A BOY CRUSOE

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OR

The Golden Treasure of the Virgin Islands

BY

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A BOY CRUSOE

CHAPTER I.

Early Life; Off for a Voyage .

I was born in a little town in the State of Maine, near the close of the Civil War. My boyhood life did not differ materially from that of the average farmer's son in the remote country districts of New England–except, perhaps, that I read more and thought more. Hard work on the rugged soil, two terms each year in the little yellow country schoolhouse, a day's fishing now and then filled the early years of my life full to over-flowing. In the winter it was work in the woods, cutting up the year's supply of fire-wood; and then, before the spring ploughing time, my brother and myself found pleasant labor and recreation combined in the maple

woods, tapping the trees, gathering the sap and tending the fire under the great kettles where the sweet product of the maple was transformed into syrup and sugar.

I really think that I was more thoughtful than the average boy. I know that I read more. I do not remember ever feeling dissatisfied with my life or with the prospects that the future held out for me. Probably I was too young for these things to trouble me much; but I read everything in the way of books and papers that I could borrow, or purchase by saving a little money earned in various ways. I was fond of stories of adventure; but travel and adventure combined, interested me most. Therefore, as I grew older, I became imbued with a passionate desire to travel in foreign lands. The tropics were my ideal, and this feeling became stronger as the years went by.

When I was fifteen years of age my father removed to a large village where there was a graded school, and I entered the grammar school, then the high school from which I was graduated.

The passion for travel still had a strong hold upon me, but I saw no immediate prospect of gratifying it, for I was obliged to look about for some immediate means of earning a living for myself. When everything else fails, one can always find an opportunity to canvass for a publishing house or a novelty concern; so, soon after leaving the high school, I was trudging up and down the banks of the Penobscot river, calling from house to house. It was discouraging work, but I succeeded moderately well.

Late in the fall I went up to Bangor to canvass that city, and it was there that I made the acquaintance of a gentleman, which led to the experiences that I am about to relate, and which changed the whole course of my life.

Mr. William H. Sargent was a wealthy, retired merchant, with impaired health. His wealth had been acquired by trading with the South American countries, and the West Indies, and he still retained large interest in many vessels sailing to that part of the world.

It was his idea to make a voyage in one of these vessels, and the friendship which had developed between us, mostly through meeting in the reading room of the Public Library, caused him to suggest that I accompany him on his voyage to the Southern seas.

I accepted only too gladly, and that very evening I wrote a long letter to my mother, explaining my good fortune, bidding her not to worry by exaggerating, in her own mind, the dangers to be encountered.

The next few days I spent mostly with my benefactor, for as such I looked upon him, helping him in various ways in his preparations for the voyage. As for myself, I required little more than a modest supply of clothing.

Mr. Sargent was thoughtful and considerate, however, and insisted upon

my procuring much that I deemed unnecessary for my modest requirements, paying for the same from his own pocket.

Our craft was a trim bark called the *Ethelyn Hope*, built at Searsport three years before. She was two hundred and fifty tons gross measurement and sat in the water jauntily and buoyantly. From her load water-line to the tips of her topmast she was as trim a craft as one could wish to see. As she lay at the wharf ready for sea, everything on deck had been made snug, and not a coil of rope or spare block was out of place. Her cargo consisted of case oil, salt fish and flour in her hold, and she carried a good deck-load of lumber. She was bound for Cayenne, French Guiana, on the north coast of South America.

The *Ethelyn Hope* was commanded by Captain Thomas Witham; and the first, second and third mates, with nine able seamen before the mast comprised the crew.

Nothing remained to be done except to cast off the lines, when, released from her bonds the bark slowly moved down the river. The sails on the lower yards and jib-boom were set, and with a light breeze favoring her, aided by the swift current, the city was soon lost behind High Head.

By daylight the following morning we had passed through the "Narrows", and just at sunrise all sails were set and the bark squared away for the mouth of the bay where she was laid on a sou', sou'-east course as she took her final departure.

My spirits were decidedly buoyant as the bark glided out of the bay into the open sea, and a delicious sense of elation took possession of me as I realized that I was really on board a ship, with the land fading away behind me, bound for a foreign shore, the wonderful tropics, the land of palms of which I had read so much. I should see for myself the curious things of the sea, strange countries and people; and perhaps encounter fierce animals in the virgin forests, the home of birds of rare and beautiful plumage.

With a strong northwest breeze the bark stood away on her course, with every sail filled out and drawing handsomely. Although the weather had been clear and the sea fairly calm, by sunset a thin haze rendered the outline of the horizon dimly visible, and the Captain began to fear a blow. His nautical instinct made him sure that there was to be a change in the weather, and he gave orders for everything to be made secure. And, sure enough, at dusk the wind freshened and hauled around into the north-east.

It was about this time that I suddenly became conscious of a peculiar feeling, a sudden dizziness, like the sensation caused by a boy's first cigar. I knew well enough that I was experiencing the first sensations of seasickness, and, suddenly losing interest in the sailing of the ship, I went below and tumbled into my berth.

Feeling somewhat better, while I lay quiet, I had nearly dropped off to sleep when I was aroused by a tremendous noise, which brought me to my senses, when I realized that the vessel was rolling and pitching wildly. I could hear the howling of the wind around the deck-houses, and the snapping of the great sails. Now and then I heard the sound of the Captain's voice on deck as though he were giving brisk orders; and I rightly concluded that we were having it very rough. I looked across the cabin and saw that Mr. Sargent was in his berth, but as he was apparently not asleep I spoke to him, asking if there was any danger.

"Oh, I guess not," he replied. "We are having a pretty stiff blow."

Strangely enough, I suppose, I did not now feel sick, though my head was a little dizzy, so I concluded to go on deck. I cautiously ascended the companion way, and found the Captain standing near the wheel, enveloped in oil-skins, his head being covered by an ample sou'wester.

"Hello, boy," was his greeting, "what are you doing up here? The best place for you is below; you might get blown over-board."

But I begged to be allowed to remain a little, arguing that I felt better on deck, and the Captain relented and found a sheltered place under the lee of the cook's galley, telling me not to try to move about the deck.

The bark was rolling and tossing, but appeared to be bounding through the water like a race-horse. Soon I heard the Captain tell the mate that the wind had shifted around into the east, and that they were in for a stiff blow, and rain, too, before long.

So it proved, and it was not long before the squall struck in earnest. The ship careened, and a sea came over her weather rail, until the lee-scuppers spouted green water, wetting me a little, even in my sheltered retreat.

The rain began to fall, and the sailors had their hands full. There was a great commotion of loudly spoken orders, the tramping of feet, the creaking of blocks, the rush and roar of the sea and the howling of the blast through the rigging. All hands were called to take in sail, and the bark, soon close hauled, was lying over nearly to her lee rail. The heavy sea beat against her bows with all the force which tons of water could exert, while the staunch little vessel, quivering for a moment would seem to hesitate, and then plunge forward to meet the next onslaught like an animate thing possessed of sensible emotions. The spray, flying back over the bows, drenched the deck from fore to aft. The topsail halyards had been hauled taut, and the sails filled out and backed against the masts with a noise like thunder.

I did not long remain in the scanty shelter afforded by the house, but made the best of my way to the cabin. To make matters worse, I was again off my

"sea-legs," and was getting terribly sick.

CHAPTER II.

Heavy Weather; the Sargasso Sea .

The gale continued until the end of the fourth day, and we were south of the deep blue waters of the Gulf Stream, when it abated somewhat, and though it continued to blow heavily, the sea was running more regularly, in long, even swells which made the motion of the bark less disagreeable, especially for me.

The studding sails were taken in, and the wind was hauled, in order that the Captain might be given an opportunity to determine our longitude.

The Captain found that we were not far off the course, as the wind had blown mostly from north, and northeast and east. The sails were trimmed, and, by sundown the wind veered around into the northwest and blew steadily, while the sea gradually subsided. We were now about two hundred miles to the eastward of Watling's Island, one of the Bahamas, also known as San Salvador, the first land in the New World discovered by Columbus. The stars shone bright, and the bark, rolling easily, plowed the warm waters of the sub-tropic sea. I remained with Mr. Sargent long on deck that night, watching the phosphorence of the water, which in these latitudes, is sometimes very brilliant.

The morning dawned upon a tropic sea, for the bark had made good progress during the night, and we were well abreast of the larger islands of the Bahamas. The breeze was soft and balmy, and the ocean a deep, crystal blue, of a hue never seen except in these southern latitudes. This is owing partly to the remarkable reflection of the sky but more to the extreme depth of the water. Myriads of flying fish rose in flocks from the water and fluttered away on both sides of the ship as the bark glided through the weeds of the Sargasso Sea. The Sargasso weed is a genus by itself, which, thrust away to the south by the mighty ocean currents, lies in a vast central pool, a great eddy between the Gulf Stream and the Equatorial current; and here it revolves. It is ocean born, and long ages have passed since it lost its habit of growing on the rocky sea-bottom. Forever floating it feeds among its branches whole families of crabs, cuttle-fish and mollusks, which like the plant itself, are found in no other seas.

The flying-fish interested me greatly, for I had read much about them. I noticed that their flight was as perfect as that of some kinds of birds, and that it

very closely resembled that of the swallow, in that it was a skimming, circling flight. I had read that the flying-fish rarely leaves the water unless pursued by a shark or some other fish to which it is a prey; and that, on leaving the water it does not really fly, but, instead, emerges from the water on an upward plane, enabling it to skim along for some distance. I had read, also, that the fish is unable to remain in the air only while its wings are wet. This latter statement is undoubtedly correct; but I observed that its flight was perfect, the fish making use of its greatly elongated and highly developed pectoral fins, as wings. I saw them flying singly and in flocks or schools, when they were not pursued by sharks and I was thoroughly convinced that they did actually fly. They gyrated in the air exactly like swallows, and moved their wings very rapidly like birds. There seemed to be no limit to the length of their flight, for they would rise from beneath the bows and fly away in a continuous line until lost to sight in the distance.

Once one dropped upon the deck in the night and the cook broiled it, assuring us that its flesh was very delicate, much like that of a fresh water perch; and indeed, so it proved to be.

The Captain had taken a course much further to the eastward than he would ordinarily. Usually, in going to the Guianas, the route is through the Bahama group, by way of the Crooked Island Channel, thence through the Windward Passage, between Cuba and Haiti and across the Caribbean sea by the east end of Jamaica. But Mr. Sargent wished to go further to the eastward so as to pass among the Leeward Islands, perhaps landing there to await the return of the bark from the coast. This plan could be followed without detriment, as a little delay in reaching Guiana was more than likely to result in an improved market for the cargo. This explains the unusual course of the *Ethelyn Hope*.

CHAPTER III.

A Terrible Storm; Leaving the Ship .

The weather continued fine for three days, after passing the latitude of San Salvador, with a fresh breeze blowing from the northwest, which sped the bark on her course so that she logged better than ten knots; but on the fourth day the wind swung around to the north and gradually hauled into the northeast, and the long, steady swells began to rise.

The Captain at once prepared for a gale and ordered the sails trimmed to

meet it. That the apprehensions of the Captain were grave was proven by the precautions taken; for not only was sail shortened to the last extremity, but the hatches were securely battened down.

The barometer began to fall about noon, and from that time the wind increased until it was blowing a gale; but just after sunset the wind almost died away, though the mountainous foam-flecked seas continued.

As the sun went down the sky rapidly became overcast, and a cloud of inky blackness appeared along the horizon. As we stood watching it a long line of whiteness appeared between the sea and the black cloud, and stretched away far toward the east. Gradually the white line came nearer, until it proved to be a wall of foam. It was advancing toward the ship with great rapidity; and as it came nearer the air above it was seen to be filled with flying spray.

The wind began to freshen, and the sailors were hurrying about in obedience to the orders of the Captain, still shortening sail. All the upper sails were reefed.

Nearer and nearer came the wall of foam, and with a roar it struck the ship, and the storm broke in a perfect tornado.

The bark was careened until the lee scuppers were submerged; and the staunch craft shook from end to end. For an instant she seemed buried beneath the raging sea, and then rose and plunged into the next wave.

Mr. Sargent and I made haste to go below, where we remained holding ourselves in our berths while the ship reeled, plunged and groaned in every timber and plank.

A fearful report like the crack of a rifle told us that some sail had been carried away; and then followed others. At length, from a change in the ship's motion, we judged that the Captain was trying to put her about and run before the gale; but suddenly a fearful crash which seemed as though the bark had split from stem to stern was followed by a terrible rolling and plunging.

Crack! Crack! and the bark pitched and groaned worse than ever.

We heard the Captain making his way toward the cabin, and then saw him enter. His face wore a look of deep anxiety.

"The masts have gone," he said, "and the bark is unmanageable. You must prepare for the worst. We may have to take to the boats."

"At once, Captain?" asked Mr. Sargent.

"I cannot tell until the well is sounded; but I fear that she must founder."

At that moment the first mate entered the cabin and stated that the bark was leaking badly. The water was rising fast in the hold.

"We must remain on the ship to the last moment," said the Captain, "for a boat could not live in this sea."

The Captain returned to the deck, and how long we clung to the berths I

cannot tell, for I was dazed by the peril which threatened us–Were we to be lost at sea, drowned, all hands?

The Captain again entered the cabin. "We must take to the boats," he said, "and Heaven help us."

We hastened on deck just as we were, half clothed, leaving everything behind. Nothing could be taken.

When we reached the deck we saw the Captain standing by the starboard boat. The other had been launched, and had instantly disappeared in the darkness and foaming water.

The Captain, first and second mate, Mr. Sargent and myself now alone remained on the bark.

We hurried into the boat. "We should not be far from one of the outlying islands of the Windward group," said the captain; "and if the boat can live in this sea until daylight we may reach one of the Virgin Islands."

The tackle was let go, and a great sea caught the boat. She was lifted up, and up, and up, and then sank, it seemed, into a fathomless abyss.

I saw the first and second mate bend to the oars. The Captain was in the stern. The boat careened and seemed to start suddenly upward on an inclined plane.

A rush of water enveloped her. I heard a roaring sound in my ears, and I knew no more.

CHAPTER IV.

Cast up by the Sea on a Tropical Island .

When I regained consciousness I was lying upon a sandy beach. I was uninjured, but rather stiff, while my body seemed to be bruised in places. I was, of course, wet to the skin, and I crawled up and lay upon the sand where my clothing was quickly dried by the hot sun, now well up.

Meanwhile I looked about me. I had been driven ashore between two points of land, upon a narrow beach. The vegetation, very thick and luxuriant, grew close to the line of sand, and all around me, beautiful trees were waving in the balmy breeze, their shining leaves glistening in the sunlight.

I stood up and looked behind me, but I saw nothing save lofty mountains heavily wooded.

I had no doubt but that I was on an island, indeed I could be nowhere else, and I judged that it must be one of the most northern of the Leeward group.

Looking toward the sea, I saw only the broad expanse of deep blue water stretching away to the horizon. There was no other land in sight.

The sea had become calmer, but the influence of the storm was still evidenced by the heavy surf which broke upon the narrow beach. There was no wreckage of any kind, no sign of anything or anybody belonging to the bark.

At first the utter lonesomeness and hopelessness of my situation depressed me; but it would not do to give way to gloomy thoughts. I was entirely alone, and, so far as I knew, upon an uninhabited island. My future was a sealed book. After a while I began to take a more hopeful view of the situation, and the novelty of my surroundings, and the strange things about me, aroused my curiosity. So I determined to explore along the shore.

The vegetation was very dense, and appeared to be interwoven with vines of monstrous size. One kind of tree, very tall and with a heavy long narrow leaf seemed to be the most abundant; and from the descriptions which I had read, and by the clusters of oblong fruit at the bases of the leaf-heads, I knew them to be cocoanut palms.

"If I am really alone upon an uninhabited island," I thought, "at least I shall not starve so long as I am able to obtain plenty of cocoanuts."

Slowly I walked along the shore, my face being toward the east as I knew from the direction of the sun. First I decided to go to the top of the loftiest headland to see if I could obtain any trace of the bark, although I felt sure that she had gone down, and that all but myself had perished; still, the loneliness of my situation caused me to cling to what I felt was but a vain hope, that some one beside myself had survived.

With thoughts confused, and laboring under varying emotions, I walked slowly along, keeping on the sand except when I was obliged to turn aside to avoid a kind of dagger-like plant whose leaves were armed with cruel points.

Reaching the headland I was obliged to go through a thicket where my scanty clothing, as well as my hands, was torn by great thorns. However, I reached the point of land, and climbing to the top of a high mound I looked around. Before me, and to my right and left, there was nothing but the blue, heaving ocean; and behind me, I saw nothing but a dense forest, with lofty mountains in the distance. There was no sign of life save brilliant plumaged birds flitting about, and bright colored butterflies glancing in the sunshine.

Surely I was alone; but whether on an uninhabited island or not, the future alone would reveal. For the present it did not matter, and I must certainly depend upon my own resources.

I returned to the spot where I had been cast ashore, meanwhile revolving

in my mind my present condition. What gave me great anxiety just then was my lack of clothing. I had on only my trousers, and shirt, shoes and stockings; and these were all I possessed in the world, but I was overjoyed to find that my knife was still in one of the pockets of my trousers. It was a good one, large and having two blades. The large blade was long and strong, and the possession of it might mean much to me in the future.

Reaching the place where I regained consciousness after being thrown ashore by the waves. I began to think of finding a good place to build a temporary shelter. This seemed to be as good a location as any, I thought, as I looked around. It was in a sheltered cove, a clear, grassy plat surrounded by trees.

"Why not make my camp right here," I asked myself; and as I reflected it seemed to be the only place where I should locate for the present, for here I should be in a position to watch closely in the hope that some vestige of the bark would yet be washed ashore; for I thought that, if the vessel had foundered, something belonging to her would very likely come ashore, and I felt sure that some parts of the boats, and perhaps the bodies of some of my unfortunate companions would be almost sure to drift in.

It was, I judged, now near mid-day, and the heat of the sun upon my head gave me some concern. I must devise some covering for my head. Looking about with this object in view, I saw hanging from a small palm tree what looked like coarse canvas. On examining it more closely, I found that it was really a sort of natural cloth, about the color of hemp, and composed of fibres that appeared to be very strong, crossing one another like warp and filling, but not interwoven. Instead, the fibres were closely stuck together so that a strong, pliant fabric was formed.

With my knife I cut off a large piece which I twisted about in such a manner as to form a conical cap. The edges I fastened together with long, sharp thorns that I cut from some bushes near by. This, though rude, would protect my head for the time being.

Before proceeding to begin the construction of my place of abode, I felt inclined to look about for some means of satisfying the hunger which I now felt keenly, for I had eaten nothing since supper the night before on board the ill-fated bark.

The cocoanut trees suggested the most available source of supply for the first meal in the strange surroundings in which I found myself; so going to a cluster of the trees near by, meanwhile wondering how I would manage to obtain the nuts fifty feet or more above my head, I was greatly relieved to find plenty of them lying upon the ground. But the nuts that I saw were not like those common in the markets at home. Instead, they were oblong and many times larger. I soon discovered that to get at the meat I must first cut away the outer husk or covering

with which it was enveloped; so I opened my knife and set to work. It was no easy task, for the husk was thick and tough; but after much labor I succeeded in removing it until I bared the round, hard shell of the nut, when, with a large stone I was not long in cracking it, and laying bare the white meat. With the nut in my hands I walked about among the trees as I ate. So interested was I in the beautiful, brilliant-colored flowers, some of which were of enormous size, and in numbers of little green lizards that hopped about over the leaves of the smaller shrubs, that I did not at once notice, as I came into a grassy, circular plat, that the ground beneath a compact, shapely tree was plentifully besprinkled with golden globes, and I was in a high state of elation when I discovered that they were oranges. The tree itself was loaded with green and yellow fruit. I peeled one of the largest, and found that it was delicious and juicy, but of a rather different flavor from those to which I had been accustomed. But here was at least both refreshment and sustenance, so I was in no danger of starving, and I made a hearty meal.

