

at present? I am at your mercy: you are doubtful, hesitating, but the scales weigh a little in my favor, do they not?"

"Oh, no. Indeed, I have never thought seriously of marrying you; I only dislike to refuse you."

"That last is an admirable frame of mind; preserve it;" and, as they had left the beach and were within hearing and observations, the conversation ceased.

Archie and Jack appeared the next day, summoned by an imperative telegram from Mrs. Grant.

"Now, boys, you must exert yourselves; I've done all I can," said their sister. "She is obstinate and odious—would not tell me anything."

"Perhaps it is all a scare," exclaimed Archie.

"You are very much mistaken. Papa is devoted to her and I to me. There's no time to lose. We are so intimate with the Montgomerys, you can be constantly at the cottage, and chance will throw opportunities in your way."

"Whose turn will it be to speak first?" cried Archie. "I'll throw up a penny; heads win, tails lose.—It's mine!" with a glance of despair.

Archie clung pertinaciously to Mrs. Page's side on the piazza, sat next her in the omnibus which took them to the bathing-beach, walked home with her through the shady lane after the bathing.

She was delighted with the gay young fellow. At length he showed a little claw: "Mrs. Page, we are all very much afraid you are going to marry papa."

"Would you not like me for a step-mother?" and she smiled deliciously at him.

His tender heart melted: "Like you! who could help liking you? But"—and he hesitated—"we don't want a step-mother; step-mothers are deucedly in the way."

An involuntary smile appeared on Mrs. Page's face: then she sighed.

The good-hearted fellow felt compunction as he heard the sigh.

"Hang it!" he burst forth, "Gerty set me at you. She expects me to be disagreeable, but who could fight a dove? It will be dangerous to marry papa; we shall be in love with our step-mother."

"Jack," he cried to his brother a few moments after, "I made a perfect mess of it—began to flatter and all that. She's an angel!"

"She is destable!" returned Jack; "I hate your purring, coaxing women. She shall have a piece of my mind, I can tell you."

Mrs. Page appeared to have a comprehension of danger, for she avoided Jack Lee skilfully for two entire days. He shot fierce glances toward her at the dinner-table, glared at her from under his bushy eyebrows in the ballroom, and when she came up dripping from her bath she could scarcely stagger past him, his sarcastic eyes were so overpowering.

She avoided the piazza, and on the third day had hidden herself with a book behind a rock, when, bristling and pugnacious, he appeared:

"Pardon my intrusion, but I am exceedingly desirous of seeing you, and alone."

She bowed stiffly.

"Mrs. Page, we have been told of my father's proposal, and that you think of accepting him. The idea is very disagreeable to all of us—to all of us," he repeated firmly; "in fact, we can scarcely think well of you. It puts you in a most suspicious, really odious, light."

Mrs. Page did not look dovelike at this moment; her light brown eyes flashed indignantly at him.

"There is but one object in marrying my father," he resumed after a moment's pause; "it is a transaction common enough in Mohammedan countries. You are purchased with a million of dollars; I think that was the sum mentioned?"

Her lip quivered like a child's, indignation and tears strove for the mastery, but cry she would not: he never should have that satisfaction.

"Mr. Lee," she exclaimed, "I don't know what you think of your conduct: I think it is cowardly, dastardly. You are afraid of remonstrating with your father, but you hurl cruel, insulting words at me, a poor defenceless woman. I admire your father, I am even fond of him, but I was far from consenting to marry him. Now I think I will.—What his entreaties could not effect, your insolence has."

She rose, and with a Juno-like air swept away.

"Et tu, Brute?" exclaimed Mr. Lee senior to his son William, who had walked from the station, and was registering his arrival in the book in the office.

"Not at all, my dear father;" and he took his father's arm and led him away. "I only came to see that you had fair play. Marry who you please and as

you please. But what is the lady's name?"

"She is a Mrs. Page—a widow."

"Ah!" exclaimed William, and his cordiality to a degree vanished.

"Let me introduce you," said his father.

"No, I am dusty and tired: I'll make my own way. They say she is staying with the Montgomerys."

Mrs. Page began to be very weary with all these complications. She felt hemmed in, beleaguered, by the Lees, and was taking a brisk morning walk on a dusty highway toward a neighboring town, in hopes to escape them for a time. Some one, however, was in swift pursuit; she felt that it was a Lee. The footsteps gained upon her.

"Alice!" exclaimed a full, melodious voice; and William Lee seized both her hands. "Alice, is it really you?"

Mrs. Page trembled and grew very pale. He placed her on a large stone which stood conveniently near, and sat down beside her. "Alice, where were you? I traveled over Europe in search of you. Will you forgive me, my darling, my suspicious, my anger, my absurd jealousy?"

Mrs. Page closed her eyes and tears rolled down her cheeks.

At this juncture Mr. Lee senior, breathless with his chase after her, came up. He felt that this was a scene, and waited for explanations.

"My dearest father," exclaimed William, rising and seizing his arm, "she loves both of us, but she promised to marry me first. I am sorry," he continued ruefully.

