SKYWARD AND EARTHWARD.

BY

ARTHUR PENRICE.

"Dream on! Of other scenes and days,
And travels long, and distant places!"
Freiligarth.

"The far sheres fly, and Travel plumes her wing,
In giddy glee we whistle through the air,
Still finding pleasures new, still unconfined!"
Fouqué.

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SKYWARD AND EARTHWARD.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

"Well," said I, at last, "you will leave me no peace till it is done, so I consent to do it. But mind, I yield reluctantly, and if it fail (as in all probability it will), I hope that you will take the blame to yourselves."

The speaker was myself, Arthur Penrice, the writer of these pages; and those to whom I spoke were my old school and college friend, Trevance, and his wife.

Henry Vivian Trevance, of Trevance, in the county of Cornwall, was the sole direct representative of an old family, and the possessor of a large fortune and good landed property.

My father's family was quite as old, but his income was a very moderate one; his tastes, however, were simple and his wants few. He died soon after I had gone up to Oxford; and in less than a year and a half
my mother died also; and so I was left with my little sister Edith (about eight years old) almost alone in the world.

Trevance had been an orphan from early childhood, but had lived a very quiet life with an old aunt in the north of Cornwall; his own place had been let on lease till he came of age, and he himself spent all his holidays with his aunt till he went to college; so his school friendships were more than usually lasting, because he had few companions elsewhere.

There were four of us who were great friends—Trevance, Williams, Smith, and myself. We were about the same age, and had somewhat similar tastes; we went to the same school, and afterwards to the same college at the same time, so that our early friendship was unbroken.

I was now on one of my annual visits at Trevance, for it was considered a settled thing that I should spend some time there every year. It was August, and there were three besides myself in the drawing-room—Trevance and his wife, and one dearer to me than either. The lamps were still unlighted, and evening was just fading into night, whilst we were sitting at the open window looking at the stars.
We had been talking together about old times; and Trevance and his wife had said to me in reply to an earnest deprecation on my part,—

"All flimsy excuses—every one of them. You must; indeed, you must."

And to this it was that I answered,—

"Well, you will leave me no peace till it is done, so I consent to do it. But mind, if it fail (as in all probability it will), I hope that you will take the blame to yourselves."

And when I had given this answer, there was the warm pressure of a hand which was resting in mine, and a specially loving look from eyes which were always full of love; and so I was more than rewarded for my tardy compliance with the wish of my friend and his wife.

But what was it that I had consented to do? It was to do nothing less than to write an account of certain adventures in which Trevance, Williams, Smith, and I had taken a very prominent part. And my reluctance arose from the fact that I was unused to anything of the sort. I could write a plain unvarnished account of things that had taken place; but would that satisfy the general public? There are
many clever books published, and there are many in which flippancy is made to do duty for cleverness; but as I am not clever (I know), and not flippant (I hope), what chance is there of my book being read? Those who are really clever will find many things conspicuous by their absence; and those who fancy themselves clever will think the book insufferably dull.

But I had consented to do it, and so the thing has to be done.
CHAPTER II.

To begin at the beginning I must go back to that very definite period the year 18—. It was in the early spring of that year that Williams, Smith, and I were staying at Trevance with our friend. It was our second visit to the place, and we had just left college, at the age of twenty-two—that happy time of life when the bright tales of hope are not only more attractive, but more persuasive, than the more sober teachings of experience.

I have said that we had similar tastes; and so we had, with a difference. We were all of us more or less fond of science, in some shape or other. Trevance was a fair astronomer, Williams and Smith were good, practical mechanicians, and I was a dabbler in both chemistry and mechanics.

Trevance, in addition to his observatory, had fitted up a good laboratory and workshops, in which we spent a good deal of our time.
Williams and Smith were then busy about a scheme which had many attractions for a mind full of enthusiasm. They had once been with Mr. Glaisher in one of his scientific balloon ascents, and from that time had been continually propounding plans for aerial navigation; and now they were hard at work finishing a small engine, which promised to do wonders. Everyone has noticed how easily a rook or an albatross sails through the air, with wings outstretched and apparently motionless, rising or falling merely by altering the angle which they present to the air: just in the same way did this engine guide its course, with wings stretched to a light frame which could be closed or expanded at pleasure.

Trevance and I had been experimenting on the expansion and condensation of various gases, with a view to working the engines of mines with something less costly than steam-power; and we had succeeded in discovering a compound gas of marvellous expansive power, and of a specific gravity, as compared with that of air, of \(0.000005\) to \(1\). This gas we had just applied to a model pumping-engine, in which the gas, after being passed into a condenser, was expanded again, so that a constant circulation was kept up; just as the
blood, returning from the body, is sent by the heart to the lungs to be oxygenized, and then returned to the heart to be sent through the body again.

It was an accident which connected this discovery of ours with the schemes of Williams and Smith; for I had filled a child’s India-rubber balloon with the gas, and was amusing myself with trying what weight it would be able to lift up, when, as I was stooping to fasten on some of the weights, I lost my balance, and fell with my whole weight on the little fragile-looking balloon; but, strange to say, it was not injured in the least degree. I then took it up and examined it, and I found that the toughness and strength and elasticity of the India-rubber were increased in a most astonishing manner, as may be seen from the following experiment.

I made a small quantity of gunpowder into a cartridge, which I put into the empty balloon, and connected with an electric battery by means of a wire. I then fastened the neck of the balloon securely round the wire, and fired the cartridge; the balloon suddenly expanded, so that the India-rubber became as thin as the most delicate membrane, and when I began to untie the neck the pressure from within was so great
that the last turns of the string burst with a crack, and the confined gas rushed out almost as if it had been just discharged from a gun.

Trevance was at the time in the workshops inspecting the engine which Williams and Smith had just completed, so that he knew nothing of the discovery which I had made. After a while he returned to the laboratory, eager to tell me the result of his inspection.

"Penrice," he said, as soon as he entered, "I do believe that those fellows have solved the problem. That engine of theirs works well, and will certainly be able to navigate the air; especially if they can use our gas for the motive power. But the difficulty of course is to construct a balloon large enough and strong enough to carry the apparatus without being too unwieldy."

"Ἀδε μὴ μοι ποῦ στῶ," I replied. "How many notable inventions have been useless for want of the ποῦ στῶ."

"Come and judge for yourself, then, unbeliever."

And having said this, Trevance took me with him to the workshop; and there was the engine suspended from some of the tie-beams of the roof. When we came in Williams and Smith set it in motion by means of steam, and showed us the working of it; and cer-
tainly it seemed to us likely to realize the hopes of its makers.

"Well, you fellows have succeeded so far," I said; "but how about the ποῦ συνό for your engine?"

"Aye, there's the rub," said Williams.

"Well, set your wits to work," I rejoined. "Nil nisi labor, which means, you know, nothing without brains. Get to work at once, and build your car of galvanized iron, with hollow sides, and make it like a good roomy boat, capable of holding a dozen people, with provisions for a year. Do this, and the balloon to support such a car and its occupants will come in time, no doubt."

"Get along with you; you are only laughing at us."

"Not a bit of it," I answered; "I'm in sober earnest; and to prove it, I mean to go to London by to-night's mail train, and stay there till the middle of next week, in order to see about the balloon. In the meantime, do you set all hands to work at 1,000-horse power, and get your car made."

I could hardly persuade them that I was not joking; but at last I got them to consent to work at the car, and then I started off for the station, and just managed to catch the mail train, by which I reached London early on Friday morning.
I had slept a good part of the way, so that after a bath and breakfast I was tolerably fresh, and then I sallied forth. How lazy the great city seemed, only just awaking to life, and yet before long to be full of bustle, and crowd, and confusion.

My destination was the factory of the Britannia Rubber Company, at Bow Common; and when I arrived there the manager had not yet made his appearance, but whilst awaiting his coming I was kindly shown over the works, which are well worth a visit. After this I was shown into the manager's presence, and began at once with my business.

"Could they make a child's toy balloon twenty times the usual size?"

"Yes."

"Was there any limit to the size of which it could be made?"

"Theoretically, no; practically, yes; they could not make one larger than the place in which it was made."

This was quite enough for me; I therefore told him that I wanted one thirty-five feet high, twenty feet long, and fifteen feet wide at the broadest part, and a vertical section of which should be of the ordinary balloon or pear shape. He stared, and said that if I
inflated a balloon of that size it would soon break and be worthless. I politely told him that was my business; all that he had to do was to make it, and deliver it to me uninflated; I would run all other risks. I asked him also to let me have about a hundred yards of the same material a yard wide, and when all was ready, to send it with the balloon and with ten gallons of India-rubber varnish to the Great Western Railway Hotel, where I was staying.

The rest of the day, as well as Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday, I spent in making purchases of things that we should be likely to want, not forgetting a net for the balloon, preserved meat, biscuits, etc., in large quantities. There was so much to be done that it was not till Thursday morning that all my business was completed; then I telegraphed to Trevance to meet me, sent off my purchases by goods train, and took my ticket to go down by the flying express.

The journey was a long one, and it was not till between eight and nine in the evening that I reached my station; but when I arrived there I found Trevance waiting for me.

"Well, old fellow," he called out, when he saw me, "here I am, break and all, in obedience to your
telegram; where are your *impedimenta*? By-the-by, what a go-ahead race those old Romans must have been to call their baggage by such a name. Here, porter, stow the things away there; and you, Penrice, jump up here on the box."

"All right, sir," said the porter, when he had put in my luggage; and off we go.

As soon as we were fairly on our way, Trevance began to question me. Where had I been? What had I been doing? Why did I not write?

"My dear Trevance," I said, "if you wish to have your questions answered, do be a little less rapid. Here you have asked three questions in a breath; and if I had not pulled you up, nobody knows how far you would have rattled on. However, here are your answers in proper order:—No. 1, to London; No. 2, making purchases; No. 3, because I did not choose."

"What an old humbug you are," he retorted; "why can't you tell a fellow what he wants to know?"

"Well, then," I replied, "I will give you a second edition, revised, corrected, and enlarged:—No. 1, to various shops in London; No. 2, purchasing a balloon and sundry stores; No. 3, because I wished to keep the matter to myself."
My companion, however, would hardly listen to No. 3, for before I had well finished he said,—

"Why, surely you have not been mad enough to buy a balloon!"

"I must confess myself to have been guilty of that folly," was my reply; "since my friends have been mad enough to make a car and an engine for it."

I then told him what I had done; and when I described the India-rubber balloon, and said that it would contain about 15,000 cubic feet of gas, and lift with ease a weight of 150,000 lbs., it was amusing to watch the gradually deepening seriousness of his face, which I could see well in the bright moonlight.

He evidently thought me a most egregious simpleton, though he did not quite like to say so. He tried to convince me that such a balloon could never carry any weight, that the net must cut it, that the least thing would tear it, that even if it could raise the car from the ground, no person who had the least regard for his own life would trust himself to it. To all this I only replied,—

"Well, we shall see."

So he no longer tried to convince me, feeling sure
that the mere attempt to inflate the balloon would render it a thing of shreds and tatters.

The conviction with which his mind was impressed, that no life or limb would be endangered, because there could not possibly be an ascent, restored him to his equanimity; so when we met Williams and Smith in the hall as we entered the house, he called out to them,—

"Here, I've brought you the most original and eminent aeronaut out of Bedlam. You would not believe me if I were to tell you what he means to do, and how he means to do it; you must hear it from his own lips."

"What, old fellow," asked Williams, "have you brought us the πρὸς στῆ that you talked about the other day?"

"So he would have you believe," said Trevance; "but it is evident that he has no understanding for himself, much less for any one else."

"Trevance," I said, sternly, "that foolish habit of making bad puns——"

"Hear, hear." "Hear, hear," cried the others; and so my assumed sternness dissolved in laughter, and we entered the dining-room.
The balloon had not arrived, and even if it had come it could not have been shown; but many were the jokes and much the bantering which I had to endure, as one or the other pretended to describe it. All this, however, was easy enough to bear, for I knew the wonderful effect of the gas upon the India-rubber, which they did not.

I then inquired about the progress of the car, and finding that it was not quite finished, I said that I should not show them the balloon till everything was ready for it. There was some grumbling at this announcement, but I declared that I was inexorable.
CHAPTER III.

The next morning Trevance had the largest of the workshops cleared out for me, and in this all my London purchases were placed on their arrival, and the key of it was delivered into my hand. But the first thing that I did was to go and see how Williams and Smith had got on with the car.

I found that this had been built, as I wished, just like a large deep boat, about thirty-five feet long, by ten feet wide. But there was something to be done to it before it would quite come up to my requirements; so I made my suggestions, which, after much counsel and consideration, were adopted.

The following description will give some idea of what the car was when it was finally completed:—

First there was the boat as originally made; then the bow and stern were heightened and enclosed, so as to make two cabins eight feet long, by ten feet wide, and six feet high, with windows on each side; the after-
cabin was fitted up for a sleeping-room, while the fore-cabin was the engine-room and store-room; and the middle compartment was our sitting-room, with seats around a table, and our scientific instruments placed so as to be easily accessible. Over the whole was placed a light arched roof of galvanized iron, from the sides and ends of which hung India-rubber curtains, which could be let down so as to make all snug. Two stout grapnel's were hung over the sides, attached to long ropes; and two reflectors were so placed that we could readily see what was below the car. I have said that the fore-cabin was our store-room, but in point of fact every foot of available space, under our seats and elsewhere, was packed with stores.

It was not till after some weeks had passed that we could consider everything ready for our first experimental trip, as I called it, though the others predicted a failure as regarded my part of the scheme.

When at length the engine was fixed, wings fitted, stores and everything else in place, the car was brought to the door of my workshop to be in readiness for the balloon.

I had plenty of time, whilst all this work was going on, for getting the balloon ready. First of all I partially
filled it with our gas, and found it quite free from the least leakage. Then I put the net over it, and inflated it still more, suffering it to remain in that condition for some days, so that the gas might have time to act thoroughly upon the India-rubber. I was glad to find that I could now subject the balloon to exceedingly rough usage without doing it the slightest damage. The extra hundred yards of India-rubber which I had ordered with the balloon I also submitted to the action of the gas; and then a portion of it was used for the curtains which were hung from the roof of the car.

Two India-rubber tubes were fixed to this roof so as to open into the neck of the balloon; one tube, with a valve opening inwards, was to convey the gas to the balloon; the other, with a heavily-weighted valve opening outwards, to convey the gas from the balloon to the condenser.

All the cords supporting the car were brought down from the net through holes in the sides of the car to a windlass in the bottom; and by turning the windlass the balloon could be contracted or even brought down almost flat upon the roof of the car, the gas being forced into the condenser. This windlass would not
need to be used except in case of a storm occurring, or if we wished to descend; for if at any time the balloon became unduly distended, owing to too great an expansion of the gas, we could easily allow the redundant gas to pass into the condenser by lessening the weight on the valve of the emptying pipe. I have omitted to mention that all the hollow iron work as well as the hollow sides of the car were filled with gas.

