All the good lessons he had ever learned in his life came to him with a force they had never possessed in the sunny hour of prosperity. He wanted to pray. He felt the need of a strength not his own. Mollie could not pray now. Her mind was darkened by the shadows of disease. He went out into the cabin. It looked as cheerless, and cold, and gloomy, as the inside of a tomb. But God was there; and though Noddy could not speak the words of his prayer, his heart breathed a spirit which the infinite Father could understand. He prayed, as he had promised the sick girl he would, and the strength which prayer had given to her was given to him.

"Here is work for me," said he, as he approached the door of the captain's state-room. "But I am able to do it. I will never give up this work."

He did not know what he was to win by this work of love, amid trials and tribulation. He had struggled with the disposition to despond; he had worked like a hero to keep his spirits up; and that which he was called upon to do with his hands was small and trivial compared with that which was done by his mind and heart. He had conquered fear and despair.

Thus prepared to battle with the giant ills which surrounded him, he entered Captain McClintock's room.



CHAPTER XV.

THE DEMON OF THE CUP.

"Is that you, Noddy?" asked the captain, faintly.

"Yes, sir. How do you feel, captain?"

"I think I'm a little better. I wish you would ask Mollie to come in; I want to see her."

"Does your head ache now, sir?" asked Noddy, who did not like to tell him that his daughter had just been taken with the fever.

"Not so bad as it did. Just speak to Mollie."

"I think you are ever so much better, sir. You will be out in a day or two."

"Do you think so, Noddy?"

"Yes, sir; I'm certain you will," answered the boy, who knew that faith was life in the present instance.

"I'm glad you think so. I certainly feel a great deal better," replied the captain, as though he was already cheered by the inspiration of hope.

"You must be careful, and keep still; and you will be all right in a week, at the most."

"I hope so; for I couldn't help thinking, when I was taken down, what a bitter thing it would be to poor Mollie if I should die so far from home and friends."

"You have got over the worst of it now, captain."

"Is Mollie out in the cabin?" asked the sufferer, persistently returning to the subject near his heart.

"No, sir; she is not, just now."

"Has she gone on deck?"

"No, sir."

"Where is she, Noddy?" demanded he, earnestly, as he attempted to raise himself up in his cot.

"Don't stir, captain; it will make you worse, if you do."

"Tell me where Mollie is at once, or I shall jump out of my berth. Is she--is she--"

"She is in her room, captain. Don't be worried about her," replied Noddy, who was afraid that the truth would have a bad effect upon the devoted father. "She laid down a little while ago."

"Is she dead?" gasped the captain, with a mighty effort to utter the appalling word.

"O, no, sir! She was taken sick a little while ago."

"O, mercy!" groaned the sick man. "I know it all now."

"It's no use to deny it, sir. She has got the fever."

"And I lay here helpless!"

"She said she felt a little better when I came out. I gave her the medicine, and did everything for her."

"I must go to her."

"You will worry her to death, if you do, captain. She is more troubled about you than she is about herself. If you lay still, so I can report that you are doing well, it will be the best thing in the world for her. It will do her more good than the medicine."

"Tell her I am well, Noddy!"

"It won't do to tell her too much; she won't believe anything, if I do," said Noddy, sorely troubled about the moral

management of the cases.

"Tell her I am well, Noddy; and I will go and sit by her," replied the sufferer, who was no more able to get out of his bed than he was to cure the fearful disease.

"I can't do anything, captain, if you don't keep still in your bed. She is a little out just now; but I think she will do very well, if you only let her alone."

Captain McClintock was in an agony of suspense; but Noddy succeeded in consoling him so that he promised to remain quietly in his bed. As physician and nurse, as well as friend and comforter, the cabin-boy found his hands full; but he had a heart big enough for the occasion; and all day and all night he went from one patient to another, ministering to their wants with as much skill and judgment as though he had been trained in a sick room.

Mollie grew worse as the hours wore heavily away; but this was to be expected, and the patient nurse was not discouraged by the progressive indications of the disease. Towards morning the captain went to sleep; but it required all the faithful boy's energies to keep Mollie in her bed, as she raved with the heated brain of the malady.

In the morning one of the seamen was reported out of danger, and the others in a hopeful condition. Noddy was completely exhausted by his labors and his solicitude. Mr. Lincoln saw that he could endure no more; and as he had obtained a few hours' sleep on deck during the night, he insisted that the weary boy should have some rest, while he took care of the sick. Noddy crawled into his berth, and not even his anxiety for poor Mollie could keep him awake any longer. He slept heavily, and the considerate mate did not wake him till dinner-time, when he sprang from his berth and hastened to the couch of the sick girl.

Another day passed, and Mollie began to exhibit some hopeful symptoms. Her father was still improving. The patients in the fore-castle were also getting better. Noddy felt that no more of the Roebuck's people were to be cast into the sea. Hope gave him new life. He was rested and refreshed by the bright prospect quite as much as by the sleep which the kindness of Mr. Lincoln enabled him to obtain.

The schooner still sped on her course with favoring breezes; while Noddy, patient and hopeful, performed the various duties which the fell disease imposed upon him. He had not regarded the danger of taking the fever himself. He had no thought now for any one but poor Mollie, who was daily improving. One by one the crew, who had been stricken down with the malady, returned to the deck; but it was a long time before they were able to do their full measure of duty. In a week after Mollie was taken sick, her father was able to sit a portion of the day by her side; and a few days later, she was able to sit up for a few moments.

The terrible scourge had wasted itself; but the chief mate and three of the crew had fallen victims to the sad visitation. Yellow fever patients convalesce very slowly; and it was a fortnight before Captain McClintock was able to go on deck; but at the same time, Mollie, weak and attenuated by her sufferings, was helped up the ladder by her devoted friend and nurse. The cloud had passed away from the vessel, and everybody on board was as happy as though disease and death had never invaded those wooden walls. But the happiness was toned to the circumstances. Hearts had been purified by suffering. Neither the officers nor the men swore; they spoke to each other in gentle tones, as though the tribulations through which they had passed had softened their hearts, and bound them together in a holier than earthly affection.

As Mr. Watts and three sailors had died, the vessel was short-handed, but not crippled; and the captain decided to prosecute his voyage without putting into any port for assistance. Mr. Lincoln was appointed chief mate, and a second mate was selected from the fore-castle. Everything went along as before the storm burst upon the devoted vessel.

"How happy I am, Noddy!" exclaimed Mollie, as they sat on deck one afternoon, when she had nearly recovered her strength. "My father was saved, and I am saved. How grateful I am!"

"So am I, Mollie," replied Noddy.

"And how much we both owe to you! Wasn't it strange you didn't take the fever?"

"I think it was."

"Were you not afraid of it?"

"I didn't think anything about it, any way; but I feel just as though I had gone through with the fever, or something else."

"Why?"

"I don't know; everything looks odd and strange to me. I don't feel like the same fellow."

Mollie persisted in her desire to know how the cabin-boy felt, and Noddy found it exceedingly difficult to describe his feelings. Much of the religious impressions which he had derived from the days of tribulation still clung to him. His views of life and death had changed. Many of Bertha's teachings, which he could not understand before, were very plain to him now. He did not believe it would be possible for him to do anything wrong again. Hopes and fears had been his incentives to duty before; principle had grown up in his soul now. The experience of years seemed to be crowded into the few short days when gloom and death reigned in the vessel.

The Roebuck sped on her way, generally favored with good weather and fair winds. She was a staunch vessel, and behaved well in the few storms she encountered. She doubled Cape Horn without subjecting her crew to any severe hardships, and sped on her way to more genial climes. For several weeks after his recovery, Captain McClintock kept very steady, and Mollie hoped that the "evil days" had passed by. It was a vain hope; for when the schooner entered the Pacific, his excesses were again apparent. He went on from bad to worse, till he was sober hardly a single hour of the day. In vain did Mollie plead with him; in vain she reminded him of the time when they had both lain at death's door; in vain she assured him that she feared the bottle more than the fever. He was infatuated by the demon of the cup, and seemed to have no moral power left.

The Roebuck was approaching the thick clusters of islands that stud the Pacific; and it was important that the vessel should be skilfully navigated. Mr. Lincoln was a good seaman, but he was not a navigator; that is, he was not competent to find the latitude and longitude, and lay down the ship's position on the chart. The captain was seldom in condition to make an observation, and the schooner was in peril of being dashed to pieces on the rocks. The mate was fully alive to the difficulties of his position; and he told Mollie what must be the consequences of her father's continued neglect. The sea in which they were then sailing was full of islands and coral reefs. There were indications of a storm, and he could not save the vessel without knowing where she was.

"Noddy," said the troubled maiden, after Mr. Lincoln had explained the situation to her, "I want you to help me."

"I'm ready," replied he, with his usual promptness.

"We are going to ruin. My poor father is in a terrible state, and I am going to do something."

"What can you do?"

"You shall help me, but I will bear all the blame."

"You would not do anything wrong, and I am willing to bear the blame with you."

