A TALE OF TWO TUNNELS.

A Romance of the Western Waters.

BY CLARK RUSSELL.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEVIL'S WALK.

The ship Lovelace lay in the East India docks, being newly arrived from an East India voyage. Her commander, Jackman, stood in her cabin and gazed in his chair at his face and seemed to study it. There was a mark as of a blow close under the left eye, and he examined this mark with care.

He was a handsome man, with regular features and a dark brown skin. His eyes were black and flashing, and, contrary to the custom of that age, he wore his hair close cropped behind. Being satisfied, he picked up a bag, locked a drawer, quitted his cabin, withdrew the key, and left the ship.

He made his way in the direction of Cannon street, where the offices of the owners of the vessel were situated. Just when he was in the middle of the thoroughfare he was knocked down and his bag taken from him. He lay stunned for some moments, and when he sprang to his feet he caught sight of the figure of a man flinging the bag into some wide area and rushing on and disappearing.

Capt. Jackman gave chase, but did not somehow think of recovering his bag. Then, feeling confused and amazingly shocked by this theft of fifteen hundred pounds in gold and paper, mostly in gold, the money of the owners, he gave up and walked sullenly, without even offering to brush his clothes, toward the offices.

Such was the story related to one of the owners by Capt. Jackman of the ship Lovelace. He said he believed his assailant was a rascally little seaman whom he had shipped at Calcutta, and who had given him trouble all the way home.

Did Capt. Jackman see the man?

Yes. Just outline enough of the flying figure to guess that it was he.

How was the money done up?

In three small bags.

Would he have had time to take these parcels out of the Captain's bag in the small compass of time allotted him by the narrative?

Certainly. He had himself seen the sailor fling the bag down the area. Sailors are swift in breaking bulk. Some are born thieves. This sailor was peculiarly active, and was the one of the whole crew, knowing that Capt. Jackman was going to carry a large sum of gold ashore, to rob him out of hand.

"How did he know that you were going to carry a large sum of gold ashore?"

"It may have leaked out through my servant, who, being a neat hand, packed it for me."

They went to the police. They searched the area and found the bag, but they did not find the gold. What, then, was to be done? Raise a hue and cry?

Capt. Jackman was grimly regarded by his owners, who had lost in Cannon street a very handsome venture in their voyage.

"I hope," said the Captain, when he called at the office five days after the incident, "that this will not make any difference in our relations, gentlemen."

"You shall hear from us, sir," answered one of the owners, a tall, lean man, with a dangling eyeglass, bending his form, crane-like, toward Jackman. The Captain seemed to pause, to look confused and pained. He then, with a polite bow, raised his cap and left the place.

"I had noticed a rather ugly mark near his eye," said one of the partners. "Aye," said the other, "and plenty of dust in his clothes."

One day some mornings after this, a fine young woman was pacing the sands of the seashore, lost in thought. The sands formed a noble stretch of promenade, brown and beautiful, with ripples moulded by the waters of the sea. But at the wash of the wave the sea was sparkling and flashing; it was blowing half a gale. The tall, midchannel combers raced inshore, following one another like cliffs looking over cliffs. The girl's dress to windward blew to her figure, and showed her a beauty in shape. Sometimes she paused in her thoughts to look at the sea, which swept into hilly heights of froth and obscured the horizon by miles of dazzle. Also she took notice of a little bark staggering down channel under close-reefed sail, sometimes vanishing and then showing her whole shape. The sight was so toy-like it made one linger. All the wet glories that came out of the sea with that little leaning, flying fabric glowed in each sparkling sunbeam that touched her. She was quaint, too, as an example of a vanished type of ship, though she belonged to her age. She was very high in the stern—a pink—and her bowsprit ran up like a mast. Her topsails, when set, would have a curiously lofty hoist for a vessel of her size. Such as she was, there she was, all of the olden times, spinning through the blue marrow of the channel, and making for some far western port.

All on the right of the young lady rose a towering terrace of cliff, white and gray blocks, seared, ravaged, scowling, menacing to the uplooker by the headlong threat of its topmost reefs. It went for miles. At some distance its curvature formed what has since sprung up into a well-known watering place.

This narrative must stop an instant to describe the young lady. Who is this girl that was walking solitary along the sands under a great height of cliff before the midday dinner hour? She shall be introduced at once as Ada Conway, the daughter of Commander Conway, R. N., a gentleman of spirit, who had seen service, who lived in a comfortable little house out of eyeshot of the wash of ebb tide. She was a tall girl, above the medium stature, of mould in absolute proportion. She had thick black hair. She was a gypsy in her look and eyes, yet had as fine a type of English face as you could wish to see. She was dressed somewhat quaintly in a sort of turban hat, with a short ornament of feather or bird's wing buckled to it by a fal-lal in gold. Her dress was of some green material, and was cut so to ascend as to reach nearly under her arms, where it was clasped in a girdle. This early century beauty blew along athwart the shrill gale and over the ribbed brown sand. And sometimes she looked at the leaning bark, and sometimes she stopped in earnest to take in the whole sumptuous mass of mountainous breaker, lifting into Atlantic height before falling with the dead crash of the defeated billow.