It may be asked how we expected to be able to make way against a strong head wind. In such a case we should contract our balloon to a very small size on to the roof of the car, and expand our wings at the requisite angle; then the wind, acting on the plane surfaces of the wings, would carry us onward just as a bird is carried on without any flapping of his wings.
CHAPTER IV.

The eventful day at length arrived—a calm bright day about the end of May. We were all in a state of great excitement: I, because the chief responsibility rested upon me; and the others, because, although they professed to believe that the balloon would be a failure, yet there was a strong hope that it might prove to be otherwise.

The balloon was brought out, the neck of it fastened to the roof of the car, that portion which was left open for the two tubes hermetically closed around them, the cords brought down through the sides of the car and fastened to the windlass, and then the inflation began.

As this proceeded, and the balloon stretched out thinner and thinner, Trevance and the others chaffed me most unmercifully.

"Well," began Williams, "I must say that your ποδι τω looks uncommonly fragile."
“Why,” said Smith, “the net will cut it to pieces before it is sufficiently inflated.”

Then Trevance took it up, “I say, why did you get such an expensive affair? You might surely have done it cheaper by blowing a monster soap-bubble. Will any one with half a grain of sense trust himself to a flimsy thing like this?”

“Well, Trevance,” I replied, “I don’t know about that; but I rather expect that you will trust yourself.”

“Come, old chap, don’t be savage,” he said. “You shall go up first; and when you come down, you shall tell us how you like it. As you blew the bub—I mean, as you made the balloon, it is but fair that you should have the honour and glory of being the first to go up in it.”

I let the laugh go round, because I was pretty sure that the balloon would be a success. A man who is in the right can afford to be laughed at; but when he is conscious that the laugh is deserved, what can he do but get angry?

The car was now moored to a large block of granite lying in the yard, by a rope of about twenty feet long; and then I got in and looked around to see
that everything was in proper order. The balloon was gradually distending itself, and presently the cords straightened out, and the car was lifted from the ground, and rose up as high as the mooring-rope would allow.

For the first time in my life I was afloat in the air, and I had the satisfaction of feeling that the balloon would accomplish all that I anticipated. Visions of voyages to be undertaken and of various countries to be visited passed through my mind, and I was enjoying the rest which is so delightful after any mental excitement, when I was recalled to myself by hearing Williams shouting out from below,—

"Balloon ahoy! Do you mean to live up there altogether, and never come down again?"

"All right; I'm coming," was my answer.

So I applied myself to the windlass, and forcing a large quantity of the gas into the condenser, I brought myself to the ground.

The others were now eager for an ascent with a longer mooring-rope, so we lengthened it to about three hundred feet; and when the whole of our party had taken their places, the gas was allowed to re-enter the balloon at a very moderate rate, so that we
ascended gradually to the full height which our rope would permit.

Several times we applied the contractor, forcing the gas into the condenser, and bringing the balloon down towards the earth, then rising again by allowing the gas to return. After doing this frequently, we tried our wings; having brought the balloon within a few feet of the ground, we re-ascended, and found that by a proper use of our wings we could steer our course in any direction that we pleased.

This was very gratifying, for it was the very thing that Williams and Smith had proposed to themselves when they made their engine. But much as we enjoyed ourselves at the elevation to which we had attained, it was very evident that we were not quite satisfied. First one and then another would look at the ground below, then at the balloon, then at the country beyond, and then again at the country immediately beneath us. At last Trevance spoke,—

"What do you say to casting off from our moorings and taking a short sail?"

It was the very thought which had been passing through the minds of all of us.

"Carried unanimously by a large majority," said
Smith; and he and Williams immediately began to let go the rope.

"Stop a minute; don't be rash," I called out. "It strikes me that there is at least one important objection to our doing what Trevance proposes."

"Out with it, let us hear what it is," he said.

"Well, don't you think that for the sake of our own characters we should be satisfied with what we have done, and attempt nothing further? I remember that the question was asked not so very long ago by one of the wisest of our party, 'Will any one with half a grain of sense trust himself to a flimsy thing like this?' Therefore, I say, rest and be thankful, without running a risk which will prove us to be altogether devoid of sense."

"Quite right; I deserve it," said Trevance. "But I never could have believed that this delicate-looking substance could have become so tough as it is.

"I could not have believed it myself," I replied, "unless I had seen it before." And then I told them how I had made the discovery by accident.

By this time we had got free from our moorings, and we rose rapidly to a height of about two thousand feet; but the motion was so easy that we did not appear to be moving at all.
It was very curious to look down upon the various objects on the earth from such an unusual point of view. The houses looked strange when we could see little besides their roofs; cattle and men, too, appeared like dots moving on the ground; the rivers were little silver threads running amongst the fields; and the sea in the distance, upon which the sun was shining, looked like an immense plate of burnished gold. But whilst we were looking at all these things with new feelings, men and cattle disappeared, houses were lost to sight, and the whole country looked like a large coloured map.

We were still rising rapidly, and after a little while it began to feel very cold. On looking at the barometer, I found that we were about fifteen thousand feet high, so it was time to think of coming down; we therefore contracted the balloon, and as we had been steering due north, we put about and now steered south. Whilst descending slowly, we took our dinner, and found that our trip had not impaired our appetites.

When we had come down low enough to discover our whereabouts, we saw that we were about four miles from Trevance; we therefore rose again a few
hundred feet, and then descended on the lawn in front of the house, greatly delighted not only with our little voyage, but also with the ease with which we could manage the balloon.
CHAPTER V.

In the evening, whilst we were sitting at supper, talking over the events of the day, I said that I thought two things were wanting to make the balloon more complete. First, a propeller, something like a fish's tail; and secondly, four small wheels, so that if we should at any time descend far from means of conveyance we might be able to draw the balloon to a place of safety. These suggestions were thoroughly talked over, and at last Williams said,—

"I think I've hit it, but I shall want a month to work at it. Smith and I will talk it over to-morrow, and tell you what decision we have come to."

The next day accordingly Trevance and I left them to their consultations and made another ascent; but we did not care to go to any great height. We sailed about within sight of the earth, and by constantly ascending and descending we steered east, west, north, or south, just as we pleased. In this way many days
were spent, as Williams and Smith had told us that they would not want the car for a fortnight.

These trips were thoroughly enjoyable, and gave us much practice and great confidence in the management of the balloon. Often we caused great astonishment by coming down close to a village or to a group of people, and then gradually ascending, whilst we kept up a conversation with them as long as we were within hearing.

One thing that greatly surprised us was the distance at which we could hear sounds; and this, I suppose, was owing to the perfect absence of any noise in our own neighbourhood. Frequently when we were up in the clouds, with the earth completely hidden from our sight, we could hear, with the greatest distinctness, children at their play, the crowing of cocks, the barking of dogs, and various other sounds.

I mentioned just now the absence of noise in our own neighbourhood: indeed at times the silence was quite oppressive, weighing us down like a heavy spell, which we longed to break, yet scarcely dared to do so.

But this was not very often, for generally there was too much to notice—a peep of the earth through a
break in the clouds; or the masses of the clouds themselves around us; or, if we were above them, the different appearances which they would present to us— islands, and seas, and mountains—making us long for a closer view of their beauties, which were continually changing, but alas! invariably vanishing as we drew closer.

Our night ascents were disappointing, if we went high enough to lose sight of the earth; for the moon, even though bright and clear, seemed to give no light; we appeared to be looking at her light in the distance, whilst we ourselves were in profound darkness.

These various little voyages were so pleasant, that we felt quite sorry when Williams told us one evening that the car would be wanted the next day for his alterations. But grumbling was useless, so we had to pocket our regrets, and curb our soaring inclinations, and content ourselves for a time with terra firma.

For the next few days the workshops resounded with the noise of almost ceaseless hammering, which helped to drive me home to spend a week with Edith.

How little did I anticipate the length of time that would elapse, or all the strange things that would happen before I should see her again! I told her that
she would have to try to do without her usual trip with me during the coming summer; but I little imagined that several summers would pass before she would see me again. However, as there were no such forebodings in the mind of either of us, we parted in very good spirits, and I returned to Trevance.

Here the work had been going on during my absence, but the fortnight had not elapsed, and the work was not quite finished. At the end of the appointed time, however, Trevance and I were admitted to see what had been done.

The car was now a boat with four wheels. It had a fish's tail indeed, as I had suggested; but the tail was only a rudder, and not for locomotion: this was to be accomplished by the wheels, which were driven by the engine. These wheels were very like the paddle-wheels of a steamer, but the floats were hung so high that they would receive no injury when the wheels were travelling on the ground.

By the most beautiful and ingenious mechanism, the floats presented their edge to the air except during the time when each was brought into use for the purpose of propulsion; but as a description of this would be of no interest to the general reader, it is not given.
The wheels were driven by the engine in the usual way, and it was expected that they would be able to make their way against any wind short of a hurricane.

Then, in order to protect the balloon from the action of the wind, there was a shield carried up from the fore part of the car, like a boat placed on end; and this, as well as the supports which kept it in its place, was made hollow and could be filled with gas.

We had agreed that some such protection was absolutely necessary, because if we wished to go in a horizontal direction at the rate of only forty or fifty miles an hour in the calmest weather, it would be like standing against a wind of that velocity; in which case the balloon would be blown back from the car. This shield, however, would enable the balloon to keep its perpendicular position at whatever rate we might go; or, which comes to the same thing, with whatever force the wind might blow in our teeth.
CHAPTER VI.

The next day after our inspection was fixed on for a trial trip; and long before sunrise Smith came hammering at our doors, and shouting to us to get up.

It was earlier than necessary, but there was no help for it; Smith had made such a terrific clatter that sleep was completely banished from our eyes. So we got up, had a cup of coffee, inflated the balloon, and took our places in the car about an hour before sunrise.

When all was ready we cast off from our moorings, and rose slowly into the air. Then the engine was set to work, and we went up, down, north, south, east, or west, just as fancy led us. The working was perfect, and we could direct our course as easily as if we were driving a steady old horse on the broadest and smoothest of turnpike roads; but no carriage from Long Acre was ever so easy as ours; and no turnpike road, even in the New Forest, so smooth as the fluid
through which we were making our way; in fact, it was hard to believe that we were moving at all. If it had not been for the evidence afforded us by our eyes, we might have imagined our journey like that undertaken by a friend of ours many years ago.

It was in the old coaching days, and he was going up to London from Exeter by a night-coach. When he reached the inn he found the coach drawn up before the door, waiting for the horses to be brought out, the coachman and the guard being in the inn, taking "something hot" at the bar. Our friend, having made himself sure that it was the right coach, got inside and made himself comfortable, so comfortable, in fact, that he fell asleep. During the night he woke, and finding that the coach was stopped, he muttered something to himself about "changing horses," and dropped asleep again. After some time he woke once more, and this time more thoroughly than before; the coach was again stopped, and all was dark and quiet around him. "Changing horses again," he said, and let down the window, but there was no sound to be heard; so he called out for the guard—no guard answered; so he shouted for the coachman, but no coachman replied; he then lifted up his voice for the ostler, but no ostler
spoke or came at his call. All was silent and dark, he could make out nothing more; however, as shouting brought him no help, he philosophically went to sleep again, and when he woke again, after daybreak, he found himself in a coach-house. The fact was that when the horses were about to be put to the coach the night before, it was found that it wanted some repairs, so it was drawn back into the coach-house, and another coach sent in its stead. No one had seen our friend get in, and no one thought of looking inside, and so it came to pass that our friend's journey to London (as he expected) took place without motion.

But we were moving rapidly, though so easily that when we shut our eyes we could not perceive any motion.

After some little time spent in trying our new powers, we turned off the gas from the engine, and opened the supply-pipe of the balloon. Then we rapidly shot up into the air, and soon came into a full blaze of sunlight, although as yet the great king of day had not risen upon the earth which we had left.

There were a few light clouds scattered beneath us, and these were painted with colours of unimaginable beauty—colours the most gorgeous as well as the most
delicate. As the sun rose above them, however, the
colours faded away and the clouds themselves
disappeared.

And now we were alone—utterly alone—in the
trackless regions of the upper air.

I have felt lonely when separated for awhile from
my companions amid the hills of Southern Africa, or
in the wild pampas of South America; I have felt
lonely, too, when standing by myself on a hill-top,
looking around on a vast interminable forest; but I
never felt the strong sense of loneliness so overpowering­ly as when out of sight of the earth in a balloon.

There was no sign of life; all was still, and silent,
and motionless around us, and we, too, were silent and
motionless. It was as if a powerful spell had been
laid upon us, preventing us from moving a muscle or
uttering a sound. But at last we could bear it no
longer; by a violent effort, like persons suffering from
nightmare, we forced ourselves to speak, and the spell
was broken.

On looking at the barometer we found that we were
now about 17,000 feet high, so we came down about
two or three thousand feet, and then ascended again.
In this elevated position we had breakfast, after which,
alternately descending and ascending, we passed four hours, and then we thought that it was time to come down and see where we were.

A few seconds sufficed to bring us down through a space of more than 16,000 feet; and then, stopping the descent of the balloon, we looked down; but land was nowhere to be seen. The sea, dotted with a few vessels, stretched on every side beneath us; but we felt no alarm; we had every confidence in the powers of our balloon, and we had confidence, too, in our own ability to manage the balloon.

Seeing a large steamer below us, and imagining her to be one of the Hamburg line to New York, we determined to go down and have a talk with the people on board, and learn what was our latitude and longitude.

Accordingly we commenced a further descent, and on shouting out, "Steamer ahoy!" we saw with the telescope that all faces were soon turned towards us.

"What steamer is that?" we called out.

"The 'Holsatia,'" was the reply; so our supposition proved to be correct.

We now came within easy speaking distance, and setting our engine to work, we kept on with her.
The degree of curiosity which we excited may well be imagined. The whole population of the vessel turned up on deck to have a look at us; but our conversation was confined chiefly to the captain and one or two others.

The chief engineer was particularly interested in our locomotive powers, and evidently attributed to them a very limited capacity. Perceiving the ill-suppressed disdain with which he spoke of our engine, we said that we should like to measure our speed with his. He replied that if we cared to try what we could do, he was quite ready; but that we must ask the captain.

So we told the captain that, having made a new engine, which we worked with a new motive power, we were desirous of testing its capabilities with those of his ship, if he would kindly direct his engineer to put on full speed. The captain very courteously consented to the trial being made, and issued his orders accordingly.