Crossing the grassy plat where the orange tree grew, I descended a gentle slope among the palm trees and soon came to a beautiful little stream of clear water. Having still one of the halves of the cocoanut shell in my hand, I used it as a cup and took a long draught of the water, which, though rather warm, appeared to be pure and wholesome.

The stream at this point was quite broad and very shallow, and though but a few rods from the mouth it flowed quite swiftly. Along the banks I noticed that a certain tall, reed-like plant grew in great profusion, and, on closer examination I discovered it to be a kind of wild cane, with large, feathery, chocolate-colored plumes.

I followed the bank of the stream to the shore, and then returned to my landing place, walking along the narrow beach.

Hunger satisfied for the time-being, I set about making preparations for constructing my dwelling. Although in no need of protection from cold in this tropical climate, I remembered having read that it was not advisable to be without shelter at night, so I decided that my first task should be to construct a house, or a hut.

I first chose a clear place a little in among the palms, perhaps a dozen rods from the beach, and, as accurately as I could by pacing, I measured off an area ten feet square. Each corner I marked by driving down a short stick, and then went in search of four corner posts. After a little searching I found some straight trees about three inches in diameter, having smooth bark and with but few limbs, each tree forked about seven feet from the ground. After an hour's hard work, I succeeded in cutting down four of them with my knife; and after trimming off the branches and cutting off the tops, leaving ample forks, I dragged them to the site of lay dwelling. I next felled another pole which was cut in halves,

leaving the butt end about four feet long. This I sharpened at the thickest end, and with it made holes about eighteen inches deep at each corner of the square to be occupied by my house.

Into each of these holes I set one of the forked corner posts, wedging it firmly with stones from the beach, driven solidly down all around it, filling in each with earth which I trod down firmly. Four long poles were now needed to rest one end in each of the upright forks, so as to form a frame, and I started away again, this time toward the brook, which I followed up stream. I had gone but a short distance when I came to a place where the stream widened into a broad pool. The water here was dark and apparently deep, and all around it, gracefully bending over the still depths, I found growing tall plants having small, narrow green leaves. The plants grew in clusters, and some of them were very tall, I judged from twenty-five to forty feet. I hurried forward with a view to ascertaining whether they would suit my purpose, when I immediately made a discovery which at once solved the question of obtaining an ample supply of material for building operations, both now and in the future; for the tall, graceful plants proved to be bamboos. I knew them from the descriptions I had read, and from the regular joints, just like those I had seen on the bamboo fishing rods at home.

I selected several of the bamboos, each being about two inches in diameter, and although I found them to be very hard, I managed to cut them down, and to trim off the branches and the tops. By making three trips I dragged the bamboos to my building site. Laying them along one side of the area to be occupied by the house, I found that they were nearly twenty feet long. Four of them I cut off to the required length. I then raised one on either side, one end of each pole resting in one of the forks of the uprights. A pole was then laid across each of the other sides, resting upon the poles supported by the forks, so that a sort of scaffold was formed, which needed only to be covered over to be complete.

I had worked so busily and had become so much interested that I scarcely noticed that the sun was already sinking behind the palm trees, and casting long shadows across the beach; so, as I was aware that darkness very quickly follows sunset in the tropics, I must make haste and provide a temporary shelter for the night before suspending work. I therefore cut the rest of the poles in halves and laid them across the two longer poles resting in the forks, thus forming a gridiron-like structure. With my knife I cut a large quantity of leafy branches from the shrubs that grew near at hand, and then went to the brook for an armful of wild canes. With this material I covered a portion of the scaffold, making quite a good shelter between myself and the sky.

As the sun sank lower and the shadows deepened, I felt a sense of loneliness steal over me, for the idea of spending the night alone, I knew not where, perhaps

on an island, with the boundless ocean on one side, and a deep, unknown forest on the other which might conceal fierce wild animals, was not at all pleasing. But I must train myself to know no fear, and the sooner I began to school myself to this end, the better.

Although I felt sure I should not sleep with nothing to protect me and with no means of making a fire, I instinctively began to think of providing some sort of couch; and again I took my knife and cut a quantity of bushes which I piled in the form of a bed beneath the scaffold. I next cut several armfuls of the tall grass which grew all around and with it covered the couch of bushes. I now had an acceptable bed, so constructed that one end which was to serve as the head, was about a foot higher than the other.

By the time I had finished it was quite dark; but I still stood leaning against one of the corner uprights with my face turned toward the forest, hesitating what to do next, and instinctively listening for some new sound. There was no breeze stirring, and the sea lightly washed the sand with a low murmur which tended to increase my feeling of loneliness. Since sunset the air had become beautifully cool. For a long time I stood motionless.

The sounds of the night were about me; and once I started violently when I thought I heard a twig crack. Then I heard, apparently only a little distance away, a noise like a stone, thrown by some one, striking the ground; but, after the startled feeling had partly left me I reasoned that the noise was made by a ripened cocoanut falling from the tree. The indistinct notes of many insects, new and strange, filled the air, and one particularly noisy insect gave forth a sharp clipping sound like that made by shears in the hands of a barber. Sometimes a note like that of a bird varied the myriads of sounds. Feeling reassured, after a time, I cautiously lay down upon my couch, but still listening. How long I remained conscious I cannot say; but I must have been very weary from the excitement of the ship-wreck, the hardship of being cast ashore and the busy day's work.

CHAPTER V.

Strange Surroundings; Building a House .

My next sensation was that of the sun shining in my face when I awoke in the morning. At first, as I looked out from beneath my shelter I could scarcely

comprehend where I was or how I came there; but the events of the day before soon returned to me. For a few minutes I lay still, looking around upon my beautiful surroundings. What a perfect paradise it was, and how overjoyed I should be were I here under different circumstances.

There was a gentle breeze stirring, just enough to move the feathery leaves of the palms and to slightly bend the tall grass; and though I could not see any of them, I heard birds giving forth discordant notes in the forest around.

But I must stir myself, for there was much to do. My house must be finished, I must devise some articles for personal use, and the problem of my future sustenance must be solved, for I could not long continue to work and subsist entirely upon cocoanuts and oranges, although they would answer well enough for the present.

So I sprang up and going directly to the stream I bathed my face and hands. Having no towel and seeing no substitute for one, I sat down and dried myself in the sun.

Cracking another cocoanut in the same manner as I did the day before and gathering some oranges, I sat down with my back against the palm tree and proceeded with my frugal breakfast. As I had neglected to provide myself with a meal ere I retired the night before, I was very hungry and my appetite was not satisfied until I had eaten nearly a dozen oranges, beside the cocoanut. Using a half shell of the cocoanut as a cup, I took a long drink of water from the stream and turned again toward my embryo dwelling.

I thought it best to construct the walls first in order to provide against the possible attacks of wild animals, and knowing this to be the first part of the dry season which, in the latitude in which I judged myself to be, lasts from the middle of November until May, there was no immediate necessity for providing shelter from rain.

The necessity of devising some plan for keeping an accurate account of each day as it passed, now occurred to me, and as I walked back to the pool for another supply of bamboos, I revolved the question in my mind. The record which I proposed to keep must be indestructible, and in some compact, portable form so that I could easily take it with me in the event of sudden departure from my habitation. One of the halves of the cocoanut shells which caught my eye as I passed the spot where I had partaken of breakfast, gave me an idea which I at once adopted.

Then and there I put the plan into execution. It was this: I resolved to use only the halves of the cocoanut shells that contained the natural holes through which the shoots of the germinating nut emerge from the shell. The meat was removed from the half shell, leaving the two holes through it.

At the close of each day, as near sunset as possible, I would cut a deep notch

in the edge of the shell, and each shell should have as many notches as there were days in the month. On the completion of the month I would carve with my knife the name of the month and year; and in this way I hoped to preserve a correct record of the time. As each month was finished I proposed to pass a cord through one of the holes; and for the purpose I at once braided a strong cord from the fibres of the cocoanut cloth from which I had constructed my head gear.

I remembered, accurately the day of the wreck, and as I had been on shore one day, I out the first notch, and engraved on the shell: "December 18th, 18–."

As I marked upon my calendar I wondered how many shells I should have upon my string ere I was rescued from my lonely position. "Perhaps," I thought, "I may never see any other place." But I resolved not to harbor gloomy thoughts; and tying a large hard knot in one end of the cord, I strung the shell upon it, inserting it from the outside. Succeeding shells strung upon the cord would fit into one another like a nest of bowls. Thus I would have a complete record, and a practically imperishable one.

As I knew the day of the week on which I had commenced my lone life, I resolved, for each Sunday, to bore a hole instead of cutting a notch, for I intended to observe the Sabbath by abstaining from work.

Continuing my way to the pool, I set to work cutting bamboos. I selected only those measuring about two inches in diameter, and before the sun reached the zenith I had thirty of them cut and trimmed, ready to drag to my house.

I found it hot work, and I threw myself down to rest. For the first time I caught sight of the birds that had been making such a babel of discordant sounds all the morning. Several of them were flying about near the opposite side of the pool, and I at once recognized them as parrots.

"What a consolation it would be," I thought, "if I could capture one and teach it to talk. It certainly would prove far better than no companion."

Having landed the bamboos at the house, I set about cutting them into lengths corresponding to the height of the corner posts. These I set into the ground at regular intervals, in line with the posts, lashing the upper ends to the horizontal poles resting in the forks, and to the poles across the other two sides, using for the purpose a long, supple vine which I found growing in plenty in the edge of the woods, twisting around the trunks of the trees.

CHAPTER VI.

The Stockade; A Crusoe's Life .

By the time I had finished setting the poles into the ground, thus forming the enclosure of the house, my appetite began to assert itself; and I was again reminded that I must search for food other than cocoanuts and oranges. More substantial nourishment I must have if I was to continue to work and retain my health and strength. But my extreme anxiety to carry along the construction of my house sufficiently far to afford a feeling of security at night, decided me to make a few more meals of the oranges and nuts before suspending work long enough to discover or develop resources.

Again I went to the pool and cut two more bamboos, each twenty feet long. I then cut them in halves, making four poles each ten feet long. Carrying these to the house, I lashed one across the upright palings midway between the upper pole and the ground, lashing them firmly to each of the palings. This strengthened the structure, and shaking it with all my strength I was gratified to find that, though naturally elastic, it was firm and strong.

As I now had a safe protection from any wild animal of moderate size and strength, I felt that I should be secure at night. I was on an island somewhere to the northeast of the Caribbean sea, in fact, I reasoned that I could be nowhere else; and from this, together with what I had read, I concluded that there could be no very large or ferocious wild animals in the forests about me.

I still had some time to work before sunset, and I therefore went to the bank of the stream to cut a quantity of wild canes which I proposed to weave in the form of basket work, between the palings, thus forming the walls of my house.

Cutting the canes was easy work, and by sunset I had a great pile of them landed by the house.

Again satisfying the cravings of hunger with oranges and cocoanuts, washed down with water from the brook, I cut another notch in the cocoanut-shell calendar, and after sitting and listening to the varied insect sounds until it was quite dark, I retired, to my couch within the inclosure.

Lying upon my couch, until I fell asleep, I revolved in my mind various plans for the future. The details for the construction of my house were pretty well worked out in my mind; and the desirability of surrounding my abode with some sort of a stockade occurred to me. I had little fear of attacks from wild animals, but I presumed that the island was inhabited in some part of it, by what sort of people I had not yet considered.

Indeed, it was extremely improbable that an island in this quarter of the world could be totally uninhabited. Whether the islanders proved friendly or otherwise, the idea of a stockade as a protection against possible surprise met with my immediate approval.

Another question of extreme importance to be considered was that of a permanent food supply. Perhaps only cocoanuts and oranges abounded in my

near vicinity; at any rate, I resolved to carefully survey the adjacent region for the purpose of ascertaining its resources.

Then the question of providing clothing for myself must be considered, for, at best, my present raiment would not long survive the rough usage which it was now receiving, and to which it would hereafter be subjected in the bush. I even thought it might be well to construct a suit from the cocoanut-fibre cloth, and thus save my civilized clothes for the day of my rescue.

Many other things passed through my mind in rapid succession as I lay upon my couch, among them the project of starting out upon a tour of discovery in an endeavor to ascertain the extent of my domain, and if it was inhabited in any part of it.

CHAPTER VII.

A Cocoanut Calendar; Food Supply .

The notches in the cocoanut calendar grew in number as the days passed, busy days of hard, incessant labor, and four months of my exile elapsed ere the house was finished to my satisfaction and a substantial stockade erected around it. The walls of my house were made of the wild canes closely woven like basket-work. It had been done very carefully, and, when completed, I had a perfect shelter, both from the sun and the wind. The roof was made of the long grass, alternate with layers of bamboos; and by using the larger bamboos in the centre of the roof, when by successive layers it reached the proper thickness, I had a roof which sloped steeply from the centre to each edge, which, carefully covered with an outside layer of the long grass dressed from the top downward, would perfectly shed the water during the rainy season. The thickness of the roof rendered it impervious to wet, and, as I soon discovered, almost a non-conductor of heat.

I left no windows in the house, as I thought there would be sufficient ventilation through the interstices of the cane-walls, but I constructed a door three feet wide and five feet high, by lashing bamboos together in the form of a gridiron, and then weaving in cane as I had done in constructing the walls. For hinges I made use of vines twisted together.

The stockade surrounded the house at a distance of about six feet from either side, and it cost me several weeks of steady work. I had first to cut a great number of good-sized bamboos, which, with only my knife, was very laborious

work. I had frequently to sharpen the knife on a piece of soft, porous rock which I found near the brook.

Each bamboo was cut off to a length of ten feet, and sharpened at the small, or upper end. These I set into the ground at intervals of one foot, to a depth of two feet. Then, at a distance of one foot from the top all around the enclosure, I lashed long bamboos, using the tough vine which I found in abundance near the edge of the bush, winding it around each upright bamboo, and around the horizontal poles. Between the horizontal pole and the ground, I wove a close basketwork of the vine. It was harder work weaving in this vine, as it was larger than the canes; but it was very tough, and a wall composed of it closely woven would prove a very effective defense.

So I kept busily at work, day after day, cutting the vines, trimming off the leaves, dragging them to the house and weaving them in around the bamboo uprights, until I finally had a wall about me elastic but capable of sustaining a great strain, the sharpened ends of the upright bamboos forming an effectual safeguard against the walls being scaled from the outside.

After the woven-work of vines was thoroughly seasoned, which did not take long, I cut round holes six inches in diameter, four on each side, about five feet from the ground, in order that I might command a view in all directions without leaving the enclosure.

In the side facing the sea, I made a door, constructed in a manner similar to that in the house; but, for the stockade door, I devised an arrangement for securely barring it on the inside, by using two large bamboos each two feet longer than the door was wide, held in place by rings of the supple vine which I twisted about the two door-posts.

These rings were made by first bending several inches of one end of the vine in the form of a circle, and then winding the rest of the vine around this ring. Through these the ends of the bars passing across the door were placed, which, if anything, made the opening, when closed and fastened inside, stronger than any other portion of the structure.

During all this time I had lived solely upon cocoanuts and oranges, varied with a few shellfish, somewhat resembling periwinkles, only larger, that I found along the beach. These I ate raw, and found them rather palatable but somewhat tough. However, as I continued in good health and strength, I preferred to complete my house and stockade before making a systematic attempt to provide other food.

Nothing now remained to be done in connection with my dwelling, but to carry into execution an idea which I had evolved while at work, that of transplanting some creepers from the edge of the forest and training them along the stockade, so that, as I calculated, in a short time, in this tropical land of rapid

growth, they would completely cover the stockade, and render my retreat more safe from observation, should my solitude be invaded.

During all this time I had suspended work on Sundays, but I had occupied the time in making short trips inland, and along the coast in either direction; but finding the forest very dense as I left the shore, I could not have gone more than four or five miles in any direction. My trips along the shore were without results, so far as enlightenment concerning the extent of the island was concerned, for every bend of the coast revealed only headlands and more coast-line stretching away beyond.

The results of my wandering in the bush had troubled me not a little, for I had found no new fruits and vegetables, and had discovered no animals, or birds that I could bring myself to think edible. There were only parrots and smaller birds, some of brilliant plumage; and even had I chosen to eat them I had no means of securing the game. I was somewhat surprised not to find more humming birds. I saw only one kind, a large, black species, having two tiny golden feathers each about six inches long at the sides of its tail. Of snakes, I had seen none, nor land turtles.

The sea-shore, too, seemed to be as devoid of food supplies, for I had seen no sea turtle, though I knew that they should be plentiful in this latitude.

But I refrained from attempting a systematic exploration, feeling it would be wise to first provide as secure a retreat as possible for my permanent head-quarters.

CHAPTER VIII.

Thoughts of the Future; Making a Bow-Gun .

My house was now finished, and I began, with a light heart to think about starting on a long exploring trip. Before taking my departure, however, two questions of importance must be solved, if possible, namely, that of devising a weapon with which I could shoot game, if any was found; and some means of procuring fire.

The morning following the completion of the house and stockade, as I was walking toward the orange tree which continued to furnish me with an ample supply of fruit, an idea came to me, and so astonished was I that I had not thought of it before that I stopped short and gazed straight ahead of me for several minutes.

My knife!

Here was steel; now for a flint, and fire would be procurable at any moment. I understood the use of flint and steel, for many times, in our boyhood, my brother and I, on our excursions in the woods, had made fires with old gun-flints and our pocket-knives as steel, for cooking grey squirrels when we were fortunate enough to shoot any. We did this from choice, because of the novelty.

Without further thought of breakfast I turned toward the shore to search for a substitute for flint, for I did not expect to find the real article here, as I had only seen soft, calcareous rock which appeared to be the prevailing kind.

A long search up and down the beach failed to disclose any hard rock, not even a pebble of sufficient size. Shells were abundant, but they would not answer the purpose. I next turned my attention to the brook, and searched along the shallowest places for a hard stone. I found one at last, round and flat, about the size of a silver dollar. It was very dark, almost black, and appeared to be quite hard. Wiping it with my hand I laid it down in the sun and waited impatiently for it to dry. When perfectly free of moisture, I opened my knife, and holding the blade firmly in my left hand, I struck the stone sharply against the back of the blade, with a quick downward stroke. No spark appeared. Over and over again I tried but without success, but I saw that the stone scratched the steel, which gave me hope that the stone was sufficiently hard.

After several more trials, a tiny spark shot downward from the blade. My joy knew no bounds. Tinder must be procured. Like a flash came to my mind the feathery heads of the wild cane. If I could find one dry enough I thought it would do. I at once ran up stream to where the canes grew, and after a little search I found a plume that was dead and quite dry. Bending the cane down I gathered a handful of the floss from the head, and going to the foot of a cocoanut tree, I lay the cane floss down by the foot of the tree and once more tried to produce a spark. I was soon able to obtain a spark frequently, but they invariably failed to reach the floss, or to ignite when they touched it. But I saw that I had fire within reach, and it only required perseverance to procure it. Holding the knife blade closer to the floss, I struck again. This time a shower of tiny sparks descended to the floss, and, yes, it had caught! Quickly dropping the knife and stone I partially covered it with my hands and very gently blew upon it. A tiny wreath of smoke arose as the fire spread through the wad of floss. Blowing upon it still harder, in short quick puffs, a tiny flame leaped up; and quickly gathering such dry leaves and grass as I could reach, I heaped them upon the flame. These were followed by small dry sticks until I had a good fire going. I now only needed something to cook, and that I proposed to search for. But fire was desirable as company at night, and to ward off wild beasts should any be found; also in the future I might wish to make signals by the aid of smoke.

Not wishing to injure my faithful friend the cocoanut tree, I allowed the fire to go out, feeling full confidence in my ability to procure it any time I wished.

I now set about preparing for my journey of exploration, meanwhile carefully watering, several times each day, the creepers that I had set out along the walls of the stockade, until they showed no further signs of wilting during the greatest heat of the day. The water I brought, with much labor and many trips, from the brook, in cocoanut shells.