Suddenly her ear was caught by a sound proceeding from the direction of the cliff. It did not come from the base; it did not come from the peak, but, womanlike, she must needs look again both. She was passing when she heard the same strange, alarming cry stopped her, and now she had the good sense to scan the front of the cliff, where it might be she should see a man hanging by his eyelids to the edge of a rock, or some helpless boy in a hollow, lowered thence by a bowline and lost to recovery by his friends.

The terrace or cliff was a vast expanse of holes and fissures—great crevices of the size of gaps; it buttressed out in parts with natural effect, was solid and green at its base, and was a noble example of an English seaboard. Miss Conway directed her eyes over the face of the cliff very carefully, studiously, as of purpose, under her shaded hand, missing the hole from which the voice was proceeding. She then, with a start, beheld a part of the figure of a man standing in a hollow of the cliff, well known to her, and a young lady residing in those parts, at the orifice of a smuggler's tunnel called the Devil's Walk.

She saw him wave a handkerchief. She pulled out hers and waved it in return, running a little way toward the base of the cliff, and shrieking:

"I know where you have got fixed. I will release you!"

The wind carried her high and powerful notes. The man in the hole flourished his arm with the most cordial, grateful gesticulation, and the young lady walked swiftly toward the little town which lay in an embrasure in the great cliff on her right.

The road was steep, wide, and formed an angle. It went like a steeple into the sky; people often paused to admire the gulls floating round about and in and out the dark blue of this fanciful aerial steeple. Nothing of the town was visible till almost the summit of the great gap had been reached, when there began to steal upon the sight a row of little houses built of flint, further off a church, then again a pleasant little rectory house, houses broke the landscape, which had few trees, and was hilly only in the distance. It was a sorry sort of town that seemed to have settled down to nothing and to seem nothing. It gave itself no airs; all was haste and sober—of a Quaker-like trimness of aspect. In a small garden, distant about a mile from the bulk of the town, stood a cottage of two stories, square and strong for the gales. It was Commander Conway's home, and the home of his daughter Ada. The girl went swiftly along the edge of the cliff, this time toward the right. She had come about two miles along the sands; she had now to retrace her steps on top. It was not very strange that she should know exactly where the man was imprisoned. She had lived many years in those parts, and knew most of the traditions of the smugglers, and had grown acquainted with their haunts, and had visited them, through talking with old sailors, to whom times were always hard, if low distant the rolling blue sea seemed all that way off! A full-rigged ship was then in sight, looking close in; she rolled in the noblest majesty the deep can swim her toys in.

But Ada had no eyes for pictures of the sea or sky, for processions of the clouds, nor ear for the gull screeching in its soft white plenty midway high, nor for the breaker arching like glass to the sand. Not just then, anyhow. She struck a path, and walked with vigor about two miles, deviating into a part of the land, about a third of a mile from the brink of the cliff.

She arrived at a strange old enclosure. It might have been some ancient smuggler's vault, the memorial gone, nothing but the small flat tombstone and the square of broken, neglected railings left. She squeezed through these broken railings, and approached the small flat stone, which was fitted with a ring in the middle; but this she had known for years. Not a living creature was in sight, not even a goat. That vast down of cliff swelled its rampart without figure of man to the distant Lizard.

A FINE YOUNG WOMAN WAS PACING THE SANDS OF THE SEASHORE, LOST IN THOUGHT.

It seemed a desolate scene even now. One might figure it with some sense of horror in a gale of wind, black with snow, so dark that if you did not mind the next step might carry you into the seething hiss that was washing, fretting, trumpeting into breakers just below.

Miss Conway seized the ring and raised it, not without exerting considerable strength. She had often raised that stone cover, and now when she had got it off, she knew what to do. It was, in short, the entrance to a smuggler's passage designed for the lifting of goods from a height. It had been abandoned, not, however, before it had been formed, nor before a whole wheel of like corridors had radiated out of this malmspring under the earth. All were of no use, and had been deserted by the smugglers as worthless. But few took much trouble to wander in those cold caves. They felt tolerably certain that bold Bill and Harry Spikem had not left anything worth their acceptance in those gloomy depths. Boatmen offered to conduct visitors through them for a stipence, but a visitor was an extremely rare bird at a town where there were no lodgings to be had, and but two small inns of those old days for the traveller to put up at—inns such as Nelson sat in with Collingwood and his wife in a little room, while little Miss Collingwood watched the dog playing.

The stone being lifted, Miss Conway peered down and called. She peered down and shrieked. The echoes of her voice seemed to flash like light, so piercing were her tones. But under the earth the voice is very deceptive, as you shall know if you hail a man from a depth of soil.