"Never mind that; we are going to do what's right, and we will not say a word about the blame. Now come with me," she continued, leading the way to the cabin.

"I am willing to do anything that is right, wherever the blame falls."

"We must save the vessel, for the mate says she is in great danger. There is a storm coming, and Mr. Lincoln don't know where we are. Father hasn't taken an observation for four days."

"Well, are you going to take one?" asked Noddy, who was rather bewildered by Mollie's statement of the perils of the vessel.

"No; but I intend that father shall to-morrow."

"What are you going to do?"

She opened the pantry door, and took from the shelf a bottle of gin.

"Take this, Noddy, and throw it overboard," said she, handing him the bottle.

"I'll do that;" and he went to the bull's eye, in Mollie's state-room, and dropped it into the sea.

"That's only a part of the work," said she, as she opened one of the lockers in the cabin, which was stowed full of liquors.

She passed them out, two at a time, and Noddy dropped them all into the ocean. Captain McClintock was lying in his state-room, in a helpless state of intoxication, so that there was no fear of interruption from him. Every bottle of wine, ale, and liquor which the cabin contained was thrown overboard. Noddy thought that the sharks, which swallow everything that falls overboard, would all get "tight;" but he hoped they would break the bottles before they swallowed them. The work was done, and everything which could intoxicate was gone; at least everything which

Mollie and the cabin-boy could find. They did not tell Mr. Lincoln what they had done, for they did not wish to make him a party to the transaction.

They were satisfied with their work. The vessel would be saved if the storm held off twelve hours longer. The captain rose early the next morning, and Noddy, from his berth, saw him go to the pantry for his morning dram. There was no bottle there. He went to the locker; there was none there. He searched, without success, in all the lockers and berths of the cabin. While he was engaged in the search, Mollie, who had heard him, came out of her room.

The captain's hand shook, and his whole frame trembled from the effects of his long-inebriation. His nerves were shattered, and nothing but liquor could quiet them. Mollie could not help crying when she saw to what a state her father had been reduced. He was pale and haggard; and when he tried to raise a glass of water to his lips his trembling hand refused its office, and he spilled it on the floor.

"Where is all the liquor, Mollie?" he asked, in shaken, hollow tones.

"I have thrown it all overboard," she replied, firmly.

He was too weak to be angry with her; and she proceeded to tell him what must be the fate of the vessel, and of all on board, if he did not attend to his duty. He listened, and promised not to drink another drop; for he knew then, even when his shattered reason held but partial sway, that he would be the murderer of his daughter and of his crew, if the vessel was wrecked by his neglect. He meant to keep his promise; but the gnawing appetite, which he had fostered and cherished until it became a demon, would not let him do so. In the forenoon, goaded by the insatiate thirst that beset him, he went into the hold, which could be entered from the cabin, and opened a case of liquors, forming part of the cargo. He drank long and deep, and lay down upon the merchandise, that he might be near this demon.

Twelve o'clock came, and no observation could be taken. Mollie looked for her father, and with Noddy's help she found him in the hold, senseless in his inebriation. Mr. Lincoln was called down, and he was conveyed to his berth. The liquor was thrown overboard, but it was too late; before dark the gale broke upon the Roebuck, and fear and trembling were again in the vessel.



CHAPTER XVI.

NIGHT AND STORM.

SUDDEN and severe was the gale which came down upon the Roebuck, while her captain was besotted and helpless in his berth. Mr. Lincoln did all that a skilful seaman could do, and while the wind and the waves were the only perils against which the schooner had to contend, there was no serious alarm for her safety. The night had come, and the time had passed by when even Captain McClintock could do anything more than the mate.

Mr. Lincoln had kept the "dead reckoning" as well as he could without any knowledge of the currents; and it was evident that the vessel was in a perilous situation, and not far distant from the region of islands and coral reefs. The first hours of the stormy night wore gloomily away, for none knew at what moment the schooner might be dashed to pieces upon some hidden rock.

When the captain revived a little from the stupor of intoxication, he seemed not to heed the situation of the vessel. Taking the cabin lantern, he went into the hold again. His only thought seemed to be of the liquor on which he lived. All the cases that Mollie and Noddy could find had been thrown overboard; but the drunkard overhauled the cargo till he found what he wanted, and taking a bottle of gin to his state-room, he was soon as senseless as the fiery fluid could make him.

Mollie did all that she could do under these trying circumstances; she prayed that the good Father who had saved them before, would be with them now; and she knew that the strong arm of Omnipotence could move far from them the perils with which they were surrounded. She felt better every time she prayed. But the storm increased in fury, and she knew not the purposes of the Infinite in regard to them.

"I am afraid we shall never see the light of another day, Noddy," said she, as the great seas struck with stunning force against the side of the vessel.

"Why not? We have been out in a worse gale than this," replied Noddy, who felt that it was his peculiar office to keep hope alive in the heart of his gentle companion.

"But we may be in the midst of the rocks and shoals."

"We shall do very well, Mollie. Don't give it up."

"I don't give it up; but I am ready for anything. I want to be resigned to my fate whenever it comes."

"Don't be so blue about it, Mollie. It will be all right with us in the morning."

"You heard what Mr. Lincoln said, and you know we are in great danger."

"Perhaps we are."

"You know we are, Noddy."

"Well, we are; but for all that, the vessel will ride out the gale, and to-morrow you will laugh to think how scared you were."

"I am not scared; I am ready to die. Promise me one thing, Noddy."

"Anything," answered he, promptly.

"You will not blame my father if the vessel is lost. He is insane; he can't help what he does. He never did so before, and I know he don't mean to do wrong."

"I suppose he don't, and I won't blame him, whatever happens," replied he, willing to comfort the poor girl in any way he could.

"I should not care so much if it didn't look as though it was all father's fault."

"It will be all right to-morrow. We will throw the rest of the liquor overboard. We will search through the hold, and not leave a single bottle of anything there. Then we shall be safe."

"It will be too late then," sighed Mollie.

"No, it won't; the vessel will be saved. *I know* it will," added Noddy, resolutely.

"You don't know."

"Yes, I do; I am just as certain of it as I am of my own existence."

Noddy had hardly uttered these confident words, before a tremendous shock threw them upon the cabin floor. It was followed by a terrible crashing sound, as though every timber in the vessel had been rent and broken; and they could hear the rush of waters, as the torrents poured in through the broken sides. Noddy, without stopping to think of the vain prophecy he had made, seized the light form of Mollie, and bore her to the deck. The sea was running riot there; the great waves swept over the deck with a force which no human strength could resist, and Noddy was compelled to retreat to the cabin again.

The lantern still swung from a deck beam, but the water had risen in the cabin so that his descent was prevented. The Roebuck had run upon a reef or shoal in such a manner that her bow was projected far out of the water, while her stern was almost submerged in the waves. Noddy's quick perception enabled him to comprehend the position of the vessel, and he placed his charge on the companion ladder, which was protected in a measure from the force of the sea by the hatch, closed on the top, and open only on the front.

"My father!" gasped Mollie. "Save him, Noddy!"

"I will try," replied Noddy. "Hold on tight," added he, as a heavy volume of water rolled down the companion-way.

"Save him, and don't mind me," groaned the poor girl, unselfish to the last.

The brave boy stepped down to the cabin floor, where the water was up to his hips. Creeping on the top of the lockers, and holding on to the front of the berths, he reached the door of the captain's state-room. In this part of the vessel the water had risen nearly to the top of the door, and the berth in which the unfortunate inebriate lay was entirely beneath its surface. He crawled into the room, and put his hand into the berth. The captain was not there.

The water was still rising, and Noddy had no doubt that the poor man had already perished. The shock of the collision when the schooner struck, or the rising waters, had forced him from his position on the bed. The water was over Noddy's head in the state-room; but the agony of Mollie induced him to make a desperate effort to save her father. He dropped down on the floor, and felt about with his feet, till he found the body. The question was settled. Captain McClintock was dead. He was one of the first victims of his criminal neglect.

It was not safe to remain longer in the state-room, even if there had been any motive for doing so, and Noddy worked his way forward again as he had come. He found Mollie still clinging to the ladder, suffering everything on account of her father, and nothing for herself.

"My poor father!" said she, when she discovered her friend coming back without him. "Where is he, Noddy?"

"I couldn't do anything for him, Mollie," replied he.

"Is he lost?"

"He is gone, Mollie; and it was all over with him before I got there. Don't cry. He is out of trouble now."

"Poor father," sobbed she. "Couldn't you save him? Let me go and help you."

"No use, Mollie," added Noddy, as he climbed up the ladder, and looked out through the aperture at the hatch.

"Are you sure we can't do anything for him?" she asked, in trembling tones.

"Nothing, Mollie. He was dead when I opened the door of his room. I found him on the floor, and had to go down over my head to find him. He did not move or struggle, and I'm sure he is dead. I am sorry, but I can't help it."

"O, dear, dear!" groaned she, in her anguish.

She heeded not the cracking timbers and the roaring sea. Her heart was with the unfortunate man who lay cold and still beneath the invading waters. She was ready to go with him to the home in the silent land.