It occurred to me to plant vines in front of the door of the stockade, so that, should I be absent for a great length of time, they would grow up over the door and still further obscure my retreat. Acting on this idea, I searched about the bush for a vine less woody than those planted along the stockade. At length, on the further side of the clearing, I discovered a vine, not unlike a morning glory vine, only it had larger leaves, climbing up a tall, smooth tree, and this seemed to answer my purpose. So, getting down upon my knees I began to dig around the root in order to move it without disturbing the earth immediately surrounding it; when but a few inches below the top of the ground I came across a round, hard object which I at first thought to be a large root of the tree, but in digging still further around it I saw that the supposed root moved, until finally I lifted it out of the ground. As I did so I noticed that it had one end attached to the vine that I was after. The root was fully a foot and a half long, and about five inches in diameter, slightly rounded at the ends. I cut off the vine with my knife, and ran with the root to the brook and washed it clean. I now saw that I had found some kind of a tuber. With my knife I cut through the thin rough skin, disclosing a white substance beneath. Quickly cutting it in halves I found that the inside of the tuber was white and starchy. I wondered what it could be. It was not a sweet potato, for the latter is yellow. Then I began to think of the roots that I had read about in books of travel in the tropics, and the first that came to my mind was the yam. Yes, this must be the yam, though I did not know before that its foliage was in the form of a vine.

Here food was in plenty, healthful and nourishing, and sufficient to sustain life even if I found no other, it being only necessary to roast them in ashes.

I resolved to plant yam vines in front of the gate to the stockade, for, while the vines were growing up to conceal it, they would, in the meantime be storing away food for me against my return. This plan I put into immediate execution.

My next thought was of devising a weapon for offence and defence, also to be used in killing game. The idea of a bow and arrows at first suggested itself, but this was abandoned for the bow-gun, for, as boys, we were able to do good execution with the latter as it had a stock and breech, admitting of securing better aim.

Looking about for material from which to construct the bow-gun, the bam-

boo seemed to be the most available for the barrel; so I cut down one about two inches in diameter, from which I selected the longest and straightest section between the joints. Next I cut a deep notch about four inches from the larger end, and extending to the centre of the bamboo. From the lower end of the notch I split away the upper half of the tube, thus forming a spout about four feet long which was to carry the arrow. For a breech I selected a forked stick, the butt of which I carefully rounded and smoothed until it would fit tightly into the round socket at the larger end of the barrel, above the notch. This, though crude, furnished a very fair substitute for a breech to rest against my shoulder when taking aim, particularly as I had thought to select a forked stick which had the butt slightly bent so that, when fixed in the breech-end of the barrel, the proper elevation was given.

The next step was to make a bow and fix it firmly across the under side of the barrel, at right angles to it, I searched about in the bush a long time before I found a tree of the right size, straight and without branches; and, on bending it down toward the ground and cutting it, I found that it was elastic and quite hard. From the tree I cut a section about three feet long, which I squared for a distance of two inches in the middle, whittling what was to be the inner side down flat from either side of the squared part to either end, each half tapering slightly from the middle. I did not remove the bark from the back of the bow.

Next I cut a square slot about the width of the squared part in the centre of the bow, in the under side of the bamboo about a foot from what was to be the muzzle, being careful, however, not to cut through into the groove of the barrel. Into this I carefully fitted the squared portion of the bow, after which notches opening in opposite directions were cut on the lower side of the barrel, one on each side of the bow. With one of the supple vines I then lashed the bow firmly, drawing the vine over the notches. When the vine was thoroughly dry the bow would be held firmly and rigidly in place.

The question of arrows was quickly solved, for I could think of nothing that could serve the purpose better than the long smooth stem which supported the heads of the wild canes These were of just the right size and length. I cut several dozens of them, sharpening one end of each, and notching the other to receive the string. To give sufficient weight to the execution end of the arrow, I split a piece of the tough vine into fine strips, with which I closely wound the arrows near the ends, until the proper weight was secured to balance them during their flight and thus render them accurate. For the wings of the arrows I used sprays from the plumes of the wild cane, until I could find something more suitable, fastening them to the string end with fibres from the ever useful vine.

It now only remained to provide a string for the bow, before the weapon could be tested. Carefully separating the longest fibres of the cocoanut cloth. I

braided them into a strong cord of uniform size, which I fastened to the bow.

And now for the test! Drawing the string back to the notch, I placed one of the arrows in the groove of the gun and, raising the gun to my shoulder, I released the string with an upward pressure of my right thumb, at the same time pointing the gun in the direction of the brook.

As straight as a line could be drawn, the arrow sped away over the brook and was lost in the thicket beyond. I felt confident of the success of my bow-gun, and after constructing a quiver for the arrows from a piece of the cocoanut cloth fastened together with thorns, and braiding a cord with which to sling it over my shoulder, I turned my attention to the final preparations for departure.

These consisted of providing a store of provisions in case I did not immediately find food on the way. I roasted several of the yams, and gathered two dozen oranges which were stored in a bag made of the cocoanut cloth. I did not include cocoanuts, for I was sure to find plenty as I went along.

I took the precaution to gather a quantity of the cane floss for tinder, which I placed in a short piece of bamboo, which I stopped up tightly at both ends with wooden plugs. This was to protect it from moisture in case of rain. I also took the cocoanut calendar.

The morning for departure arrived. Taking a farewell plunge in the brook, I made a hearty breakfast of yams and oranges, after which, closing the door of the stockade and fastening it with withes of the vine, I slung the quiver of arrows and the bag of provisions over my shoulder, took the bow-gun and started away along the shore, going in a southerly direction.

CHAPTER IX.

Starts to Explore the Island; Turtles' Eggs .

I followed the narrow line of sand, sometimes having to make a detour inland to get around a rocky point of land which jutted out into the water, or to avoid a dagger-like plant the spike-like leaves of which were armed with spines as sharp as needles. This, I concluded, must be the Spanish bayonet.

The sun shone brightly, and the sea, deep blue and calm, stretched away toward the west, the long, gentle swells causing but a ripple on the beach. As I progressed, the island along the shore became less attractive than it was in the near vicinity of my house; and in some places it had a parched appearance. Once I

was obliged to cross a flat area of several acres in extent, bounded by a high bluff, where I had to make my way cautiously among cactus plants of various kinds; some low and spreading over the ground and bearing beautiful, yellow, wax-like blossoms, and others a great size, like trees denuded of the smaller branches and twigs.

The sun had reached the zenith when I came to a small stream and sat down beneath a wide-spreading tree to rest, and to refresh myself from the provisions that I carried. As I ate I gazed up among the branches of the great tree, whose broad leaves furnished such a grateful shade, when I saw that it bore fruit, round and green, five or six inches in diameter. This I believed to be bread-fruit, from the pictures I had seen, and I resolved to carry two or three along with me, only obtaining them by climbing the tree.

Although I did not intend to travel steadily in the heat of the day during my march, I felt anxious to make a good beginning on the first day out, so after getting cool and feeling well rested, I went on.

As I crossed the brook, scores of small brown crabs scudded away along the bank. They were the first I had seen during my sojourn on the island. Spiders, I had seen many of, some of great size with hairy bodies and long legs; but as they showed no ferocity, I had no fear of them. Indeed on account of their great size I did not believe them to be poisonous. As a rule, the natural histories said, poisonous spiders of the tropics are not of great size, and most of them have short legs.

Having made a long detour around a swampy place which extended to the sea, I came out of the bush upon a wide beach shaped like a semi-circle, or half-moon; and as I did so my attention was attracted to several large, glossy, blackish objects scattered over the beach. I approached one, and found it to be a monstrous turtle. There must have been hundreds of them, and, one by one, as I moved about, they started away toward the water. Some of them were very large, and must have weighed three or four hundred pounds. Had I been so disposed I had no means of dispatching one for food, but I felt sure that the turtles had been depositing their eggs in the sand, and I could easily roast the eggs in the fire, which would form a very acceptable adjunct to my larder.

Accordingly, digging into the sand where the turtles had been lying, I found plenty of round white eggs, a quantity of which I gathered to add to my stores.

It was now near the end of the afternoon, as I observed by the sun, and I decided to select a place to camp for the night. I selected a spot near a thicket of thorn bushes, which would form an effectual protection to the rear, and then began collecting dry branches for a fire. The sun was low in the sky, and the heat was greatly moderated, and, by the time I had collected a large pile of fire wood, a sea breeze sprang up, taking the place of the land breeze of the day, making it

cool and comfortable.

I had no difficulty this time in starting a fire, and as soon as it had burned down sufficiently I buried a yam and some of the turtles' eggs in the ashes, and, while they were cooking I occupied the time cutting away a part of the smaller thorn bushes, making a cleared place in which I could sleep during the night, the thicket over me furnishing protection from the dampness of the air.

By the time this was accomplished, and a cocoanut shell of water was brought from the brook, I judged that the yam and eggs were sufficiently cooked, which they proved to be when I uncovered them, and I at once proceeded to eat my evening meal. The eggs proved to be of good flavor, but wanted salt. This reminded me that I must provide a supply of salt, which I could do by evaporating some sea-water as soon as I had the opportunity.

It was now past sunset and rapidly growing dark; so I replenished the pile of firewood, and piling a quantity of it upon the fire, I lay down with a bunch of grass for a pillow, and in a short time fell asleep.

CHAPTER X.

Under the Coils of a Snake .

When I awoke in the morning it was with a peculiar sense of oppression. In the first drowsiness I thought there was a great weight across my chest; and my arms were aching. I tried to move, but found that I could not lift my arms. They seemed to be pressed closely to my aides. Thoroughly awake now, I was terrified to find that I was lying beneath the folds of an enormous snake.

Frightened as I was beyond all expression, I maintained sufficient presence of mind to keep perfectly quiet until I could more fully realize my true situation– and, above all, locate the position of the great reptile's head.

As I gazed at the great scaly coils that enveloped me, I saw that the snake was of a pale yellow color. It was perfectly motionless. By tracing the taper of its body I saw that the head must be somewhere near my right shoulder.

I was in a great quandary what to do. Although still anxious for results, I was now quite calm, and my mind was full of plans for escaping from the terrible coils. I dared not move for fear that the snake would strike me with its fangs, or that it might encircle my body and squeeze me to death. Some snakes, like the boa-constrictor, kill their victims by this method; and while I felt sure that this

snake was not a boa, on account of its color, I felt that it had the strength to crush me to death.

For a long time I lay in this position, how long I could not tell; but the sun had grown intensely hot as it beat down upon the thicket. I heard the cries of the birds, and looked up at the blue sky with the fleecy clouds floating across it, wondering whether it was to be my fate to die here in the folds of a huge serpent. I wondered too, if bye and bye my bones, bleached white, would be found in the thicket on the shore of this lonely island.

I was gasping for breath on account of the heat, my cramped position and the weight of the serpent's folds across my chest, when I felt it move a little. I wondered if it was preparing to strike me. I did not move, and in a moment it began to move again, and the coils slipped across my body. Slowly it continued to move, until my arms were free and its tail swept across my face.

I was now free, but I waited a few seconds to see if the snake was leaving me. Distinctly hearing it gliding from me, I arose quietly, feeling stiff and sore in my arms and chest. The snake was not in sight, but seeing the grass moving a little distance away, seizing a large stone I sprang after it, but it escaped into the bush.

I reasoned that the snake must have crawled under the thorn bushes after I lay down, and that it coiled upon my body for warmth, as the nights were frequently uncomfortably cool; and so soundly had I slept that its movements had not awakened me.

After this unpleasant adventure I felt anxious to be moving, and, making a fire, cooked some eggs which, with oranges from the stores, comprised my breakfast; after which I gathered a few more turtles' eggs, and resumed my march.

As I had done the day before I followed the coast, but instead of keeping along the sand I followed the edge of the forest, thinking it might prove more advantageous to do so as it would enable me to keep a look-out for game, and perhaps discover new fruits. My progress was necessarily much slower, but the walking was easier as the trees shielded me from the direct heat of the sun, which, on the beach was terrific, the white sand producing a fearful glare which caused no little pain in my eyes.

As I proceeded, the country became more open, and I frequently crossed quite large treeless tracts of tall grass, or stretches which, had it not been for the tropical vegetation surrounding might have been taken for New England pasture land.

One morning, just after resuming my march as I was crossing one of the latter grass tracts, a bird different from any I had before seen arose from the ground and flew into the thicket on the opposite side. Its color was light drab, and the wings and under tail feathers were white. I approached the edge of the

bush cautiously, meantime, drawing back the string of my bow-gun and fixing an arrow in place. Laying aside the bag of provisions I crept softly along, until a sharp "coo-o-o" drew my attention to the branches of a tree, where I saw the bird stepping gingerly along one of the larger limbs. Apparently it had not seen me, so, carefully moving to one side until I had a low bush between me and the game, I worked up a little nearer in order to make sure of being within range of the arrow. Then, rising quietly to one knee, I took careful aim and released the string. The sharp "twang," much to my surprise was instantly followed by a flutter as the bird came tumbling to the ground. I hastened forward and picked it up. The arrow had passed entirely through the neck, so that it was quite dead in a few moments. I saw that it was a species of wild pigeon, and therefore edible; and I congratulated myself on securing such an acceptable change in my fare.

I saw no more pigeons after that, but during the succeeding days I found several orange trees from which I replenished my supply of this refreshing fruit.

I continued steadily on, making no important discoveries, following the edge of the brush, but always keeping the sea in sight. Almost every day I went to the beach to look for turtles' eggs, which I usually found in abundance.

The coast continued to loom up before me, head-land after head-land, stretches of beach and rocky bay shores. Allowing for the indentations of the coast that I followed, I concluded that the island was a large one; and, the fact that I was gradually turning toward the direction of the sun convinced me that its shape was nearly round.

I always camped just before sunset that I might have sufficient time to make a fire, cook and eat supper before dark.

I had not kept a fire after supper was cooked, as, having neither seen nor heard anything of wild animals of any kind, I did not feel the need of it; and, beside, I was becoming accustomed to being alone, and to sleeping in the open air, and the nervousness of the first few nights after I was cast ashore had entirely left me.

At the end of the sixth day I had, in my journey, turned around so that the direction which I followed was a little more than right angles to that taken where I left my house. In other words, instead of going nearly south, my course was now nearly southeast.

At the end of the seventh day I came to a large stream which was too wide and deep to ford. The next day being Sunday I resolved to pitch camp and remain there until Monday. Meanwhile I would decide whether to devise some means of fording the stream, or follow up its course.

Although I had not, as yet, done any work on Sunday, I decided that it would be no great violation of the day to try to evaporate a little sea water, while I was in camp, and thus procure a little salt, which I was craving.

That night before going to sleep, I revolved several schemes in my mind, and, ere I fell asleep, I believed I had solved the question of making salt.

CHAPTER XI.

The Cave on the Mountain; A Beacon; Attacked by Wild Pigs .

After breakfast the following morning, I cut a large quantity of fine, long grass, which I proceeded to make into large bunches, all I could hold in my hands, tieing them with wisps of the grass itself. Then I cut two forked stakes and set them into the ground about ten feet apart. Going a few rods up the bank of the stream where I saw some bamboos growing, I cut one, and trimming it, carried it to the camp, and placed it, one end in each of the forks of the stakes.

Taking the grass I went to the edge of the beach and thoroughly saturated it in the salt water after which I carried it to the camp, and parting each bunch in the middle, I hung them over the pole.

The idea proved highly successful, for the hot sun evaporated the water very quickly, leaving particles of salt clinging to the grass throughout each bunch.

I then gathered a quantity of broad leaves which I laid on the ground so that their edges over-lapped, and by gently shaking the bunches of grass the salt fell upon the leaves in a fine white shower.

I repeated the process several times until I must have had fully half a pound of salt.

Preparing a short piece of bamboo by plugging one end as I had done in making the box for the tinder, I carefully gathered up the salt and poured it into the bamboo, enough to last a long time.

I had determined to go no further along the coast, but to follow the course of the stream to its source which I judged must be among the mountains which seemed to extend across the northeast corner of the island. This I wished to do along the opposite bank, but, as I could not cross the stream at this point, I decided to follow the bank on which I now was, rather than take the time necessary to construct a raft.

If I followed the stream to its source I should reach the mountains, and besides, have gained a fair idea of the island in all but the extreme south-eastern part. From the tops of some of the mountains, I believed that I could gain a very good view of the small portion untraversed, or rather not encircled by my route,

which could not be very great. If the island was inhabited anywhere in that direction, I believed I should see some signs from the tops of the mountains.

I really had no faith that the island was inhabited, for, being comparatively small, if there were people there I must have met some signs, ere this, to indicate it.

I had another object in wishing to reach the mountains, which was to see if any land was in sight to the south, east and southeast. One thing I was perfectly sure of, that this island was near the Virgin group, perhaps a little north of those islands, if not even one of them; so that, if people did not regularly inhabit it, there must be islands not far away that were inhabited, and people must, therefore, occasionally visit my island.

I felt, moreover, anxious to reach the mountains as quickly as possible, because, as I had calculated from my limited knowledge of the climate, the rainy season must soon set in, which would make travel unpleasant, if not difficult or impossible. And besides, I wished to be away from the lowlands of the coast during heavy rains, as I knew it could not be so healthful as the mountains.

So, getting my effects together, I set out, following the course of the stream.

For the first few miles the stream flowed across a flat country, which became rocky the further I went, and the stream became more rapid in its flow.

Several pretty cascades were passed and, in places, I was obliged to do some sharp scrambling over rocks that were overgrown with creeping vines, among which convolvuli were conspicuous.

For four days I continued to ascend the stream, until lofty hills began to rise on either side abruptly from the banks; which indicated that I was getting very near the mountains.

The sides of the foot-hills were heavily wooded, but, as I left them and entered the mountains, gradually ascending to a higher altitude, the vegetation grew less dense and changed in its general appearance.

The stream was now little more than a small rushing mountain torrent, foaming over the rocks. At the end of the fifth day, just before sunset, I reached the source of the stream, for coming suddenly to a wall of rock above which the mountain rose precipitously, I beheld the brook bubbling forth from the bowels of the mountains. I decided to camp here for the night, and proceeded about my usual preparations for getting supper. I had no yams, but plenty of oranges; but presently I saw some yam vines growing a short distance away, and it was the work of a few minutes only to procure enough for supper and breakfast.

When I awoke in the morning the sky was partially overcast. As I had calculated, the rainy season was undoubtedly about to set in, and I resolved to hasten to the top of one of the mountains as quickly as possible, as I felt that, upon the outlook from the highest elevation depended my plans for a considerable time

in the future.

So, hastily preparing and eating my morning meal, I climbed to the top of the rock which rose above my camping place, and saw that the highest mountain was not more than five miles away. I set out at once. The way was not difficult except where it led across a deep ravine at the foot of the mountain, where the undergrowth and creepers formed a dense tangle; but once through this, I found the way almost clear of low bush. I now began a steep climb. As I ascended, the cocoanut trees became less plentiful, and their places were taken by other species of palm, great ferns as large as trees, and giant cacti.

As nearly as I could tell, with the sun partly obscured by clouds, it was near mid-day when I came upon a broad table-land of grass, dotted here and there with groves of trees. Beyond, rose the last peak. Fearing rain, I pushed forward, resolving to reach the top before dark, and camp, so as to be ready to take observations early the next morning.

It was quite dark when I came to the summit. I could see nothing, of course, until daylight, and I searched about for a place to camp. There was a strong breeze blowing and the air was quite cool, so I found shelter behind a great boulder and prepared to spend the night. I still had a few yams with me, and three turtles' eggs, and these I cooked and ate. I then proceeded to make myself as comfortable as possible by lying close to the rock, and, having nothing else to do, I went to sleep, the long climb having wearied me.

Once or twice during the night I awoke feeling very chilly, and I was not sorry when the first faint gleam of dawn appeared.