"Dear Mr. Lee," said Mrs. Page, seizing his other arm, "you are so like him—your bearing, your smile, your tones—really, if I could not have married William I must have married you."

A cloud passed for a moment over Mr. Lee's face, but during his seventy years, whenever there were heroic, unselfish qualities to be displayed, he was never wanting.

"My dear," he said in that pleasant voice so like his son's, turning with kindly courtesy toward her—"my dear, it is best as it is—more natural, more appropriate."

"And to think it was papa's favorite, William, that broke off the match, after all!" cried Gerty.

An Adventure Among Savages.

CONCLUDED.

WE HAD not long to wait, before the dark cordon of naked forms came closing up around us, with a slow and measured movement, for it was evident they thought we knew nothing of their approach. They were within thirty yards of us, the Irishman conspicuous by his peculiarity of figure and gait, when I touched Dick, the boat-steerer, on the arm, and gave the word in a whisper, "Now! Make an end of him!"

At the same time, I brought my own gun to a sight, to send a second bullet in the same direction, in case the first one missed its mark. But there was no need. The report from Dick's musket was followed by a yell—a veritable Irish yell—and Barney fell in his tracks. No further sound came from him; but the sonorous wail of many savage voices attested the astonishment and awe of the natives, as they seemed, for the moment, to hesitate in their attack.

A sudden thought struck me. There was a hideous idol fixed against one of the posts in our prison, directly fronting the door; and I bethought me of making it still more hideous, by smearing it with phosphorus. We all had friction-matches in our pockets, and Dick, in particular, being a famous smoker, had brought about half a bunch on shore with him.

It was the work of a moment to rub the face of the idol with the luminous substance in which the match had been dipped. Its great circular eyes, and hideous grinning mouth appeared as if shooting forth flame, and the effect was startling, even to us who understood the cause.

It was at this moment that the boldest of the barbarians rushed up to the door and threw it open for the outside. We stood at bay in the darkness, reserving our fire, in readiness for the worst. But a single glance into the building was enough for the leaders, who thought themselves, as indeed they were, the bravest of their tribe. They saw only their god glaring at them with fiery eyes, as they thought, and breathing flame from his capacious jaws.

"Jurawarra! Jurawarra!" was yelled from a score of savage throats, in most discordant concert; the cry was taken up by all the rest, and there was a general rush for a view at the terrible object, though no one ventured to approach it. The first assailants had fallen back a short distance, and stood with eyes fixed upon the fiery apparition, spellbound and awe-stricken, still repeating the cry "Jurawarra!"

"Now is our time!" said I, seeing that the back side of the building was left entirely unguarded, and knowing that our operations were well covered by the interior darkness. "Klok hard, and make an opening!"

It was but the work of a moment to force a hole through the dry bamboo sides of the house. Save a slight crash, which was effectually drowned by the shouts of the barbarians, this was done without noise. Indeed, what had added to the sense of awe and mystery, was the fact that no sound had come from the building, but the report of the single shot which had killed Barney.

We passed quickly into the open air, and struck a beeline for the water-side, guided by the roar of the tide on the coral reef. No natives crossed our path; every one, women and children included, had rushed to the centre of attraction, joining in the everlasting shout of "Jurawarra!" and we had no difficulty in avoiding them all.

As we reached the beach, a light flashed up on the seaward horizon, and as soon as we recovered breath and looked steadily for a little time in the direction of the light, we made out the outline of the ship's sails against the dark background!

There was little prospect, at that distance, that we could make ourselves heard by hailing. On the other hand, we should only hasten the approach of our enemies, who, for the present, were bewildered by a phenomenon, which must have appeared to them a miracle. But the luminous effect of the matches would not last many minutes. The savages would discover our absence, and recover from their fright.

"In this direction our boat lies," said Dick, the boat-steerer. "It's thereaway we landed."

"Yes; but she may have been carried away up among the cocoanut groves, and we may almost as well look for a needle in a haystack, as hunt for her in the darkness."

A brilliant flash lighted up the sea, revealing the ship not more than a mile distant, and almost instantly followed by the smart report of her old six-pounder, the very voice of which we seemed to recognize.

The situation was tantalizing enough; to know that friends were so near, and yet to have no means of reaching them, or opening communication. The report of the gun, too, would draw the attention of the natives. Already the burden of their song had changed from the single exclamation, "Jurawarra!" to a confused clamor of guttural sounds, showing that they had partially recovered from their terror; and were investigating the cause of the strange apparition.

"Let's all shout," suggested Dick, "and try to make them hear us on board the ship, I see no better way."

"We can do better," I said. "We can fire a musket. They could not tell our voices from the others; and if they could hear us, they can certainly hear the Kanakas now. One musket, only—Tom, fire yours off—the rest of us hold our fire, and be on our guard."

Tom raised his old flint-lock, and fired in the air. As the report died away, a long-drawn "Aho-o-o-oy!" came from seaward, sounding above the monotonous roar of the water rolling over the coral.