"You hold on tight a little while, and I will go on deck, and see if I can make out where we are," said Noddy.

"It matters little to me where we are. I shall soon be with my father," replied Mollie.

"Don't say that. Your father is at rest now."

"And I shall soon be at rest with him. Do you hear those terrible waves beat against the vessel? They will break her in pieces in a few moments more."

"Perhaps they will, and perhaps they won't. You mustn't give up, Mollie. If I should lose you now, I shouldn't care what became of me."

"You have been very good to me, Noddy; and I hope God will bless you."

"I want to save you if I can."

"You cannot, Noddy, in this terrible storm. We are poor weak children, and we can do nothing."

"But I am bound to work and win. I shall not give it up yet, Mollie. We have struck upon a rock or a shoal, and the land can't be a great ways off."

"Such an awful sea! We could never reach the land."

"We can try--can't we?"

"Where is Mr. Lincoln?"

"I don't know. I have not heard a sound but the noise of the sea since the vessel struck. I suppose he and the rest of the men were washed overboard."

"How horrible!"

"I don't know. They may have left in one of the boats."

"I haven't any courage, Noddy. My poor father is gone, and I don't feel as though it made any difference what became of me."

"Don't talk so, Mollie. Save yourself for my sake, if you don't for your own."

"What can we do?" asked she, blankly, for the situation seemed utterly hopeless.

"I don't know; I will see," replied Noddy, as he crawled through the aperture, and reached the deck.

A huge wave struck him as he rose upon his feet, and bore him down to the lee side of the vessel; but he grasped the shrouds, and saved himself from being hurled into the abyss of waters that boiled in the fury of the storm on both sides of the stranded schooner. He ran up the shrouds a short distance, and tried to penetrate the gloom of the night. He could see nothing but the white froth on the waves, which beat on all sides. There was no land to be seen ahead, as he had expected, and it was evident that the Roebuck had struck on a shoal, at some distance from any shore.

It was impossible to walk forward on the deck, for the savage waves that broke over the vessel would have carried him overboard. The sight suggested the manner in which the men had so suddenly disappeared. They had probably been swept away the moment the vessel struck. The rigging of the schooner was all standing, and Noddy decided to go forward to ascertain if there was any comfortable position there for Mollie. He went to the main-mast head, and, by the spring-stay, reached the fore-mast. Descending by the fore-shrouds, he reached the fore-castle of the schooner.

The bow had been thrown up so high on the shoal that the sea did not break over this part of the vessel with anything like the force it did farther aft. The hatch was on the fore-scuttle, and it was possible that the men had taken refuge in the fore-castle. Removing the hatch, he called the names of Mr. Lincoln and others; but there was no response. He then went down, and attempted to make his way aft through the hold. This was impossible, and he was obliged to return by the way he had come.

"My poor father!" sighed Mollie, as Noddy reached the ladder to which she was clinging; "I shall never see you again."

"Come, Mollie. I want you to go with me now," said he, taking her by the arm.

"Did you find any of the crew?" she asked.

"Not a single one."

"Poor men!"

"I am afraid they are all drowned; but we may be saved if we only work. If we stay here we shall certainly be lost. If the sea should carry off the companion-hatch, we should be drowned out in spite of all we could do."

"What can we do?"

"We must go forward."

"That is impossible for me, Noddy."

"No, it isn't."

"Save yourself, Noddy, if you can. I do not feel like doing anything."

"I shall stay by you, and if you are lost I shall be lost with you."

"Then I will go with you, and do anything you say," said she, earnestly; for when the life of another was at stake, she was willing to put forth any exertion.

"The vessel holds together first-rate, and if we stick by her till morning, we may find some way to save ourselves. Don't give it up, Mollie. Work and win; that's my motto, you know."

"I am ready to work with you, Noddy, whether you win or not."

The persevering boy got a rope, which he made fast around the little girl's body, and watching his time, at the intervals of the breaking waves, he bore her to the main shrouds. She went up to the mast head without much difficulty, though the force of the wind was so great that Noddy had to hold on to her, to keep her from being blown from the ropes.

At this point he made a sling for her on the spring-stay, in which she sat as a child does in a swing. It was adjusted to the big rope so that it would slip along, and permit her to hold on to the stay with her hands. The vessel seemed to be so wedged in the rocks or sand, on which she had struck, that she did not roll, and the only obstacle to a safe passage from one mast to the other, was the violence of the gale. By Noddy's careful and skilful management, the transit was made in safety through the most imminent peril. The descent to the deck, forward, was more easily accomplished, and the heroic youth soon had the pleasure of seeing his gentle charge safe, for the present, in the fore-castle.

He had worked and won, so far. He was satisfied with the past, and hopeful of the future. Having conducted Mollie to a safe place, he turned his attention once more to the situation of the vessel. Looking over the bow, he discovered the dark, ragged rocks, rising a few feet above the water, on which she had struck, but he could not see any land.



CHAPTER XVII.

AFTER THE STORM.

THE Roebuck had been built, under the direction of Captain McClintock, for the voyage around Cape Horn. She was a new vessel, and of extra strength, and she held together in spite of the hard thumping she received on the rocks. As she struck, a hole was knocked in her bottom; but her bow had been forced so far up on the rocks that the water which she made all settled aft.

With tender care Noddy had wrapped up his frail companion in a pea jacket he found in the fore-castle, and together they waited anxiously for the morning light. The waves beat fiercely against the side of the vessel, pounded on the decks as they rolled over the bulwarks; and the survivors were in continual fear that each moment would witness the destruction of their ark of safety. Noddy had made the best arrangements he could for a speedy exit, in case the worst should be realized.

With the first signs of daylight Noddy was on deck endeavoring to obtain a better knowledge of the location of the wreck. It seemed to him then that the force of the gale had abated, though the sea was hardly less savage than it had been during the night. As the day dawned, he discovered the outline of some dark object, apparently half a mile distant. He watched this sombre pile till there was light enough to satisfy him that it was an island.

"Hurrah!" shouted Noddy,--forgetting, in the joy of this discovery, that death and destruction had reigned on board the Roebuck.

"What is it?" asked Mollie, hardly moved by the gladness of her companion.

"Land ho!" replied he, as he descended the ladder to the fore-castle.

"Where is it?" said she, languidly, as though she did not feel much interested in the announcement.

"Right over here, about half a mile off."

"It might as well be a thousand miles off; for we can never get there."

"O, yes, we can. We have the boat on deck. I'm afraid you are discouraged, Mollie."

"I can't help thinking of poor father," said she, bursting into tears again.

Noddy comforted her as well as he could. He told her she ought not to repine at the will of God, who had saved her, though he had permitted her father to be lost; that she ought to be grateful for her own preservation; and, what seemed to be the strongest argument to him, that weeping and "taking on" would do no good. He was but a poor comforter, and only repeated what he had often heard her say in the dark hours of their former tribulation. Her father was dead, and she could not help weeping. Whatever were his faults, and however great had been the error which had brought her to the present extremity, he was her father. In his sober days he had loved her tenderly and devotedly; and it seemed like sacrilege to her to dry the tears which so readily and so freely flowed. They were the natural tribute of affection from a child to a lost parent.

Noddy did not dare to say all he believed, for he was convinced that the death of the captain was a blessing to himself and to his daughter. He was so besotted by the demon that life could henceforth be only a misery to him, and a stumbling-block to her. It required no great faith for him to believe, in the present instance, that the good Father doeth all things well.

The daylight came, and with it the hope of brighter hours. The clouds were breaking away, and the winds subsided almost as suddenly as they had risen. Still the waves broke fiercely over the wreck, and it was impossible to take any steps towards reaching the land, whose green hills and bright valleys gladdened the heart of the storm-tossed sailor-boy. With an axe which he found in the fore-castle, he knocked away a couple of the planks of the bulkhead which divided the seamen's quarters from the hold. He passed through, by moving a portion of the miscellaneous cargo, to the cabin, where he obtained some water, some ship bread, and boiled beef.

Poor Mollie had no appetite; but to please her anxious friend, she ate half a biscuit. They passed the forenoon in the fore-castle, talking of the past and the future; but the thoughts of the bereaved daughter continually reverted to her father. She talked of him; of what he had been to her, and of the bright hopes which she had cherished of the future. She was positive she should never be happy again. After much persuasion, Noddy induced her to lie down in one of the bunks, and being thoroughly exhausted by anxiety and the loss of rest, she went to sleep, which gave her patient

friend a great deal of satisfaction.

She slept, and Noddy went on deck again. The waves had now subsided, so that he could go aft. He found that the jolly-boat was gone from the stern davits. At first he supposed it had been washed away by the heavy sea; but a further examination convinced him that it had been lowered by the men. It was possible, if not probable, the crew had taken to the boat, and he might find them on the island, or a portion of them, for it was hardly to be expected that the whole crew had escaped.