As soon as the engineer let us know that his engines were working at their full power, we turned the gas full on to our engine, and the race began. It was not long a doubtful one, for we easily passed ahead of them, going at least five miles to their one.
When we came back to the steamer, the engineer admitted his defeat, and expressed his astonishment at our speed, which he had not at all anticipated; and not a few of the passengers would have been glad if we had offered to take them from the steamer and convey them to New York; but as we had made no arrangements for so long an absence from home as this would have involved, we did not make any such proposal.

After dining on board, the captain gave us our sailing directions, and a packet of letters for the post, and then when we had bidden our new friends a prosperous voyage, we turned our faces homewards.

In returning to land we had to work our way against a head wind, but still our progress was very good, and we reached Trevance soon after seven p.m., quite delighted with our day's performances.
CHAPTER VII.

The next day Trevance was occupied during the morning with his steward and his housekeeper, making arrangements for a prolonged absence from home; for we had agreed amongst ourselves to make an aerial tour of Europe.

The rough plan sketched out was to go first of all through Spain and Portugal, then to cross and recross the Mediterranean, touching at various places of interest on either side, thence to go through Palestine and Asia Minor, traverse Russia and central Europe, and return home by way of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland.

In the afternoon Trevance and his solicitor were closeted together for a considerable time, making the money arrangements necessary for an absence of two or three years; for such was the time during which we proposed to be away.

At last he came to us, whilst we were wondering
what could detain him so long, and, throwing himself back in an easy chair, he said,—

"Such a battle! I declare I'm quite tired out. The old fellow thinks me mad, and almost made me think so too. But I got into an obstinate fit, and told him that it was the most sensible way of seeing the world, and certainly the most economical, as even he must allow. At last he gave in; and I'm glad he did, for otherwise, I think that I must have done so myself, for he's a good old chap, honest and true to the backbone, and with a regard for my interests which he thinks will suffer if I go away. However, the matter is settled now, and here I am, ready for a start."

"What at once?" I exclaimed.

"Yes; at once. Why not at once?"

"But—"

"But me no buts," said he. "I must be off at once, else I shall change my mind; and that, you know, will be your loss more than mine."

"Modestly put," I replied. "Well, what do you fellows say to this proposition?"

"Agreed," said Williams and Smith together; and the former added, "It is nearly full moon, too, so that we shall have a moonlight night."
We hurried off at once to pack a portmanteau a-piece, (which was all the luggage we allowed ourselves,) and then to put them with some books into the car. After this Trevance gave a few final directions to his old housekeeper, who thought that her young master was "'most mazed." Then the balloon was inflated, we took our places in the car, and sailed off majestically into the moonlit sky at a few minutes before 9 p.m.

We divided our watches into portions of six hours each, but there was to be a change in the middle of each watch: thus Trevance was to have from six till midnight; I from nine till three a.m.; when Trevance turned in, he was to call Williams, who was to be on duty from twelve till six; and when I went below, I was to call Smith, whose watch was to be from three till nine. In this way each person would get at least six hours' unbroken sleep, and twelve hours' rest, out of the twenty-four. This seemed to us to be better than the usual ship-watch of four hours long. Perhaps the following programme will place the matter in a clearer point of view:—

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Smith turned in soon after we started, so as to be ready to get up at three, but Trevance, Williams, and I chatted away till midnight, when Trevance went below. The conversation then flagged, and whilst I indulged in a waking dream of the excursion which we had proposed to ourselves, I saw Williams dropping off into a doze; but I did not care to rouse him up.

After a while I perceived a strange feeling coming over me, for my limbs seemed too heavy to move. It was very cold, but it was not the effect of cold that I was feeling. I called to mind what I had read in Glaisher's "Travels in the Air," and the dreadful conviction forced itself upon me that it was insensibility coming over me. I tried to shout so that one of the others might be roused; but the power of speech was gone. I then gave a glance at the barometer, and saw that we had reached an altitude of more than five miles. Very soon sight failed; but my mind was still active, and I thought that perhaps one of the others would wake up, and have strength sufficient to use the contractor so as to cause the balloon to descend.

If none of them should wake up, what would be our fate? I pictured to myself the balloon ascending higher and higher, until at length it should burst, and
then fall down, down, down into the sea, where every
vestige of it, and every trace of ourselves would quickly
be swallowed up by the waves!

But long before that could happen, the life would
have left our bodies, and so that fearful downward fall
would not be able to cause us the slightest pain.

It was strange that thoughts such as these should
present themselves to my mind, and yet should cause
me not the slightest uneasiness. But the insensibility
which had seized my body was gradually taking pos­
session of my mental faculties, and in a short time
must have completely deadened them, for I knew no­
thing of what took place.

What time elapsed I do not know, but consciousness
returned, my mind seemed to wake up as from a sleep;
then a light appeared to dawn upon my eyes, and
sight was restored. The first object that attracted my
attention was the figure of Williams sleeping just as I
had last seen him.

When muscular power came back to me, my first
use of it was to make the balloon descend; and then
I called to Williams, who started up in alarm, as if he
felt conscious that he ought not to have slept during
his watch. I told him as well as I could what had.
taken place, and we both looked eagerly downwards for the first sight of land.

Whilst thus anxiously watching, I put my fingers to my wrist to feel my pulse, but there was scarcely any to be felt. I then remarked that breathing was almost suspended; and yet I had no unpleasant sensations. I felt that I was really living—capable of motion, of feeling, of thought. I mentioned these circumstances to Williams, and he found that he was in just the same condition.

What could be the cause? "'Twas strange, 'twas passing strange." We could not account for it, but so it was.

The sun was shining brightly, but it did not immediately occur to us that our watch was over; we were still anxiously looking out for land, and after some little time had passed we discovered it beneath us.

On drawing nearer we perceived that we were approaching some barren-looking mountains; therefore we checked our descent, and set the engine to work to sail about, so that we might discover where we were.

I then thought about the time, and looked at my watch, but it had stopped; on my asking Williams, he found that his also was not going. I knew that I had
wound up mine just as Trevance went below at midnight, and it was now about mid-day; so that we must have slept or been insensible for about thirty-six hours at least.

I then asked Williams to call the others; and when they came up, we were over a circular chain of mountains surrounding a deep valley, out of the middle of which abruptly rose a mountain about the same height as those which surrounded it. We none of us recognized the place as any that we had ever seen or heard of. It was a bleak, barren, desolate mass of stone, without a trace of vegetation, or of water near it. However, we determined to descend, and see what discoveries we should make.

Accordingly we came down, and having nearly emptied the balloon of gas, we tied the car securely to a large block of stone; and then scrambled about on the mountain, which did not improve upon a closer acquaintance.

The view from the ridge on which we stood was singularly uninviting, and yet it was not without a certain grandeur and grim majesty. In front of us, at the foot of the mountain-side, stretched a small plain, rocky, and barren, and desolate; and beyond this,
nothing but a tumultuous sea of mountains of various shapes and sizes. Behind us was the deep valley which I have mentioned before, out of which, about three or four miles off, rose a great mountain, gaunt, and grim, and terrible. But no trees, no grass, not a scrap of verdure anywhere.

We could not imagine where we were, for we had seen no place like it, though we had travelled pretty extensively in the mountainous countries of Europe. After walking till we were tired, we sat down at the foot of a rock to rest, and on looking at my watch to see what time it was, I remembered that it had stopped. On applying to the others, it was found that no watch was going with the exception of Trevance's, who had wound his up just before we left the balloon.

"I say, this is curious," he exclaimed, when he looked at it; "we have been scrambling about this mountain nearly four hours, and yet the sun seems to be just where he was when we first landed from the car."

"I'll tell you what it is," said Smith; "we have come down somewhere near the north pole, where the sun never sets at this time of the year."

"But isn't there a great polar ocean?" asked Williams.
"Yes, that's just it," replied Smith.

"But this is a mountain, not an ocean," put in Trevance.

This interruption did not quite please Smith, who liked to have his own opinion, so he said,—

"Hear what a fellow has to say! I was just observing that we are on a mountain in the middle of the warm polar ocean."

"Polar fiddlesticks!" said Trevance, laughing. It's just as likely that we are on the Mountains of the Moon."

Whilst this little discussion was going on I had been making certain observations, which in my opinion seemed to settle the matter. So as soon as Trevance had spoken, I said,—

"I believe that Trevance is right."

"Nonsense, Penrice," said Smith, turning round to me. "You know that the centre of Africa is a well-watered plain, and that the Mountains of the Moon have no existence on that continent, except on maps."

"Quite true, most learned Smith," was my reply; "and yet I believe Trevance to be right. Look there in the sky, and tell me what you see."

"Why, I see the Moon, to be sure," he answered.
"I do not think so," I said, quietly. "I believe that to be the Earth, and that we are now literally on the Mountains of the Moon."

If a cannon had been fired close at hand, my friends could hardly have started more than they did when they heard my words. They turned hastily round to look at the object at which I was pointing in the sky, and exclaimed as they did so,—

"Nonsense! Impossible!"

"Look well, then, at that Moon of yours," I replied; "do you not recognize America on its surface? Is it anything like the Moon? Depend upon it, whilst we were insensible we went up so high that we got beyond the Earth's attraction, and came within that of the Moon."

Were we merely dreaming?

Was it possible for us really to have left the Earth entirely, and to be standing on a far-distant globe?

"No," and "Yes," were the respective answers to these questions—a sorrowful "No," and a still more sorrowful "Yes."

How should we ever return to that Earth from which we were so widely separated? How should we be able to live in this strange barren world? Must we
remain Lunatics (for so, with a sort of grim joke, we thought of the possible inhabitants of the Moon) for the rest of our days?

Our days! Why, each of our days now was at least 709 hours long! Oh what a tide of wretchedness, of dreariness, and of desolation flowed in upon our hearts as we more clearly realized our situation.

Not one of us had the heart to speak; a feeling of dark desponding grief took possession of us. We were exiles, not merely from our country and our friends, but from the Earth itself and from the human race—doomed to starve in the cheerless inhospitable Moon.

Astronomers inform us that the Moon by day is burnt up by a heat equal to that of a furnace, while by night it is frozen by the intensest cold; and reason, guided by the deductions of science, tells us that they are right. But there must be something (what it is I do not know) to temper both the heat and the cold. The deductions of astronomers are right as far as the knowledge goes which they actually possess; but an unknown something which has not entered into their calculations makes the fact otherwise.

But, as may be supposed, we did not think of these things then. We walked aimlessly about on the moun-
tain, pondering over the hopelessness of our condition; and then sat down under the shadow of a huge overhanging rock, gazing in speechless grief at the far, far distant Earth—228,000 miles from us. At last, worn out by bodily fatigue and the violence of our feelings, we one by one dropped asleep where we were sitting.
CHAPTER VIII.

After some hours' sleep a sort of confused murmuring awoke us; and looking up, we found ourselves surrounded by a crowd of strange figures, whose appearance is quite indescribable, as it was utterly unlike anything that we had ever seen. Our sleep had quite restored our usual good spirits, and so we were ready to make the best of things.

These curious beings were talking about us, we knew; but yet we heard no sound. We understood what they were saying, but not a single word entered our ears; their discourse seemed to strike at once upon our sense in some strange inexplicable way, without the intervention of sound or hearing.

They were wondering what we were, how we had got there, whence we had come, and what they should do with us. I made some remark to Trevance, but they did not seem to hear me speak, for they continued their own conversation just as before. By way of joke I then said to them,—
“Gentlemen, be so good as to tell us where we are.”

Immediately the conversation amongst themselves ceased, and one of the figures advanced, and said (though still we did not hear a word),—

“Strangers, you are in our country; from whence do you come to us?”

“Illustrious inhabitant of this country,” I replied, speaking this time in French,” we come from a distant globe called the Earth.”

The change of language made no difference; he understood what I said just as well as before, and asked,—

“And where, O stranger, is the Earth?”

I then pointed to it in the sky, where it was faintly visible, and told him that that was our home from whence we had come.

He immediately turned to the crowd of beings about him, and having informed them what information I had given him, said to them,—

“The stranger tells a lie.”

I found out before long that these creatures could not hear (if I may use the expression) unless they were directly addressed; and so he evidently thought that we could not hear what he said to his fellow Lunarians; for, turning to me, he said,—
"The strangers come from a distant world, and do us honour by their visit." Then to the crowd, "They are evidently come for mischief; we must keep a sharp look out on them."

Then there ensued a discussion amongst them as to what should be done with us, and finally they settled that the one who spoke to us, who seemed to have some authority among them, should take charge of us, and that there should always be a guard with us to prevent us from doing any harm.

When all this was settled, our guardian, addressing himself to us, said,—

"Will the strangers be pleased to honour me with their company during their stay in this country, that I may show them whatever they wish to see?" Then, turning to an individual near him, he added, "One must pretend to be civil to the creatures, otherwise there is no knowing what villanies they may be up to."

We bowed, and said that we should be happy to accept his courteous invitation.

Our friend led us a little way down the mountain (having first called twelve individuals to act as our guard), and when he reached an opening in the rock, he bid us enter his dwelling. Following him, we found ourselves in
a large circular cave, with several doorways, which led to other caves, one of which he allotted to us and our guard.

The caves were lighted by means of a series of copper reflectors, so arranged that they caught the sunlight from one another and transmitted it throughout the whole dwelling-place. The copper of which these mirrors are made, and which is the only metal used by them in any way, is found in small lumps in some of the Lunar valleys, and is hammered to the required shape on smooth stones.

It would be tedious if I were to relate everything that happened, in chronological order, so I will set things down just as they occur to me.

All the inhabitants of the Moon live in caves, natural or artificial. The lower class have their dwellings for the most part crowded together at the bottoms of the mountains; and the height at which any individual Lunarian lives on the mountain is an evidence of his social position; so that the upper classes are locally, as well as socially, higher than the others.

We could not find out what it was that regulated the social scale. At first each takes his place by lot, but afterwards some among them take a higher or a lower place, for some reason not apparent to us.
In all the dwelling-places into which we went (except the very lowest), there was some part set aside as a treasury, and the great object of each person seemed to be to store up in this treasury a heap of certain white stones. The larger the heap was, the more was the owner respected. It was wonderful to see what trouble every one would take to get some of these stones; and yet we could never find out that they were of the slightest use to their owners. The mere possession of them seemed to be a source of intense pleasure.

Amongst the inhabitants of the Moon there was nothing that we could discover similar to our eating and drinking; and it is well for them that it should be so, for unless they could eat the mountains, there would be nothing for them to eat; and as for water or fluid of any sort, it was conspicuous by its absence. For ourselves, we never felt either hunger or thirst whilst we were with them.