"Hurrah! a boat!" And in our excitement, we all halloed to the full stretch of our lungs. Loud voices, several of them, came back in reply, and presently, we made out the boat, which had approached as near the reef as the officer dared. Up went a boat-lantern on a waif-pole, showing what seemed little more than a mere spark of light.

"She can come no further," said I, "there is but one course for us—to rush out on the reef and go to her, through the breaker. We can do it, if we keep cool and seize the right moment for the start."

"Here come the savages?" said Tom.

Sure enough, they were approaching; some of them bearing torches. There was not a moment to be lost.

"Look out now, when the next one breaks, and I'll give the word. Never mind the guns, throw them away into the water, so the Kanakas won't get them. All ready? Now!"

It was a fearful risk, but no one hesitated to run it. Braced up for the worst, we met the next roller at just the right moment; and passing through it, found ourselves still four in number, and not seriously injured, though somewhat bruised, and nearly strangled by the brine, for the struggle had been a hard one. Our cries were answered at once, and scarcely a minute elapsed ere we were alongside the boat, and ready hands were dragging us over the gunwales. But by this time, the line of the beach was alive with the natives, and numerous torches, made by burning a species of oily nut, shed a glare upon the wild scene.

Laying off at a safe distance, we saw them crowd down to the beach until the

entire population who were able to walk must have been present. And among them, to our great relief, appeared our two comrades, who had been left in charge of the boat. They were still guarded, but did not appear to be hurt. Somehow, I felt that they were safer, now that the Irishman was out of the way, and that we should have no difficulty about effecting their ransom.

But nothing could be done for them at the moment, and I gave the word for the already overloaded boat to return to the barque. Keeping then under good working sail, we held our position until day again broke.

It appeared that the mate, soon after we left, had stood off shore to make a long board, intending to be close in with the island at nightfall; but the wind slackening, he was so far off at the time of the surprise of the guard and seizure of the boat, that he knew nothing of that transaction, and did not regain his desired position with the ship until long after dark. He had since kept the signal-light constantly aloft, and as the night advanced, had sent the second mate with another boat to reconnoitre, becoming uneasy about us; and had also fired the six-pounder, as before related.

We succeeded, the next day, in ransoming our two men for a few pounds of tobacco, and other articles of trifling value; and having got them safely on board, we opened a regular fire from the old gun-carriage, under cover of which, the savages took good care to keep out of range of the gun, and we had no desire to kill or injure any of them. The renegade Barney was the instigator of all the trouble, and it was a satisfaction to us to know that he got his deserts. I firmly believe it was his intention to have destroyed us all, and then to have captured the barque, if possible. He was bad enough to do it, but too cowardly to wish to run much risk himself, and for that very reason, was unable to inspire his followers with courage to act promptly. His whole management of the business showed an indecision which marred its success, and proved our safety. Followers will never be bold without a bold leader.

Our two men, when attacked, fired but a single shot, which slightly wounded one of the natives; but, deciding that resistance was useless, threw their guns into the sea, as the rest of us did afterwards, and submitted at discretion. The wounded native and a few others were clamorous for their blood; and, for a time, their lives seemed suspended by a hair; but the ransom party finally prevailed, and the prisoners were placed in confinement, but not otherwise ill-treated. It did not not appear that these people were desirous of killing any white men. Their cupidity was the besetting sin, as is the case of most South Sea Islanders, but they would never have done us injury, but for the influence of the white scoundrel and coward Barney.

We did not stay to make a trade for the anchors and other articles; nor did we see what disposition was made of the beach-comber's body. It was probably carried off outside of the reef and sunk, according to their usual custom.

Exploring the Prisoners' Cells.

The Virginia (Nev.) "Chronicle" says: As they now have a pretty rough lot of customers at the county jail, it was yesterday thought worth while to overhaul all the cells in order to see what was going on among the prisoners. Sticking into the under side of a bench they found a large jack-knife, which had been ground to a sort of dagger point, making it an ugly weapon.—An ordinary case knife was found which had been sharpened till it would shave like a razor; also, a case knife which had been made into a saw. A Chinese opium pipe was found rolled up in some blankets, and several lots of opium were brought to light, one lot being found in the possession of a white man. In one of the Chinese cells was found an opium pipe, manufactured in the jail, which is quite a curiosity. It is constructed of a soda bottle, into one side of which has been drilled a hole but a little larger than a common pin.—How this small hole was drilled into a substance as hard as glass is a mystery, but it is said there is a way of doing it by means of a stick, greased, dipped in fine dust or sand, and whirled rapidly between the palm of the hands. Several thicknesses of paper passed over the bottle to prevent it cracking when held against the flame of a candle in smoking, and a stem was fitted in the neck of the bottle by splitting a stick, cutting a groove in it, and then fastening the halves together by wrapping them with a piece of ticking gummed over with a paste of chewed bread. This rude pipe showed signs of having given frequent solace to its owner. He probably missed it sadly. Some of the opium confiscated was found secreted in queer places.

If your foot is asleep do not be alarmed; the poet tells us the soul is not dead that slumbers.

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