From the deck he went below. He had anticipated that the fall of the tide would enable him to enter the state-room of the captain; but there was no perceptible change in the height of the water. In this locality the whole range of the tide was not more than a foot. There were many things which might be of great value to Mollie, if they ever escaped from this region, and he was anxious to save them for her use. The captain had a considerable sum of money in gold and silver. The cabin-boy, knowing where it was, set himself at work to obtain it. He was obliged to dive several times before he succeeded; but at last he brought it up, and deposited it in the safest place he could find.

Other articles of value were saved in the same manner, including the captain's chronometer and sextant, the sad neglect of which had caused the terrible disaster. Towards night a change in the wind "knocked down" the sea, and the waves no longer dashed against the shattered vessel. The galley had been washed away; but the boat on deck, though thrown from the blocks, was still uninjured; and Noddy was sorely perplexed to find a means of getting it overboard. It was too late, and he was too tired to accomplish anything that night.

Mollie was awake when he went to the fore-castle again; and rest and refreshment had made her more cheerful and more hopeful. She spoke with greater interest of the future, and dwelt less mournfully on the sad event which had made her an orphan. Noddy told her his plans for the morrow; that he intended to launch the long-boat, and visit the island the next day; that he would build a house for her; and that they would be happy there till some passing whaler picked them up. The tired boy, now secure of life, went to sleep. His fair companion wept again, as she thought of the pleasant days when her father had been a joy to every hour of her existence; but she, too, went to sleep, with none to watch over her but the good Father who had saved her in all the perils through which she had passed.

The sun rose clear and bright the next morning, and Noddy went on deck to prepare their simple breakfast. He had constructed a fireplace of iron plates, and he boiled some water to make tea. Mollie soon joined him; and sad as she still was, she insisted that the cooking was her duty. She performed it, while Noddy employed himself in devising some plan by which, with his feeble powers, he could hoist the heavy boat into the water. The bulwarks had been partially stove on one side, and he cleared away the wreck till there was nothing to obstruct the passage of the boat over the side.

They sat down on the deck to eat their breakfast; and during the meal Noddy was very quiet and thoughtful. Occasionally he cast his eyes up at the rigging over their heads. Mollie could not help looking at him. She had a great admiration for him; he had been so kind to her, and so brave and cheerful in the discharge of the duties which the awful catastrophe imposed upon him. Besides, he was her only friend--her only hope now.

"What are you thinking about, Noddy?" asked she, perplexed by his unusually meditative mood.

"I was thinking how I should get the boat into the water."

"You can't get it into the water. What can a small boy like you do with a great boat like that?"

"I think I can manage it somehow."

"I am afraid not."

"Don't give it up, Mollie; our salvation depends on that boat. I found out something more, when I went aloft this morning."

"What?"

"There is another island off here to the northward, just as far as you can see. We may wish to go there, and the boat would be wanted then."

"Noddy, perhaps there are savages on those islands, who will kill us if we go on shore."

"Two can play at that game," replied Noddy, in his confident tone.

"What could a boy like you do against a mob of Indians?"

"There are two or three pistols in the cabin, and I think I know how to use them; at any rate I shall not be butchered, nor let you be, without showing them what I am made of," answered Noddy, as he rose from the planks, and turned his

attention once more to the moving of the boat.

"You wouldn't shoot them--would you?"

"Not if I could help it. I shouldn't want to shoot them; and I won't do it, if they behave themselves. But I must go to work on the boat now."

"Let me help you, Noddy, I am real strong, and I can do a great deal."

"I will tell you when you can help me, Mollie, for I may need a little assistance."

"I don't see how you are going to do this job."

"I will show you in a moment," replied Noddy, as he ran up the main shrouds.

He carried a small hatchet in his belt, with which he detached the starboard fore-brace from the mast. This was a rope, the end of which was tied to the main-mast, and extended through a single sheaf-block at the starboard fore-yard-arm. After passing through this block, the brace returned to the main-mast, passed through another block, and led down upon the deck. There was another rope of the same kind on the port side of the vessel. They were used to swing round the yard, in order to place the sail so that it would draw in the wind.

When Noddy cut it loose, the brace dropped to the deck. It was now simply a rope passing through a single block at the end of the yard. The little engineer made fast one end of the brace to the ring in the bow of the boat. He then unhooked the peak halliards of the fore-sail, and attached them to the ring in the stern of the boat. Now, if he had had the strength, he would have pulled on the yard-arm rope till he dragged the bow out over the water; the stern line being intended merely to steady the boat, if necessary, and keep it from jamming against the mast. When he had drawn the bow out as far as he could with the brace, he meant to attach the same rope to the stern, and complete the job.

"That's all very pretty," said Mollie, who had carefully noticed all her companion's proceedings; "but you and I can't hoist the boat up with that rigging."

"I know that, Mollie," replied Noddy, wiping the perspiration from his brow. "I haven't done yet."

"I am afraid you won't make out, Noddy."

"Yes, I shall. Work and win; that's the idea."

"You are working very hard, and I hope you will win."

"Did you know I made an improvement on Miss Bertha's maxim?"

"Indeed! What?"

"He that works shall win."

"That's very encouraging; but it isn't always true."

"It is when you work in the right way," answered Noddy, as he took the end of the yard-arm rope, and, after passing it through a snatch-block, began to wind it around the barrel of the small capstan on the fore-castle.

"Perhaps you haven't got the right way."

"If I haven't I shall try again, and keep trying till I do get it," replied Noddy, as he handed Mollie the end of the rope which he had wound four times round the capstan. "Do you think you can hold this rope and take in the slack?"

"I am afraid there will not be any to take in; but I can hold it, if there is," said she, satirically, but without even a smile.

Noddy inserted one of the capstan bars, and attempted to "walk round;" but his feeble powers were not sufficient to move the boat a single inch. He tightened up the rope, and that was all he could accomplish.

"I was afraid you could not stir it," said Mollie; but her tones were full of sympathy for her companion in his disappointment.

He struggled in vain for a time; but it required a little more engineering to make the machinery move. Taking a "gun-tackle purchase," or "tackle and fall," as it is called on shore, he attached one hook to the extreme end of the capstan bar, and the other to the rail. This added power accomplished the work; and he made the capstan revolve with ease, though the business went on very slowly. He was obliged to shift back the bar four times for every revolution of the

barrel. But the boat moved forward, and that was success. He persevered, and skill and labor finally accomplished the difficult task. The boat floated in the water alongside the wreck. He had worked; he had won.



CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BEAUTIFUL ISLAND.

"THERE, Mollie, what do you think now!" exclaimed the youthful engineer, as he made fast the painter of the boat to a ring in the deck of the schooner.

"You have worked very hard, Noddy, but you have succeeded. You must be very tired."

"I am tired, for I have done a hard day's work."

"You ought to rest now."

"I think I will. We are in no hurry, for we are very comfortable here, and storms don't come very often."

It was late in the afternoon when the work of getting out the boat was finished. Noddy had labored very hard, and he was perfectly willing to rest during the remainder of the day. Mollie made some tea, and they had supper at an early hour. It was a remarkably pleasant day, and the air was as soft and balmy as a poet's dream. Both the young workers were very much fatigued, and they sat upon the deck till dark.

"Where is my father now?" asked Mollie, as she cast a nervous glance towards the beautiful island which they hoped to reach on the following day.

"Where is he?" repeated Noddy, surprised at the question, and not knowing what she meant.

"I mean his remains."

"In his state-room," answered Noddy, very reluctant to have the subject considered.

"Will you do one thing more for me, Noddy?" demanded she, earnestly and impressively.

"Certainly, I will, Mollie."

"It shall be the last thing I shall ask you to do for me."

"Don't say that, for I've always been ready to do everything you wished me to do."

"I know you have, Noddy; and you work so hard that I don't feel like asking you to do any extra labor."

"I will do anything you wish, Mollie. You needn't be afraid to ask me, either. If you knew how much pleasure it gives me to work for you, I'm sure you would keep me busy all the time."

"I don't wish to wear you out, and you may think this is useless work."

"I'm sure I shall not, if you want it done."

"If you knew how sad it makes me feel to think of my poor father lying in the water there, you would understand me," added she, bursting into tears.

"I know what you mean, Mollie, and it shall be done the first thing to-morrow."

"Thank you, Noddy. You are so good and so kind! I hope I shall see Miss Bertha, some time, and tell her what you have done for me," continued she, wiping away her tears.

They retired to the fore-castle soon after dark; and when Mollie had said her simple prayer for both of them, they lay down in the bunks, and were soon asleep.

Noddy's first work the next morning was to rig a mast and sail for the long-boat. In this labor he was assisted by Mollie, who sewed diligently on the sail all the forenoon. While she was thus engaged, Noddy, without telling her what he was going to do, went into the cabin, carrying a boat-hook, and, with a feeling of awe amounting almost to superstitious terror, proceeded to fish up the body of Captain McClintock. He knew just where it lay, and had no difficulty in accomplishing the task. He dragged the remains out into the cabin, and floated the corpse in the water to the foot of the ladder. It was an awful duty for him to perform; and when he saw the ghastly, bloated face, he was disposed to flee in terror from the spot.