We at first supposed that during their long night the Lunarians must get what refreshment they needed in sleep or its equivalent. But when we had been with them for some time, we found that this was a mistake, for they never slept.
It is well known that half the Moon (or, to speak more strictly, $\frac{4\pi}{1000}$ of its surface) is always turned away from the Earth, and that during half the Lunar day, i.e., for about 354 hours, it is in total darkness, relieved only by such light as it may get from the stars. We were anxious to get some information about this part, but we were for a long time unable to do so, as the Lunarians seemed to have a great objection to talk about it.

On one occasion, however, Trevance happened to get hold of a very communicative individual, who gave him a good deal of information. This person stated that once every hour the names of all the inhabitants are brought to an officer appointed for the purpose, who draws a certain number of them by lot, and the persons whose names are so drawn are conveyed as quick as thought to the Earthless hemisphere, and compelled by an irresistible power to traverse it from side to side during one revolution of the Moon, until they come round to the inhabited hemisphere, just opposite to the part at which they left it.

He further informed Trevance that when they pass through that Earthless hemisphere they forget all that had happened to them before, that their dwelling-
places have been given to others, and fresh ones assigned to them by lot after they have passed through; so that a person who has been living at the top of a mountain, and has had a large heap of white stones one day, may have to live at the very bottom and not be the owner of a single stone the next day; but then, as all that has happened before is forgotten, it is just like beginning life afresh.

All this makes the accumulation of the white stones still more a matter for wonder. But after all, substitute "gold" for "white stones," and "men" for "Lunarians," and you can tell pretty nearly the same story.

On making inquiry about the laws of the Lunarians, our host told us that there was a special body of individuals appointed to administer the laws, which were all engraved on the sides of the halls of the Mountain of Justice. He further stated that very few but those persons knew much about the laws, and that even these learned individuals did not always agree with one another, or with themselves.

This appeared to us to be a true account of the matter, as far as we were able to form an opinion from what we saw; for on our expressing a wish to
see the Mountain of Justice, our friend took us there, and we found five or six judges (forming the highest Lunarian court) engaged in trying a case. The defendant was accused of a breach of their ceremonial law, in sitting down during a portion of some speech of ceremony which he had to make; and the judges condemned him because they said that the law ordered him to stand with his face to the sun at the commencement of the speech, which clearly regulated his position throughout. Immediately after this case was disposed of, another was called, and in this the defendant was condemned for standing with his face to the sun throughout the whole of his speech, the judges observing that the law ordered his face to be turned towards the sun only at the commencement of his speech.

To us terrestrials the reasoning of the judges did not appear very clear, and we should have been as much puzzled as many of the Lunarians were with the decisions, if we had not heard (I am obliged to use the term) all the private conversation of the judges, which was not addressed to the public. From this we gathered that these two defendants were, in some way or other, unpopular; and that it was expedient to condemn them either with the law or against the law.
So much for Lunarian law, which we did not find to be a subject of great interest.

We could discover no distinction of age or of sex among the Lunarians, so that I can describe no schools, with infallible educational nostrums, for the gratification of sociologists, and no marriage ceremonies, for the delight of more frivolous minds.

In fact, we were too short a time in the place, thoroughly to understand the various manners and customs of those amongst whom we were thrown. Almost everything that they did appeared to us to be as inconsistent with their professed opinions, as their heaping up white stones was with the fact that they might have to give them up at any time. Some few individuals, who made preparation for their journey on the Earthless side of the Moon, were ridiculed by the others as dreamy enthusiasts.
CHAPTER IX.

It will be remembered that we left the Earth at full moon, and we arrived at the Moon in what was her afternoon; the Earth, therefore, was shining upon it, and hourly increasing towards fulness.

There it was, always in just the same spot of the heavens, showing us its various seas, and continents, and islands; growing fuller and fuller until midnight, when it presented a most magnificent spectacle—a brilliantly-shining moon, nearly four times as large as the full moon appears to the inhabitants of the world.

As we looked at it we could with difficulty believe that we were looking at that world, the geography of which we had learnt—that world of which we knew so much, and yet so little. We found it hard to persuade ourselves that those darker portions on its surface were seas traversed by countless ships, and lashed at times into irresistible fury by the winds, whilst everything appeared to us so still, and lifeless, and motionless.
There were cities full of pleasure and of pain, of enervating luxury and of squalid misery, of virtue and of vice; but we could not see them. There were millions of beings, each living out his own history of hopes and fears, of joys and sorrows; but here the very existence of such beings was unguessed at.

And so it may be that in the stars and planets which give beauty to the night, and in those countless multitudes of stars and planets which the eye of man cannot see, possibly in the sun itself—the source of light and heat to its own vast system—there are beings of God's creation, with all their various feelings and aims, carrying out more or less perfectly the will of Him who made them, but each race ignorant even of the existence of the other, and consequently feeling no concern in the pursuits of another.

So man's busy projects were nothing to Lunarians, though full of deepest interest to us.

We spent part of a day and part of a night in the Moon—nearly 500 hours—about three weeks of human life, and (as may readily be supposed) we began to get very tired of it. The almost total absence of sound, the bleak, barren, rugged nature of the scenery, the uninteresting character of the inhabitants, all made us
long to get away. It was all so inexpressibly wearisome that we determined to endure it no longer; and as the Lunarians could only perceive what we said when they were directly addressed, there was no difficulty in our arranging a plan, which in course of time we were able to carry out.

The suspicions of our hosts, or gaolers, were so far allayed that one of us could sometimes get away from the others without being watched. I took an opportunity, therefore, of slipping off unperceived, and going to our balloon.

Everything was just as we left it, and when I had seen that it was ready for a rapid inflation, I returned and made my report to my friends. After a short discussion amongst ourselves, Trevance said to our host,—

"Most illustrious friend, inhabitant of this delightful country, we have a request to make."

We had observed that the Lunarians were extremely ceremonious, and fond of what we should call flummery, so we always used rather "tall talk" in speaking to them.

"Courteous stranger," he replied, "what is your wish?"
To this Trevance answered, "Our desire is to submit to the inspection of your superior wisdom the conveyance in which we came to your charming country; and we shall deem it a favour if you will give us the honour of presenting so worthless a thing to your notice."

"Most highly-esteemed guest," he said, "it will give me the greatest pleasure in my life if I may accompany you." Then, to one who stood near, he continued, "I am more than half afraid of these humbugs, so go and collect as many of the principal inhabitants as you can." And turning to us, he added, "Soon I will go with you, accompanied by friends, to do you honour."

In about an hour he returned, bringing with him a few friends; and when he came into our apartment he announced that he was ready; and accordingly we started. On coming out of the cave we found the mountain-side literally swarming with Lunarians, who had come partly at the summons of our host, and partly out of curiosity, because they had been informed that something was going on.

As we went up with our Lunarian friend, we asked him to take measures to prevent too much crowding
about our balloon, lest some mischief should be done. He immediately gave directions that a circle of Lunarians should be formed round us and our balloon, and that no one should be admitted within this circle without his permission; and thus, he said to some of his friends, not only would mischief be prevented, but also our escape.

When we reached the balloon, the circle was formed as directed, and our host called half a dozen of his friends to inspect the strangers’ conveyance. They had never before seen wood, or cord, or glass, and they were very energetic in their expressions of astonishment. Every now and then, as some new wonder struck them, they would turn round and speak to the crowd, trying to explain what they saw.

Whilst this inspection was going on I crept unobserved into the car, and began slowly to inflate the balloon, as we had arranged beforehand.

After some little while, Trevance asked the inspecting party to look at the inside of our dwelling. There was much hesitation on their part, and no small amount of fear; but at length his persuasions prevailed, and he led the way up the ladder, Smith and Williams bringing up the rear.
When our visitors had finished their examination of our open-air sitting-room, their powers of wonderment seemed to have been completely exhausted; but on taking them into our bedroom, we were soon undeceived on this point, for the white bed filled them with surprise; they touched it, and looked at it, and touched it again; but they could not make it out, they had never seen anything like it, and so it remained a mystery to them.

Their astonishment, however, was completed by the sight of a looking-glass; but it was the astonishment of fear. Their own copper reflectors are too rough to reflect any objects; they will transmit a certain amount of light, but nothing more; so when they saw the looking-glass they were perfectly astounded. They looked at one another, they looked at us, and they looked at the glass; but they could not be induced to go near it. They saw themselves and us twice over, and it was too much for them; they could not be persuaded to look at anything more, but requested us to accompany them home again. That, however, was by no means our intention; the balloon was already straining at the mooring ropes, and the pieces of rock which rested on them would soon be moved by the strain, and then the balloon would be at liberty.
But it would not do to excite the suspicions of the Lunarians; so Trevance preceded them over the side, and when they were down on *luna firma* once more, he stood talking to them for a while, with one foot on the lowest bar of the ladder. Then, at a signal from us, he clambered up like a cat after a mouse, the balloon gave a tug—another—and we were free, floating about fifty feet over the heads of the astonished Lunarians.

Their amazement was intense, and for some time they were powerless to speak or to move. But we were longing to be on the wing again, so when Trevance had made them a most flowery complimentary speech, we set our engine to work and floated quickly away.

Oh, how glad we were to feel that we were really free! We had been there nearly three weeks of earthly life, and the weary monotony of existence was becoming unbearable.

We felt no hunger, no thirst, no desire for sleep; and there was the dreariest of prospects around us—rocks, rocks, rocks, nothing but barren rocks. There was no water, no vegetation, no wind, no clouds. We scarcely heard a sound, except when some one was speaking, and even in that case I hardly know whether we heard really.
And then the Lunarians themselves, with their ceremonious talk, and their indescribable appearance—an appearance so strange, that you could not tell whether you actually saw them, or were only conscious in some way of their presence.

Oh, how wearisome it all was!

The only compensation was the magnificent appearance presented by the Earth at night; and this, of course, was rendered all the more interesting to us by our knowledge of its geography and of its inhabitants. The summer solstice had passed, so of course the southern hemisphere was hourly more and more brightly illuminated, and we saw each part of the greater portion of the globe successively brought before us.

It was with very mingled feelings that we looked upon it, and speculated as to what was going on in the different countries which we saw. We could scarcely persuade ourselves that we were not in a dream, and that we were separated from the world by so many thousands of miles.

But when we looked at the desolate scene around us, and at the sky, which (owing to the extreme rarity of the atmosphere) was black, with the stars shining
during bright sunlight—when we saw the strange beings with whom we were living—then, indeed, the dreadful reality came home to us; we were far, far away from the world to which we belonged, and it was uncertain whether we should ever visit it again, or be lost in boundless space, or in some strange unknown world.

One thing we were quite determined about—to get away from the Moon. But first we would see that side of it which is never turned towards the Earth; and to this we were now directing our course.

We sailed rapidly on, keeping just above the tops of the mountains, and occasionally descending a little to traverse a wide valley; and so we came to the side of the Moon which is never seen from the Earth; but it was all the same scene of dreary desolation—rocky barren mountains, and rocky barren valleys. The only signs of life to be seen were Lunarians, all moving in one direction, but moving as if in a dream, taking no notice of one another or of anything else.

The intense weariness and depression of spirits, which had come upon us, were not removed by this visit to the other hemisphere of the Moon. Words utterly fail when I attempt to give an account of our
feelings—of the loathing, heart-sickening weariness which pressed with a black heavy weight upon us.

Our one all-absorbing thought at last was to get away; whither we cared not, so that we could but be gone. "Let us leave," was our unanimous wish; "let us never more see this dreary scene, where everything is so dismal and dispiriting."

Accordingly we turned the tap of the supply-pipe, and presently shot up into space like an arrow discharged from a bow, as if the balloon itself were glad to leave our late dismal abode.
CHAPTER X.

Upwards we went, and the distance between us and the Moon rapidly increased. Upwards still, and at length a sort of dreamy languor stole over us, a kind of waking sleep, with a blissful consciousness of existence; there was no past, no future, nothing but the present. We were just like persons recovering from a severe illness, with mind and body alike inactive, only just realizing things around as something altogether external and in no way connected with ourselves.

How long we remained in this state, or whether we passed into a state of complete insensibility, we could none of us tell. But more than once we awoke to fuller consciousness. On one occasion our attention was attracted by a large mass of stars of various sizes. When we looked at them through the telescope we saw that they were of irregular shape, shining with a reflected light; and on looking around the heavens we perceived several of these clusters scattered about.
They were evidently systems of meteors, millions of which are probably revolving round the sun in every variety of orbit and plane, and some of which, coming within the Earth's atmosphere, blaze and consume away, forming those brilliant meteoric displays which appear in August and November, and at other fixed periods.

On another occasion we got into the middle of one of these systems, and we saw on every side of us pieces of stone varying in size from a few cubic yards to small bits of gravel. For a little while we were carried along with them in their orbit, but having set the engine to work, we at last got clear of them.

And now another startling sight met our eyes. On looking over the side of the car we saw beneath us nothing but the black sky and the sun and the stars—sky and stars above us, sky and stars around us, and sky and stars and sun beneath us. The power of thought was almost taken from us for the time. We were atoms wandering in space—floating within the limits of the solar system, but whither bound we knew not. Fortunately darkness did not add to the horrors of our situation; it was perpetual day. The sun below our feet was always shining upon us, but
there was no diffused light; it was as if we were carrying the light with us, while it was dark night all around.

The balloon was fully distended, and the engine was actively at work; but there was nothing to tell us in what direction we were going. Again and again we fell into a state of semi-insensibility, and recovered again and again, to find matters apparently in the same condition.

So time passed on, whether quickly or slowly we knew not; for the periods of our unconsciousness, or partial unconsciousness, were always long enough to enable our watches to run down. We might have been days, we might have been weeks, we might have been even years, making this voyage—there was nothing to tell us of the lapse of time.

We still sped on in boundless space—on, on, we knew not whither, and (strange to say) we cared not whither. It was only when we were fully conscious that we felt the slightest symptom of fear; and we never awoke to that full and complete consciousness whilst we were wandering in space.

We were conscious enough at times to wonder at the sights about us, and occasionally, even, to use the
telescope; but it was at the best a dreamy sort of consciousness, in which the element of fear was wanting.

In those regions weight seemed almost to have disappeared; for instance, the telescope appeared lighter than an ordinary drawing-pencil; and this, I suppose, was due to the small attraction of gravitation.

The ordinary position of the balloon was vertical with regard to the sun, that great luminary being beneath our feet; but once or twice our relative positions were altered, the sun being on our side or somewhat above us; and this was when we were slightly attracted by some passing meteor system.

So we went onwards, still onwards, in space, with the sun gradually growing smaller and smaller.

But a change came at last. We awoke to the fact that the sun was above our heads, and that there was daylight all around us. Looking over the side of the car, we saw clouds beneath us, and through breaks in the clouds we perceived land and water. We were also in a denser atmosphere than what we had lately been accustomed to, and therefore talking was easier, hearing more distinct, light diffused.