Why couldn't he have come to the place where he entered? she thought; and then she reflected that he might have strayed in one of the corridors, and have not to the end of it and was there standing, thinking the entrance was over his head, and waiting with a beating heart for his release. For certain it was there was no release for the man from the height save through the smuggler's exit.

If that was his luck in those branching corridors, he would have been well off had he fallen and been caught by some projection of rock, for then they could have seen him above; they could have lowered tackles and a bowline; they could more clearly have heard his shouts. Now he could not approach the seaward-facing hole so as even to show himself to those down-looking.

A flight of four rude steps sank into the gloom, and the coming went away in blackness. She had a great deal of pluck in her veins; only a plucky woman, single handed, would have ventured this rescue. It was no longer now like opening a trap door and letting a man out; it was seeking for a captive in a blinding blackness where the orifice in the cliff let in at its mouth of tunnel as a dis ance a green light like the object glass of a telescope at evening.

It was clear that some officious hand must have closed this trap door above on observing it opened, supposing it so by neglect; for the people of the place, though they got no money by the thing, rather valued themselves upon it as a small sight, though there were scores of greater wonders, east and west, particularly west, much of the same kind. Ada walked a little distance, until she was plunged in darkness; she then stood and shouted:

"Where are you?"

No answer was returned. Some faint sheen from the trapdoor lay just here, and a little further onward, and you could have distinguished the marks of the axe in the solid stuff the daredevils had sheared through till they came to the open. The labor was wonderful because it had been secret; it had been done in passages of blackness in long nights, with lookouts to silence the axe and hands in the soil striking fiercely, by small lantern light, against the portion they had opened by a line ruled straight by magnetic compass.

But Miss Conway knew that the smugglers had run a number of tunnels, besides this long corridor, on either hand of it, extending like the antennæ of an aquatic insect. If the man had wandered into one of them, then, after she had cried aloud in vain to and from the central passage, she must return for help and lights, and make a proper search.

She walked on, again paused, shrieking in her shaking, ringing voice:

"Who are you who has been caught here?"

This, however, did not last long. She had neared the orifice overlooking the sea—close to, it glowed like a lamp in the cliff side—when her cry was echoed in a loud note, and a man's shape stood between her and the light.

"Oh, there you are!" shouted the girl, greatly relieved. "I was afraid you had got lost in one of the off avenues."

"You are extremely kind to come to my help," he exclaimed, approaching her.

She could clearly see the movements of his shape against the disk that glowed behind him.

"I don't know what I would have done. I don't know how long I've been locked up. I am very hungry, and could drink a gallon of beer. Was I not an idiot to come into this place?"

"I think you were," she said. "Did you pull the stone up?"

"Yes," he answered, "and some villain, seeing me descend, must have sneaked to the pit and put the stone on. For when I returned, making sure of my exit by that lighted hole yonder, lo! there was no light; all was blackness. I was without a stick, without means of making a light, and I had read in my time a great deal of the old smugglers—of their shifts and ways—and knew that this and the adjacent coast contained many of their caves. I got a plan of this one from a man in your town, and entered it with a candle and explored by candle light, but the candle burned out long ago. Idiot like, I dreamed of run goods neglected, of hard specie in canvas and tobacco in wood."

"You never find such things," said the girl. "In our caves the men were too cunning. They did not work for you or for me."

"Pray, what time is it?"

"About noon."

"Lord! Then I have been here since 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon."

"It is time we got out," she exclaimed. "Did never a man pass below in so many hours?"

"Two shrimpers only did I see far out—aged, bowed shapes, and I could not have made myself heard."

"Now, hook your hand into this pleat," said she, taking his hand and fixing his finger for him.

They walked in darkness. It never will be known how it happened—whether Miss Conway had, in that moment of excitement, failed to take a glance at the wall-star at the end, and turned with her companion into one of the long out-leading corridors, or whether she had absolutely forgotten her geography of the place in the blackness that was upon them, for she had never contemplated passing more than a few steps beyond the entrace to the cave. She grew sensible of her blunder when they arrived at the extremity of the cutting, which had, doubtless, other avenues forking out of it.

"I believe," she cried in a low voice, "I have mistaken our cell."

"In the name of mercy, don't call it a cell," he exclaimed, with the very presence of a shudder in his speech. "In the long hours that I have been haunting these holes like a worm I have seen sights, and I have heard sounds, and among the sounds I heard was the faint, everlasting chorus of the dead for those they loved, passing through the earth.

"This is no place for such talk," she exclaimed, baffled by the blindness of the cave.

They returned, still linked, but somewhat ironically. It seemed certain now that they took a turning to the left, for they missed the star and came against the blank wall of the cliff, as they supposed. Strong of heart as was the girl, she was beginning to grow frightened; nor was there any consolation to be found in the idea of her having a companion and a protector. Who was he? Well, so far as his utterance could pronounce him, he was a seaman, gatherable from his speech, of a some what heedless cast of mind; but how he looked, how he was dressed, how tall he was, whether he was black, brown, or white, she knew no more than whither the rest of these caves tended. She said:

"How long have I been down here?"