Noddy was strong for his years, or he could not have placed the body on the locker, out of the reach of the water. He prepared the remains for burial precisely as those of Mr. Watts had been. The most difficult part of the task was yet

to be performed--to get the corpse on deck, and lower it into the boat. He procured a long box in the hold, from which he removed the merchandise, and found that it would answer the purpose of a coffin. By much hard lifting, and by resorting to various expedients, he placed the remains in the box and nailed down the lid. He felt easier now, for the face of the corpse no longer glared at him.

When he had bent on the sail, and shipped the rudder, he contrived to set Mollie at work in the fore-castle, where she could not see what he was doing; for he thought his work must be revolting to her feelings, especially as it would be very clumsily performed. Having put a sling on the box, he rigged a purchase, and hoisted it out of the cabin. Then, with suitable rigging, he lowered it into the boat, placing it across the thwarts, amidships.

"Come, Mollie," said he, in a gentle, subdued tone, at the fore-scuttle.

"What, Noddy?" asked she, impressed by his voice, and by his manner, as she came up from below.

"We will go on shore now."

"To-day?"

"Yes; but we will return. The boat is ready, and I have done what you asked me to do."

"What?"

"Your father."

She was awed by his manner, and did not readily understand what he meant. He pointed to the long box in the boat, and she comprehended the loving labor he had performed. She did not inquire how he had accomplished the task, and did not think of the difficulties which attended it. Noddy did not allude to them.

"I am ready, Noddy; but can you get me the prayer-book?" said she, her eyes filling with tears, as she prepared to perform the pious duty which the exigencies of the occasion required of her.

The book was fortunately on a shelf to which the water had not risen, and he brought it up and gave it to her. He had before placed a pick and shovel, an axe, a couple of boards and some cords in the boat. He helped her to a seat in the stern-sheets, and shoved off. There was hardly a breath of wind, and Noddy sculled the boat towards an opening in the reef, which was of coral, and surrounded the island. The afflicted daughter gazed in silent grief at the box, and did not speak a word till the boat entered a little inlet, which Noddy had chosen as a landing-place.

He stepped on shore, and secured the boat to a bush which grew on the bank. Mollie followed him in silence, and selected a place for the grave. It was at the foot of a cocoa palm. The spot was as beautiful as the heart could desire for such a holy purpose; and Noddy commenced his work. The soil was light and loose, and after much severe labor, he made a grave about three feet deep. It would be impossible for him to lower the box into the grave; and, from one end, he dug out an inclined plane, down which he could roll the corpse to its final resting-place.

It required all his skill, strength, and ingenuity to disembark the box; but this was finally accomplished, with such assistance as the weeping daughter could render. The rude coffin was then moved on rollers to the foot of the tree, and deposited in the grave. Mollie opened the book to the funeral prayer, and handed it to her companion. Severe as the labor he had performed had been, he regarded this as far more trying. He could not refuse, when he saw the poor girl, weeping as though her heart would break, kneel down at the head of the grave. Fortunately he had read this prayer many times since it had been used at the obsequies of Mr. Watts, and it was familiar to him. Awed and impressed by the solemn task imposed upon him, he read the prayer in trembling, husky tones. But he was more earnest and sincere than many who read the same service in Christian lands. It touched his own heart, and again the good Father seemed to be very near to him.

The reading was finished, and the loving girl, not content with what had been done, gathered wild flowers, rich and luxuriant in that sunny clime, and showered them, as a tribute of affection, on the rough coffin. Noddy filled up the trench first, and then, amid the sobs of the poor child, covered all that remained of her father. With what art he possessed he arranged the green sods, as he had seen them in the graveyard at Whitestone. Mollie covered the spot with flowers, and then seemed loath to leave the grave.

From the beginning, Noddy had trembled lest she should ask to look once more on the face of the departed. He had been horrified at the sight himself, and he knew that the distorted visage would haunt her dreams if she was permitted to gaze upon it; but she did not ask to take that last look. Though she said nothing about it, she seemed to feel, instinctively, that the face was not that she had loved, which had smiled upon her, and which was still present in her remembrance.

"Come, Mollie, it is almost dark, and we must go now," said he, tenderly, when he had waited some time for her.

"I am ready, Noddy; and you cannot tell how much better I feel now that my poor father sleeps in a grave on the land--on the beautiful island!" replied she, as she followed him to the boat. "You have been very kind to do what you have. It has cost you a whole day's labor."

"It is the best day's work I have done, Mollie, if it makes you feel better," replied Noddy, as he hoisted the sail.

They did not reach the wreck till it was quite dark, for the wind was light. Mollie was more cheerful than she had been since the vessel struck. She had performed a religious duty, which was very consoling to her feelings in her affliction; and Noddy hoped that even her sadness would wear away amid the active employments which would be required of her.

In the morning, Noddy loaded the boat with provisions, and such useful articles as they would need most on the island, and in the middle of the forenoon they again sailed for the land. They entered the little inlet, and moored the boat in a convenient place, for it was decided that they should explore the island before the goods were landed.

"We are real Robinson Crusoes now, Noddy," said Mollie, as they stepped on shore.

"Who's he?"

She told him who Crusoe was, and some of the main features of his residence on the lonely island. She was surprised to learn that he had never read the story.

"But we have everything we can possibly need, while Crusoe had scarcely anything. We have provisions enough in the vessel to last us a year," added she.

"We shall do very well. I don't think we shall have to stay here long. There are whale ships in all parts of the South Seas, and if they don't come to us, we can go to them, for we have a first-rate boat."

They walked up the hill which rose from the little plain by the sea-side, where they found a small table-land. But it did not take them long to explore the island, for it was hardly a mile in diameter. Portions of it were covered with trees, whose shape and foliage were new and strange to the visitors. No inhabitants dwelt in this little paradise; but the reason was soon apparent to Noddy; for, when Mollie was thirsty, their search for water was unavailing. There was none on the island.

This was an appalling discovery, and Noddy began to consider the situation of the water casks on board the wreck. They returned to the boat, and having selected a suitable spot, the goods were landed, and carefully secured under a sail-cloth brought off for the purpose. For two weeks Noddy labored diligently in bringing off the most serviceable goods from the wreck. He had constructed a tent on shore, and they made their home on the island. For the present there was nothing but hard work, for a storm might come and break up the schooner.

Noddy rigged a series of pulleys, which enabled him to handle the water casks with ease. Other heavy articles were managed in the same way. Farther up the inlet than his first landing-place he found a tree near the shore, to which he attached his ropes and blocks, to hoist the barrels out of the boat. We are sorry that our space does not permit a minute description of these contrivances, for many of them were very ingenious. The labor was hard, and the progress often very slow; but Noddy enjoyed the fruit of his expedients, and was happy in each new triumph he achieved. He had found a joy in work which did not exist in play.

"Now, Mollie, we must build a house," said he, when he had brought off sufficient supplies from the wreck.

"Do you think you can make a house, Noddy?"

"I know I can."

"Well, I suppose you can. I think you can do anything you try to do."

"I have brought off all the boards I could get out of the wreck, and I am sure I can build a very nice house."

The work was immediately commenced. Near the spot selected for the mansion of the exiles there was a grove of small trees. The wood was light and soft, and Noddy found that he could fell the trees with his sharp hatchet quickly and easily. Four posts, with a crotch in the top of each, were set in the ground, forming the corners of the house. The frame was secured with nails and with ropes. The sides and the roof were then covered with the hibiscus from the grove. Noddy worked like a hero at his task, and Mollie watched him with the most intense interest; for he would not permit her to perform any of the hard labor.

The frame was up, and covered, but the house was like a sieve. It was the intention of the master builder to cover the roof with tough sods, and plaster up the crevices in the sides with mud. But Mollie thought the fore-topsail of the schooner would be better than sods and mud, though it was not half so romantic. They had whole casks of nails, small and large, and the sail was finally chosen, and securely nailed upon the roof and sides. A floor was made of the boards, and the house banked up so as to turn the water away from it when it rained. Two rooms, one for each of the exiles, were partitioned off with sail-cloth. A bunk was made in each, which was supplied with a berth-sack and bed-clothes from the schooner. Besides these two rooms, there was one apartment for general purposes.

This important work occupied three weeks; but it was perfectly luxurious when completed.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE VISITORS.

THE house was finished, and the satisfaction which it afforded to the young exiles cannot be expressed in words. Noddy had exercised his ingenuity in the construction of a fireplace, a chimney, and a table. The stern-lights of the Roebuck furnished the windows of the principal apartment; while single panes of glass, obtained from the assorted cargo of the vessel, admitted the light to the sleeping-rooms. They had knives, forks, spoons, dishes, and cooking utensils in abundance. Everything they wanted was at hand; and in this respect they differed from all the Crusoes of ancient and modern times.

The miscellaneous cargo of the schooner supplied the house with all the comforts and many of the luxuries of civilization; and if Noddy had been familiar with the refinements of social life, he would probably have added the "modern improvements" to the mansion. If the house had been an elegant residence on Fifth Avenue or Blackstone Square, the occupants could not have enjoyed it more. Day after day Noddy added some new feature of comfort, until he was as proud of the dwelling as though he had been the architect of St. Peter's.