Surely we were coming down to the Earth once more. How full of gladness this thought was no one
but ourselves could imagine. We longed with an indescribable intensity of longing to feel that we were again in the world, a part of the great family of man.

In order to descend we stopped the engine, and worked the windlass to force the gas into the condenser, and so we rapidly passed through a belt of clouds into open air, from whence we could plainly see the land beneath us.

But the scenery was altogether strange to us, and we had not an idea of the part of the world at which we were arriving. We were coming down upon a gently-undulating country, not far from the sea. As we came lower we saw trees with the most brilliant flowers, and birds of the gayest plumage; so we were evidently approaching some place within the tropics.

But what place? This question would probably soon be answered, as we were descending with great rapidity. Soon our grapnel caught with a firm hold, and we came safely to the ground.

When we got out of the car we were just like children let out of school. We walked, and ran, and tumbled, in a very undignified manner. But there was one thing which caused us the greatest astonishment. We found that we could jump with ease to a
height of ten feet, and that we came down as lightly and gently as if we were made of feathers. This we attributed to our having been so long in the ethereal regions. Heavy weights, too, we could move with ease; in fact, we all seemed to have grown so much stronger that we were astonished at ourselves.

Beyond all astonishment, however, beyond every other feeling, was the delight of being once more on the Earth; and under the influence of this intense pleasure our spirits rose to the highest point. No words or actions were too extravagant as expressions of joy. At last we were called to order by Trevance.

"Business first, pleasure afterwards," said he. "Let us hold a council of war. As Commander-in-Chief I take the chair, and now call upon Penrice to give us his advice."

Called upon in these terms by our leader, I spoke as follows (showing at least that our Lunar visit had not crushed my spirits):—

"Captain and fellow-travellers, it has been well said that 'brevity is the soul of wit'; I am inclined to think that it may be said with equal truth and propriety that 'brevity is the soul of speech-making.' If you have anything to say, say it in few words, clearly
and distinctly, and say no more. Therefore I will content myself on the present occasion with asking the question, ‘Where are we?’ (‘Hear, hear,’ from the others.) It is all very well,” I continued, “for honourable gentleman to call out ‘here, here.’ I know as well as honourable gentlemen that we are here; but where is ‘here’? I maintain, without fear of contradiction, that in this enlightened nineteenth century it is not a sufficient answer to my question to call out ‘here, here.’ Such an answer might have done very well in the dark ages, when men of limited mind and narrow understanding were content with a limited (‘liability,’ said Smith)—no, not liability, but that in which the honourable gentlemen shows himself to be deficient, knowledge; but I contend that it is unworthy of men of intellect to be so easily satisfied, and therefore I ask again, ‘Where are we?’ (‘Hear, hear,’ from Smith again.) The honourable gentleman with the pertinacity of a microscopic intellect, again answers, ‘here, here’; but I ask of the enlightened, the large-minded, and the really intelligent members of this council, ‘Where, where?’”

When the laughter had subsided (for people in high spirits will laugh at very little things), we all acknow-
ledged that we could not answer the question. The trees were strange to us, the birds were of altogether unknown species, so that we were utterly at a loss as to our whereabouts.

The most tempting fruits hung on the trees around us in the greatest profusion, and as we experienced a sensation new to us since we left our home—the sensation of hunger—we tasted some of the fruits, and found them most delicious.

Having, therefore, somewhat satisfied our hunger, we carefully secured the balloon, and concealed it with branches of trees, at the same time making marks in various places near, so as to direct us again to the spot; and then we set forth on an excursion of discovery.

Our wanderings led us to the sea-shore, where the view was extremely beautiful. The grassy land, bright with flowers, sloped down quite to the water's edge, and the trees here and there overhung the sea, which was gently rippled by the breeze playing on its surface. At some distance on either hand were bold cliffs standing forward; but they did not mar the soft beauty of the scene, for they appeared to be clothed with trees and shrubs from top to bottom.

We had never before seen any place to equal this
in its peculiar kind of beauty. And then the birds—how shall I attempt to describe their gay and glittering plumage? But most astonishing of all were the butterflies. Imagine hundreds of these, some with wings as large as the tail of a peacock, and some no bigger than a house-fly, but of all colours, wonderfully contrasted and combined—some soft and velvety, while others had all the metallic brilliancy of a humming-bird's neck. If the flowers growing in such profusion on tree and shrub and smaller plant were bright and beautiful, these were a hundred times more so. It is impossible to conceive the blaze of splendour which was before our eyes; and every moment there seemed to be something fresh to admire.
CHAPTER XI.

But whilst we were directing the attention of one another to each new sight of beauty, we saw at some distance from us something which appeared to be moving towards us through the air above the surface of the sea. As it drew nearer, we perceived the flapping of wings; and when it came still closer we distinguished birds, supporting and drawing a sort of car in which were seated four men or women.

It was soon apparent that they saw us, for they checked the flight of the birds, as if to reconnoitre. We concluded that the impression produced by us was not an unfavourable one, because they soon advanced again. When they had come within a few yards of us, they stopped their car, sprang lightly to the ground, and let their birds fly away.

Whilst they were walking towards us, we had the opportunity of looking at them more attentively. They were all men; their skin was a bright rose colour,
their eyes blue or brown, and their hair (which they wore rather long) and beards brown, and neatly kept. Their faces were gentle, intelligent, and expressive. They were clothed in a short tunic made of various flowers and leaves, arranged in elegant designs.

When they came to us each man put his hand on the top of his head, and then on his breast, at the same time saying something which we could not understand. We replied by bowing and saying, "How do you do?" They then spoke again, and sat down on the grass, and we immediately followed their example; upon which they spoke a few words, and presently some birds, which were perched on the trees near, flew to some fruit, which they brought and laid on the ground in front of us. Our astonishment may be imagined when we saw the birds thus obedient, but we afterwards found that (as Belinda Castlewarden, a charming Irish friend of ours, would say) all the wild birds were tame. The four natives then took some of the fruit in their hands, and offered it to us, saying something which we took to be an invitation to eat; accordingly, we were all soon engaged in this task, one that was by no means disagreeable with such viands.

When we had finished our fruit, we pointed to the
country round us, and asked its name, a question which they appeared to understand, for they replied, "Alili," giving the vowels the Italian sound. Upon our pointing in like manner to the sea, they said, "Imala." This, however, we afterwards found was the name of the country from which they had just come, on the other side of the sea.

The sun was now getting low in the heavens, and we were feeling sleepy, so we made signs that we should like to rest; upon which one of the natives said, "Fene," and pointed inland, getting up and making signs that we should go with him. They seemed so friendly that we had no hesitation in accompanying them; and after walking about a mile we came in sight of a large collection of elegant-looking huts, covered externally (and, as we afterwards found, internally) with large leaves. These leaves, like the flowers and leaves of which their tunics were composed, were coated with a sort of varnish, which made them weatherproof and durable, and preserved their fresh appearance. Of course we did not find this out till a subsequent period.

As we approached the village we saw several men, women, and children, who were dressed in similar
fashion to our guides, except that the women had longer tunics, and flowers in their hair—and such hair, rich, glossy, and so long that it would completely veil the owners from head to foot, if they pleased.

They were all pleasing-looking, with regular delicately-formed features; especially the women, who had liquid, melting, almond-shaped eyes, fringed with long lashes, under slightly-arched, clearly-pencilled brows; and when to this you add a faultless form, and a fairy-like grace in every movement, it will be acknowledged that the ladies of Alili were more than ordinarily attractive.

When we reached the village the inhabitants came to have a look at the strangers; and we could not but be struck with their behaviour, for there was no pushing or crowding, or rude staring, but a respectful curiosity and attention to our movements, as if we were honoured visitors of high rank.

But we were overpoweringly sleepy, and were obliged to repeat our signs that we wished to rest; our guides, therefore, who had been talking to their friends, telling them probably how they had fallen in with us, showed us to a hut, the floor of which at one end was strewn with delicately-scented flowers to the depth of several inches.
We were soon sound asleep on this bed of exquisite softness. Once during the night I woke and heard the steady down-pouring of rain; but when we got up in the morning, wonderfully refreshed with our slumbers, the rain had entirely ceased, though the sky was still cloudy.

Whilst we were looking about us outside our hut, one of our friends of the day before came to us and beckoned to us to follow him, which we did; and he led us to a large hut in the centre of the village.

In this hut all the inhabitants, apparently, were seated, with piles of most delicious fruits before them; and when we entered they said something which their looks made us interpret into a welcome; so we took our places, and were soon engaged in the pleasant occupation of eating our breakfast of fruits.

But what the fruits were we could not tell; we had never heard of anything like them, any more than we had heard of the birds and butterflies which we saw, or the people amongst whom we were. It was very evident that we had discovered some unknown country never before visited by travellers.

After our breakfast we strolled back to the sea, near the place where our balloon was hidden, and there we determined to bathe. We found the water
extremely pleasant, and so salt that swimming was easier than usual; so we swam out to a great distance from the land, but still, on dropping our feet, we could always touch the bottom. On returning to land, we lay down under the shade of a tree, and eat some of the fruits which grew so plentifully around us, whilst we talked over our situation.

We agreed that the country was new to geographers, but as to its position on the globe, all was mere conjecture. The supposition that met with the most favour was that we were somewhere in the interior of Africa; but then how happened it that this fair people were there, surrounded by dark-skinned races? Everything connected with the place and the people was so strangely wonderful, that we could come to no satisfactory conclusion.

We lay there talking for about three hours, but during the whole of that time we had seen no indications of any tide in the sea, so we concluded that this sea was not connected with the main ocean, but must be a salt-water lake; and if this supposition were correct, that would account for the great saltness of the water.

This point, then, we agreed to investigate, as it might help to determine our whereabouts.
CHAPTER XII.

Accordingly the next morning, we made one of the natives understand that we wanted to walk by the edge of the sea for some days, and he, in return, let us know by signs that he would accompany us. At the last minute, however, Trevance excused himself, saying that he wanted to take some observations, and to work out our latitude and longitude. He gave us a month's leave of absence, and told us to make good use of our time. I then suggested that he should keep Smith for a companion, and that when he had found our latitude and longitude, they should make explorations in another direction from that in which we proposed to go. After some little discussion, this suggestion was finally agreed to; so Williams and I set out, after wishing our two friends "good-bye," and warning them not to fall in love with any of the attractive belles of Alili.

We went in a southerly direction, and our first day's journey led us through a country similar to that which
we had already seen. We passed two or three villages, and were treated by the people with great kindness; the impression produced upon us by our first acquaintances was confirmed on every subsequent occasion, and we agreed that the natives of Alili were the gentlest of savages. At sunset, when we came to a halt for the night, we found by our pedometers that we had walked just fifty-three miles, and yet we did not feel at all tired.

The next day, as we were passing through a grove of fruit trees, we saw at a little distance from us what appeared to be the trunk of a tree, from the top of which proceeded long grassy leaves, like a clump of pampas grass; but although the weather was perfectly calm, these leaves were continually moving about in all directions. The trunk, which was about six feet high, was of a rich chocolate-brown colour, mottled with crimson and green spots, and the leaves were a delicate green, tipped and banded with magenta.

Whilst we were admiring this beautiful tree-grass, a fruit about the size of a melon fell from a neighbouring tree, and in its fall happened to touch one of these leaves; other leaves were immediately drawn to the spot, and the fruit, being firmly grasped, was raised to
the top of the trunk and deposited there. Curious to see what would happen, we climbed a tree just by, and then we saw the middle of the trunk open, receive the fruit, and close over it again. We were greatly astonished, and at last we concluded that this was an unknown species of zoophyte—a sort of gigantic land *anthea cereus*. We considered ourselves very fortunate to have discovered something that had never been described by any naturalist, something, indeed, that was altogether a novelty in natural history, as it had never even been mentioned by any traveller.

Our journey still lay in a southerly, or rather in a south-south-easterly, direction, and at the end of the second day we found the land stretching away towards the north-west as far as we could see, so we determined to try if we could manage to take a voyage.

The next three days, therefore, we spent in manufacturing a bark canoe, having found some bark very suitable for the purpose. We then sewed some large leaves together, and fitted up a latteen sail; and then when we had launched our vessel we took a short sail in the sight of the natives, who were struck with the greatest astonishment. They had evidently never seen a boat of any sort before, and they regarded us with
the greatest respect when they saw us turning about hither and thither just as we pleased.

It did not require much persuasion to induce our guide to embark with us; our first care, therefore, was to put on board a good supply of fruit, by way of provisions, and then we set sail on a south-west course, with a strong steady breeze carrying us along at eighteen or twenty knots an hour. We soon lost sight of land, and sailed onwards with nothing to hinder our progress; and so three nights and two days passed away.

When the sun rose on the morning of the third day, and the usual clouds had cleared away, we saw a peculiar glittering light somewhat above the horizon, right ahead of us. As we approached nearer and nearer, the light grew larger and larger, until at last it seemed like a glittering mountain rising out of the midst of the sea. And so in reality it proved to be—a mountain of pure white stone, as white as new fallen snow. Not a plant or a speck of anything sullied its pure bright whiteness. As deep as the sight could pierce beneath the waters, and as high as the eye could reach above, it was all pure and white and unspotted. Cold and solitary it stood in that silent ocean, as if
watching for some long-expected companions, whose continued absence constantly mocked the hope of their appearance.

For a whole day and night we sailed along its shores, and it was still the same, without any change. But the state of our larder warned us that it was time to return, so we steered to the westward, and on the fourth day after leaving Mount Alabaster (as we called it) we reached the land. Here we were made at home in a village similar to those which we had already seen, and the inhabitants of which listened with the greatest interest to what we supposed to be our guide's account of our voyage. This voyage, however, had not helped us in deciding where we were. We had sailed about 1,200 miles in a straight line before we touched the Island of Alabaster; and then we had sailed, at nearly right angles to our former course, probably 900 miles before reaching land; so that this sea was no moderate-sized salt-water lake, but a sea of considerable magnitude; and in what part of the world could an unknown sea of such a size exist?

The next day our boat was a great object of attraction, and as the people appeared to wish to know how it was made, we showed them its construction. This
day was the fourteenth of our absence from Runalo (for so the village was called from which we had started); we had therefore spent nearly half of our leave. We thought, however, that we would sail a little further, and to this end we laid in a fresh stock of provisions, and stood westward again.

For some miles we had land on each side of us, and then it receded on either hand, and we sailed in the open sea for three days; at the end of that time we saw land ahead of us, and came to anchor as the sun was just setting. During all the time that we had been exploring we had never had a moonlight night, so that prudence had compelled us to sail very slowly, even on the open sea, except in broad daylight; but here, with land close to us, we remained at anchor for the night. The next day, however, we went on shore, and walking about twenty miles through a very pretty country, we came to the sea again, so we concluded that we had landed on an island; but on making inquiries of our guide, he gave us to understand that the sea before us was very narrow, and stretched many days' journey both to the north and south of where we were.