"I should say half an hour," he answered.

"You mean ten minutes," she cried.

"Well, time lengthens itself while we stop in this place," he exclaimed. "If we have missed the avenue leading to the exit, we may go hunting endlessly through corridors for it."

"No," she exclaimed, passionately. "If I can see the daylight in the end, I shall know where I am."

They walked, and they continued to walk. Ada's heart turned cold with horror. She had no true conception of the ramifications of these remarkable caves, and did not know but that there might be wells and desperate pits waiting to receive the man from the windings. They all, no doubt, had their hatchways or exits, long since buried under the sands of time. Evidently it was a great company of smugglers that fashioned this Devil's Walk.

"Where are we going?" said the man, stopping, and Ada onward stopped.

"I shan't know until I see the light in the passage where I me, you."

"The mischief is," cried the man, "that we may be walking yoked round and round endlessly, without ever coming to light. Good God! what a horrible issue to this adventure. Nobody ever visits this place, I suppose?"

"Only you," said she, "and it's my business to seek you."

"How sorry I am that you should be here I can't say, yet it is natural to want to get out."

"Indeed, it seems so mad to come into this smuggler's hole with a dream of being with no further provision than a candle, and it is wonderful that you should not know by that same light that you had been entombed and spent a whole night under ground."

"Time dies and time loiters under wild conditions. I can tell you that, for I'm a sailor."

"Are you?" she ejaculated. "What rating."

"I lately commanded a merchantman. I have lain awake all night sick in hospital, and have heard the quarters and halves strike with the rapidity of chimes. I could not have sworn that three hours have passed. I shall look the time I suspect when I get out. I am beginning to feel a bit sick of this blackness, and that one round of light that offered me a leap as an escape."

As he spoke these words they made a step, and lo! there was a ledge left at the extremity of the passage glowed within fifty feet the cherry star of day.

"Hurrah!" shouted the man.

The girl in a single sob, unheard by her companion, expelled her tent-up feelings.

"Yes, there is the portholes big enough," said the man. "Now you know the way."

"Come along straight," she said.

She led him as before, and, touching the wall, made a true course for the opening. But as she advanced she grew very uneasy on observing that no light fell through the hatchhole, and that the short flight of steps was not visible in any definition of faintness. Her companion, stumbling slowly alongside of her, presently noticed this.

"How did you get in?" said he.

"By a trap which had left open."

"It isn't night again, I hope," said he, with a ghastly laugh.

"I see no light," she answered, "and this is the corridor of the entrance. Oh, my God! I fear some troublesome wretch, while I've been talking to you instead of hastening above, has shut us down."

"So that we can't get out?"

"Not from within."

"Well," said he, after a pause, and a tone of courage in his voice, "what we've got to do is to go to that light hole yonder and wait for something to pass and make our case known. Somebody is sure to pass."

"Let me see if I can feel the steps with my foot," said the girl. "But hold on to me."

He had brought out a large metal tinder box, but empty, and in his fit of distraction had let it fall. She shrieked as if she had been stung. The nerves of even stout-hearted girls soon yield to blackness, to the association of a range, invisible men, and to the probability of a frightful fate. He laughed to encourage her, said that the thing was, and groped and picked it up. She took him to the steps, felt with her foot, and said, "Feel for yourself. The trap door is immediately overhead."

"Well, if we mean to preserve our lives," said the man, "and God knows how sorry I am that you should be a sharing my imbecile fate, we must we to that round hole yonder and keep a smart lookout on the sands below. But I'll try first if this stone can be lifted by shoving."

He left her and got upon the short set of steps, and strained with his hands. He could not bring his shoulder to bear. In vain he rolled and groaned. He came down, and feeling for her, said: "No; the sightseers have made it easy; but it is not easy to thrust up from under, and if I were twenty men I could not do it with my hands in that narrow circumference."

"Let's walk to that hole," said the girl, hooking him. "It is our only chance."

"Another sightseer may descend," said he.

"Few dream of booty in this age," she answered. "It is pretty well known," she continued, "that all are dry bones here."

They gained the orifice. It framed a noble picture of channel ocean afternoon. The seas ridged in glittering ranks, smoke burst from their curtesying heads and they raced in groans upon the hidden beach beneath, whitening out back to half a mile of foam. Ships were in sight, blowing upward, blowing downward, rendered somewhat prismatic in the airy lens of that smuggler's window. The tide was making fast, and they could see nothing but white water.

"Look at that," cried the man, pointing down.

The shuddering girl drew a foot or two closer and peered below. "There is no escape," she exclaimed.