The sun rose clear, but, to the south-east, fleecy clouds were scudding along toward the land. In all directions, however, the line of the horizon was distinctly visible, and the peak commanded a view of the sea at all points of the compass, and of the whole island.

I scanned the line of sea and sky all around, but saw nothing that looked like land. A little to the south-east there was a faint, serrated line against the sky, but I concluded that it was only a cloud.

As I stood scanning the great rim of the ocean, there came to me a strong feeling that I would like to establish a beacon on the summit, one, if possible, which could be seen from a ship several miles at sea; and the more I thought of this project the more strongly was I convinced that it would be a wise thing to do; for, in the event of a ship's passing on this side of the island, a prominent structure on the mountain might attract attention and lead to my rescue. I thought it all over as I retraced my steps to the boulder, and resolved to look about for a suitable place to make a substantial shelter while engaged in the work. I deemed it advisable to go further down the mountain where the vegetation was more plentiful, and where I might find fruits, and possibly game–though game did not

seem to be plentiful, but brilliant plumaged birds were numerous.

In the edge of the bush between the table land and the mountain peak, I discovered a small grove of about a dozen orange trees, and here I at first thought that I would make my camp; but a little further to the south I saw a great rock, which appeared to over-hang several feet; and the idea at once struck me that it might be wise to encamp beneath its shelter.

So, turning in that direction I was not long in reaching the rock. It was at the base of a spur of the mountain; and the top not only overhung the base considerably, but, there was a sort of natural excavation which formed quite a large cave, open on three sides, it was true; but here I saw great possibilities in establishing my camp while erecting the beacon. Besides, I fully expected the rainy season to set in almost any day, and should I have to stay here for several months, the rock would afford me the best of shelter.

So, having decided to make this the base of operations for the present, I took my bow-gun and set out to forage for supplies, of which I stood in immediate need.

I went down among the trees in the intervale between the two mountains. The vegetation was very luxuriant, but not so dense as in portions of the low-lands across which I had marched. I had noted that the cocoanut palms were less plentiful here, and that there were several other kinds of palms that I had not seen before. One of these had a trunk covered with great sharp spines, and from the grapelike cluster of fruit at the top I knew it must be an oil palm; but I saw only a few of these. Another had a bottle-shaped head of vivid green just below the leaves, which I at once recognized as the "mountain cabbage," or cabbage palm. These were very plentiful.

Skirting the edge of the bush, a short distance to the north, I turned to penetrate further toward the valley, when suddenly, as I took a step forward, I felt myself sinking downward. I threw down my gun and tried to save myself by clutching the creepers; but I continued to sink into a mass of vines. I was considerably frightened, and wondered, for a brief moment, if I had fallen into the opening to a cavern; but suddenly my feet touched solid earth, and I found myself standing beside what appeared to be an old wall–about the height of my shoulder. Pushing aside the creepers I saw that it was really a wall, built of large stones and some kind of mortar. I was so astonished at the discovery that I could scarcely collect my thoughts. Looking around, I was still more perplexed, for only a few feet away there was a rectangular enclosure which looked like the ruined foundations of a house. I found that the wall extended for perhaps fifty feet in each direction, the opposite side being flush with the rising ground above. An examination of the rectangular enclosure showed unmistakably that it was a portion of the foundation of a house.

What could this mean? It could mean but one thing; that people had lived here. But when, I could form no opinion; but from the appearance of the masonry it must have been many years before. The ruins, as well as the wall, were thickly overgrown with creepers and other vegetation.

Still further signs of the former presence of man now attracted my attention. A great plant, like an immense lily, with broad leaves six or seven feet long was growing near by at the edge of the small clear area surrounding the ruins; and, on going nearer to examine it I quickly recognized it from the great bunch of elongated fruit which hung from the crown of leaves.

Banana trees!

And there were many of them scattered around. Here was a never-ending supply of food, of the most nourishing kind. I walked around to the south side of the clearing, where I found other trees, much resembling, in general appearance, the banana trees; but the fruit was much larger, and curved like a scimitar.

My reading of books of tropical travel stood me in good stead as it aided me in recognizing trees and fruits that proved of great use to me. This latter, I knew to be the plantain. A still further search revealed yams, and several clusters of canes, much larger than the largest cornstalks that I had ever seen.

Here was another valuable discovery–sugar cane! Taking out my knife I cut one of the canes, and was delighted to see that it was full of limpid juice. I tasted it and found it very sweet and very refreshing. I sucked several joints of the sugar cane dry, and then turned to gather some of the bananas. The bunches were rather small, but several appeared to be quite ripe. I also dug some of the yams, and with a sugar cane under one arm, my bow-gun under the other, the yams and bananas in my hands, I started back to the camp. I could not climb the wall, loaded as I was, so I set about to go around the end nearest to my cave-dwelling; when I saw a pigeon, like one I had shot near the coast, fly up and alight on the wall. As quickly as I could I laid down my load, and, adjusting an arrow in the bow-gun, took careful aim and released the string. Again my aim was true, for the arrow pierced the neck close to the body. It must have been killed almost instantly, for it quickly ceased fluttering.

With this addition to my forage, I proceeded slowly to the camp. With food for two days at least, I now began to form plans for making the "cave," as I chose to call it, habitable. I proposed to close the two ends and a portion of the front, by setting bamboo, which I had seen growing plentifully in the valley below, into the ground, and weaving in vines. I only intended to make a temporary shelter against the wind, and had no idea of spending the time and labor that I had on my house on the coast.

It was slow work cutting the bamboos and dragging them up to the cave, and this occupied me several days. These had to be cut into the proper lengths,

and set into the ground, so that the upper ends would come firmly up against the overhanging rock. As I worked, my plans for the future matured, so that I foresaw an extended sojourn here. The ultimate outcome was, that the inclosing walls of the cave were, when finished, fully as substantial as those of my house at "Sargent" Bay, as I had resolved to call the place where I had drifted ashore, in honor of my late benefactor. The paling of bamboos was closely interwoven with vines, and I constructed a door for the front. I now had not only a comfortable but a substantial dwelling, which would afford protection from the wind and rain, no matter from which direction they came.

About every other day I went to the old ruins to procure bananas and yams; and, on these trips, I shot several pigeons which proved to be very delicate and tender. I often roasted yams, and found them to be very hearty food; and became very fond of them.

Frequently, of late, there had been showers of rain, which proved to me that the rainy season had set in. I made frequent trips to the top of the mountain, and, each time, I saw that the peculiar serrated line against the sky, which I at first thought must be a cloud, had remained stationary. This convinced me that it was land, and as it was evidently the top of a mountain range, it must be a great distance away.

I speculated as to what land it would be. If my suppositions were correct as to the position of the island on which I was exiled, from the direction it might be one of the Virgin Islands. If so, the Leeward Islands lay beyond, further to the east and south-east.

My mind was now filled with the project of erecting a substantial beacon, one which would be seen from some distance at sea. Gradually I evolved plans for the structure. The first step was to cut the tallest and largest bamboo which I felt capable of dragging to the peak. I found one that suited me. It was a long tedious task to cut it down with my knife, but it was finally accomplished, and I dragged it to the front of the cave.

It was my intention to devise a headpiece to fasten securely to the top of the bamboo in order to render it as conspicuous as possible. This would have to be done before the bamboo was raised and set into the ground.

The daily showers became more frequent and more severe, and some days the rain would sweep across the mountain in perfect torrents. Nevertheless, I succeeded in cutting several more bamboos, of smaller size, and I also brought several bunches of bananas and plantains, and a quantity of yams up to the cave.

I now set to work to complete the beacon. Cutting the bamboos to the required lengths, I lashed them together in such a manner as to form a sort of gridiron, eight feet long and six feet wide. This I filled in with a basket-work of vines, woven very loosely that the wind might easily pass through it, to prevent

its being blown down when raised to the top of the pole.

At length the beacon was finished, the gridiron being firmly lashed to the upper end of the bamboo; and I had been on the mountain seven weeks. The rainy season was well under way; but I worked during the intervals when it ceased to rain, and, by means of a sharpened stick, aided by my knife, I dug a hole fully four feet deep, on the highest part of the mountain. I found it difficult work to raise the bamboo with the gridiron at the top, and plant its base in the hole, but, after many trials, I succeeded, after which I wedged it firmly with stones and earth solidly packed.

It would be useless to attempt to leave camp while the rain continued, and I had fully reconciled myself to remain until the close of the rainy season; and I hoped that I could find enough to do to occupy the time. I was obliged to go frequently in quest of food, and I set about preparing a brief account of the circumstances of my exile in the island, the date of the wreck and the date of the raising of the beacon; also, explicit directions for finding "Sargent" Bay, where my house stood. This was carved in deep letters around the smooth surface of a large section of bamboo, like a Chinese prayer cylinder. This was fastened to the bamboo signal pole, a few feet from the ground, to guide anyone who might chance to notice the beacon and investigate its meaning, to my rescue.

I made a coat and kilt reaching to the knees, from cocoanut cloth. The coat was without sleeves, but it would save my only shirt, and the kilt would prove a great protection to my trousers, which were already showing signs of hard usage. These garments were sewn together with fibres of vines, a long, sharp thorn being used as a needle. I also made a new hat, of more skillful workmanship than the first, which I had worn until the present time.

Twice, each day, I went up to the beacon to scan the horizon. I saw no vessels, but the distant, faint outline of mountains remained in sight. This position commanded a view of the entire island, and I studied it with interest. It was nearly circular in shape, and I calculated that it was not over forty miles in diameter. I had thought seriously of descending to the eastern slope of the mountains, and exploring the small portion which had not come, thus far, within my projected route. This belt of country, between the foot of the mountains and the sea, seemed, from my elevated position, to be very flat, and more sparsely wooded than the other side of the mountain; but the question of its being inhabited was settled by the torrents of rain, for, for miles to the east and south-east the country was under water.

The rain had apparently been the heaviest on the east side of the island, for none of the west side was inundated, as far as I could discern; but the stream, along whose banks I had marched from the coast, was swollen to the size of a great river.

After I had made the clothing, I searched the edge of the bush until I found some wild canes, growing by a swampy place, from which I made a supply of arrows. Frequently I shot a pigeon, the birds apparently being driven into the open by the rain. One day when I went to procure a fresh supply of bananas, as I extended one hand to cut off a bunch, I sprang back and quickly retired several rods. The cause of my precipitate flight was nothing more nor less than a great yellow snake, exactly like my unwelcome companion on the coast. It was coiled among the leaf stems of the banana tree. I did not disturb it, not feeling particularly curious as to its disposition under the present circumstances; and the next time I came it was gone. I named it the "banana snake," in commemoration of the latter incident, and because of its color, which was nearly that of a ripe banana.

The nights, at this elevation, and during the rain, were cold, but the cave was quite comfortable, and I built a small fire just inside the door each night, to drive out the dampness; having, from time to time before the rain became too constant, filled all the available space in the cave with dry wood, only reserving enough room to lie down to sleep.

The weeks passed, rather tediously after I could think of but little to do, but the rain was not so steady and, almost every day, there were several hours when it entirely ceased to fall. There being only short grass around the top of the mountain, I utilized these intervals of the cessation of rain by exploring the mountain to the line of the bush, all around. There was nothing but rocks, with occasionally a few small shrubs. But one day I made an interesting discovery. Nearly down to the line of the bush on the opposite side from my camp, I came across a similar over-hanging rock; but on going under it, I perceived a large crevice, which, on close examination, I found extended into the mountain for some distance. I had my tinder and flint with me and, gathering a few dry leaves and sticks that lay around near the opening, I made a fire at the entrance. By its light I could see that I had found the entrance to a cavern, but I could see only a few feet from the mouth. The walls were dark and the top of the cavern was not more than four feet from the floor. I determined to still further explore it with a torch.

For a week I did not again go near the cavern, but made daily trips to the beacon for the purpose of taking observations, but all the time I was trying to invent a torch. Nothing suitable for the purpose, which would burn for any length of time, suggested itself to me, until, one morning, while at the ruins for yams and fruit, I saw some ripe cocoanuts on the ground.

"Why not use the oily kernel of the nut?"

I at once proceeded to act upon this suggestion. Taking a couple of nuts to the camp, I split them in halves, fastening one into a split stick, making a sort of

ladle. Hastening to the cavern on the other side of the mountain, I made a little fire at the end of the stick, and had the satisfaction of soon seeing the oily meat of the nut blaze up in a steady, yellowish flame. Watching it for a moment, I saw that the meat charred very slowly, while the oil was tried out by the heat to feed the flame.

Taking the torch and the spare nuts with which to replenish the torch, I entered the mouth of the cavern. I was both surprised and disappointed, for it was neither beautiful nor grand. The roof was low, and the walls were dirty and grimy. The cavern was not more than six feet wide and four feet high, and I was obliged to stoop as I moved along. The cave took me straight into the mountain for a few rods, when I came to what appeared at first to be the end; but I soon discovered a small opening a little to my right, through which, after hesitating a little, I crawled on my hands and knees. I went but a few feet before I emerged into a chamber of considerable size, where I could stand erect; and here I was greeted by a cloud of bats that flitted about as though bewildered by the light, their wings making a curious, uncanny fluttering sound. I could see the roof plainly, and clinging to it, with their heads downward, were thousands of bats. There were, depending from the ceiling, a few small stalactites, but they were dark and grimy. I examined the floor of the cavern, which revealed to me its true nature. I was in a guano cave, the floor of which was thickly covered with the guano of the bats, the accumulation of centuries, probably.

"What a fortune there is here," I thought, "if all this guano could be cheaply conveyed to the coast and loaded into vessels."

Although the air in the cave seemed to be pure, it was not a pleasant place, and most unattractive; so, after discovering a small passage, like the one I had just crawled through, leading further into the mountain, I retreated toward the entrance and was soon in daylight, feeling no desire to further explore a cavern devoid of all the beauties usually attributed to such natural phenomena.

The days dragged now, as I waited for the weather to clear, with nothing to break the monotony but occasional trips to the ruins for yams, oranges, plantains, bananas and sugar cane; and sometimes I would stalk pigeons, when my bow-gun proved very effective, especially as I every day became more skillful in using it, while the birds suffered in consequence.

Several times each day I went to the beacon to scan the horizon; but I saw no sign of a vessel. I reasoned that my island must be out of the regular track of vessels going to the Windward or Leeward Islands, as I knew it to be, of ships bound to the South American coast, Central America or any of the large West India Islands. But the far distant mountains still showed plainly against the horizon.

While gazing away toward the east one day, the idea came to me to try to

construct a boat, on my return to my house on the coast, in which to attempt to reach the distant land. I was not skilled in sailing a boat, but I reasoned that, with a fairly staunch and steady craft, provided with some sort of a sail, I might, when a long period of fair weather was promised, escape to the land which I dimly saw to the eastward. This plan occupied my mind continually for days, and, so seriously did I begin to consider it, that I became extremely impatient to start away for the coast.

Three weeks more of weary waiting, and the rain ceased to fall steadily, and then the sun began to break through the clouds at intervals, but the showers were still frequent. From the beacon I could see that the floods in the lowlands to the east were subsiding, and that the river along which I had traveled from the coast, was assuming its normal proportions.

Gradually the clouds dispersed, and whole days of bright sunshine followed. The rainy season was drawing to a close. A few days of clear weather would dry the ground and the bush so I would be able to set out for the coast.

I felt a pang of regret at the thought of leaving my home under the cliff; but then, perhaps I might come back. I could not tell. Perhaps I should have to give up the idea of building the boat, and then it might be years before I was rescued. I might, indeed, spend my entire life here alone; but this thought I put away from me.

My preparations for leaving the mountain were easily made. I left the house under the cliff exactly as it was, save the closing, securely, of the door; and one morning as the sun came up out of the sea, and the lovely island verdure lit up with a gorgeous blending of green, purple and gold, I took a farewell look all around the horizon from the peak, and, with my gun, arrows and bag of provisions, dressed in the rudely made cocoanut-cloth garments, I started down the mountain, taking, as nearly as I could, a northeast course toward the coast.

The ground was yet sufficiently damp to render it pleasantly springy and cool to my feet, and the freshness of the verdure of the forest and bush which I traversed imparted to the air a pleasant coolness, even though the sun shone fierce and hot. Birds were flitting like iridescent gems through the trees, and tittering curious discordant cries. Not since the beginning of my exile had I been conscious of such cheerfulness and light-heartedness as on this morning–and, with all, I had the feeling of going home, as, indeed, I was.

Crossing the valley at the foot of the first mountain peak, I ascended the lower spur and descended its side toward the level country which lay between it and the coast. In general appearance, the bush here did not materially differ from that to the southwest, traversed during my march from the coast months before.

Shortly after entering the belt of virgin forest which skirted the base of the

mountain range, I emerged into an opening, perhaps two acres in extent. It was covered with thick grass, green and luxuriant after the rains. The grass was not tall, perhaps two feet high, apparently a new growth, and I started to cross it. A tall cactus, a veritable tree, stood alone near the centre of the grassland, and toward this I took my way, thinking that I would like to examine it closely, as it was the largest one I had seen on the island.

After examining this giant of the tropics, I continued my way across the intervening space toward the bush on the other side. I was nearly out of the grass, when a strange sound caused me to stand still and look about me.

The sound came in a series of short, angry grunts, like "woof! woof!" and, a short distance to the left I saw the grass violently agitated, while the noise came nearer to me.

I at once decided that some animal was coming toward me, whether to attack me or not, I could not tell. But I quickly decided that the most sensible thing for me to do would be to seek safety. Naturally I thought of the bush, and ran toward it. The moment I started to run the "woof, woof!" followed me, and I increased my speed as fast as I could, hampered as I was by the thick grass. The terrible, guttural sound gained upon me as I plunged on, but at last I reached the bush, and, seeing a large tree with branches near the ground, just ahead of me, I dropped my gun and bag of provisions, and grasped the lower limb. Quickly I climbed up to what I considered to be a safe distance, and then looked down to see what sort of a beast my pursuer would prove to be.

I had but a second or two to wait, for soon, not one but three shot out of the grass and rushed to the foot of the tree. I could not mistake them. They were pigs, wild pigs.

They looked up at me with little, cruel looking eyes, and one, the largest, which had probably led the chase, snapped his jaws, showing long, white tusks, ran around the tree and continued the "woof, woof!" throwing up his head and, as he apparently grew more angry because I was above his reach, flecks of foam were flung from the ugly jaws. This one was, without a doubt, the boar. The other two were smaller, and seemed to be taking matters more coolly.

They were villainous-looking beasts, gaunt, with long legs and sharp, pointed heads; and their color was a sort of rusty-red. Feeling perfectly safe, the question which naturally first occurred to me was, "how long shall I be besieged in this position?" There seemed to be but one course to follow, at present, and that to await developments. The pigs had not appeared to notice my paraphernalia.

After a while the boar grew calmer, and finally all three lay down near the foot of the tree. I made myself as comfortable as possible, and looked down at them.

The day dragged along monotonously, while I was able to change my position so frequently that I was not cramped; but I began to get very hungry, having eaten nothing since early in the morning. The pigs continued to remain on guard, the boar now and then getting up and regarding me contemplatively, until the sun sank behind the forest. Then the pigs moved away into the grass. It was soon dark, and the moon, which was near its full, came up over the mountains; but I was not long able to distinguish the movements of the pigs in the uncertain moonlight.

Patiently I waited, until the moon was directly over the clearing. There was no sound of the pigs, and, after a little, I slid to the ground and, cautiously gathering up my gun and provision bag, moved noiselessly away into the bush. The moonlight favored me, and I hurried on for several miles, when I was brought to a halt by a small stream. Feeling safe from the pigs, I decided to camp here until daylight. I did not dare make a fire, so, after satisfying hunger with a portion of a pigeon which I had roasted before setting out, and an orange, I sat down by a large tree and, leaning against the trunk, was soon asleep.

CHAPTER XII.