Where were we, then? On what unknown part of
the world? We could not answer the question; our geographical knowledge was quite as much at fault as our zoological. Just as we had never heard of birds and butterflies and zoophytes similar to those which we had lately seen, so we knew of no undiscovered country in which we could travel nearly three thousand miles, unless it might possibly be in central Africa. However, time would show; and meanwhile we would do what we could to clear up the mystery.

On reaching the sea, we walked along the shore almost due north for about thirty miles, passing two or three villages on our way, and seeing various forms of animal and vegetable life just like what we had met with before. The country was slightly undulating, and every little valley had its own stream of fresh water gently flowing towards the sea. Just before the close of the day we mounted a higher hill than usual, and looking down, we saw in the valley beneath us one of the prettiest of villages, inviting us to repose and shelter, of which we were glad to avail ourselves, as the evening clouds were gathering in the sky, and the darkness would soon be upon us.

We received the usual hospitable welcome, and were soon sleeping off the fatigues of our journey on our
bed of flowers. About five o'clock in the morning we were roused by a storm of wind and rain, which continued with but little intermission throughout the whole day. In the various lulls that occurred we were visited by the natives, who were never tired of looking at our clothes, our knives, watches, pencils, etc.; but at last we began to get tired of the task of amusing them, and therefore we were not sorry when the approach of sunset warned them to depart and leave us in peace. We did not sleep the less soundly after our day of inaction, and when we woke in the morning we found the sun shining brightly, and no trace of the recent storm except in the freshness of everything around.

After our breakfast of fruits in the public hut, we perceived, on looking over the sea from the hill, that the opposite coast was distinctly visible at a distance apparently of about thirty miles. We wished much that we had got a boat so as to cross over, but as we had none, we were obliged to dismiss the idea from our minds. However, there was nothing to prevent our bathing, so we went a short distance from the village, and taking the precaution of hiding our clothes under some large leaves and putting our watches and
valuables into a small waterproof case which we carried about our necks, we plunged in medias aquas.

We found the water, like that of the sea which we had left, of great density, so that swimming was easy; and very shallow, so that we could not get out of our depth. Thus, between wading and swimming we reached the opposite shore, and having dried our bathing costume in the sun, we sat down to a hearty meal on fruits which would have been a fortune in Covent Garden. The afternoon was now too far advanced to permit of our returning the same day, even if the distance had not been so great; so we collected a pile of leaves, and having crept into the middle of it, we were soon sound asleep, for we were thoroughly tired. If any one thinks that we had done nothing very fatiguing, let him try to go a distance of twenty-five or thirty miles by swimming and wading, and I will answer for it that he will have no desire to repeat the experiment.

Well, we slept soundly, undisturbed and unwetted by the rain, which fell, as usual, in moderate showers; and the next day after breakfast we returned across the narrow sea. We found our clothes safe and dry, and on coming into the village we met our guide, who
showed great joy at seeing us again, particularly when we showed him where we had been.

Another night and day of wind and rain made us congratulate ourselves that we had some better shelter than our bed of leaves of the night before. If this storm had come on whilst we were on the opposite coast we should have been in a very wretched plight. Towards evening the weather cleared a little, but in the night the storm began again, and continued for six and thirty hours. When it passed away the day was too far spent for us to think of commencing our return; but the next morning we were up early, and having bidden our friends "good-by," we walked back to the place where we had left our boat.

When we had baled out the rain-water from it and stored it with provisions, we sailed to the village at which we touched after leaving Mount Alabaster; and from thence we followed the windings of the coast, sailing first to the north, then north-east, and then south-east-and-by-east. The wind, however, was not very favourable, and we did not like sailing by night so close to the shore, so we were some time accomplishing the voyage, and ten days passed before we arrived again at Runalo, from whence we had started.
We were nearly a week beyond our appointed time; but when we got to our own quarters we found that Trevance and Smith were still absent, so we comforted ourselves with thinking that our prolonged absence had not caused them any anxiety.

The next morning we made out that they had started without a guide three or four days after we left, and that nothing had been seen or heard of them since. We began, therefore, to fear lest they should have lost their way, or fallen in with some unfriendly people; but still it was utterly useless for us to think of following them, as we did not know the direction in which they had gone; nothing remained, therefore, but for us to wait as patiently as we could.
CHAPTER XIII.

We managed to pick up some little information from the natives respecting their country. Thus we found that they called the whole world Alili, their own village and neighbourhood they named Runalo, the sea was Peraka, the sun Hili, water Aka; the accent being in every case on the penultimate syllable.

There were two stormy seasons in the year, lasting from three days to a week or more, during which the rain and wind were sometimes very violent. One of these seasons had just passed whilst we were on our exploring expedition.

We made inquiries also about their customs, and gathered that each person did what was right in his own eyes, which, however, was always right in the eyes of others. There were never any quarrels amongst themselves, or with others, and so there was no need of laws or of any form of government. If any one wished to leave his village, he was quite at liberty to
go and settle elsewhere; and so if any stranger wished to settle amongst them, they would help to build his hut, and he immediately became one of them.

The children were under the care of their mothers for several years, and they were instructed early to make tunics; so that it was no uncommon thing to see very young children helping to arrange the leaves and flowers. After a few years they were handed over to their fathers, by whom they were taught how to build huts and to prune fruit trees.

When a young man wished to marry, he spoke to the father and mother of the damsel upon whom he had fixed his affections; they then mentioned the subject to her, and her decision was final. If she decided in his favour, the matter was declared in the public hut, and the young man then went to the hut of the bride's parents with a garland of flowers on his head, and seated himself in silence in the middle of the floor. The whole family and their friends then walked around him three times; at the third time the young man stood up, and when the bride passed him he took the garland of flowers from his own head and placed it upon hers. Upon this all stood still, and the father of the bride came forward, and joined the hands of
the young couple, declaring that he gave his daughter to the young man to wife. A procession was then formed. First came several girls, scattering flowers along the road, then the bride and bridegroom, and lastly the relatives and friends of both parties, and in this order they marched to the bridegroom's hut, and so the ceremony ended.

We could hear of no sickness, nor did we see an old person amongst the natives, so that it seemed as if disease and old age were unknown among them. If we rightly understood what was told us, it would appear that before people got old they were removed in some way or other, supernaturally, the natives believed, by the Great Father, whom they endeavoured to please in all that they did.

Such was some of the information, as we understood it; but on some points we may have been mistaken, as we did not know the language, though we had picked up a good deal of it.

The time passed on, and still Trevance and Smith did not make their appearance, so that we were getting quite uneasy. At last it occurred to us that they might have left some note for us in the balloon, so we went to the place where it was concealed. We soon
found the marks in the trees pointing to the spot, but when we got there, the balloon was gone! The discovery was overpowering. Our friends were gone, and we were left in this unknown land without the means of escape!

We were convinced that they did not intend to desert us, but it was now a fortnight beyond the time when we were to have met again, so that there was but faint hope of their reappearance. We could not, however, yet give them up altogether. If they were themselves in safety, they would make every exertion to return to us; but our fear was that they would lose sight of the land, and be carried to a great distance, so that they would not know where to find us; or that they themselves would somehow be lost.

There was no fear of our starving, or of our being ill-treated; but we could not endure the thought of settling for life amongst these people. We might get reconciled to it in the course of time; but as yet we could not calmly contemplate the possibility of such being our fate.

And yet what was to be done? Could we by a land journey reach any place from whence we could get to civilized countries? Did these shallow seas com-
municate with the main ocean? A long journey by land seemed to be altogether out of the question, but there appeared to be more hope in a sea voyage. We determined, therefore, to build a larger boat, and endeavour by means of it to terminate our exile from home, unless Trevance and Smith should return in the mean time.

The want of tools compelled us to confine ourselves, as before, to the building of a bark vessel; and this we immediately set about, with the help of the natives, who showed the greatest interest in our undertaking. The occupation had a good effect in taking away our thoughts from our banishment, so that we were happier than we should otherwise have been.

After several days' hard work our little vessel was finished, in a much more ship-shape fashion than our former boat; for we had profited by the experience which we had gained in that. One great improvement was that we effectually prevented any leaking, by varnishing our boat over both inside and out with the same substance which the natives used for their huts and garments.

This substance is produced by a creeper, which is in itself a magnificent plant, growing, like a gigantic
Nasturtium, to the tops of the highest trees; its leaves are a delicate green, veined with pink and white; its flowers are like enormous tulips, with eight petals, the alternate petals being deep crimson and white; and the fruit is like a large vegetable-marrow, about four feet long and ten inches in diameter, of a silvery white colour, striped longitudinally with black. This fruit is filled with a fluid in which the seeds float, and when the fruit is opened the fluid is at first of the consistency of oil, but as it dries it becomes thicker, till at last it becomes a sort of India-rubber—tough, elastic, and impervious to water.

We managed, too, to make our sails of this material; and this was the way in which we made them. We constructed of bark a large trough, about twelve feet long and four feet wide, which we made water-tight with this varnish, and then partly filled with water; over the surface of the water we poured some of the varnish, which, when it dried, came off in a large sheet, the size of the bath; and by joining several of these sheets together we made some good sails, which we could cut to any shape that we pleased.

All this occupied us several days, and when everything was ready, the whole population turned out to
see the launch of the vessel. This was successfully accomplished, and as soon as she was afloat on the water, Williams and I raised a feeble cheer, which was repeated by some voices a little distance behind us, and on turning round we saw, to our great delight and astonishment, Trevance and Smith walking towards us.

In reply to our eager questions, they informed us that they had been away in the balloon, and had brought it back in safety. Of course we were not satisfied with this information; so we intrusted the boat to our guide, who had been with us on our former voyage, and then we went to our hut, where Trevance told us the story of his discoveries.
CHAPTER XIV.

"For four days after you left I took observations, compared them with the 'Nautical Almanack,' and worked at my astronomy; but nothing would come right: the stars were in their wrong places, the sun was where he ought not to be, and the moon was nowhere.

"At the end of four days I became convinced of one thing—that we are not on the Earth at all, but on one of the superior planets.

"Don't interrupt me; but listen to all that I have got to say, and then make what comments you please.

"I told Smith my convictions, but of course I failed to convince him (you know his Devonshire obstinacy); and then he suggested our ballooning at a moderate altitude, so that we might obtain some notion of the geography of our whereabouts. The suggestion was by no means a bad one, so I agreed to it. Accordingly we inflated the balloon, and started, keeping a course
nearly due north, at an elevation of about four thousand feet.

"This sea, by the side of which we are, stretches away to the N.N.W., and appeared to be about one hundred miles in width. When we had proceeded about fifteen hundred miles, we found the sea branching off to the W. and E.N.E.; then we passed over land for about five hundred miles, and came again to the sea. Sailing on for about eight hundred miles, we again saw the land beneath us, crossing which, for two hundred miles, we reached sea once more, which when we got further north we perceived to be frozen. We then skirted the ice towards the east for a distance of about two thousand miles or so, and then turned southward. We crossed sea, land, sea, land, sea, then a narrow strip of land, a narrow strip of sea, then eighteen hundred miles of land, after which we sailed west, and passed alternately sea and land till we came here.

"During all this time we have frequently landed from the balloon, set up our instruments, and taken observations. It was not long before I hazarded a guess as to our planetary residence, but I have kept my guess to myself till I should be able to resolve it into a certainty. Therefore, finding out where the Earth
would be if my guess were correct, I searched for it with the telescope, and found a planet in the place. But I was not quite satisfied. Jupiter should be in such a place in the heavens: I looked, and there Jupiter was. I watched these planets, the Earth and Jupiter, at different times after various intervals, and finding their motions to be just what I expected, my doubts passed away and certainty took their place. I can and do affirm most positively that we are not on the Earth."

Eager curiosity was apparent on the countenances of us who listened, but for a second or two astonishment kept us silent. It was as if a second sentence of banishment had been pronounced against us. True, the place of exile was not like the dreary desolate Moon; on the contrary, it was a place in which there might be much enjoyment; but still, it was a place of banishment from relations, from friends, from home, from the world itself.

And this last thought was the overwhelming one. If we had been anywhere in the world, we might have said that we would enjoy ourselves for a time, and then return, and make known the discoveries which we had made. But to be in another planet, millions
of miles distant from the earth, with unknown dangers in our way if we should attempt to return, and unknown dangers, too, if we were to stay!

Perplexity and astonishment kept us silent for a few moments, and then as with one voice we said to Trevance,—

"Where, then, are we?"

And immediately a thought struck me; but Trevance replied,—

"I have not yet committed myself so far as to say that I know where we are. All that I have positively stated is that we are not on the Earth. And is not that enough for you to know? Can you not be contented and happy where you are? We have (as far as our experience goes) a delightful climate, delicious fruits, which satisfy hunger without cloying the palate; flowers and foliage, birds and butterflies, the most brilliant and beautiful; scenery the most charming —everything to gratify and delight the senses. We have around us, too, gentle and interesting companions, who look up to us as superior beings. And then we are far away from politics, from discontent, from the strife between labour and capital, in which too often both sides are in the wrong, from all the thousand and
one annoyances which so continually meet the inhabitants of the world. What more would you have? Do you want excitement? Here are unknown seas and lands to explore. Do you ask for employment? Here is an uninstructed people to teach. If the greatest good to the greatest number be your aim, here you can pursue it in perfection without the meddling and muddling of philosophers (?), who think every one a fool but themselves. What is it, then, that you want?"

"To know where we are, you old humbug," said Smith, in his matter-of-fact way.

"I will hazard a guess," I ventured to say,—"That we are now on Mars."

"Nonsense, Penrice," replied Smith. "Do you mean to tell me that these 'gentle and interesting companions,' as Trevance calls them, are inhabitants of the planet of war? Why, if this were Mars, we should wake up every morning to find out throats cut, and come home at night to find that our houses had been burnt over our heads whilst we were away. No, no, don't try it on upon me. Trevance has had his head turned by all those sines, and cosines, and logarithms that he has been working at so often. One
could see well enough that the Moon was not the Earth; but it is different now. Look here, you have sea and land, tropical and polar regions, and people, and birds, and butterflies, and fruits that you can eat: Mars, indeed!"

"Indeed Mars it is," said Trevance. "You have tropical and polar regions; but did we pass any sea or land known to geographers when we were going from one to the other? You have people, and birds, and butterflies; but have they been described by ethnographers and naturalists? You have fruits, too; but have botanists ever seen such? Again I say, decidedly, that we are on the planet Mars."