Now they looked at each other. The girl has been described. The man was the sailorly looking fellow you would expect to see in him after his confession of calling. The light shone very well here, and sank for a distance of twenty or thirty feet into the gloom, then went out in utter suddenness into black blankness. Miss Conway saw standing beside her a man of about 30 years of age. He was dressed in the style of the day when peace had newly lighted on the land, when the billows of our home waters were no longer vexed by the keels of contending cruisers, nor by the thunder. He was decidedly handsome. Hair cut short behind, he had lost his hat, and she could see that his hair in front was bushy and plentiful, coming over the forehead in the "fine" style of that age. He had very striking features, but they looked ashen and sunken now. He bowed to the young lady when their gaze met, and said, extending his hand:

"You perceive I have lost my hat."

"We will not seek it," she exclaimed.

He was dressed in a dark green cloth coat, a colored waistcoat, and metal buttons. He was covered with dust, had scratched himself on the hands and face, and could not have looked in a more sorry plight had he been newly enlarged after a week's imprisonment in the great pyramid.

"Do no persons but you ever walk along these sands when they are bare?" said the man.

"At long intervals," said she, finding some faint reassurance in his presence and in the light. "A boatman or a stranger in the place might stroll as far as this from the town. The tide is ugly, and it makes fast."

"At that rate we are entombed, and must die in the full sight of life," cried the man, leaning against the wall and folding his arms with a scowl. "It is bad enough that I should be here, cursed idiot that I am. But that I should have drawn you into a living grave."

"I desire to find you a man," she interrupted passionately, scorning him with regard. "We must husband our strength and preserve our voices. In to-day or in to-morrow"—but her tones failed her as she spoke—"a man may pass within hearing of our voice, and learning who I am, deliver us."

He gazed at her with a sudden admiration. She certainly made a noble, heroic figure as she stood viewing him in that strange, tunnel-like light, bright on the left, in gloom on the right. Her eyes sparkled. She looked down the corridor where the stone lay, then sat down, placing her back against the wall. It was clear that an under dread possessed her, but not so as to master her. The thought of being locked down with a strange man in a lonely cavern for an afternoon and night—and for how much longer who could tell?—was horrible. It kept her soul shuddering, so to speak. But the man's own consternation was too excessive to take notice of anything but this—that he was entombed in a smuggler's cave, where, as things stood, there was every chance of him and his companion leaving their bones. He sat down in a most disconsolate posture opposite her, and they both had the light on them.

"This," said the man, meaning the light, "is worth something, anyhow.

"Continual darkness is frightful," she answered. "It drives men mad."

"Who the deuce could figure that those sands would be covered at floods" he cried. "What an enormous waste they offer when the water is low."

"You must have slept, otherwise you would have surely known that you had already spent a night in this place."

"When I found I couldn't get out," he answered, "I took to wandering in the darkness, and lost the light, and losing that, lost this corridor. I turned and piled and groped, and then my candle bell burned out, I sat down as I now sit, and I have to doubt I slept. I awoke and began to grope my way along again, and after a long time my hands brought me to some entrance just down yonder, clear into the view of this orifice."

"Was it daylight?" she asked.

"Bright."

"When you get out," she said, smiling, "you will have had enough of the Devil's Walk."

"I shall thank God for my escape, madam," cried he with real fervor. "If it is only for your preservation. May I be so ask the name of the good and heroic lady who has come, at the risk of her life, to release a man from a living tomb?"

"My name is Ada Conway," she answered.

He stood up and made her a low bow.

"My father is Commander Conway, late of the Royal Navy—what he will think—what he will fear—the fruitless searches he will be making—I am his only child—he will suppose I have been overtaken by the tide and drowned. Yet they should still be looking for me there," she exclaimed, gazing out to sea.

"No, madam, they wouldn't creep in the surf," said he; "they'd watch for the breakers to strand you. Permit me to introduce myself. I am Capt. Jackman, late of the ship Lovelace, which arrived home a week or two ago. I left her, and having heard much of these parts, thought I would make a cruise in your neighborhood, and a pretty cruise it has been."

"Are you an American?" she asked.

"No. I am supposed to descend from a good old English family."

"You have had no food since yesterday?"

"Not a pinch of biscuit."

"Well, God must help us out. He must help us out, for it is too, too awful," she cried, burying her face.

"If people don't pass to-day, they will come along to-morrow," said Capt. Jackman, "and I have got the voice of a lion," saying which he stood up and sent "Ship ahoy! For God's sake help us!" alinging in ringing echoes across the troubled rush of the sea.

"Ay," she exclaimed; "but think what must pass between now and to-morrow." She looked at her watch. "Do you know the time?" she inquired.

"By the light in the west I should say it is not far from six," he answered.

"It is six," she said, replacing her watch, "and we have the night before us."

"It must be borne," said the man, with a note of sulky sympathy, clasping his knees and fixing his eyes upon the sea.

CHAPTER II.