Return to the Coast; A Mangrove Swamp; Fever .

When I awoke it was morning, and the sun was fully an hour up. Taking a hasty bath in the cool water of the stream, and after a hurried meal, crossing the stream on the stones that were not submerged, I set off along the east bank. The stream flowed in a northerly direction. By keeping close to the edge of the forest I made rapid progress. Nothing occurred to distract my attention, except the sight of a small flock of pigeons, one of which I killed. I encamped for the night in the edge of a thicket, and made a fire to roast the bird which I plucked while waiting for a bed of coals.

At daylight in the morning I continued my course down the stream which was now much wider and deeper. Its edge was thickly fringed with bamboo, and the idea came to me that I might construct a raft from them, and float down stream to the coast; but then, the stream was apt to become suddenly shallow in places, and it contained many large stones, and after delaying for several days while constructing the raft, it might prove to be time and labor lost.

At the close of the fourth day, as the sun was declining behind the palm

trees, I was astonished, on emerging from a thicket, to see the ocean, blue and calm, stretching out before me. I had failed to note the fact that I had followed a more direct course from the coast than when I marched toward the interior, and that the mountains were much nearer the north coast than the west. For the last two days I had noticed that the cocoanut palms were more plentiful, as were also the bamboos along the stream, both of which should have reminded me of my approach to salt water. I had reached the coast sooner than I expected.

Knowing that I would probably not be able to cross the stream at its mouth, I found a place where a few stones rose above the water, and managed to cross to the other bank. The mouth of this stream differed from that of either of the other two streams that I had seen. It was broad and muddy, covering a wide expanse, and what seemed the strangest to me was that trees were growing from the water, covering the entire area of the mouth of the stream. Each tree rested upon the apex formed by a cluster of roots, which rose from the water, looking like gigantic spiders or devil-fish. I could see under the whole aquatic forest, a tangle of slimy roots above the dark water. The air was permeated by an indescribable stench; and around the edge of the dark recess, black, hairy crabs crawled about, or lay by the festering pools. I concluded that this was one of the famous mangrove swamps, and I decided to retire from such an undesirable locality.

Accordingly I proceeded along the beach until I was free from the smell of the swamp, where I made camp for the night beneath some spreading trees near the water's edge, making a fire and roasting yams, and broiling a pigeon which I had killed just after crossing the stream.

When I awoke in the morning I felt that a change had come over me. I felt dazed, the back of my head was aching, and I had a burning fever. After a few moments I remembered the swamp. The air which I had been breathing must be laden with fever. I staggered to my feet and, without stopping to get breakfast, I started along the beach, my course now being toward the west.

I felt very weak and walked with great difficulty. I was obliged to stop frequently to rest, and toward mid-day I managed to eat the remainder of the pigeon that I had broiled the night before. Once I saw some orange trees, but the fruit was both sour and bitter. I sucked some of the juice, however. The bitter and the acid seemed to allay my fever a little, and I soon felt less weak. I camped at sundown, and went to sleep with confidence that my condition would be improved in the morning, as I was at a safe distance from the swamp.

For two days more I marched along the shore, finding sweet orange-trees frequently, and plenty of pigeons whenever I chose to make a short detour into the forest.

At last a high mound appeared ahead where the shore seemed to take a sharp sweep toward the south, and, hurrying forward, I was soon standing at the

top of it and, to my great joy, looking down upon the bay where I had been cast ashore.

Crossing the familiar little stream, I hastened toward my house. It was with a feeling of relief that I saw that everything was apparently as I had left it.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Feathered Companion; Making a Fish-Trap .

Everything about my house was as I had left it. Nothing had been disturbed, the overflowing stream not having reached it. The vines around the stockade now completely covered it, and the yams that I had planted in front of the stockade-gate were thick and luxuriant, the great, bean-like leaves completely concealing the entrance.

The effects of the fever were fast leaving me, and I grew strong rapidly. There was much to do, now that I was settled down at home. I dug up the yams in front of the stockade-gate and stored them in the house for future use. Then I carried out the couch and made a new one of fresh branches and grass, more comfortable than the first had been.

I also made two fire-places, mere enclosures for keeping the coals in place. These consisted of circular enclosures of stones brought from the stream, each about three feet in diameter and one foot high, one being in a corner of the house for use during rainy weather, and the other in the enclosure of the stockade, near the gate.

My next thought was to plant yams by the trunks of all the trees near the house. This would furnish me an inexhaustible supply, and of a superior quality, as the vines would have plenty of chance to climb, up and around the tree trunks.

One day while walking through the bush in search of pigeons, having succeeded in killing two, I came across several cocoanut palms of much smaller size than any I had yet seen. They were not more than fifteen feet high to the base of the leaf heads, and their tops were very spreading, much more so in proportion to the length of the trunks than in the case of the larger trees. But these all bore great bunches of nuts, and I began to wonder how the unripe nuts would taste, and whether they contained more water than the ripe ones.

With but little difficulty I climbed one of them, and with my knife clipped the stems of several of the nuts, which went tumbling to the ground.

Descending, I cut off the husk of the end opposite the stem, until I could make a hole through the shell. The latter was very thin and soft, and the knife went through it easily. My knife was always in excellent condition, kept so by frequent sharpening on the stone which I used for striking fire to the tinder.

Raising the nut as though it were a canteen, I drank the water. It was somewhat different from that of a ripe nut, much sweeter, more limpid and very cool and refreshing. After the water was drained from the nut I out it open, when I found the whole inside lined with a whitish, translucent pulp, of the consistency of solid jelly. This I found to be delicious, but, after having eaten a little, rather sickish. However, I carried several of the unripe nuts to the house, and soon became very fond of them. I made frequent trips to the young palms and the water became my principal beverage, while my only dessert was the jelly, for which I carved a rude spoon from a piece of hard wood.

I noticed that the parrots were not so noisy as they had been before I left for the interior, and for several weeks I was at a loss to account for it. But one evening, while returning from the water-cocoanut palms, I espied two diminutive parrots fluttering through the bush. They were young ones and not quite able to fly, though nearly fledged. They would launch out from a limb, sometimes falling short of their next perch, and sometimes striking against a limb, when they would flutter to the ground, making small, parrot-like cries. They were a beautiful green, with red wing feathers and red breasts and necks. The parent birds all the while remained near-by, as though encouraging the little ones in their attempts to fly.

I tried to catch one of them, but they were sufficiently active to evade me successfully. I felt a great desire to capture one and teach him to talk, for I sometimes longed for a companion to speak to. Finally I evolved a plan for catching one. I set to work to construct a net, for a snare would injure them. I prepared a great quantity of fibres from the cocoanut cloth, and with it wove a purse-shaped net, perhaps two feet in length. This was to be suspended to a limb of a tree, and baited with a piece of roast yam suspended over the mouth of the bag in such a manner that, when the young parrot reached for it, he would be almost sure to lose his balance and fall in. Its weight, together with the fluttering of the bird, would draw the mouth of the bag together and prevent its escape.

This net cost me several weeks of work, but it was at last finished and ready to set. This I did very carefully, selecting a low limb in what seemed a favorite place for the parent birds to give flying lessons to the little ones.

For several days the net remained undisturbed, and every morning I supplied it with a fresh, white piece of yam.

One morning, just at daylight, I was awakened by a great outcry of parrots, and, feeling sure that one of the young birds had fallen into the net, I hastened

toward it. Sure enough, the net had done its work, for it was bobbing about and swaying from the limb, while muffled little shrieks came from the nearly-closed mouth; and from the trees around there arose a perfect babel of discordant cries of parrots, old and young. The two parent birds were perched on the limb over the net, when I arrived, but on my approach they flew away a short distance, hurling cries of defiance at me. Carefully I cut the net clear of the limb and carried it to the house, the belligerent little parrot all the time fluttering and shrieking, and striking at my hand whenever it was near the opening. I reproached myself for not thinking to make a cage for it when captured, and I was obliged to secure the opening and deposit the net in the house, while I made a cage for my future companion. This was not a difficult task. Going to the brook where the wild canes grew, I cut a quantity of them and, cutting them to the required length, I stuck them into the ground, leaving spaces about two inches wide. The canes formed a small yard about two feet square. The top was covered with a piece of cocoanut cloth, the edges being tied all around to the upright canes.

How to get the fighting little bird out of the net and into the cage was the next question. I did not exactly relish the idea of putting my hand into the net, so finally I decided to lift one corner of the cocoanut cloth on the top of the cage, and, loosening the mouth of the net, insert it under the cloth, at the same time reversing the net. The scheme worked perfectly and the little parrot tumbled into the cage, his feathers all ruffled. He was a curious little thing and I laughed aloud as, without uttering a sound, he proceeded to smooth his feathers, and then to circumnavigate the cage. He then retired a little from the bars and regarded me with the utmost seriousness, canting his head, looking at me first with one eye and then the other. Then he began to dress his feathers, evidently resolved to make the best of it all, and to feel perfectly at home from the first.

I made my pet a little run-way outside the wall of the house, constructing it in the same manner as I had the cage, covering it half with cloth and the remainder with canes so he could have both sun and shade. This enclosure I connected with the cage by cutting a square hole through the wall of the house.

As the weeks passed, the parrot grew, his wing and tail feathers developed, and he became very beautiful. He enjoyed his new home, apparently, spending a part of his time outside, and part inside. He enjoyed the sunshine, but would never remain long in it. He preferred the shade of the cloth covered portion. Nights, he always passed inside, and I made a perch for him to sleep on. It was simply a cane passing through the cage and securely fastened to a bar on each side. Hours and hours he would spend, swinging on this bar over and over, holding on with his claws, and then with his stubby beak. I fed him on yams, bananas and oranges, but the banana was his favorite food.

Every day I talked to him, telling him all about the ship-wreck, discussing

with him the various tasks that occupied me, and the probability of my rescue. I named him Puff Ball on account of his shape when captured, and then I called him simply "Puff." Puff listened patiently to all I had to say, frequently interjecting a sharp comment. Sometimes he would interrupt me by setting up a loud screeching, and I always had to cease talking when Puff had the floor.

For weeks he did not appear to attempt to imitate my words, and I began to despair of teaching him to talk, when one morning, as I lay awake for a few minutes before arising, I heard him softly chattering to himself. I listened and heard him say "Puff," "Puff," very distinctly. I was delighted and, going to the cage, I complimented him on his first attempt.

Once while bathing in the stream, I noticed, for the first time, several fish gliding through a quiet pool. From the momentary glance I had of them they appeared to resemble the white perch of the lakes at home.

This opportunity to add to my larder could not be neglected, and I set to work to devise a plan for capturing them. I thought, at first, of making a hook from thorns; but this idea was abandoned as not apt to be practical, and I hit upon a plan for making a net. The first inspiration gradually developed into a trap, and took definite shape as I revolved the matter in my mind. It was a simple device, but I spent much time and patience in perfecting it.

First selecting one of the supple vines, about half an inch in thickness, I bent it into the form of a hoop, two feet in diameter, uniting the two ends by lashing them with smaller vines. Then, with the aid of a sharp thorn and thread from the fibre of the cocoanut, I sewed together pieces of the cocoanut cloth so as to make a bag three feet long, with an opening of the same diameter as the hoop. Then I sewed the edge of the opening of the bag firmly to the hoop, which kept the bag rigidly open.

Next, from more vines, I wove a funnel-shaped basket, the larger end fitting inside the hoop, while the smaller end, which was inserted into the bag, had an opening about six inches in diameter. The larger end of this basket, which was like an inverted cone, was lashed to the hoop, all around.

This was my fish-trap, and as soon as it was ready I took it to the brook. The water was normally low and, finding the narrowest place in the current, I built across it a wall of stones, having an opening in the centre of the wall, in width just a little less than the diameter of the hoop. The trap was then set into this opening, with the mouth pointing up-stream, the gentle current keeping the bag distended, while the hoop projecting across the edges of the opening in the wall held the bag in position.

I expected that the fish, swimming downstream, finding no other passage, would enter the opening of the bag and pass through the small opening in the lower end of the cone, thereby becoming imprisoned. From similar devices that

my brother and myself had made and used in the brooks at home, I knew that, once inside, the fish would huddle in the lower end of the bag and make no effort to repass through the opening in the end of the cone.

CHAPTER XIV.

Another Exploring Trip; Tropical Fruits .

The morning following the setting of the trap I removed it and, allowing the water to drain out through the meshes in the bag, I found three beautiful silvery fish, not unlike the white perch of the northern waters. Cleaning them, I broiled them over the coals, and found them to be delicious, delicate and fine flavored. After that I had no lack of fresh fish.

Puff, meantime, had made rapid progress in the art of talking and could carry on quite a conversation–and many were the hours I spent assisting him in adding to his vocabulary. He insisted upon following me everywhere I went, always walking and never making any attempt to fly, his instructions in the use of his wings having been neglected since his capture. When walking through the bush in search of pigeons and other provisions, I always carried Puff perched upon my shoulder, and he never made any attempt to escape. He seemed as perfectly satisfied with my society as I was with his, and we kept up a continuous conversation.

My supply of salt becoming nearly exhausted, I procured a large supply, enough to last me many months, by the same process as had been employed on the first experiment while marching along the coast. This I sealed securely in joints of bamboo.

Having no particular task on hand, one afternoon I proceeded to prepare a supply of provisions, roast pigeon, fish, yam, a few oranges and half a dozen green cocoanuts, preparatory to setting off, the following morning, to explore along the bank of the stream, which flowed almost by my door, toward its source. I knew that this was a separate stream, independent of the other two that I had met with. I remembered that I had not crossed a third stream on my march from the mountains, and I was curious as to its source. Certainly it must be much shorter than the other two.

Seeking my couch early in order that I might set off by daylight, before going to sleep I remembered that I needed a new supply of arrows. This would

necessitate delaying another day, and in the morning I set to work, and before sunset I had several dozen of much better made arrows than the first ones.

With my quiver and provision bag slung across my back and with Puff on one shoulder and the bow-gun on the other, I set out just as the sun was rising above the palm trees. I kept to the left bank of the stream, and soon passed "Bamboo Pool" where I had first discovered these useful plants.

I walked along rapidly, stopping only to refresh myself and Puff. The way was easy, for there were very few shrubs or thorn bushes along the bank. But I had to occasionally turn aside to avoid inhospitable cactus plants, and the sharp, dagger-like plant which grew plentifully almost everywhere.

Just as I was thinking about seeking a good place to camp in order that I might make myself and Puff comfortable before dark, I was brought to an abrupt stop, where I stood transfixed with surprise; for I had reached the source of the stream, less than a day's journey from my house.

Before me there was a little pool, only a few feet across, and its centre was bubbling and boiling. The water which supplied the stream flowed from the bowels of the earth. While the pool was violently agitated, no sound was made by the up-rushing water. My brook was simply the outlet of a subterranean river.

I at once made camp for the night, determining to spend a day around the pool before returning. I kindled a fire for the sake of its cheering effect, and made my supper from the provision bag. Puff was satisfied with a banana.

After a frugal breakfast in the morning–for I had only some plantain and a part of one of the fish left–I set out to explore the forest in the near vicinity of the pool. Almost immediately I came across some banana trees, and near by a few plantains were also growing. Further around I found a couple of orange trees. This seemed quite a natural garden, and it was not so far away but that I could make frequent trips from home for bananas and plantains.

Penetrating a little further into the forest, I came to a little clear spot, in the centre of which grew two large, handsome trees, each with straight, rather smooth trunks, with symmetrical tops.

At first I thought both the trees were of the same kind, but I soon noticed that the leaves of one were larger than those of the other, and more pinnate. I discovered that both trees bore curious-looking fruit. The fruit, too, looked something alike. It was large, round, and green in color, with a pebbly rind. Several were lying under each tree; but that under one of the trees was decayed, and when I tried to move it with my foot it yielded to the pressure, and as the mass parted it looked like uncooked bread. The fruit under the other tree was firm and hard. I was at a loss to solve the mystery. Cutting one of the latter, I found that it had a very hard shell. Procuring a long pole from the bush, I succeeded in knocking off some fresh fruit from the other tree. On cutting this I

found that the skin was thin, and that the inside had something the appearance of a yam.

I carried one of each to camp, when it occurred to me to roast the latter, and see if it proved good to eat. While it was roasting in the coals, I cut the other green globe in halves, and found that the hard shell was very readily separated from the meat, leaving two nice bowls, suitable for drinking vessels, and perhaps for cooking. When I thought the other was thoroughly roasted, I took it from the ashes. The transformation was marvelous. The fruit was now like light, white bread. Very cautiously I tasted it, and found that, while it possessed no decided flavor, it was very delicate. I tried some with a little salt, and mentally pronounced it delicious.

Before going into camp for the night, I procured half a dozen of each fruit, and, early in the morning, after adding a supply of bananas and plantains to my burden, started to return to the house, which was reached early in the evening.

I became very fond of the new fruit, which answered for bread; and I made dishes from the shell of the other which served for drinking vessels, and I even boiled some fish in one of them.

My time was now occupied by various tasks. Frequent trips were made to the pool. I planted more yams, and made frequent excursions hunting pigeons. I also made a complete suit of clothes from the cocoanut cloth, including a hat and a pair of very substantial moccasins, for my shoes were all but useless. These things were varied by giving Puff lessons in conversation, in which he proved to be an apt scholar.

I had seen no turtles on this part of the coast, and I contemplated a journey to the cove where I had seen them months before, as soon as, from my calendar, I judged it to be their breeding season. I had long craved more of their delicious eggs.

As the days and weeks passed, frequent showers came up; and after a time, the showers of warm, tepid rain became more frequent. Some were very violent, with high wind, and occasionally thunder and lightning. They rose quickly and as quickly passed over, when the sun would burst out, making the drops falling from the trees glisten like silver. But there came a day of almost steady rain, and, after consulting my calendar, I found that it was about time for the rainy season to set in.

I had hardly thought of the rainy season since my return from the mountains. Indeed, I had intended to set to work and attempt to construct a craft with which to try to reach the distant land to the east. But now I must wait for another rainy season to pass before attempting it, for the sea would be too rough to risk a voyage in a rude and frail craft.

I allowed gloomy thoughts to take possession of me, which I did not even

confide to Puff, who was my only comforter.

CHAPTER XV.

A Hurricane and a Shipwreck .

I strove to occupy my mind by digging a large store of yams, and gathering hundreds of cocoanuts, and storing them inside the house for use when the rain should prevent my going far from the shore. I also gathered an immense quantity of dead branches for firewood, which I piled in the rear of the house, covering it thickly with grass and then broad leaves and bark stripped from the trees, to shed the water.

The rain became almost constant, and after a day of hard work making some repairs that I thought necessary on my house, I lay on my couch, secure from the rain and wind, thinking of the past, present and future. The wind had risen rapidly until it had become a gale. I listened to the rustle and flapping of the leaves of the palm trees, and to the roar of the waves on the shore. At length, through the crevices around the door I could see that the night was frequently lighted up by vivid flashes of lightning. Heavy thunder began to rumble away back over the forest. The wind increased, and then came a roar which seemed to shake the earth, and shrieks sounded above the dashing of the surf as the wind came with terrible force.

I could hear the stockade creak, and see the walls of the house tremble. The rain came in torrents, and swept against the enclosure. Another blinding flash and roar, and, above the rattle of the palm leaves I could hear the crack and crash of breaking and falling branches and tree trunks. A hurricane had broken over the island. I lay appalled, and listened to the terrible havoc of the tempest. I could not close my eyes.

It seemed as though the night would never pass; but after long, weary hours, a faint gray light stole into the house, denoting the approach of day and the end of that awful night.

The storm abated a little, but the crashing sounds continued to come from the forest. As soon as it was light enough to see plainly I ventured to go outside the stockade. The structure had withstood the force of the wind; but what a pitiful sight greeted me as I looked about. Many of the tall cocoanut palms that had been my friends and companions from the first lay prostrate, twisted and

broken. The ground was covered with nuts, leaves and broken branches. The little stream was full to the very top of the banks.