"Trevance is right," said I; "and I can show you just where we are. Look at this chart of Mars. You see De la Rue Ocean—you see that island in the middle of it marked Snow Island? Well, Williams and I sailed to that island, and found it to be composed of a pure white stone, like alabaster; and that island enables me to fix our present locality at the spot on Dawe's Strait, which I have marked Runalo; and here, too, I have traced our track, and also the track of Trevance and Smith in the balloon."

Williams looked all astonishment, and exclaimed,—
"Why, how close you have kept your knowledge! why ever did you not tell me before?"

"For the very sufficient reason that I did not myself know it. But whilst Trevance was speaking I took the chart of Mars and made it all out."

"Certainly," Williams replied, "everything corresponds to our voyage of discovery; and that narrow sea which we crossed by swimming and wading, the day after the storm, is Bessel Inlet."

"Let me see it," said Trevance. "Yes, here is our course, just as I have described it."

There could be no longer any doubt about it. Even Smith was convinced that we were on Mars.

In its most favourable position Mars is thirty-five millions of miles from the Earth, so that if our balloon could travel at the rate of two hundred miles a minute we should be more than four months making the passage. It was possible that in the ethereal regions, where there is nothing to oppose the progress of the balloon, we might be able to travel at this rate. At all events, the thing must be attempted.

But not yet. Trevance had made his calculations, and found that we must wait nearly three months before we ought to start. The subject, however, was
frequently talked about, and we agreed that our chief
danger lay in the chance of our meeting with some
collection of meteoric stones, of which thousands are
whirling round the sun at every conceivable distance
and in every conceivable direction. But no danger
was sufficient to deter us, though we all admitted that
on many accounts we should be sorry to leave our
present quarters.

We spent a good deal of our time in making ex-
plorations, and in more than one place we discovered
some beautiful natural grottoes, a description of one
of which will give some idea of the others.

Strolling one day at the foot of some high land close
to the sea, we saw an opening about five feet above
our heads, just too high for us to jump on to the ledge
which projected in front of it. Repeated failures to
get to it only made us the more eager to do so, and
at last Trevance said to me,—

Come, Penrice, you are a light weight; you shall
stand on my shoulders, and get up there, and see if
it is worth while for us to follow you.”

Accordingly I stood on his shoulders, and got up on
the ledge. When there I told them that the opening
appeared to be the entrance to a large cave, which
might be worth exploring. Trevance, therefore, helped
up Williams and Smith, and then with handkerchiefs
and neckties we made a rope by means of which he
was enabled to join us.

The floor of the cave was tolerably smooth and
sloped rapidly downwards, so there was no difficulty
in walking. We could not see the roof above us be­
cause the light was not sufficient, but the 'sides we
could feel with either hand. We went on very
cautiously, lest we should step suddenly into some
pool of water or crevice, and presently we began to
see the end; but it appeared as if light fell upon it
from some other part than from the entrance.

As we proceeded we found that what we saw was
not the end, but that the cavern took a sudden turn,
almost parallel to the way by which we had come;
still the floor sloped downwards, and a faint white
light shone up from below.

Going down the passage for about a hundred yards,
we came into a spacious hall, nearly circular in form,
with a dome-shaped ceiling of some white transparent
substance, through which the light was transmitted.
There were columns and arches of the same material
as the roof, and the effect was wonderfully light and
elegant. One of the archways led into another hall, where everything was blue, thence we passed into a pink room, and from that again into one where roof and sides and columns were iridescent, the light being reflected and transmitted in all the colours of the rainbow. The whole appearance was one of magical beauty, and the play of light and the ceaseless change of colour as we moved was like a glittering fairy scene. On every side were grotesque arches, light and airy pendants, and graceful festoons, lighted up with the most brilliant hues, which gleamed and sparkled with an unceasing change. The slightest movement set all the colours in motion: the blues became green, and the reds turned into blue, with an instantaneous transition. It appeared as if the whole of that wonderful hall were built of rainbow.

It was at last with lingering and reluctant steps that we left a scene so enchanting. On retracing our way we took careful bearings of our course, and by this means we found that these caverns extended for several hundred yards under the sea; and the next day, when we bathed there, we easily found the dome-shaped roofs rising up under the water with glassy smoothness.
One peculiarity in Mars is the absence, or almost total absence, of tides. Owing to there being no moon, and to the great distance of the planet from the sun, there is nothing to cause any great tidal wave. The waters of the seas are kept sweet by their great saltiness, and by rapid evaporation within the tropical zone—an evaporation which produces a perceptible current from the colder parts of the sea north and south of this zone.

For a long time we were puzzled as to how the waste caused by evaporation was supplied. The rain, though falling almost nightly, was evidently not sufficient to restore the balance; but after some time we concluded, from various observations which we made, that there existed several underground communications between the polar seas and the great central oceans and inland seas. Indeed, we had reasons for believing that this communication existed to a far greater extent than we had at first supposed, between every part of the Martial seas; as in almost every place where the bottom was rocky we detected a current of cold or cool water rising up.

The climate of Mars in the tropical regions appeared to be similar to that on the Earth in semi-tropical parts;
but as the year consists of 668 days, the summer is nearly twice as long as ours, and consequently the soil absorbs a great amount of heat, so that most of the trees are both in fruit and flower all the year round.

The force of gravity is about half of what it is on the Earth, so we were able to jump twice as high, and to walk much further with very little fatigue. Thus, that which so much astonished us at first was not due, as we had imagined, to our having lived in an ethereal atmosphere, but to a simple natural cause.
CHAPTER XV.

The time had now arrived when we should again commit ourselves to our balloon, and endeavour to reach the Earth. We had told our friends that we were about to leave them, and they in turn had told others; so when the day came, great numbers had gathered together from all the neighbouring villages.

These happy people seemed incapable of feeling sorrow. There was a slight pensiveness in their manner; but they thought that it would make us happy to get back to our own home, and so they could feel no unhappiness themselves. But I will say honestly that the parting was attended with no little regret on our side. They had been so gentle, so kind, so unselfish, that we were really and heartily sorry to leave them.

At length, however, the last words were spoken, we had taken our places in the car, the cords which held the balloon were let go, and we rose gradually into the air. As the balloon became more inflated, we ascended more
rapidly, and soon lost sight of our friends; presently the scenery became indistinct, and in a short time we could not tell sea from land. Then once more we felt insensibility stealing over us; we could see everything about us, but it required immense exertion to move a single muscle; and at last the insensibility became complete.

Of course we had no means of determining the length of time that we continued in this state. We were conscious now and then of a partial awakening; but we had no distinct remembrance of these times, they were but as dreams occurring at intervals in the midst of deep sleep.

At length full consciousness gradually returned, and we awoke to a clear perception of things. The sun was shining above our heads, and below us was land, to which we quickly descended. Having securely moored our balloon, we walked about to look around us; but there was nothing as yet to tell us where we were. After taking counsel together, therefore, we decided upon returning to the balloon, and voyaging at the height of a few hundred feet above the ground, till we could determine our locality. Accordingly we took our places again in the car, and sailed along at such a height that we could readily see the country over
which we were passing. And there was something very remarkable about it—everything was on a small scale: the highest hills were not above two thousand feet high, the trees were from five to ten feet in height, and the rivers were little streams—altogether it seemed like a world in miniature. We sailed on rapidly towards the east, but the appearance was still the same: everything was small, even the sun itself looked smaller than usual. He was now rapidly sinking in the west, but the light continued wonderfully bright, and when it was completely set we turned for the first time to look at the Moon; but if other things had attracted our notice by their smallness, much more did the Moon attract it by her largeness. But was it the Moon that we were looking at? No, we answered to ourselves, and there was no hesitation in our answer; it was clearly not the Moon, nor could we doubt what it was that thus attracted our gaze.

It was Jupiter! and a most glorious sight it was!

There was this magnificent planet occupying a considerable portion of the sky, and shining with the light of twelve thousand Moons. Imagine thirty-four full Moons placed side by side, and that will give nearly the diameter of Jupiter. The spectacle was stupen-
dously grand; and awful, too, in its grandeur. It made us feel our own nothingness in the midst of the mighty works of the Creator.

If this, then, was Jupiter, where were we? There was no difficulty in answering this question. We were on one of the moons of Jupiter, and subsequent observation showed that we were on Io, the nearest of them to the mighty planet.

In the interests of science we ought doubtless to have visited the other satellites, and even ventured to have gone to Jupiter himself, so as to have found out whether he is a solid, or a fluid, or something between the two. But I am not ashamed to confess that the interests of science had very little weight with us at that time. We were, in round numbers, about four hundred millions of miles from the earth; and there had arisen within us an irrepressible longing to traverse that immense distance, and to get home again.

It is all very well for men of science "who sit at home at ease" to turn up the whites of their eyes, and shrug their shoulders at such depravity. Let them undertake the voyage for themselves; for our part, if we could but get back to the Earth again, we were willing to be pointed at for the rest of our lives as the
men who had been to Io, but would not go on to Jupiter. We felt that we could not do it. The difficulties in the way of our return were already enormous; why, then, should we add to them by going to Jupiter?

We therefore stayed only about twenty-four hours on Io, and consequently we went rather more than once round the great planet. We discovered that this satellite was inhabited by a small race of beings, not very unlike monkeys; but that they were reasoning creatures was shown by the houses which they inhabited, the bridges which they constructed, and the roads which they made from one place to another. We did not, however, hold any communication with them, for our appearance alarmed them so much that they fled into their houses when we attempted to come near them. Their alarm was not much to be wondered at when it is remembered that they were only between five and six inches high. We must have seemed to them just like what giants of sixty or seventy feet high would appear to us; and I do not think that we should be very ready to meet half way the advances of such monsters.

However, we were as anxious to get away from
their world as they could be to see us take our departure. The first thing was to find out the position of the Earth, and then, allowing about four years for our voyage, to determine its position at the end of that time.

When Trevance had made the necessary calculations, we once more took our places in the car, the rudder was fixed so as to steer in the proper direction, the engine was set to work, and the voyage began, homeward, as we most earnestly hoped.

How long the voyage lasted, or what happened, or what was to be seen, we could not tell; for, as usual, we were insensible, or partially insensible, during almost the whole time. When partial consciousness returned to us, it was only for a few minutes at a time; and whenever we looked about us at such periods there was always the same prospect to be seen—black sky and stars above, below, around us. But even a voyage from Jupiter must come to some termination, and so it happened to us.

The first sensation of real consciousness that we felt was one of extreme cold—cold so intense that it seemed as if our muscles were frozen, so powerless were they. When at length we were able to move, we
looked over the edge of the car, and found that we were sailing over a stratum of thick cloud; we therefore stopped the engine, and lowered the balloon.

Soon we entered the clouds, and then the temperature became warmer. Presently the clouds were passed, and all was clear about us. We looked down, and there was sea beneath us, and on the sea—O! how the sight gladdened our eyes!—a ship in full sail. Once more, then, we had come back to the Earth. O! how almost delirious was our joy! We could well-nigh have thrown ourselves out of the car in our ecstasy. As it was, we behaved ourselves in the wildest manner, shaking hands with one another, and congratulating one another again and again on our return to human life. And there came over us those calmer feelings of deep thankfulness which we ought to have had at first.
CHAPTER XVI.

But what ocean was this, beneath us, and what ship was this sailing so gallantly on its surface? The first question we could not possibly answer, as the real ocean is not like one in a map, with its name printed across it; and we were as yet at too great a distance to be able to give a reply to the second.

We were, however, rapidly descending, and we fired a gun to attract attention, and then we put out our red ensign; but we were evidently not yet observed, for we could see some of the men run up the shrouds as if to see where the sound came from. Having now come much nearer, we fired again, and this time we were seen: people crowded the decks to look at us, and the old British flag—the dear old ensign—was run up to the peak. We gave a cheer at the sight, and in a few seconds there came up to us a regular hearty English cheer in reply—our own cheer, as it were, multiplied a hundred-fold.
Down we came within fifty yards of her.

“What ship is that?” we called out.

“The ‘Ocean Queen,’” replied the captain. “Will you come and pay us a visit?”

“Most gladly.” And then, “Make fast,” we shouted, as we let down a rope to them.

Very soon the balloon was firmly secured by a couple of ropes to the bow of the ship, and the engine set gently to work, so as to keep the ropes taut and to prevent the balloon from getting entangled in any way in the rigging of the ship. Then putting our rope ladder over the side of the car, the lower end was held firmly by a couple of seamen, and we came down on deck. As soon as we were on board, the captain came forward and shook hands with us.

The “Ocean Queen” was a fine ship of about 2,000 tons burden, carrying out three hundred and twenty emigrants to a settlement which was being founded in La Plata. The head of this settlement, and as such holding a commission from the Argentine government, was Colonel Montague, a gentlemanly-looking man of fifty or thereabouts, who was on board with his wife, a son just of age, and a daughter of eighteen.
The passengers crowded the decks to have a look at our balloon, and then many of them strolled aft and came on to the poop to look at us; and when we said that we had just come from one of the moons of Jupiter, many were the looks of incredulity with which the story was received.

No one openly expressed his disbelief, but we were questioned pretty closely on various points. Unfortunately, all the fruits and flowers which we had collected in Mars had disappeared before we reached Io; so that we had nothing with which to corroborate our tale. At last some one asked how long it was since we started. We replied that we could not tell what length of time had elapsed, but that we left in the year 18—.

"That was eight years ago," said the captain.

"Eight years!" we exclaimed with one voice.
"Is it possible that we have been away so long?"

"However, I suppose it must be so," I continued, sorrowfully, "unless we are now in a dream."

"Young mon," said a solemn-visaged man standing near, "it's aye mickle better to tell the truth; a lee, an' sic an awful lee as thine, is na a joke, an' will tak' thee doon to the pit. Ye are nae aboon two-an'-twenty
the noo, sae that eight year sin ye were nae mair than fourteen. Nae doot ye hae telled a lee.”

The captain, seeing that we were gentlemen, and fearing that we might feel insulted by such a mode of address, turned angrily, and was telling the man to “go forward, as he had no business to come aft,” when I interceded for him, and said,—

“Captain, don’t be hard upon my friend from the north. I can readily understand his not believing our story, which is true nevertheless; the time when we left Trevance may be easily proved.”

“‘Trevance’?” interposed Mrs. Montague, and so making a diversion in our favour; “did you say ‘Trevance’? I remember seeing an advertisement in the papers some five or six years ago, offering a reward for information respecting Henry Vivian Trevance, of Trevance, who left his home two or three years before in a balloon, in company with three or four friends, whose names I forget.”

“I remember their names, mama,” said Miss Montague; “they were Penrice, Williams, and Smith.”

“Quite right,” I observed; “this is Trevance, this Williams, this Smith, and I am Penrice.”