The work was done, and they had nothing to do but sit down under their "own vine and fig-tree," and enjoy themselves. They had provisions and water enough to last them six months. But Noddy had discovered that idleness was the sum of all miseries; and after he had thoroughly explored the island, and amused himself for a few days among the novelties of the place, he realized that work was a positive luxury. Even patient, plodding labor, without any excitement, was better than doing nothing.

Though there had been a storm, the Roebuck still held together; and the most profitable employment that presented itself was bringing off the rest of the cargo from the wreck; and everything which it was possible for him to move was transferred to the shore. He built a storehouse of sail-cloth, in which all the merchandise and provisions were carefully secured, though it was not probable that any considerable portion of it would ever be of any value to the islanders.

Noddy had built a fence around the grave of Captain McClintock, and on a smooth board had cut the name and age of the deceased. Every day Mollie visited the spot, and placed fresh flowers on the green sod. The sharp pangs of her great affliction had passed away, and she was cheerful, and even hopeful of the future, while she fondly cherished the memory of her father.

The islands which were just visible in the distance were a source of interest and anxiety to the sailor-boy and his gentle companion. Noddy had carefully examined them through the spy-glass a great many times; and once he had seen a large canoe, under sail, with a ponderous "out-rigger" to keep it from upsetting; but it did not come near the home of the exiles. This proved that the other islands were inhabited, and he was in constant dread of a visit from the savages. He put all the pistols he had found in the cabin in readiness for use, and practised firing at a mark, that he might be able to defend himself and his fair charge if occasion required. They did not come, and there were no signs on the island that they ever visited it, and he hoped to avoid the necessity of fighting them.

There were plenty of fish in the waters which surrounded the island, and Noddy had no difficulty in catching as many of them as he wanted. There were no animals to be seen, except a few sea-fowl. He killed one of these, and roasted him for dinner one day; but the flesh was so strong and so fishy that salt pork and corned beef were considered better.

A two months' residence on the island had accustomed both the boy and the girl to the novelties of the situation; and though, as might be reasonably expected, they were anxious to return to the great world from which they had been banished, they were tolerably contented with the life they led. Noddy was continually planning some new thing to add to the comfort of their daily life, and to provide supplies for the future. As in many large cities, a supply of pure water was a question, of momentous importance to him, and he early turned his attention to the subject. He made spouts of canvas for the "mansion" and the storehouse, by which the water, when it rained, was conducted to barrels set in the ground, so as to keep it cool. This expedient promised a plentiful supply, for the rains were heavy and frequent, and the quality was much better than that of the water casks.

When all the necessary work had been accomplished, and when the time at last hung heavily on his hands, Noddy began to consider the practicability of a garden, to keep up the supply of peas, beans, and potatoes, of which a considerable quantity had been obtained from the wreck. Mollie was delighted with the idea of a "farm," as she called it, and the ground was at once marked off. Noddy went to work; but the labor of digging up the soil, and preparing it for the seed, was very hard. There was no excitement about this occupation, and the laborer "punished" himself very severely in performing it; but work had become a principle with him, and he persevered until an incident occurred which

suspended further operations on the garden, and gave him all the excitement his nature craved.

"What's that, Noddy?" said Mollie, one day, when he was industriously striving to overcome his dislike to plodding labor.

"Where?" asked he, dropping his shovel, for the manner of his companion betrayed no little alarm.

"On the water," replied she, pointing in the direction of the islands which had given them so much anxiety.

"It is a native canoe loaded with savages," said Noddy, hastening to the house for his spy-glass and pistols.

He examined the canoe long and attentively. It was only four or five miles distant, and looked like quite a large boat.

"They are coming here," said Noddy.

"O, what shall we do?" exclaimed the timid maiden, recalling all she knew about cannibals and fierce savages found on the South Sea Islands.

"Perhaps they will not come here," added Noddy; but it was more to cheer up his friend, than from any hope he cherished of avoiding the issue.

"I hope they will not. What do you think they will do to us, if they do?"

"I think I can manage them, Mollie. Don't be alarmed."

"How many are there in the canoe?"

"A dozen or fifteen, I should think," replied he, after he had again examined the object with the glass.

"What can you do with so many as that?" asked she, in despair.

"They are savages, you know; and they are afraid of powder. If I should shoot one of them, the rest would run away."

"Can't we hide?"

"That will do no good. They would certainly find us. The best way is to face the music."

"And they will steal all our things, Noddy."

"I won't let them steal anything," said he, examining his pistol.

"I hope you won't have to shoot any of them. It would be awful to kill the poor creatures."

"I won't fire if I can help it. They are all looking this way, and I'm sure they can see the house and the tent."

"What shall we do?" cried Mollie, who certainly felt that the end of all things had come.

"We can do nothing; and we may as well take it easy. I can't tell what to do now; but I think I will go down and hide the boat, for they may carry that off."

Mollie went with him to the inlet, and the boat was moved up among the bushes where the savages would not be likely to find it. The wind was light, and the great canoe advanced but slowly. The men on board of her appeared to be watching the island with as much interest as its occupants regarded the approach of the intruders.

Off the reef the big canoe came up into the wind, and the savages appeared to be debating what they should do next. They could see the remains of the wrecked schooner now; and the question appeared to be, whether they should visit that or the shore. But she soon filled away again, and passed through the opening in the reef. Noddy had three pistols, all of which he put in his belt, and finished this hostile array by adding a huge butcher-knife to the collection. He looked formidable enough to fight a whole army; but he intended only to make a prudent display of force. Mollie thought it was rather ridiculous for a small boy like him to load himself down with so many weapons, which could not avail him, if a conflict became necessary, against sixteen savages, full grown, and accustomed to fighting. But Noddy was general-in-chief of the forces, and she did not remonstrate any further than to beg him to be prudent.

The canoe slowly approached the shore. Those in her seemed to be familiar with the land, for they steered directly up the little inlet which Noddy had chosen as his landing-place. The "lord of the isle," as our sailor-boy felt himself to be, moved down to the shore, followed by Mollie. The savages could now be distinctly seen. They were horribly tattooed, and they did not look very friendly. As the canoe touched the shore, they sprang to their feet, and Noddy's calculations were set at naught by the discovery that several were armed with guns.

One of them stepped on shore. There was a broad grin on his ugly face, which was intended for a conciliatory smile. The savage walked towards Noddy with his hand extended, and with his mouth stretched open from ear to ear, to denote the friendly nature of his mission. The boy took the hand, and tried to look as amiable as the visitor; but as his mouth was not half so large, he probably met with only a partial success.

"Americals?" said the savage, in tones so loud that poor Mollie was actually frightened by the sound.

He spoke in a nasal voice, as a man does who has a cold in the head; but the lord of the isle was surprised and pleased to hear even a single word of his mother tongue. He pointed impressively to the American flag, which had been hoisted on a pole, as he had seen Captain McClintock do when he had a slight difficulty with a custom-house officer at Barbadoes, and politely replied that he and Mollie were Americans.

"Big heap thigs," added the savage, pointing to the tent filled with stores and merchandise.

"They are mine," said Noddy.

"Americals--yes."

"What do you want?"

"Big wreck," said the visitor, pointing over to the schooner. "Big lot mel ol the other isal."

"Americans?" asked Noddy, clearly understanding the speaker, whose enunciation was principally defective in the substitution of l's for n's.

"Four Americals; big storm; come in boat."

"Do you hear that, Mollie?" exclaimed Noddy. "He says that four Americans came to the other island in a boat."

"They must be some of the crew of the Roebuck."

"Big wreck; log time; fild it low," said the savage, pointing to the schooner again.

They had been looking for the wreck from which the four men had been saved, but had not been able to find it before.

"Whale ship over there," added he. "Take four mel off."

"Is she there now?" asked Noddy, breathless with interest.

"Go sool--to-morrow--lext week."

This was not very definite; but the way to his native land seemed to be open to him, and he listened with deep emotion to the welcome intelligence.

"Can we go over there?" asked Noddy, pointing to his companion.

"Go with we."

"We will."

"Big heap thigs," added the savage, pointing to the storehouse again. "Walt to trade?"

"Yes; what will you give for the lot?" asked Noddy, facetiously.

"Big heap thigs," replied the man, not comprehending the wholesale trade.

It was of no use to attempt to bargain with these people; they had no money, and they could help themselves to what they pleased. Noddy gave them heavy articles enough to load their boat, for he felt that he had no further use for them, if there was a whale ship at the other island. He questioned the savage very closely in regard to the vessel, and was satisfied that he spoke the truth. The welcome intelligence that a portion of the Roebuck's crew had been saved, rendered the exiles the more anxious to visit the island.

The savages all landed and gazed at Mollie with the utmost interest and curiosity. Probably they had never before seen an American girl. But they were respectful to her, and she soon ceased to be afraid of them. She laughed with them, and soon became quite intimate with the whole party. They treated her like a superior being; and certainly her pretty face and her gentle manners were quite enough to inspire them with such an idea.