The waves roared and thundered on the narrow beach. I turned toward the sea and thought about the night of the wreck.

But had I gone mad? Had the horrors of the night so affected my mind? I covered my eyes, and in a moment looked again.

Yes, out toward the bluff, only a few rods from the shore, was a vessel. It lay as though at anchor. I saw that it was a barkentine. The vessel had not anchored; she was stranded. Then I ran to the shore and waved my arms wildly. I could not go to the bluff on account of the swollen stream. I saw several men walking around the windlass. Then they ran excitedly along the deck; and then I saw but two men on the deck. I gazed out at the rocking vessel and saw a boat slowly swing around the bow. It was filled with men rowing. I saw the boat pointed toward the shore. I watched it eagerly. The boat seemed to make no headway. But, yes, it was slowly making headway. Then again my heart sank, as through the flying spume I saw a mountain of water, a great billow many times higher than the stranded ship, come rolling into the bay. I stood transfixed with horror, spellbound, as I watched the water, coming with the speed of the wind, with a roar which every instant became more terrific. Powerless to aid the poor souls in the boat, struggling against a forlorn hope, in this moment of peril–of instant death, I stood, sick and faint, in contemplation of their fate.

The great wave now overhung the vessel. Its foam-fringed crest curled over and, with a fearful snarl of anger, like some dread monster with jaws agape, it rushed over the vessel and obscured it from sight.

I sank to the ground and covered my face, as I wept in anguish. I was overcome at the awful thought of the catastrophe and by the instant, but full realization of my great disappointment,–almost at the moment when rescue from my long, lonely exile seemed near, every hope vanished; and in a few moments I should see the bodies of those whom I hoped would succor me tossed ashore, bruised and mangled. These thoughts flashed rapidly through my mind as I sank to the earth.

Yet there was a faint hope, and the flitting thought caused my courage to revive for an instant.

If the boat, perchance, escaped being swamped and should be borne far enough toward the beach to ground firmly and thus escape being carried back by the receding water, her passengers might be saved; but if not, her fate was certain, for she would be hurled back upon upon the reef and not a soul would escape.

I started to my feet and strained my eyes in the direction of the vessel as the huge wave thundered upon the beach, the water rolling far up toward my

house.

Oh, the awful anguish of that moment! At first I could see no sign of the vessel, but as the succeeding wave subsided I caught a glimpse of the vessel and saw that her masts, spars and rigging were hanging about her in a tangled mass of wreck. The hull seemed to remain in about the same position, it only having careened shoreward. The boat was nowhere to be seen, though I carefully scanned every inch of the swirling water. Perhaps it had been dashed ashore unseen by me, obscured in the cloud of foam.

I dashed to the beach and ran eagerly along the shore, hoping to find the boat and to rescue her passengers who, if discovered, would be in a state of insensibility. But my search was fruitless, and I stood again a hopeless castaway, no nearer rescue than when, on that bright morning after the storm which sent the *Ethelyn Hope* to the bottom, I regained consciousness to find myself alone at this very spot.

I returned to my house and tried to reconcile myself to my disappointment, and to adjust my mind to the rapid succession of events in which were mingled joy and sorrow, hope and despair, all within little more than a half-hour.

Fortunately my house, thanks to the thoroughness with which the builder, assisted by nature, had done his work, had withstood the fury of the hurricane and had proved to be impervious to the rain, so I had no difficulty in making a fire, by which I prepared breakfast, drying my costume in the meantime.

The wind had by this time nearly all died away, though the incessant roar of the surf continued on the beach. Hoping still that some one from the ill-fated vessel might escape to keep me company, I went again to the beach, walking along toward the creek. Seeing neither a body nor a sign of the boat, I started to follow along the bank of the creek with the intention of crossing it and searching along the shore in front of the bluff; but I had taken a few steps only when I stopped in astonishment, for almost at my feet, her shoulders upon a tangle of reeds, lay the body of a young woman. I thought she must be dead, for she was very white and her eyes, while open, were fixed, turned upward toward the palm leaves. As gently as I could I lifted her and with some difficulty bore her to a mound at the foot of a palm tree, where I laid her carefully down, resting her drooping head in a natural position.

Poor girl–for she was but a girl–cast up by the sea, dead; and that was all I could ever know, about her. How tenderly I would lay her beneath the tropical flowers on the bluff, in a grave lined with soft grass!–alas, all I could do.

Sadly I gazed at the still form, and was about to turn away again toward the beach when, to my great surprise, I thought I noticed a faint tremor on her face and a movement of her hands. I must be mistaken; but no, again there was a movement–no mistaking it this time–then her eyes closed. I knelt beside her and

held her wrist. It was cold, but I thought I could detect a tiny flicker of the pulse. Certain now that life remained, I lifted her as tenderly as possible. She was very slight and I could easily bear her weight; but her body was so limp that I found it difficult to carry her, supporting her head at the same time.

However, I reached the house, bore her within and laid her upon the couch. Then I took a piece of the cocoanut cloth, hastily twisting it to make it as soft as possible, and went to work vigorously chafing her wrists and hands, and I was presently rewarded by seeing her open her eyes. Her head was turned slightly away, but with a faint sigh she moved it toward me. With a wondering gaze she looked full into my face for a moment, and then her eyes closed again. She had lost consciousness, and I again chafed her hands and loosened her wet garments about her throat. In what must have been a few moments only, but what seemed to me to be hours, she again opened her eyes and I saw her lips move. I bent close to her and made out to catch her words, faintly whispered.

"Where am I? Is papa here?"

That was all, for then she swooned away again.

Her father. How strange it all was, and now for the first time, I remembered that I had not noticed a woman on the deck of the ship before the boat was launched. Satisfied now that her life was safe, I left her, hurried to the beach and renewed my search, when, directly in front of my door, with the water washing partly over it, I saw the body of a man resting upon the sand. From his appearance I judged him to be a sailor. I dragged the body out of the water. The limbs were rigid and there was a deep gash on the left temple.

Feeling certain that life was extinct, I turned and continued my search. I soon picked up an oar, and as I came to the mouth of the creek I saw something which caused me to start back, involuntarily. It was a hand protruding from a pile of broken reeds. Hastily I tore away the reeds, revealing the body of a man, which, I noticed, was not dressed like a sailor. While I was moving the body away from the edge of the creek I observed that the man was rather past middle life, well built and rather stout, of medium complexion, with thick hair and moustache, both being sprinkled with gray. His limbs were not rigid, which caused me to hope that a spark of life remained. I therefore began to treat him as I knew drowning persons should be dealt with, and shortly, to my great joy, he began to revive and was, ere long, able to sit up and look about him. He gazed at me in seeming wonder as though thinking me to be a being of a different species from himself, which was not to be wondered at in view of my picturesque costume.

"Oh Marjorie, my poor girl:" were his first words.

"If you mean your daughter, sir," I said, "she is safe and sound in my house yonder." He extended his hand to me, which I took and held while he recovered

his vitality sufficiently to go to the house.

"I fear we shall intrude greatly upon the hospitality of your household;" he said, with a little effort.

"No fear of that, sir," I made reply; "for the company of yourself and daughter is certainly a great pleasure to me and I am the sole member of my household."

"Are you alone, then?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, alone on this island," I answered.

He was going to say more but I begged him to desist until he was stronger, and until he was able to proceed to the house.

He expressed himself as being fully able to do so, and as he seemed anxious about his daughter I assisted him to rise; and, placing an arm about him I supported him as he walked slowly to the house.

The meeting of father and daughter was a joyous one. The girl was able to sit up and the color was returning to her cheeks. I could not help noticing at a glance that she was very pretty, tall with a slender well moulded figure, with brown hair and blue eyes and a clear complexion. She was, I judged, anywhere from seventeen to nineteen years old. With usual feminine thoughtfulness of her appearance she had already coiled her hair neatly and rearranged her damp garments as well as she was able. While I stirred up the fire so that my visitors might dry their clothes, the father related, briefly, the story of their experiences.

His name was Richard Harborough, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, from which port the wrecked barkentine, *Three Sisters*, of which he was the owner, hailed. His family consisted of his wife, and three daughters for whom his vessel was named. He had determined to make a voyage in his vessel for health and recreation and his daughter Marjorie, a student at Dalhousie College, whose health had been impaired by overstudy, had accompanied him, the family physician strongly recommending a voyage in the southern seas as a restorative.

The *Three Sisters* had taken out a cargo of general merchandise to Demerara, British Guiana, and after discharging she had proceeded to Greytown, British Honduras, where she had taken in a partial cargo of mahogany for Boston, proceeding from the Central American coast to San Domingo where she took on board sufficient logwood to complete her cargo. During heavy weather the seas that came aboard had polluted her fresh-water casks and seeing the island just at dusk they had put in toward it intending to anchor until morning and then to come ashore and refill her casks. But the storm broke upon her, the rain obscured the island, and she would have gone ashore had she not struck one of the hidden coral reefs. What prevented her masts from going overboard the men could not explain; but it must have been a miracle, they said. As soon as the barkentine struck, the anchor was let go, by which it was hoped she would be prevented from drifting, until daylight. When first I saw the men on the deck they were

hauling up the anchor, finding that the barkentine had not drifted, with the intention of taking it to windward and trying to work her off the reef by heaving at the windlass. But realizing that the vessel was hopelessly aground, and fearing that she might break up, it was decided to try to reach the shore, the result of which attempt I had witnessed.

CHAPTER XVI

Pleasant Companions; Enlarging the House .

I told them, as briefly as possible, the story of my exile on the island, to which they listened, seemingly with the greatest interest, refraining, on account of delicacy, I supposed, from asking about my strange garb.

"And now," I said at the conclusion of my narrative, "you must make yourselves at home and as comfortable as possible, while I see about dinner"–for it was just mid-day–"and then we will attend to the poor fellow who lies outside on the beach."

So saying I took my bow-gun, my guests watching me in wonder, and started for the thicket behind the house.

I hoped to secure a pigeon, for my companions must be in need of nourishing food. I had the good fortune to spy a pigeon almost immediately and to secure it with a single arrow. My companions were greatly surprised to see me return so quickly, and after placing some yams and bread fruit to roast in the ashes, I set about plucking the pigeon. It was a plump bird, of the ring-tail variety. Half of it I fixed over the coals to roast, and with the remainder I proceeded to make some broth, which I succeeded very well in doing, thickening it with crumbs of cold roasted bread fruit, and seasoning it with salt of my own manufacture, as I explained to my guests, while I prepared it.

After the repast, which greatly revived Mr. Harborough and his daughter, we all went to the beach, I leading the way, to where the dead sailor lay.

"Poor fellow," said Mr. Harborough, "it is the third mate. The barkentine carried seven men beside the captain and three mates. We must see if any more have come ashore." But although we searched carefully all along the shore up the bay, we found no other bodies. So the dead sailor was carried tenderly to the palm grove, where he was laid in a grave, dug after much hard labor, and lined with grass; I promising to carve a head-piece for it, in the near future.

Then I took Mr. Harborough and his daughter around the neighborhood of my hut, showing them where I had been cast ashore, where I had gathered the reeds and cut the bamboos for my house, where I had discovered the yam vines; indeed, I gave them a careful history of my doings thereabout, which used up all the afternoon. The sea, meantime, had subsided and the sun had dried the bush and the grass; and after a frugal meal from the remnants of the noonday repast, we sat long in front of the house beneath the tropical sky, watching the moon rising above the feathery palm tops, while we speculated regarding the future.

The situation presented few complications, for we must simply make the best of everything until rescued, be it days, months, or years. Mr. Harborough had most important information to communicate, namely, that the *Three Sisters* had a bountiful store of food supplies and cooking utensils, as well as a rifle, shot-gun and ammunition for each. The rifle had belonged to the captain and the shot-gun to the mate, who, when opportunity offered, were accustomed to go ashore for a little sport, shooting. To get these treasures ashore would greatly add to our comfort, and, although we had no boat, we resolved, very early in the morning, to set about discussing means for saving as much as possible from the vessel.

Mr. Harborough, I was glad to see, took a cheerful view of the situation, and was resolved not to despair; and Miss Harborough, also, showed her bravery by taking the greatest interest in our plans. With some large pieces of cocoanut cloth I screened off a corner of the room, including my couch, which was to serve as Miss Harborough's sleeping apartment, while Mr. Harborough and I stretched ourselves on the floor near the door. Before we slept I communicated to him my intention to build an addition to the house before attempting to do much in getting things from the vessel, in order to afford Miss Harborough privacy, by having a room to herself. He thanked me for all my kindness, and we knew no more until awakened by Puff, who, while everything was damp, had not been heard from. Indeed, I had, I regretted to admit, forgotten him. But now, his feathers dry, and the morning bright and fair, he made himself heard, indicating by all the words in his vocabulary, interspersed with shrill screeches, that he was hungry, and would brook no delay in having his wants supplied.

The morning repast finished, we adjourned to the beach to lay out a plan of work for the immediate future. We had two matters to discuss: one, the most important, of devising ways and means of transporting the supplies from the stranded barkentine to the shore, and the other, the construction of an addition to the house for the accommodation of Miss Harborough.

"It seems to me," observed Mr. Harborough, "that we should solve the problem of getting out to the vessel as quickly as possible; for, if there arises another great storm, she might break up."

"That is very true," I replied, "and your suggestion is a wise one; so, as the building of the addition to the house will not be a long task if we work together, let us set to work upon it at once. We will construct it in the same manner as I built this house."

It was decided that Mr. Harborough should cut the bamboos and the canes, while I would build the house, having acquired some skill from my previous work.

"I fear you will find it laborious work, for I have only this knife," I observed, taking out my much-used knife.

"Ah," he replied, "I have a good knife, larger and stronger than yours;" so saying he produced a large pocket-knife, having a broad, strong blade.

"Capital," said I; "now we shall get on famously."

I conducted him to the thicket of bamboos a a little way up the stream, leaving him, while I went a little further down, to cut reeds.

"Oh, but I want to do something to help," exclaimed Miss Harborough. "What can I do?"

"You can be of the greatest assistance by carrying reeds to the house. They are very light, and, besides, you can take small armfulls."

She was overjoyed at the idea, and she at once set to work with much enthusiasm. I cut a quantity of reeds and then went back to bring some bamboos, after which I set to work cutting a door-way through the side of the house to connect it with the extension. I pursued the same methods as in making the main house, Mr. Harborough cutting bamboos and reeds, his daughter bringing all the filling material from the stream, while I set up the frame and wove the reeds into the walls. This finished, grass was cut for thatching the roof. We worked steadily, only stopping for a bit to eat at noon, so that, by sunset, the addition was completed. It was six by eight feet in dimensions, and it was very thoroughly made. After consulting Miss Harborough, it was decided not to have a door between the two apartments, but to hang up a curtain instead. I suggested that the curtain be made of cocoanut cloth, and I promised Miss Harborough to gather the cloth in the morning, and show her how to sew it together with fine roots.

We all sat for a time in front of the house, enjoying the breeze which blew toward the land after the sun-down, retiring early in anticipation of the work of the morrow. Before I slept I had formed a plan to reach the barkentine on the reef, which I believed would prove successful. The morning dawned bright and

cloudless, and the household was awakened by Puff, screaming for his breakfast.

CHAPTER XVII.

Building a Raft; Visits to the Wreck .

We first visited the young cocoanut palms from which I cut a supply of cloth for the curtain, to be hung between the two apartments in the house; and while I dug some small roots for thread, to use in sewing the pieces together, Mr. Harborough, under my direction, with his knife shaped from a piece of hard wood, a bodkin, to be used in lieu of a needle in sewing.

Leaving Miss Harborough comfortably ensconced in front of the house, with the materials around her, Mr. Harborough and myself set about the task of reaching the vessel.

"There is but one way to reach her, sir," I said, "and that is by means of a raft. It is the only sort of a craft that we can construct with no tools, and, besides, I believe we can make a raft which will carry the cargo."

"Your experience fits you to take the initiative," he replied. "I am under your direction. You shall lead, and I will follow and obey your instructions."

"I am sure our combined ideas only will produce the best results," I made answer. "But first let us proceed to the bamboo thicket."

As we started to go up stream, Mr. Harborough turned and cast an anxious look toward his daughter.

Noticing this, I hastened to reassure him concerning her safety.

"And are there no wild animals on the island?" he asked.

"I have seen none hereabout," I assured him. I remembered the wild pigs that I had met on my march around the coast, but I thought best not to unduly alarm him by alluding to them.

"And do you believe the island entirely uninhabited?" he asked.

"At the present time I believe it is absolutely uninhabited," I replied. As we walked along I told him about the old wall on the mountain, adding that it was evidently constructed by civilized people, long ago. An idea occurred to me at that moment concerning the ruined wall, but I resolved not to communicate it at present.

As for the wild pigs, I did not believe they would put in an appearance in this part of the island. Reaching the bamboo thicket, we set to work cutting a

great quantity of them, selecting those from two to four inches in diameter, I, meanwhile, explaining to Mr. Harborough how I proposed to construct the raft. We labored incessantly the entire day, only stopping, when the sun stood directly overhead, to allay the cravings of our appetites; and reaching the house, we were delighted to find that Miss Harborough had dinner all ready for us, she having roasted some yams and the only remaining bread fruit. I resolved to make a trip to the pool and procure another supply at once.

Miss Harborough had finished the curtain, and before we returned to our bamboo cutting we hung it in place, fastening it with wooden skewers.

While we continued to cut bamboos Miss Harborough wandered about admiring and wondering at the many tropical sights and sounds. I continued to keep the records of the days on my cocoanut-shell calendar. In two days we had cut what I believed was a sufficient number of bamboos. The following day was Sunday; and while we resolved to abstain from working on the raft, we agreed that the time was too precious to remain entirely idle; so we resolved to devote the day to replenishing our larder.

We were early astir and prepared for a trip to the pool. Before setting out I got out the fish net, which I set in the stream, explaining that we would remove it on our return, and hoping that it would yield a good number of fish. I took my bow-gun, intending to keep a sharp lookout for pigeons, and Miss Harborough carried Puff, I having taken care to secure him to her arm by a thong so he could not impede our progress by flying away into the thicket.

We followed the bank of the stream and in due time reached the pool where we set about, in the best of spirits, gathering water-cocoanuts, bread fruit, oranges, bananas and plantains. Refreshing ourselves upon some ripe bananas that we found scattered through the bunches, while we sat beneath the shade of the broad leaves, we gathered up our spoils and set out to return.

I decided to keep along the edge of the forest going back, hoping to bag a pigeon or two; and I was so fortunate as to secure four, to the great wonder of my companions who marvelled at my markmanship and the accuracy of the rude bow-gun.

Arriving home the net was removed from the stream, being nearly half filled with fish. The question of food was settled for several days, and we could work on the raft uninterrupted.

Miss Harborough allotted to herself the duty of preparing the food, and well did she perform her task. She not only had our meals ready with unfailing regularity, but her womanly instinct enabled her to devise dinners, dainty and appetising innovations in the simple cookery, that were most acceptable.

The foundation of the raft was laid by placing bamboos on the beach just out of reach of the surf, there being no discernable tide, about one foot apart. The

poles, forming a layer, were about eighteen feet long, and there were fourteen of them. This fixed the dimensions of the raft, eighteen by fourteen feet. These were firmly lashed together with lianas from the thicket near by, which were passed over and under each alternate pole, across to the opposite side and back again, six times across, with double weaving at the ends. Next we cut a great quantity of reeds and laid them evenly over the frame-work, to the thickness of about two feet. Another frame was then made the same size as the first, which was placed over the reeds and bound firmly to the bottom frame, to which it was firmly fastened with lianas around the edges, forming a sort of mattress. This process was repeated until the raft was fully six feet thick. This work, as is to be supposed, occupied several days; but when it was completed we had reason to feel proud of the result. Indeed, it was the outcome of no little skill.