CAPT. JACKMAN.

It was about 2 o'clock in the morning, as they came afterward to know, when Ada Conway sprang with a violent tingling shriek to her feet. She had been sitting close to the sphere in the cliff. Opposite to her squatted the man, apparently in slumber. The disk framed a scene of midnight heaven full of palpitating stars and slowly moving, snow-white clouds sailing northward, and a corner of moon lit as a silver nugget nestling in and visibly departing from the top part of the orifice.

The girl shrieked, and the man also sprang to his feet.

"We are saved!" he shouted.

He caught her by the hand and began to run. In the direction of the steps there was glowing a considerable glare of torchlights, amid which the forms of several figures were clearly distinguishable, and while the pair ran a voice, loud and resonant, came in echoes down through the hollow vault:

"Is Miss Ada Conway below here?"

"Yes," screamed the girl.

"God Almighty! Come to your father! What are you doing in these vaults?" And the figure that was speaking started on, perceiving by the strong torchlight, that the girl approached with a male companion.

The commander was a little square man of the "Boarders away" type, equal in his heyday, when in charge of a boat and crew, to a French or Spanish gunboat. He had been one of the most gallant officers in the service, and had quitted it as commander on an income of his own.

Ada, recognizing him by the light, threw herself upon his breast in a wild storm of weeping. She sobbed; the commander stood silent, surveying the handsome, bareheaded stranger, who was very visible in the flashes the torchbearers waved about him. Then, collecting herself with a sudden sense of rapture at the thought that she was safe and with her father, she lifted her head and, holding her father's arms, exclaimed:

"Father, this is Capt. Jackman. I was passing along the sands yesterday morning"—

"So! Yesterday morning! How many yesterday mornings do you mean?" groaned the commander.

"When," continued the girl, "I heard this gentleman crying for help out through that hole there. I came on to the green and got between the rails, and managed to lift the stone and descended. We forgot ourselves in talk; we lost ourselves in deviating from right to left. When we came to this place it was in total blackness, the stone was on, and we were entombed."

"Let's get on deck," said Commander Conway.

They passed up through the trap, five of them, lighting the land for a mile around. How gloriously sweet and fresh and boundless was the night! The piece of silver moon shone over the sea and shed a little light upon the land. The stars sparkled and the white clouds floated with a majesty that befitted their domain. Ada passed her hand through her father's arm on rising out of the earth, and exclaimed:

"Who could have put the hatch down upon me, father? There was no man in sight when I went to let Capt. Jackman out."

"He was that fellow Goldsmith," answered the commander. "He is one of the torch-bearers. He instantly came to apprise me on recollecting. He said he fell asleep after walking from Spenpoor, just past a brow of land where you couldn't see him. No sooner had you gone down than he must have got up, and, finding the cover off, put it on, according to the custom of these rogues."

"The wretch!" cried the girl, turning and straining her eyes at the three men in their rear. "Couldn't you have guessed, you savage, by sign of that stone being off," she shouted at Goldsmith, "that there must be people in the caves below?"

"I vow to Peter, ma'am," cried Goldsmith, waving his torch furiously so that the figures of the people came and went in a cannibal dance of glow, "that I thought it was some wicked trick of a boy, or that it had been forgotten, and so I put it on again. God forgive me."

"Who are you?" said Capt. Jackman, addressing the other torch-bearer.

"My name is Herman, and I am a poor boatman," answered the man. "I've got nothing to do with this job.

"Here," said the Captain, in the brisk tone of the sea, and he slipped a sovereign into his hand. "Here, you Goldsmith," and he also slipped a sovereign into the hand of the excited torch-bearer. "See here," said he, "you pinned this lady down, and you might have killed us both. You might for sixpence some ten years hence have gone below and started back at beholding two skeletons lying athwart the entrance corridor. But you did not mean it. You were quick in your turn when reflection came to our service. So take this."

The man was profound in his bows and brow-knuckling by the faint light of the moon. The conversation had been listened to in silence by the commander and his daughter.

"You've lost your 'at, sir. Shall I fetch it for yer?" said Goldsmith.

"I wouldn't send a wolf into that Devil's Walk," answered Capt. Jackman, with a dull laugh.

"We'll find your 'at, sir," said the two men, and they plunged away back toward the broken fence and the hole in the earth.

"I wonder," exclaimed Capt. Jackman, coming abreast of Commander Conway, "if my little hotel will be open at this hour?" and he gazed down at the short, square man who trotted between him and his daughter, whose head towered above her father's.

"No need to talk of hotels, sir. Happy to put you up. I'm sure, after your desperate experience. My house is close by, and, sir," he said, turning and extending his hand and clasping that of Capt. Jackman, "I thank you, from the heart of a father, for your courtesy during these long hours to my daughter."

Capt. Jackman took the old gentleman by the hand and bowed, but made no reply, and they resumed their walk.