The savages had loaded their goods into the canoe, and were ready to return. The man who spoke English offered

them a passage in his craft; but Noddy decided that it would be better and safer for them to go over in their own boat. He proceeded to secure all his valuables, including all his own money and that he had saved from the state-room of the captain, which he concealed about his clothes. The boat was well loaded with such articles as he thought would be useful to Mollie, or would sell best when a chance offered. He had quite a cargo, and the savages began to be impatient before his preparations were completed.

While he was thus employed, Mollie gathered fresh flowers, and paid her last visit, as she supposed, to the grave of her father. She wept there, as she thought of leaving him in that far-off, lonely island; but she was consoled by the belief that her father's spirit dwelt in the happy land, where spring eternal ever reigns.

The boat was ready; she wiped away her tears, and stepped on board. Both of them felt sad at the thought of leaving the island; but home had hopes which reconciled them to the change.



CHAPTER XX.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

NODDY shook out the sail of the boat, and pushing her off, followed the canoe. Though the exiles had been on the island but little over two months, they had become much attached to their new home, and it was with a feeling of sadness that they bade adieu to it. The house and other improvements had cost Noddy so much hard labor that he was sorry to leave them before he had received the full benefit of all the comfort and luxury which they were capable of affording.

"Don't you think we ought to live on the island for a year or so, after all the work we have done there?" said Noddy, as the boat gathered headway, and moved away from the shore.

"I'm sure I should be very happy there, if we had to stay," replied Mollie, "But I don't think I should care to remain just for the sake of living in the house you built."

"Nor I; but it seems to me just as though I had done all the work for nothing."

"You worked very hard."

"But I enjoyed my work, for all that."

"And you think you did not win anything by it," added she, with a smile.

"I don't think that. I used to hate to work when I was at Woodville. I don't think I do hate it now."

"Then you have won something."

"I think I have won a great deal, when I look the matter over. I have learned a great many things."

Noddy had only a partial appreciation of what he had "won," though he was satisfied that his labor had not been wasted. He had been happy in the occupation which the necessities of his situation demanded of him. Many a boy, wrecked as he had been, with no one but a weak and timid girl to support him, would have done nothing but repine at his hard lot; would have lived "from hand to mouth" during those two months, and made every day a day of misery. Noddy had worked hard; but what had he won? Was his labor, now that he was to abandon the house, the cisterns, the stores, and the garden,—was it wasted?

Noddy had won two months of happiness.

He had won a knowledge of his own powers, mental and physical.

He had won a valuable experience in adapting means to ends, which others might be years in obtaining.

He had won a vast amount of useful information from the stubborn toil he had performed.

He had won the victory over idleness and indifference, which had beset him for years.

He had won a cheerful spirit, from the trials and difficulties he had encountered.

He had won a lively faith in things higher than earth, from the gentle and loving heart that shared his exile, for whom, rather than for himself, he had worked.

His labor was not lost. He had won more than could be computed. He had won faith and hope, confidence in himself, an earnest purpose, which were to go through life with him, and bless him to the end of his days, and through the endless ages of eternity. He had worked earnestly; he had won untold riches.

The wind was tolerably fresh after the boats passed the reef, and in two hours they were near enough to a large island to enable the young voyagers to see the objects on the shore. But they followed the canoe beyond a point of the land; and, after a run of several miles more, they rounded another point, and discovered the tall masts of a ship, at anchor in a small bay.

"It may be many months before we can get home. This ship may have to cruise a year or two before she obtains her full cargo of oil."

"I hope not."

"But we may find some way to get home. I have all the money I saved from the vessel, and we can pay our passage home."

The money reminded the orphan girl of her father, and she mused upon the past. The boat sped on its way, and in a short time reached the ship.

"Hallo, Noddy!" shouted Mr. Lincoln, as the boat approached. "And Mollie too!"

The mate was overjoyed to see them, and to find that they had been saved from the wreck. He leaped into the boat, took Mollie in his arms, and kissed her as though she had been his own child. He grasped the hand of Noddy, and wrung it till the owner thought it would be crushed in his grip.

"I was sure you were lost," said Mr. Lincoln.

"And we were sure you were lost," replied Noddy.

"How did it happen? The cabin was full of water when we left the schooner."

"You didn't wait long, Mr. Lincoln."

"We couldn't wait long. The sea made a clean breach over the wreck. Only four of us were saved; the rest were washed away, and we never saw anything more of them!"

Noddy and Mollie were conducted to the deck of the whale ship, where they were warmly welcomed by the captain and his officers. The three sailors who had been saved from the wreck of the Roebuck were rejoiced to see them alive and well. In the presence of the large group gathered around himself and Mollie, Noddy told his story.

"Captain McClintock was lost, then?"

"Yes," replied Noddy, breaking through the crowd, for he did not like to tell the particulars of his death in poor Mollie's presence.

At a later hour he found an opportunity to inform his late shipmates of the manner in which the corpse of the captain had been found, and of its burial on the island. In return, Mr. Lincoln told him that he had cast off the boat a moment after the schooner struck the reef. The men who happened to be on the quarter-deck with him had been saved; the others were not seen after the shock. With the greatest difficulty they had kept the boat right side up, for she was often full of water. For hours they had drifted in the gale, and in the morning, when the storm subsided, they had reached the island.

They had been kindly treated by natives, who were partially civilized by their intercourse with vessels visiting the island, and with which they carried on commerce, exchanging the products of the island for guns, ammunition, and other useful and ornamental articles. The savages knew that, if they killed or injured any white men, the terrible ships of war would visit them with the severest punishment.

"What ship is this?" asked Noddy, when the past had been satisfactorily explained by both parties.

"The Atlantic, of New Bedford," replied the mate. "She is full of oil, and is homeward bound."

"Good!" exclaimed Noddy. "I suppose I have nothing further to do in this part of the world, and I may as well go in her."

"This hasn't been a very profitable cruise to me," added Mr. Lincoln.

"Well, I suppose there is no help for it; and I hope you will have better luck next time."

"I don't grumble; these things can't always be helped. We were lucky to escape with our lives, and we won't say a word about the wages we have lost."

"Perhaps you won't lose them," added Mollie; and there was a slight flush on her fair cheeks, for her pride and her filial affection were touched by the reflection that these men had suffered from her father's infirmity.

The captain of the whale ship was entirely willing to take the exiles as passengers; and Noddy told him he had saved a great many articles, which might be of service to him. The next day, when the vessel had taken in her water, she sailed for the beautiful island. Outside the reef she lay to, and the boats were sent on shore to bring off such of the goods as would be useful on the voyage.

Noddy and Mollie had an opportunity to visit their island home once more; and, while the former assisted the men

in selecting and loading the goods, the latter gathered fresh flowers, and for the last time strewed them on the grave of her father.

The "big heap thigs" was very much reduced by the visit of the boats; but there was still enough left to reward the natives who had befriended the young islanders for the service they had rendered. According to the captain's estimate,--which was rather low,--he took about four hundred dollars' worth of goods from the island. Mollie, as her father's heir, was the owner of the property, subject to Noddy's claim for salvage. With Mr. Lincoln's aid the accounts were settled. Mollie insisted upon paying the mate and the three seamen their wages up to the time they would reach their native land. This, with their own passage, consumed nearly the whole sum.

Besides the property saved from the island, there were about sixteen hundred dollars in gold and silver, and the valuable nautical instruments of Captain McClintock, making a total of over two thousand dollars. Though the disposition of this property was properly a subject for the maritime courts to settle, Mr. Lincoln and the officers of the ship talked it over, and decided that one half belonged to Mollie, in right of her father, and the other half to Noddy, as salvage,--which is the part of property saved from a wrecked imperilled ship, awarded to those who save it.

Noddy at first positively objected to this decree, and refused to take a dollar from the poor orphan girl; but when the captain told him that a court would probably award him a larger share, and when Mollie almost cried because he refused, he consented to take it; but it was with a determination to have it applied to her use when he got home. The whale ship filled away when the goods had been taken on board, and weeks and months she stood on her course, till the welcome shores of their native land gladdened the sight of the exiled children. Mollie had been a great favorite with the officers and crew during the voyage, and many of them were the wiser and the better for the gentle words she spoke to them. The captain sold the nautical instruments, and the money was divided according to the decision of the council and officers. Noddy was now the possessor of about twelve hundred dollars, which was almost a fortune to a boy of twelve. It had been "work and win" to some purpose, in spite of the disastrous conclusion of the voyage.



CHAPTER XXI.

THE CLERGYMAN AND HIS WIFE.

THE captain of the whale ship very kindly took the young voyagers to his own house until their affairs were settled up. He had dealt fairly and justly by them in all things, and both were grateful to him for the interest he had manifested in their welfare.

"What are you going to do now, Noddy?" asked Mollie, after the instruments had been sold and the proceeds paid over to them.