We expected that the buoyancy of the materials of which it was constructed, together with its great thickness, would enable the raft to float with its top high out of the water, which would allow it it to support a considerable load. And, besides, it was so light that our combined efforts sufficed to move it quite readily. On the morning of the day following its completion, we launched the raft, and to our great satisfaction saw that it floated like a cork. We decided that a long bamboo to be used as a scull-oar would be the best means of propelling it. One half of the thickness of the larger end of this bamboo was split away the length of the first joint, which gave a flat surface to offer resistance to the water in sculling. Another bamboo was provided to be used in poling. We were now ready to set out for the wreck. Miss Harborough expressed a desire to accompany us, but I demurred, until we had proved the seaworthiness and stability of the raft, in which her father joined. So she seated herself near the beach and watched us as we pushed off.

Beneath our combined weight the raft did not appear to sink perceptibly, and it promised to float a good amount of cargo. This was most pleasing to us for it would enable us to remove what we wanted from the vessel rapidly. We joined in poling the raft until the water became too deep, after which I used the scull from the end, being somewhat of an expert by reason of my boyish practice with a punt on the pond near the home of my childhood. The sea was placid, and it required only a few minutes to reach the wreck. I propelled the raft under the bow-sprit and held it steady by grasping the martingale, while Mr. Harborough climbed aboard, from whence he threw a line with which I quickly made the raft fast, and joined him on the deck.

The scene around us was one of confusion. The deck was strewn with a tangled mass of rigging, rendering it not a little difficult to move about.

"I think," said Mr. Harborough, "that we should proceed systematically through the vessel, and I suggest that we first proceed to the cabin."

So we descended the companionway which led to the roomy cabin. It was comfortably, though not luxuriously fitted up, after the usual style of vessels going on long voyages. Mr. Harborough proceeded to collect all his clothing, while I, at his suggestion, gathered into a bundle all of the wearing apparel that had belonged to the captain, to be appropriated to my own use; and indeed, I was sadly in need of it. We did not disturb Miss Harborough's cabin, having decided to let her accompany us on the next trip, when she could gather up her own belongings.

"There seems to be nothing else that can be of use to us," said Mr. Harborough, glancing around the cabin.

"Oh, but why not take the chairs? They are fastened to the floor of the cabin, but there must be tools on board in the carpenter's kit, with which we can easily remove them. And, then, the charts, the chronometer and the compass. Who knows but that they may be of great use to us? I am sure the compass would, at least."

"That is true," he replied; "I fear that I am not very used to being a castaway."

"A few months will accustom you to such an existence," I replied.

So we went forward and found the carpenter's chest, from which we took all the tools necessary to remove the cabin chairs, and the compass. These, with the chronometer and the clothing, we deposited together in the cabin. Next we set about collecting all the small sized rope and all the cooking utensils in the galley, which we placed with the cabin crockery. We debated whether it would be advisable to attempt to remove the galley stove to the shore; but, because of its weight and the consequent great difficulty in removing it, we abandoned the idea. As we moved about the deck we could see Miss Harborough by the beach, and we frequently signalled to her, fearing that she might be lonesome alone, amid such strange surroundings.

As I stood gazing at the beautiful island, densely covered with tropical vegetation, radiant with golden light, I made out the mountain on which I had erected the beacon, which I could dimly see. I called Mr. Scarborough's attention to it, and expressed my disappointment that it was so dimly visible; but when I reflected that the mountain was much nearer the east coast, I took a brighter view of it, for I believed that the island must be one of the Virgin Islands; and, if so, it must be one of the most easterly. Still I could not make up my mind what the land I had sighted far to the eastward from the mountain top might be. If it was one of the northern Leeward Islands, then we could not be far out of the track of vessels. In this case the beacon must, sooner or later, be seen from some passing ship.

Overhauling the stores we found quantities of provisions, canned and dried fruits, salt, half a barrel of salted beef, nearly two barrels of flour, a great quantity

of sweet potatoes and several gross of matches. Indeed, nothing seemed to be lacking.

We now set about loading the raft, lowering the different articles over the side by means of a rope, distributing the weight over the raft. We loaded it until it settled to within a foot of the top, and a great quantity of freight it took. At this rate it would require but few trips to complete the work. Taking the clothing aboard we started ashore, which we reached without accident, though it required considerably more time to scull the heavily loaded raft. Being so deeply laden, it grounded several feet from the beach, so that in unloading it, we had to wade back and forth through the water.

Everything was stored snugly in the house before sundown.

On the morning following we made another early start for the wreck, Miss Harborough with us this time. As before, the raft was made fast to the bow-sprit, and Miss Harborough was hoisted aboard in a bo'sn's chair. We proceeded to load the raft, intending to make two trips during the day. This was soon accomplished, and taking the compass and the chronometer, as well as Miss Harborough's trunk, we were about to cast off, when, with an exclamation, Mr. Harborough grasped the chains and disappeared on deck, presently returning with face aglow, carrying in each hand a gun. Such good fortune was almost overpowering, for with guns we could not only defend ourselves effectively, if necessary, but easily secure plenty of game. He explained that there was a quantity of cartridges for the rifle as well as considerable ammunition for the shot-gun, in the cabin. Each day we continued to make one or two trips to the vessel, the weather fortunately continuing calm, with the result that we stripped her of everything that we could move, and that could possibly be of use to us. We soon discovered that we could store in the house only such articles as there would constantly be use for, so we proceeded to build another addition from the other side, opposite Miss Harborough's apartment, to serve exclusively as a store-room. Thus our abode extended to quite a pretentious establishment. The raft, no longer in use, we hauled up among the cocoanut palms. We had been so busy since the barkentine came ashore that we had not been able to extend the stockade around the two additions to the house. This we proceeded to do, following the same plan of construction as I had previously done, joining it to the main structure at the four corners, thus making an enclosure of quite twice the area of the original compound. We planted yam vines all around the new stockade, varying our labors by making trips to the pool for provisions, going on excursions into the forest, but never far away, securing pigeons with the aid of the shot-gun, but seeing no animals, and fishing in the stream. We lived sumptuously, with the fruit and the plentiful supplies from the vessel. At my suggestion, we planted a quantity of sweet potatoes, selecting a sunny spot near the stream, breaking up the ground

with poles sharpened with the aid of a good axe, which we found in the carpenter's kit. Indeed, we found several tools, such as a bit, auger, two saws; and a hammer that were of great use to us; and fortunately a few nails. I had some doubt as to the success of our sweet potato experiment, believing that the tropical climate would prove too warm for them, remembering that they flourish to the greatest perfection in the eastern-central part of our own country. However, the experiment was worth trying in the interest of future food supplies. We had, from the first, kept a close watch along the shore all along the bay, in case bodies of other members of the barkentine's crew came ashore. But none did, and, with the axe, we hewed a rude head-board from a hard-wood plank which we had brought from the vessel, for the grave of the man whom we had buried, carving thereon the name "William Clayton," together with the day and year of his death.

We discussed the advisability of setting fire to the wreck, but after mature consideration we decided that so long as it remained intact, it might serve to attract attention should a vessel be passing, and thus lead to our rescue.

We had much leisure, and I took occasion to make known a project which I had in mind from the first, that of making a trip to the mountain. For one thing I wished to see if the beacon had withstood the hurricane; and, more than all, an idea had taken possession of me, growing stronger every day, that a careful investigation around the ruined wall might lead to interesting, and, perhaps, important revelations. My companions were delighted with the prospect, and we at once set about making preparations for the journey; and here a new idea suggested itself. We must carry with us as large a quantity of provisions as possible, and how could this be accomplished? We would make knapsacks from sail-cloth. Why had we not thought to bring the sails of the barkentine ashore? The raft was again launched, and we removed the smaller sails from the vessel; and, by searching among the seamen's dunnage in the forecastle, we found several sailors' needles and twine. All working together, we soon fashioned two square bags, with straps of several thicknesses of cloth, with which to sling them upon our backs. The next most important thing was the selection of the articles to be carried with us. Provisions must form the bulk of the packs, and we made the selection with the greatest care. We also proposed to take along the axe, a coil of rope, the ship's compass, which was removed from the gimbals, and, of course, the two guns, Mr. Harborough carrying the rifle, while I took the shot-gun. We made belts from the sail-cloth for carrying ammunition. The axe formed part of my equipment. A light bundle of clothing was made up for Miss Harborough who also took charge of Puff, who was made fast to her arm by a piece of twine. Everything was made snug in the house, and the remaining sail-cloth was carefully spread over the stores to be left behind. The door was securely closed, and one bright morning we were ready to start, first taking, by means of the compass,

the bearings of the mountain. It was my intention to proceed by a different route from those I had followed in going to and returning from the mountain, for two reasons. One was that I wished to further explore the island, which a new route would enable me to do, and the other was that a direct route through the forest would be much shorter, requiring us to encamp but one night. My companions fully agreed with this idea. The stream was followed as far as the pool, where we entered the forest. It consisted of many varieties of trees, one kind being of large size, with a smooth, straight trunk, towering to a great height, without branches. This, Mr. Harborough said, was the mahogany tree.

Great lianas entwined the trees and many creepers, some bearing exquisite blossoms that called forth exclamations of delight from Miss Harborough, depended from the branches; and in some places the vegetation was so dense that we were compelled to cut a way with the axe. At Mr. Harborough's suggestion and at her request I ceased to address his daughter as Miss Harborough, and thereafter called her Marjorie, as did her father; for, as they both said, we were exiles together, and formality was superfluous. We were in excellent spirits and made rapid progress. When the sun was in the zenith, as we could see by an occasional glimpse through an opening in the dense canopy above us, we paused by a tiny stream of clear water for refreshments and a short rest. Our repast finished, while Mr. Harborough and I conversed concerning the present and the future, Marjorie wandered away a short distance, searching for new and beautiful flowers. Just as we rose to resume the march, and were about to call her, we heard an agonizing scream coming from the forest at no great distance away. It was clear that something had befallen Marjorie. Grasping the guns, we dashed in the direction indicated by her cries, and presently we saw her dress through the undergrowth. As we hastened forward a sight met our eyes which caused us to come to a sudden halt and to gaze in horror at the spectacle before us; for there was Marjorie, crying out no longer, her limp body in the grasp of what looked like a dark, shrivelled-up old man.

It seemed to be four or five feet tall, with a face almost black, its body covered with short hair. The limbs were long, small, and the legs were bent. We both shouted, at which the monster released Marjorie, allowing her to fall to the ground, while it stood motionless, looking at us, but making no sound. Almost at the same instant it stooped and grasped a huge club which lay at its feet. We waited no longer, and both raised our guns and fired. Evidently our excitement disconcerted our aim, for the monster, without giving forth a sound, sprang to the great tree near which it stood and began to climb it rapidly, keeping to the side opposite to us. We hastened around, and Mr. Harborough fired another shot from his rifle, but without apparent effect, for the creature quickly reached the branches and disappeared.

We hastened to Marjorie who had recovered from her swoon, and was able to give us an account of her adventure. There was little for her to tell. She was walking leisurely along, stopping to admire a flower or a brilliant butterfly, when, without warning, she felt herself in the grasp of the horrible creature. She screamed and then fainted. We were unable to conjecture what sort of a creature it might be, for we were not aware that the tropical regions of the Western Hemisphere contained large apes.

While we were discussing the matter, I remembered a story which I had read years before about a creature found in the depths of the South American forest, which was called a "Burghree." As I recollected the story, the description of the "Burghree" corresponded very nearly to the monster we had just encountered. Marjorie, having now recovered, although she was still somewhat weak, we again went to the tree and peered sharply among the branches.

"It seems to me," said Mr. Harborough at length, "that I see something which looks like a great nest, far up in the tree-top."

I looked more closely and also saw it.

Clearly this was the home of the strange creature, and then I recollected that the story of the "Burghree" corresponded almost exactly to the present realization, for it retired to a great platform of branches and grass, far up in the tree-top, whence it hurled defiance and clubs at the men below, while this one uttered no sound. Another shot from the rifle was without result, and we decided that it would be not only useless but folly to waste more ammunition. Resuming our march, few words passed between us for a long time. As for myself, I was absorbed with my own thoughts, and Mr. Harborough seemed to be occupied in like manner.

Suddenly I stopped and rested my gun upon the ground.

"Mr. Harborough," said I, "did you notice that the face of the creature looked more like a human face than that of an ape, and that the feet and hands seemed to be unlike an ape's feet and hands?"

"I noticed the face," he answered.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The March Continued; Arrival on the Mountain .

As we went on our cheerfulness returned.

We saw occasional pigeons and many beautiful plumaged birds, among which were parrots and paroquets that kept up a noisy clatter. We also encountered a species of brown and yellow ground-snake about two feet long, which did not appear to be harmful, as it always seemed anxious to get away. Frogs, small lizards and crabs were plentiful, and I presume some of the latter were edible. Coming to a thicket of thorn-bush just as the dusk began to settle across our path, we prepared to camp for the night. A square space was cleared in the thicket, some leafy branches were laid across the top to serve as a roof, wood was gathered, and a fire was built in front; and we proceeded to roast a few yams and two fat pigeons that I had shot late in the afternoon; and opening a can of peaches, we made a bountiful repast. We soon sought repose, and, as no sound save the murmuring of the breeze through the trees came from the forest, sleep came quickly to all of us. We were aroused the next morning at daybreak by Puff who was screaming at the top of his voice at a flock of wild parrots in the trees above, and in an incredibly short time we were again on the march. We had proceeded only a short distance when we came to a small open place covered with grass, and we were about to skirt its edge when close in front of us came an angry "woof."

"Wild pigs," I cried, greatly alarmed, for, from my previous encounter, I understood their savage nature.

At the moment an ugly looking boar showed his head directly in front of us. Mr. Harborough was about to fire, but I restrained him, knowing that the least disturbance might bring a drove of these savage beasts upon us.

"Let us quietly withdraw as quickly as possible," I said, "and make a detour of the forest."

This plan was carried out, and, to my great relief, successfully, for the boar disappeared in the grass, and we saw no more of it.

Having the compass, we were able to keep the right direction, pushing forward rapidly, only stopping a short time at mid-day for dinner, and the sun was yet high in the heavens when we came to the first rising ground, and I knew that we had reached the foot of the mountain.

Presently I saw familiar land-marks, and I was able to lead the way to the top. The beacon was standing exactly as I had left it. We proceeded to my cave-dwelling, where everything was found pretty much as I had left it, except that the barricade before the door showed some decay. There was still some time before nightfall, during which, after depositing our sacks within, we cut a quantity of grass for beds and gathered a quantity of fire-wood. We also partitioned off one corner of the room for Marjorie, fixing a bamboo across, to which hung cocoanut cloth which we found in abundance a short distance away, fastening it together with pegs, and thus we were comfortably settled soon after our arrival; and, as

we enjoyed the evening meal, we talked over future plans. I promised to show my companions the ruined wall in the morning, as we retired to rest.

The orange trees and banana plants near the ruin were still thrifty and bore abundant fruit, and we regaled ourselves as I showed my companions the old wall. Mr. Harborough took the greatest interest in it, and we speculated as to its origin. Other matters, however, engaged our attention from day to day. The compass was taken to the foot of the beacon, and the bearings of the land which I had discovered in the distance accurately determined.

It lay exactly southeast, half east, from where we stood.

"In my opinion," said Mr. Harborough, "this small island where we now are is one of the most northeasterly of the Virgin Islands, and that land in the distance is one of the same group."

"But," I said, "if that is the case should we not be able to see some of the other islands to the westward?" I was aware that there were several islands in the Virgin Group.

"Not necessarily," he answered, "for they lie very low on the ocean."

We spent much time about the beacon, improving our habitation, in gathering fruit and shooting pigeons for our larder; and we took twelve days in making a trip to the low south-east coast, marching along the shore and returning from the northeast. We found animal life even scarcer than on the west side. Birds were not so plentiful, though we found some pigeons, and saw plenty of little green lizards and crabs. We made no discoveries that promised to be of use to us. On our return I took my companions to the mouth of the guano cave, but Marjorie declined to enter and Mr. Harborough did not appear anxious to do so. We made frequent trips to the ruined wall, and searched the enclosure carefully. The more we studied it the more we were convinced that the wall had served as a foundation for some structure.

One day as we were returning with fruit, Mr. Harborough had fallen behind to examine a spot which had escaped attention, when we were arrested by a sudden exclamation from him. He had dropped upon his knees and was eagerly clearing away the plants and grass with his hands.

We hastened to him, inquiring what he had discovered. He pointed to a square, flat stone. It was about four feet square and seemed to open like a hatchway. He had stepped upon it and felt it rock, very slightly, beneath his weight, but enough to attract his attention. Did the stone conceal an opening, the entrance to an ancient dungeon, or a treasure vault? We were nearly overcome with excitement, not unmixed with awe, and I confess to a feeling of dread as I contemplated what might be below if the stone really covered an opening to a

subterranean chamber.

CHAPTER XIX.

An Ancient Ruin; A Wonderful Discovery .

The edges of the opening, around the stone, were crumbled and cracked, and after scraping away the accumulation of moss and mold we found that we were able to remove a large piece of rock which left a space of sufficient depth to receive a lever. We hastened to the edge of the forest, where we selected a small tree of hard wood, which we felled; and from it we made a lever about fifteen feet in length. The larger end was flattened a little with the axe, in order that it should fit closely against the stone in prying it up.

We next moved a large stone from the wall, which we placed about three feet from the aperture which was to receive the lever, to act as a fulcrum. Then we lifted the great lever, placed the flattened end into the aperture, let it rest against the stone fulcrum, and reaching up as near the elevated end of the lever as possible, brought our combined weight to bear upon it.

The flat stone moved slowly upward, and Marjorie, who stood near, in her eagerness, bent over the opening. Almost at the same moment she started violently back, gasping for breath. The foul air, which rushed from the opening, had nearly suffocated her.

Working together nearer the upper end of the lever, the stone was lifted a little higher and Mr. Harborough was able to hold it while I placed a rock under the stone, which prevented it from falling back when the lever was released.

We now gathered around the opening which was not yet wide enough to enable us to see far below; but to our great astonishment we saw that a flight of stone steps led downward. Below all was dark. Foul air still came from the opening.

"We must wait for the air to purify before entering," I said; "and, meanwhile, we will procure lights."

"Why in the world did we not remove the cabin lamps from the vessel?" exclaimed Mr. Harborough, "If we only had them now."

"Come to the house," I said, "and I will show you how we will procure a light."

Hastening to the house I opened my knapsack and held up the two binnacle

lamps for the inspection of my companions, much to their amazement.

Both were filled with oil, very little of which had escaped, as I had wrapped strips of sailcloth tightly around them.

In answer to their inquiring looks, I reminded them that I had, for a long time, believed that some such discovery as the present one might be made, and that I had, unknown to them, packed the binnacle lamps which had proved to be a fortunate act on my part.

Taking them, with plenty of matches, we returned to the ruin. Lighting a wisp of dry grass, I threw it into the opening. It fell to the bottom, where it continued to burn brightly, showing that the air was now pure. In the momentary glare of the burning grass, we saw that the opening was about eight feet deep.

We now procured another stone from the wall, which we placed under the lever, increasing the height of the fulcrum so that we were able to lift the stone still further; and by pushing the lever around toward one side we quickly swung the stone from the opening until it rested at one side.

Lighting the lamps, we cautiously descended the stone stairs. They were covered with what seemed to be finely pulverized mould which had worked down from above; but the dampness, incident to an underground chamber rendered the steps somewhat slippery, so we had to descend carefully. There were ten steps. Reaching the bottom, Mr. Harborough and myself leading and Marjorie bringing up the rear, we found ourselves standing upon a solid floor, deeply covered with fine mould, but quite dry. The floor of the chamber was evidently composed of stone, laid very closely, without mortar. The roof was made of great flat stones, supported by two rows of pillars made of square blocks of stone, extending the length of the chamber. The walls, roof, pillars and floor were all thickly covered with dust. Searching along the walls, we discovered, at the further end, four niches sunk into the wall about five feet, and into the rear wall of each niche, there was fixed a massive iron staple, to which was fastened an iron chain of crude workmanship. At the end of each chain there was a rough iron collar which was evidently designed to be fastened with a rivet. Stepping into one of the niches, we discovered that the floor of it was thickly studded with sharp iron spikes which we found, on clearing away the dust, to be about two inches in height. The purpose of the niches was apparent; they were unquestionably designed as places of torture. Well must they have served their purpose; for the wretched victim who, on account of the short chain fastened to his neck, could not lie down, was compelled to stand constantly upon the sharp pointed spikes which would pierce and cruelly lacerate the feet.