All their talk till they arrived at the Commander's cottage was about this singular adventure under earth. Capt. Jackman freely owned:

"I wouldn't take a guide, for my hopes denied me one. Frankly, Commander, I had been told that some smugglers' booty lay in a branch tunnel of this hiding place, and my intention was to look at it and afterward to take measures to secure the contents by means of the law."

The Commander's laugh had the sepulchral note of the Devil's Walk.

"We were famous smugglers in our time, sir," said he; "we did not leave our run goods, earned at the very risk of our lives, to be hunted and enjoyed by strangers to the gang."

"Who told you of a treasure lurking in an English cliff?" asked Miss Conway.

"The master of a brigantine," answered the Captain, "who knew your little creek or port well, and the whole of the smugglers who had thronged it, before the lawless lot discovered their diggings were of no use to them and departed."

"That's not so long ago either," said the Commander. "It's not above four years since that, from these cliffs, I witnessed one of the most desperate actions I ever saw between a large smuggler cutter and a government schooner. They came to running fight, then came to a stand with wrecked canvas and blazing guns. They fought with extravagant courage, sir, then the smuggler, with his scuppers running crimson, threw his sweeps over, and by Heaven the schooner remained silent and active only in making good the mischief done her."

"It is abominably hard," said Ada, "to kill men for smuggling. I like the price of smuggled tea."

"And what tobacco, sir, tastes like the run stuff?" said the Captain.

"Here's my house," said the Commander.

He pushed open a front garden gate. The house lay in blackness, save that in one corner a square of window was dimly illuminated. No lights were visible beyond in the neighborhood of the town. It was three o'clock in the morning, growing and growing to the vast dome of midnight fast and faster flashed with stars as the morning grew. The horizon vanished in blackness thrilling with white of charging seas.

Capt. Jackman is ready to die of hunger, father, and of first sickness," said Miss Conway, as the party of three stepped along the walk.

"He shall be fed," said the Commander. "You'll be perished, Ada, I don't doubt."

He put a key into his door, opened it and they entered.

An elderly woman in a dressing gown, her hair curiously curled, her figure immensely stout, was descending the staircase, holding high a candle as they entered. She seemed to fall off the stairs, shrieking:

"I heard your voices. Oh, Miss Ada, where have you been? Building myself?"

"Thanks, Mrs. Dove; I am safe, and am fortunate in having saved the life of another," said Miss Conway, scarcely enduring the old housekeeper's embrace, and motioning toward Capt. Jackman, to whom the stout old woman bowed. Mrs. Dove had been twenty-two years in Commander Conway's family, had nursed Ada until she was too old to require a nurse; had nursed Mrs. Conway through a long, most distressing and fatal illness, and was now, in her somewhat advanced middle age, appointed by the Commander, in gratitude for services rendered, to the post of chief mate to his little craft.

"We want something to eat, Mrs. Dove," said Ada. "Is the servant up?"

"No, miss. I let her lie. I could not tell you were coming."

She pulled a small bell, which rang up stairs, and they all went into the little room that was lighted by a candle. The Commander lighted four or five more candles and this made light to see by.

"No," said Ada. "I'll not go up stairs until I go to bed, and then I'll sleep for a week. I am not fearfully tunnel soiled, I hope." And she stood up and turned herself about, to the admiration of Capt. Jackman.

(To be continued.)

Mr. Gratebar to Philip.

"In a general way, Philip," said Mr. Gratebar, "it may be said that opportunities exist everywhere; but they exist for those only who are qualified to seize them. And opportunity is a very shy bird, Phillip—the hunter must be ever ready to shoot."

The Man of Moderate Means.

"I am never really disturbed by my lack of money," said the man of moderate means, "but still, when I hear of somebody who has money to burn, I can't help thinking that it makes a pleasant fire to sit by."

A TERRIBLE ECZEMA

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Four years ago Eczema made its appearance on my head in its worst form. I was attended by two physicians, but notwithstanding their treatment it continued spreading, until my face was covered with scales and became a horrid, loathsome sight. For three months I did not leave the house. I had a fine head of hair, seven years' growth, and had to sacrifice it. I was in despair. The physicians had failed even to relieve me, when one of them recommended CUTICURA SOAP. I used three boxes of CUTICURA (ointment), one half dozen cakes of CUTICURA SOAP, and one bottle of CUTICURA RESOLVENT, and in three weeks from the time I began, the scales had left my face and the skin lost its florid hue. *In six weeks I was entirely cured.* My face was smooth and my complexion clearer than it had ever been before. MARION A. SMITH, Sunbury, Pa.

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AFRO-AMERICAN NOTES.

The number of Afro-American politicians who discovered Major McKinley before he was nominated at St. Louis, and who are now working night and day to have President McKinley discover them, continues to increase and will do so long after March 4 has come and gone.