"I'm going to Woodville, now, to face the music," replied Noddy. "I suppose they will take me to the court-house; but I have made up my mind to submit to the penalty, whatever it may be, for setting the boat-house afire."

"Fanny has told all about it before this time, you may be certain," added Mollie, to whom he had related the story of the fire.

"I hope she has not; for I think I am the guilty one. She wouldn't have set the fire if it hadn't been for me. I am going to stand right up to it, and take the consequences, even if they send me to prison; but I hope they won't do that."

"I'm sure they won't. But, Noddy, suppose Miss Fanny has not told the truth yet. Will you still deceive your kind friends? You told me you had been made over new since you left Woodville, and I know you have. You said you meant to live a good life, and not lie, or steal, or get angry, or do anything that is bad."

"Well, I mean so, Mollie. I intend to stick to it. They won't know anything about that. They won't believe anything I say."

"They must believe you. I'll go with you, Noddy!" exclaimed she, smiling at the happy thought. "I will tell them all about you."

"That will be jolly; and the sooner we go the better."

Their good friend the captain found a gentleman who was going to New York, and they accompanied him, though Noddy felt abundantly able to take care of himself and his fair charge. They arrived the next morning, and took an early train for Woodville.

Noddy conducted Mollie down the road to the lawn in front of the house. His heart bounded with emotion as he once more beheld the familiar scenes of the past. As he walked along he pointed out to his interested companion the various objects which were endeared to him by former associations. He talked because he could not help it; for he was so agitated he did not know whether he was on his head or his heels. He heard a step on one of the side paths. He turned to see who it was, and Bertha Grant rushed towards him.

"Why, Noddy! Is that you?" cried she, grasping him with both hands. "I am so glad to see you!"

"You'd better believe I'm glad to see you again," said he, trying to keep from crying.

The poor fellow actually broke down, he was so much affected by the meeting.

"I didn't expect to see you again for years, after the letter you wrote me."

"Been cast away, Miss Bertha, and lived two months on an island where nobody lived," blubbered Noddy.

"Who is this little girl with you? Is this Mollie, of whom you spoke in your letter?"

"Yes, Miss Bertha, that's Mollie; and she is the best girl in the world, except yourself."

"I'm very glad to see you, Mollie," said Bertha, taking her hand, and giving her a kind reception. "Now, come into the house."

Bertha, finding Noddy so completely overcome by his emotions, refrained from asking him any more questions, though she was anxious to hear the sad story of the shipwreck. Mr. Grant had not yet gone to the city, and he received the returned exiles as though they had been his own children.

"I've come back, Mr. Grant, to settle up old affairs, and you can send me to the court-house or the prison now. I did wrong, and I am willing to suffer for it."

"I have told them all about it, Noddy," interrupted Miss Fanny, blushing. "I couldn't stand it after you went away."

"It was my fault," said Noddy. "I said so then, and I say so now."

"We won't say anything about that until after breakfast. We are very glad you have come back; and we don't care about thinking of anything else, at present," said Mr. Grant.

Breakfast was provided for the wanderer and his friend, and Mollie was soon made quite at home by the kind attentions of Bertha and Fanny. When the meal was ended, Noddy insisted upon "settling up old affairs," as he called it. He declared that the blame ought to rest on him, and he was willing to suffer. Mr. Grant said that he was satisfied. Fanny was to blame, and she had already been severely punished for her fault.

"You will not send poor Noddy to prison--will you?" interposed Mollie. "He is a good boy now. He saved my life, and took care of me for months. You will find that he is not the same Noddy, he used to be. He is made over new."

"I'm glad to hear that," replied Mr. Grant. "But Noddy, did you really think I intended to send you to jail?"

"Yes, sir; what was the constable after me for, if not for that?"

"It's a mistake, and I told you so in Albany. Didn't I say you would be a rich man?"

"You did, sir; but I thought that was only to catch me. All of them said something of that sort. I knew I couldn't be a rich man, because my father never had a cent to leave me. That's what they told me."

"But you had an uncle."

"Never heard of him," replied Noddy, bewildered at the prospect before him.

"Your father's only brother died in California more than a year ago. He had no family; but an honest man who went with him knew where he came from; and Squire Wriggs has hunted up all the evidence, which fully proves that all your uncle's property, in the absence of other heirs, belongs to you. He left over thirty thousand dollars, and it is all yours."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Noddy, utterly confounded by this intelligence.

"This sum, judiciously invested, will produce at least fifty thousand when you are of age. I have been appointed your guardian."

"I don't think I'm Noddy Newman after this," added the heir, in breathless excitement.

"I know you are not," added Bertha, laughing. "Your real name is Ogden Newman."

"How are you, Ogden?" said Noddy, amused at his new name.

"I suppose Noddy came from Ogden," said Mr. Grant.

"If that's what's the matter, I don't see what you wanted to take me to court for."

"As you have come to years of discretion, you might have had the privilege of naming your own guardian; and we were going to take you to the court for that purpose. As you were not here to speak for yourself, I was appointed. If you are not satisfied, the proceedings can be reviewed."

"I'm satisfied first rate," laughed Noddy. "But you said something about sending me off."

"My plan was to send you to the Tunbrook Military Institute, where Richard is, and make a man of you."

"I should like that--perhaps."

"You gave me a great deal of trouble to find you; and I did not succeed, after all," added Mr. Grant.

"I didn't know what you was after. If I had, I shouldn't have been in such a hurry. But I guess it was all for the best. I've been at work, Miss Bertha, since I went away," said Noddy, turning to his teacher and friend.

"Did you win?"

"I rather think I did," replied he, depositing his twelve hundred dollars on the table. "That's rather better than being a tinker, I reckon, Miss Bertha."

"O, if you had seen him work. He did things which a great man could not have done," said Mollie, with enthusiasm. "And he's real good, too. He'll never do anything wrong again."

"We must hear all about it now, Ogden," continued Mr. Grant.

"Who?"

"Ogden; that's your name now."

Between Noddy and Mollie the story was told; and there was hardly a dry eye in the room when the parts relating to the yellow fever and the funeral of Captain McClintock were narrated. Noddy told the burden of the story; but he was occasionally interrupted by Mollie, who wanted to tell how her friend watched over her and her father when they were sick with the fever, and what kindness and consideration he had used in procuring and burying the remains of her father. Noddy only told facts; she supplied what she regarded as very important omissions.

When the narrative was finished, Mr. Grant, and Bertha were willing to believe that Noddy had been made over new; that he had worked, morally as well as physically, and won, besides the treasure on the table, good principles enough to save him from the errors which formerly beset him; had won a child's faith in God, and a man's confidence in himself. The whole family were deeply interested in Mollie; they pitied and loved her; and as she had no near relatives, they insisted upon her remaining at Woodville.

"This is your money, Ogden, and I suppose I am to invest it with the rest of your property," said Mr. Grant.

"No, sir," replied Noddy, promptly. "You know how I got that money, and I don't think it belongs to me. Besides, I'm rich, and don't want it. Mollie must have every dollar of it."

"Bravo, Noddy," exclaimed Mr. Grant. "I approve of that with all my heart."

"Why, no, Noddy. You earned it all," said Mollie. "One hundred dollars of it was yours before the wreck."

"I don't care for that. Mr. Grant shall take care of the whole of it for you, or you may take it, as you please."

Mollie was in the minority, and she had to yield the point; and Mr. Grant was instructed to invest all she had, being the entire net proceeds of what was saved from the wreck.

After the story had been told, all the young people took a walk on the estate, during which Noddy saw Ben and the rest of the servants. The old man was delighted to meet him again, and the others were hardly less rejoiced. The boat-house had been rebuilt. It was winter, and every craft belonging to the establishment was housed.

In the spring, Noddy, or Ogden, as he was now called, was sent to the Tunbrook Institute; while Bertha found a faithful pupil, and Fanny a devoted friend, in Mollie.

Three months at Woodville convinced Mr. Grant and Bertha that the change in Noddy was radical and permanent. Though not now required to work, he was constantly employed in some useful occupation. He was no longer an idler and a vagabond, but one of the most industrious, useful, and reliable persons on the estate.

He did not work with his hands only. There was a work for the mind and the heart to do, and he labored as perseveringly and as successfully in this field as in the other. At Tunbrook he was a hard student, and graduated with the highest intellectual honors. From there he went to college.

The influence of those scenes when the yellow fever was raging around him, when the stormy ocean threatened to devour him, and perhaps more than all others, when he stood at the open, grave of Captain McClintock, was never obliterated from his mind. They colored his subsequent existence; and when he came to choose a profession, he selected that of a minister of the gospel.

The Rev. Ogden Newman is not, and never will be, a brilliant preacher; but he is a faithful and devoted "shepherd of the sheep." The humble parish over whose moral and spiritual welfare he presides is not more rejoiced and comforted by his own ministrations than by the loving words and the pure example of the gentle being who now walks hand in hand with him in the journey of life, cheered by his presence and upheld by his strong arm, as she was in the days of the storm and the pestilence. Mollie McClintock is Mrs. Ogden Newman; and as together they work, together they shall win.