To what period of the New World's history this dungeon belonged we could not even conjecture; but, judging from the style of architecture and the cunningly devised method of torture, Mr. Harborough, who had seen the ruined forts along

the Spanish Main, had no doubt that this chamber was connected, in some way, with the old Castilian days in this part of the world.

The west wall seemed to be perfectly smooth and unbroken; but on the east side of the chamber we found a square stone, measuring something like two feet each way, being almost a perfect cube, protruding half way from the wall. This was easily removed, and thrusting in one of the lamps, we saw what appeared to be a square chest. Brushing away the dust which covered the end of the chest next to us, we saw that it was of wood, bound with bands of iron, the whole being thickly studded with nails.

"A treasure chest," exclaimed Marjorie; "oh, it seems like the stories of the buccaneers."

An iron ring was fastened to the chest, but when we took hold of it and tried to draw the chest toward us, we found it to be so heavy that we were unable to stir it. So I went to procure a lever which I cut from a small tree near the wall, and returned with it to the chamber. One end of the lever was inserted, upward through the ring of the chest and we lifted with our combined strength.

The chest was raised slightly, and then the iron bands, eaten by years of rust, broke, and the chest, rotten with age, fell apart.

Marjorie was holding one of the lamps so as to illuminate the chest, and, as it broke open, she almost dropped it, while Mr. Harborough and I dropped the lever and gazed at the broken chest and at each other in speechless astonishment; for the aperture seemed to be full of gold coins.

We had discovered a treasure chest, indeed. The coins were of several sizes, and all were covered with a brownish dust. But gold they were, and there were thousands and thousands of them.

We examined many of the coins, on which the legends were plainly legible. Each one bore a male head on one side, with dates ranging from 1517 to 1540; and on the reverse, this superscription:–"Carlos I., Espana: Rex"–Charles I., King of Spain. We concluded that we had discovered a favorite trysting place of sea-rovers who sailed these waters carrying death and desolation afloat and ashore under the protection of royal authority, with the understanding that the Spanish treasury should be enriched thereby.

Here, before us, with no one else to claim it, was wealth beyond our power to estimate.

"It is utterly useless to us here," said Mr. Harborough, as we discussed the importance of our discovery.

"True," I replied, "but as we have no intention of always remaining on this island, it may prove to be of great service to us. To this end we must consider what immediate disposal we will make of all this wealth."

"And," I continued, as we replaced the stone in the aperture and withdrew

from the chamber, "it seems to me that the first step toward ensuring to ourselves the future enjoyment of all this wealth, should be to transport it to the cove and store it in our house."

This proposition of mine was the beginning of much discussion and consideration for several days thereafter, during which it was definitely decided that the gold must be transported to our house at the cove; and we began to consider how this task, not a trifling one, could be accomplished.

Clearly there was but one sure and safe way, and that, to carry it there ourselves.

CHAPTER XX.

" The Golden Treasure;" Its Removal .

It was finally settled that we would transport the golden treasure to Sargent, at the cove, in the knapsacks on our backs. To do this would require several journeys through the forest; but as time was no object to us, what more could we ask than to be able, during our exile, to so easily acquire wealth which would render us independent for life; for rescued we must surely be, sooner or later.

We decided that no part of the walls should remain uninspected. Every square foot of it was carefully examined, but we found no indications of other openings. One day, however, while looking at the east wall, I noticed one of the stones which seemed to be more loosely set into the wall than any of the others; and on examining it more closely, the upper edge appeared to be chipped as though some pointed instrument had been inserted. It at once occurred to me that this may have been caused by prying the stone out–in other words, I mistrusted that the stone might conceal the entrance to another chamber.

We examined it closely and came to the conclusion that it would be worth while to remove the stone. We worked at it for several days without making any perceptible impression.

It was too heavy and we could devise no appliance to assist us materially. Finally it occurred to me that we might remove a flag-stone of the floor, dig under the stone and compel it to drop from its place. We soon discovered, however, that it rested upon the flag-stone next to it. Not to abandon the project, we at last succeeded in removing the second flag-stone from the wall, which enabled us to excavate the earth from beneath the flag-stone next to the wall. This we accom-

plished after a great deal of hard work, for our only excavating tools consisted of sharpened and flattened pieces of wood. At last, however, the flag-stone settled into the the excavation and the stone in this way fell outward. To our great astonishment this was followed by a rush of air from the aperture. We did not, at first, know what to make of this, but we shortly agreed that we had found the entrance to an underground passage leading to the open air.

Indeed this idea seemed quite reasonable, for we had often read of such passages in connection with the strongholds of the early days; either as a means of offence or defence, or of escape.

Taking the two lamps I preceded Mr. Harborough into the passage, Marjorie bringing up the rear. From the first it was evident that the passage was not artificial, but a natural cavern. Indeed as we proceeded it proved to be a simple guano cave, the stalactites being grimy and the stalagmites buried beneath long years accumulations of guano. In its general character it did not differ materially from the cave which I had discovered on the east side of the mountain during my former sojourn. The ceiling of this one, however, was higher so that we were able to walk upright; and it had no windings. Proceeding a few rods we came to a second chamber, leading off at right angles; but the opening was so small that we would have had to crawl through it and we did not consider it worth while to enter it, at present, at least. The thought occurred to me that the passage connected this cavern with the one which I had previously discovered; for, as I thought the matter over, I believed that the two must run nearly parallel. Myriads of bats flitted about, almost flying against our faces, and several times nearly extinguishing our lamps. In a few minutes we came to a fair-sized chamber, nearly circular and perhaps a dozen feet in diameter; and as we entered it we were astonished to find that it was partially illumined by daylight. Stranger still, mounted on two huge wooden blocks were two brass cannon, pointing away from us.

"An ingenious fortification," remarked Mr. Harborough.

"A masked battery," said Marjorie.

We now examined the guns closely. They were covered with a greenish corrosion, and were, as I have said, brass. They were of exactly the same size, about four-inch, and on the breech of each was stamped the following, together with the arms of Spain: "Espana: 1512." We saw that we had reached the mouth of the cave, which was thickly filled with a mass of bushes and creepers. We resolved to clear away the obstruction at once, and I returned to the chamber for the axe. With it and our knives we soon cleared away the vegetable growths, and behold, we stood on the side of the mountain a few yards from the mouth of cave, overlooking the ocean to the eastward. The purpose of the guns was quite apparent. They commanded the approach to the mountain, and to an advancing enemy were utterly invisible, as a shelf of rock hid the entrance from below. This

latter discovery did not promise to be of any special importance to us, it was most interesting. Our whole effort, now, was put forth toward transporting the gold to the cove on the west coast; and placing as many of the coins in each knapsack as we could each carry comfortably, we packed enough provisions to last at least two days, and set out. As we had done on the journey to the mountains, we followed the edge of the forest making a short detour, when about half way, to avoid a possible encounter with the wild pigs. Mr. Harborough and myself would have liked very much to risk an encounter with them, but the safety of Marjorie was our first consideration, and these animals were very fierce. So as we had grave doubts as to their desirability for food we decided to give them a wide berth. Nothing occurred to give excitement to the march and toward the end of the second day we reached the house in the cove, where we found everything entirely undisturbed. We immediately set to work to make several strong bags of sail-cloth, each being about two feet long and half as wide, in which to store the gold. This occupied us one full day, and after storing the gold we had brought, in a corner of the hut, burying it beneath the kitchen utensils, we took sufficient provisions to last us during the return march and set out. Numerous trips were made to and from the mountain which consumed several weeks. Meanwhile we had made an additional discovery, almost as important as the first. As we gradually removed the gold contained in the chest we saw that there was another chest beyond it. Like the first it fell to pieces on being moved. Beyond it was a solid wall of stone. But the second chest was not so heavy as the first, and it proved to be only about half filled with gold. The rest was occupied with rolls of manuscript, all of which fell to powder when exposed to the air, leaving not one scrap on which the faded writing was legible.

At last only what gold we could carry away on one more trip remained. During our march to and fro from the coast we had kept a sharp watch for the "wild man," as we called him, and Marjorie always kept very close to us while passing through that part of the forest.

But we saw no signs of him.

CHAPTER XXI.

Preparing for Departure; Death of the Monster .

On the morning of the day on which we were to set out with the last packs

of gold, the sky was partly overcast, and far down in the eastern horizon the sky line was blended into a leaden haze, which gradually disappeared as the sun ascended toward the zenith. This I knew, was a premonition of the approaching rainy season, which I knew was always preceded for several weeks by a thin veil of clouds and the murky atmosphere of the horizon in the morning.

This decided us to make this our last journey, and to remain at the cove after our next arrival there; for there we were sheltered, to a great degree, from the rain and our house was much more comfortable than the abode beneath the rock on the mountain, which was dreary during the long rain, as I knew from experience. At the cove we had a substantial house, and, with the stores and utensils from the wreck we should be very comfortably situated. And, beside, we had gradually, as we marched back and forth, evolved a scheme to remove some of the deck planks of the vessel and such lumber as we found available, and to try, during the rainy season, to construct a substantial boat in which we might venture to leave the island. We planned to construct a great shed, closed in on three sides and left open at the end facing the beach. Beneath this we would lay the keel of our craft and test our skill as ship-builders.

So, with our guns, clothing, such other articles as we wished to take back with us, and of course, Puff, after closing the cliff-house we proceeded to the chamber beneath the ruin to pack the remaining gold. Our knapsacks were speedily filled, and we prepared to leave the chamber.

Marjorie preceded us to the stairs, but scarcely had she reached the first step when she darted back to us shrieking and trembling, her face ashy pale.

She crouched between us, unable to speak, her eyes staring wildly toward the stone steps. I sprang forward and looked up toward the opening. There I saw, standing between us and the sky, silent as a statue, with eyes glaring down at us–the wild man of the forest.

There was no mistaking it; but this time it looked less like an ape and more like a human being.

Without looking around I beckoned to Mr. Harborough. He stepped to my side, and catching sight of the horrible thing above us, he raised his rifle and fired. The report roared around the chamber and the stairway was filled with smoke. Simultaneously a heavy body rolled down the slippery stairs and lay outstretched at our feet. It was the wild man–lifeless; its limbs outstretched and its wide-open eyes staring up at us.

Never again do I wish to look upon such a horrible object. We shrank back in the doorway, feeling weak and faint; Marjorie clung to her father, her eyes gleaming with terror, a look of horror upon her face.

After we had recovered our courage and the first shock had partly passed away, we approached closely and examined the strange being. It was human in

every detail, the hair, arms, legs, feet, eyes and face. It had once been a man, but what a marvelous transformation had taken place! The body was entirely covered with short brownish hair which grew several inches long on the breast. The hair of the head was dark brown in color, long, tangled and matted. The nose and mouth were regular, and the teeth were in fair condition. The eyes were either blue or gray, we could not tell exactly which. The finger-nails were long, which made the hands look like claws.

The skin was tanned by exposure to sun and rain until it was a dark bronze hue. We pondered long concerning the history of this strange being; for a human being it surely was; once like ourselves.

In death it was less repugnant than in life. Now that we had become accustomed to look at it, it impressed us only as a poor dead outcast, of whom we knew nothing.

There could be but one solution to the mystery. Either the wretched person had been marooned, or, like ourselves had been cast away on the island, and, driven mad by solitude, exposure and the contemplation of his position had probably for several years roamed the forest as a wild man–a wild beast in every sense, except his origin. We moved the body to a corner of the chamber, composed the limbs and went out into the sunlight.

The long lever remained under the stone which had covered the opening, and we worked it back into place–closing the treasure chamber, now a tomb. We covered the stone thickly with earth and turned toward the forest.

Without further incident we reached the house at the cove and proceeded to put everything in order in anticipation of the coming rainy season which, we promised ourselves should be a busy one with us, between boat building and general occupations; and we viewed the future not without pleasant anticipations. We were comfortable, with every want supplied, a happy family sharing a common lot.

Never was there a complaint made by any of us. We indulged in conversation about home, our individual lives, and discussed matters of present and future moment.

CHAPTER XXII.

Boat Building; a Startling Sound .

Out first work of magnitude was the construction of a great shed in which to build the boat, sheltered from the weather. This occupied us many days; for it was of considerable size, twenty-five feet long and about two thirds as wide. The method of construction was exactly the same as in the other structures and need not be described again. It was closed all around except the end next to the beach. This was left open to afford both air and light.

House-building was varied by several trips to the stranded vessel which remained on the reef precisely as we had left it. Our raft, too, was in a perfect state of repair.

Many of the deck planks we removed, as well as all the boarding of the deck-house and the sheathing in the cabin. We were careful to save every nail, and we found a further supply in the fore-castle. These, though common "cut" nails, could readily be transformed into "clinch" nails by heating, in which form they would be available for fastening the boat together.

The heavy deck planking we proposed to use for the keel and frame of the craft, as well as for oars and thole-pins. All the lumber and such small rope as we believed would be of use to us, also quantities of sail-cloth, were transported to the shore and piled inside the shed.

These duties were varied by occasional trips to the forest to hunt wild pigeons, fishing in the stream or jaunts to the pool for fruit. These were holidays to us, during which work was forgotten and we all entered into the spirit of the occasion.

Day by day the clouds of the morning lingered longer and longer and were less quickly dispelled by the sun's rays. They became more sombre as the days went by, and sunset was preceded by fitful gusts of wind, indicating that the rainy season was coming on apace. So we abandoned further work on the boat and began to lay in a supply of cocoanuts and yams.

While returning from the pool one day, as we passed the bamboo thicket an idea occurred to me which I lost no time in communicating to Mr. Harborough.

It was this; to fasten bamboos, of good size, around our boat, outside, immediately below the gunwales, reaching from stem to stern. This would render it more buoyant, for the bamboo, consisting as it does of hollow joints, would have the same effect as air bags, or water-tight compartments. Such a device would, I believed, make it impossible to capsize the boat, thus making it doubly seaworthy and rendering our escape from exile more certain.

"It is a capital idea," exclaimed Mr. Harborough. "And while we are about it," I continued, "we may as well select a bamboo for a mast."

My companions fully approved of my ideas and we at once set to work to cut the bamboos and carry them to the boat-house.

This work occupied us a good many days, for it was slow and laborious,

even with the aid of the axe; for the outer part of the bamboo is extremely hard.

We now proceeded to strengthen the outer part of the wall of the house, and to renew the thatch of the roofs, all of which required several days of labor, cutting the grass and fastening it into place.

A large supply of wood was gathered and stored in the farther end of the boat-shed; in short we made every preparation for a comfortable rainy season, protected from the wind and the rain. Hurricanes could not be guarded against, so we only hoped that they would give us a wide berth.

The first showers had set in ere we resumed work on the boat. From one of the best planks we fashioned the keel, which was laid with some ceremony, Marjorie constituting the audience; after which we set about getting out the stern-post and the frame-pieces. While we were thus occupied Marjorie performed the house-hold duties, and, at odd times, busied herself heating the nails white-hot, and dropping them into water, which process transformed them into "clinch" nails.

She also made several bags from sail-cloth strongly sewed, for the reception of the gold. The bags were filled with the coins, securely sewed up and stored away in Marjorie's trunk, nearly filling it. We decided that this would be the safest way to dispose of it for the present.

Work on the boat went on apace, each day being much like its predecessor. The daily showers became more frequent and copious and we saw the sun less often.

At times we felt depressed and our isolation grew irksome.

One morning, having had breakfast, we started for the boat-house, when we were brought to a sudden stand-still.

A long-drawn sound like a trumpet blown at a distance echoed and reverberated through the trees. It continued several seconds, during which we remained in a listening attitude.

Neither of us spoke.

It was repeated again; what could it mean, what could it be?

Surely it could not come from any wild animal for we had seen none larger than a pig.

Had we been believers in the existence of demons, we must have at once decided that a demon lurked in the forest behind us.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Marjorie had heard the sound, also, and came toward us.

Suddenly she pointed out toward the sea, uttering the exclamation, "look."

We both turned and looked in the direction indicated.

A boat was rounding the point; a real boat.

There were men in it, four men. The boat shot around the point and began skirting the shore toward us.

We saw that they were black men, dressed in rough but civilized garments.

They were conversing among themselves, speaking in a tongue which we did not understand.

Were they friends or foes? Stepping quickly into the house we took our guns and waited behind the stockade, standing so we could watch the boat. It had the appearance of a canoe, made of wood. Evidently the black men had seen our house as the canoe was turned toward the shore.

She grounded in a few seconds, and the men sprang ashore. They cautiously approached the boat-shed peered into it, and then came slowly toward the house. Beckoning Marjorie to remain out of sight we grasped our guns and stepped boldly out, resolved to meet the emergency unhesitatingly, whatever it might be.

To our surprise the black men stopped with a shout of joy.

One a tall, fine looking negro, stepped toward us and extended his hand to us.

"Fo' de Lard, Marsa; Who is yo', how long yo' ben heah?"

I told him that I had been here many months, and that my two companions, pointing to Mr. Harborough and to Marjorie, who now came forward, had been here half as long.

Then he told us a strange story, one which gave us great joy.

He said that they were coming from their island to this one to hunt turtles, at the great breeding place which I had discovered on my first march to the mountain, and that, while nearing the east coast of our island a steamer came along, slowed down and then stopped.

Men on the steamer seemed to be looking at the island with glasses, and then the whistle of the steamer was blown. This was in the late evening before. Presently the steamer started and when it came up with the canoe the "cap'n" asked them if there were any people living on the island.

The black men answered in the negative, adding that none of the turtle hunters dared go far from shore, for a terrible savage monster half man and half demon, lurked in the forest. The "cap'n" told them he had seen a beacon on the

top of the mountain, and that he believed some one was signalling for assistance. So he bargained with them to follow close along the shore, searching carefully in every cove, while the steamer followed slowly.

The steamer anchored during the night and the black men were taken on board.

At daylight that morning the black men continued along the shore in the canoe, the steamer following. As the canoe came in sight of the cove they saw the wreck and signalled back to the steamer, which had answered by a blast on her whistle.

It was the sound of the steamer's whistle which we heard just before the boat appeared. In a few minutes a large steamer came in sight from behind the point and anchored off the cove. A boat was immediately lowered and rowed swiftly ashore. A man in uniform sprang ashore and came hurriedly to us, extending both his hands which we eagerly grasped.

He was the second officer of the Royal Mail steamship *Dunmore Castle*, from England for West Indian and Colombian ports. When off the east side of the island somewhat out of her course by reason of a heavy squall into which she had run a few hours before sighting the island, the first officer had seen my beacon and called the Captain's attention to it. The rest had been related by the black men.

My story is nearly told. We were transported on board the steamer, with such of our belonging as we wished to take with us. The great weight of Marjorie's trunk called forth some remarks from the men who handled it, but we made some casual allusion to rare sea-shells and other curios and felt relieved when the trunk was on board.

The *Dunmore Castle* proceeded to make her ports of call, during which we had to give a detailed account of our life and strange adventures on the island, to the wondering passengers.

We were landed at Kingston, Jamaica, from whence we proceeded by stage over-land to Port Antonio on the north-east coast, where we embarked on the steamship *Sama*, for Boston, with fruit.

I have nothing more of interest to relate, unless the reader may like to know that I see Marjorie every day still, and that her father visits us at least once each year, when we talk over and over again, the incidents that I have, in my humble way, tried to relate.

FINIS.

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