The management of Howard University, at Washington, under the Presidency of Dr. J. E. Rankin, who gave up the pastorate of a rich Congregational church at Orange, N. J., to accept his present position, has not commended itself to the Afro-Americans of the District of Columbia, the main charge being that Dr. Rankin has labored to make the university faculty entirely white. Dr. Rankin writes religious poetry. The Washington *Bee* now wants to know why Congress should appropriate money to run Howard University, especially its law department. The university once had a princely endowment, but is now as poor as Job's turkey.

A new paper has made its appearance in Chicago with the unique name *All-About-Us*. It starts off well and has plenty of space to move around in. W. H. A. Moore, the literary genius of the new venture, and a good writer of clean verse and prose, talking about the success of Paul Lawrence Dunbar, the poet, and Prof. W. E. Burghardt Du Bois of the University of Pennsylvania, author of "The Suppression of the Slave Trade," says: "I believe we are face to face with a new and genuine literary movement. As Mr. Dunbar pointed out in his clever address before the Sunday Club, it presents, perhaps, more in possibilities than it does in positive achievements. There is, nevertheless, a very evident movement, distinctive and promising, in those qualities of excellence which make for truth and long life. What we need most at this time is good-natured restraint and healthful criticism—the restraint which brings saneness and the criticism which stands for the truth, whether spoken of things good or of matters unworthy."

There is a very steady demand for the revival of the National Afro-American League, but it is not believed to be sufficiently general to insure the success of it. Still, a national meeting of branch leagues may be called early in 1897.

The death of Mrs. Kate Walters, wife of Bishop A. Walters of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, at her home in Jersey City, removes one of the most active workers the church possessed, and one of the most effective of pastor's wives. She was born in Louisville, Ky., Aug. 18, 1856, and was married to Bishop Walters in 1877. The New York *Age* says of her: "She understood the art of adapting herself to her surroundings, was modest, intelligent, cultured, thoughtful, and in every way fitted for the positions which she has occupied."

The selection of Dr. A. R. Abbott as medical superintendent of the Provident Hospital, a worthy Chicago institution, is a distinct gain to the hospital. Dr. Abbott is a physician of thirty years' standing. In 1861 he graduated from the University of Toronto, and in 1863 he was commissioned a surgeon in the United States army and placed in charge of the Freedmen's Hospital in Washington. After the war he returned to Toronto and continued in active practice until three years ago, when he retired and removed to Chicago, where his son resides. He did not seek the position and only accepted it as a matter of duty.

The Phyllis Wheatley Club of New Orleans has eighty members, and is a very public-spirited organization. It maintains one night school for young men and women who are unable to attend day school, one free sewing school for girls, a committee on philanthropy, pays weekly visits to the prisons, and gives the inmates reading matter, sympathy, and advice, and has established a sanitarium where girls may be trained as nurses. The membership of the club is composed of the most cultured and wealthy Afro-Americans of New Orleans.

The Afro-Americans of Athens, Ga., want a hospital, and instead of waiting for somebody to give it to them, they are raising funds on their own account to establish it.

The Denver *Statesman*, which has a waspish editor, says: "A few unwise, ill-chosen words may wreck a man's career in life. Ambitious men who depend upon their tongues to win prominence and reward should give their brains abundant exercise before unbridling their tongues. Talk is silver, but it is not always sound currency."

There is general rejoicing in Georgia because the law to prevent the catching of 'possums between March and October failed on its passage in the Legislature. There are few animals dearer to the Southern black and white heart than the opossum.

The sarcastic editor of the Baltimore *Race Standard* says: "If every colored man who is an aspirant for an office under the incoming Administration was as big as the position which he is seeking we as a race could do great things in this country."

If we should have war with Spain on account of Cuba, Afro-Americans would fall over each other in the scramble to enlist. Their newspapers are to a unit in favor of Cuban independence.

The statement that ex-Senator B. K. Bruce of Mississippi is "a negative character on the race question" has precipitated a discussion all along the line. A writer in the Leavenworth *Herald* whose editor is also a B. K. Bruce, says: "The individuals who have from time to time heaped abuse upon those Bruces who have endeavored to make an honorable living are from the ranks of the ignorant, lowly, and vicious, who know very little about the Bruces and a great deal less about their relations to the race with which they are identified." Perhaps, but ex-Senator B. K. Bruce is a negative character on the race question just the same.

Booker T. Washington, who has been assigned to the place in the public estimation so long held by Frederick Douglass, is getting his share of misrepresentation from some of the Afro-American newspapers. In a recent letter to THE SUN reporter, Mr. Washington says: "Of course, you can understand that I am misquoted in all kinds of ways. For instance, I saw an article a few days ago in a San Francisco paper, which purported to be a quotation from my Richmond speech, in which I advised colored men and women not to take up the professions. I have never done anything of the kind." Mr. Washington believes in industrial education, but he never underrates or disparages academical and professional education. He knows and appreciates the fact that the sort of education good for one man would not be good for another.