Then we gave a slight account of our wanderings,
from the beginning; but we said that we could scarcely expect to be believed, especially as we had no proof to bring forward in support of our assertions. And, judging from the looks of our auditors, many of them seemed to be quite of the opinion of our Scotch friend, that we were telling "an awfu' lee."

When we had finished our story, we asked the captain to make it known that we should leave in the evening, and would take any letters direct to England; upon which many of the passengers went below to write to their friends.

Whilst there was this comparative quiet before dinner, we inquired our exact position, so that we might know how to steer a straight course to England. The captain was very friendly, telling all that we wanted to know, and offering to supply us with provisions from the ship's stores, which offer we gratefully declined, as our own provisions were still very good.

We sat down six-and-thirty to dinner, and the captain brought out champagne in honour of our visit. There was, as might be expected, a good deal of fun and quiet chaff about our adventures, which only a few really credited. One thing to our discredit was our youthful appearance; by what we said respecting the
time of our departure, we were about thirty; by what we looked, we were not more than two-and-twenty. And this, I suppose, was to be accounted for by our life in the ethereal regions during the eight years that had passed, the greater part of which time we spent in the sleep of insensibility, during which there was no wear and tear of mind or body; so that practically we were not older than we were when we started in the balloon.

When we came on deck after dinner Colonel Montague took Trevance into his confidence, and kept close to his side. He detailed his plans about the settlement which he was going to establish, and asked his advice about various matters. Every now and then he would ask his daughter some question about the subject which he was discussing, as if he wanted to direct Trevance's attention to her; and I could not help thinking that he thought it would be a good thing if she were to become Mrs Trevance, as I knew that he had been pumping Smith about Trevance's property; but the daughter did not seem to appreciate her father's efforts.

There was something in young Montague which we all thought very attractive. His father was a fine-looking man, with many good qualities probably, but I
fancied (it may have been no more than fancy) that he was rather a schemer. Young Montague, on the other hand, was as open as the day, with a handsome intellectual countenance, with which it would be impossible to associate any mercenary or selfish motive.

Miss Montague was like him, but with a certain feminine softness of manner that only partly concealed great strength of character. Her deep blue eyes were wonderfully lovely, with a look of trustfulness in them that haunted one again and again long afterwards.

Mrs Montague had once been handsome, but she looked as if she had much to contend with, and now seemed to be entirely taken up with family cares.

We lingered in our talk till sunset warned us that we must be gone, and then the last farewells being spoken, we entered our car, the ropes were cast off, and we sailed away with a parting cheer from the crew and passengers of the "Ocean Queen."

We sped rapidly on in a north-easterly direction, keeping at an elevation of from three hundred to three thousand feet. After we had crossed the line the trade winds helped us along very considerably, and not many days passed before we saw the weather-beaten cliffs of the Cornish coast.
We then steered direct for Trevance, and in a few hours we saw the place beneath us, looking as if we had only just left it. As the balloon descended we saw some of the labourers running towards the house, and we heard them calling out,—

"The young squire's come back in the b'loon."

Having descended from the car, and made our aerial ship secure, we were surrounded by the men about the place, eagerly inquiring where we had been; and on our way to the house we were met by the old housekeeper, who, as soon as she saw Trevance exclaimed,—

"Why, Master Henry, sure 'nuff 'tis you come back again."

"To be sure it is, Mrs. Stevens. Who else should it be?" said Trevance, shaking hands with her.

"Well, sir, I don't know, I'm sure," replied she. "But we all thought you must be dead, and Squire Turner won't care to see that you've come to life again, as one may say."

"And who may Squire Turner be?" Trevance asked.

"Well!" said Mrs. Stevens; "to think that you don't know! Why, sir, your great-grandfather's sister
married in some outlandish place one Squire Turner; and this is her great-grandson, who came and said that the property was all his; and after a deal of fuss he got it somehow. And this comes of his great-grandmother not being satisfied with a Cornish husband, but must go for to marry a foreigner like in England; more shame to her, I say."

Here was news indeed, and a turn of events which Trevance had never contemplated.

And there was another surprise to come; for before we got to the house we were met by a footman, who said that his master desired us to leave the place immediately. The news of Trevance's arrival must have reached him, and he clearly did not like the thought of being turned out of comfortable quarters; so he affected not to believe in the identity of Trevance, and so he sent him this message. In vain did Trevance ask to speak to Mr. Turner; the man's orders were imperative—we must leave the place immediately.

There was, therefore, nothing to be done but to go, though Trevance was boiling over with indignation at this treatment. We first got the balloon into a place of safety on a neighbouring farm, and then went to the station and took the next train to Truro.
Here Trevance went at once to the family solicitor, asking us to accompany him in order to support his identity.

Nothing could exceed Mr. Carlyon's astonishment when we walked into his office. I never saw a man more perfectly astounded. For the first few seconds he looked from one to the other without speaking a word, and at last he said,—

"Is it possible? Is it really Mr. Trevance? Where can you have been all these years?"

Trevance then gave him an outline of our adventures, and finished by telling him of the reception, or rather the repulse, which he had met with at Trevance.

Mr. Carlyon, in return, sketched a brief history of affairs since we left in the balloon. As I mentioned before, we intended to be absent about two or three years, and Trevance had left Mr. Carlyon to manage everything till his return. But when three years had passed, and no money had been drawn from the bank, and no news of any sort had been heard of any of us, the worthy solicitor got anxious, and advertised in English, Foreign, and Colonial papers.

Some of these advertisements were seen by Mr. Turner, who knew that, as the estate was strictly en-
tailed, it would come to him in the event of Trevance's death. This gentleman, therefore, immediately took lodgings at Truro, and in a very little time claimed the property. Mr. Carlyon resisted the claim as long as he could; but at length he was obliged to give way.

When Mr. Turner took possession, he shut up the greater part of the house, reduced the establishment, and cut off all that he considered superfluous expenditure. And when, in addition to this, I say that he was a proud, violent-tempered man, it will readily be believed that he was cordially detested by the tenants and the whole neighbourhood. He had done nothing to improve the property; but then, on the other hand, he had done nothing to lessen its value by allowing things to get out of repair, or by neglecting the woods and plantations. What was absolutely necessary he had done; but he had done nothing more.

Mr. Carlyon said that it would be very difficult to get this man to yield the estate peaceably. His only hope was, that he might be able to convince him that the case against him was so strong that it would be a useless expense to resist. However, as Trevance had put the matter in his hands, he would do what he could.
CHAPTER XVII.

WHILST Trevance was having his talk with Mr. Carlyon, we returned to the hotel where we had left our luggage; and I took the opportunity of writing to my own dear little sister Edith, whom I had left living with my aunt at Trevenna, near Looe.

Trevenna, consisting of a house and about fifty acres of land, was the only landed property which I possessed. On the death of my mother, about two years before my going off with Trevance in the balloon, I had persuaded my aunt Mary, my father's only sister, to live there and take charge of Edith, who was then just over eight years old.

At that time I was still at Oxford, and my long vacations were spent on the continent, where Edith and I had many a ramble in curious out-of-the-way places; for we generally managed to get away from the beaten track, and seek for "fresh fields and pastures new." Thus it happened that my only sister
was much of a companion to me; and I was now longing to see the dear child again, with her merry laughing face and her untiring energy. So I wrote to tell her of my return, and of my intention of being at Trevenna in the course of the next afternoon.

Accordingly, the next day I went to the station to start by the 12.50 train; but on asking for my ticket, I was told that that train would not stop at Menheniot (the station for Trevenna), but that I must wait for the next, leaving at 5.15. This, however, I would not think of, so I booked myself for Lostwithiel, a little town at which I had never stopped since my early school-days, when I was eleven years old.

The train was pretty punctual in starting, and soon we came to Grampound Road; then we passed Burngullow, white with china clay, which is decomposed granite, obtained plentifully from this neighbourhood; then we stopped at St. Austell, with its beautiful church-tower on the right hand; then Par, with its harbour and mineral railway, both the creation of one man, whose name is dear to Cornishmen—Treffry, of Place; and then, in a little more than an hour after leaving Truro, we reached Lostwithiel.

Here, giving my portmanteau in charge to a porter,
SKYWARD AND EARTHWARD.

I strolled about for four hours. I passed over the well-remembered bridge, and entered the town. But how small it seemed to have grown! Long streets appeared to have strangely contracted themselves; the houses, indeed, were all in their old places, but the streets somehow had grown much shorter than they used to be.

My first steps were directed to the principal hotel, where I had a substantial lunch, and paid—well, I suppose that a traveller is a rara avis, and has to be plucked accordingly. Very different was the charge in another part of Cornwall on another occasion. We were a party of five, three ladies and two gentlemen, and we were going to see the Logan Rock. Our carriage put us down at an inn, from whence it would be necessary for us to walk across the fields to the Rock. Before going on, however, we went into the inn—the Logan Rock Inn—and asked for lunch; upon which we were shown into a beautifully clean little parlour, and there was served up to us nice bread, butter, cheese, biscuits, and cider, upon which we made great inroads after our morning's drive. When we called for the bill we were astonished at the amount, for we were actually charged only fourpence-halfpenny each!
Comfort, cleanliness, civility, and a good lunch for fourpence-halfpenny! Hear it, ye landlords of more pretentious places, who take in poor travellers—hear it, and make your charges somewhat less unreasonable! However, I will keep locked up in the recesses of my account-book what I paid at Lostwithiel, as I believe that the hotel there has changed masters since that time, so things may be better now.

But to return to my story. After lunch I walked about the town, and visited the church, with its curious old Saxon font, and its graceful spire, springing from a singularly elegant octagonal lantern; the market-house, which was used for the grammar-school; and the old stannary prison—all looked just as if I had left the place only the week before.

From the town I walked to Restormel Castle, formerly a residence of the old Earls of Cornwall, or at least of Richard, Earl of Cornwall and King of the Romans; and as I sat down on the battlements, I thought of the days that are gone, the paper chases that we used to have in the neighbouring woods, the stories that we used to invent and tell to one another as we strolled about the place or sat in the shadow of its massive walls—all came vividly back to me, until
I could almost have fancied that I was a boy again in the midst of my school-fellows. The town and the whole neighbourhood were full of pleasant memories for me. But I am lingering too long; I must go on with my journey.

At a quarter-past six I took my place in the train again, crossed in safety the spiders'-web viaducts between Bodmin Road and Doublebois, and got to Menheniot about seven. There I found waiting for the train the vehicle which some of the people, disdaining the vulgar and colloquial term 'bus, used to dignify by the name of "the omleybush," the said "omleybush" running (!) between the station and Looe, a few miles distant.

I knew well the usual rate of progress of this machine: how the driver walked his horse up the hills because they were steep, how he walked him down hill lest he should stumble, and how he walked him on level ground for some reason best known to himself or to his horse. I therefore gave my portmanteau to this very careful driver to be left at our lodge, and then I set out to walk to Trevenna myself.

I could scarcely convince myself that eight years had elapsed since I last walked along that familiar
road, but such was really the case. And what might not have happened in that time? It is true that I was not changed in any way: the eight years had been a blank to me, as far as age was concerned; but Edith—she would be now over eighteen, if she were alive. "If she were alive"—I dared not think of that if, and yet I could not now drive it out of my mind. I walked fast, but the thought remained. I looked about me at various well-known objects, but the thought would still recur to me. At length the suspense became more than I could well bear; but it would not last long, every minute was bringing me many steps nearer to my home. Now another turn in the road would bring me in sight of the lodge; and now the turn was reached, and what did I see? The lodge just as it used to look, and a young lady standing at the gate; in a second or two a graceful fairy-like figure was flying along the road, and presently Edith was in my arms.

"Arthur, darling, come at last!" was all that she could say.

When the first excitement of meeting was over, I had time to see how my sister was grown and improved. She had been graceful and attractive as a
child, but she was still more graceful and attractive now. She was rather short, rather slight, with a perfect figure, light airy movements, brown hair, brown eyes, and a face more intelligent and expressive than actually pretty.

"And this is little Edith, is it?" I said, "I shall have to mind my p's and q's with such a grown-up young lady."

"Nonsense, Arthur; don't talk in that way," she replied. "You can't think how glad I am to have you back again."

"Not more glad than I am to come back to my little sister, I can tell you. But how is aunt Mary?"

"Well; pretty well, that is. But you will find her much changed; and she is in a great flurry at your coming back. Oh! Arthur, it is like a dream. Every one said that you would never return; but I could not give up hope, though latterly I must confess the hope has been getting fainter and fainter. But you are not altered the least bit. You look hardly a day older."

"Well," said I, "as far as bodily life goes, I believe that I am only two months older than when I saw you last, and I can with difficulty imagine it to be
really true that eight years have actually passed away. But the eight years have been a reality to you, and have transformed you from a child to a young woman. Now, then, tell me about business. How have you managed, since aunt Mary is so much feebler?

"Why," she replied, "I have been obliged to do the best I could. Gradually everything has come into my hands, and I have had to re-invest some of your money; but your income is no less than it was. I will show you my books by-and-by. But where have you really been all this time? For you were only joking when you said in your letter that you had been to the Moon, and to Mars, and I don't know where."

"Indeed, Edith, I was not joking. It is the plain sober truth that I have been to the Moon, and Mars, and one of Jupiter's satellites, and I will give you a full account of our adventures some day; but there is no time for it now."

There was no time, for we had just reached the house. I went in, as soon as Edith had announced my arrival, and I found my aunt more feeble than I had expected. After she had welcomed me back, she spoke in the warmest terms of my sister, who had been
to her, she said, as a most affectionate daughter, always cheerful and always helpful.

Before I had been many days in the house, I found how true this was. Everything depended upon Edith, all the housekeeping, all the visiting, all the business, and yet she was always ready when my aunt wanted her, merry and bright, and yet always sympathising with the whims and fancies of old age and weakness.

When I had been a week at Trevenna I received a letter from Trevance, saying that Mr. Turner was very hard of conviction, but that Mr. Carlyon hoped yet that there would be no necessity for an action at law. The last proposal made by Trevance was that all back rents received by Mr. Turner should be refunded; but that out of this, all money spent in repairs and improvements, together with £500 for each year of his occupancy, should be allowed to him, no rent being demanded for the house and the portion of the estate kept in hand. This proposal had just been sent to Mr. Turner by Mr. Carlyon, on behalf of Trevance, but up to the time of his writing to me no answer had been received.

I also had letters from Williams and Smith, from their respective homes. They asked me to join them
in taking out patents for the improvement of engines and for the gas which I had discovered, also to enter into partnership with them in establishing a manufactory for engines and locomotives. They had found a foreman of engineers, a clever intelligent man, who was willing to take the management under them; and there were premises in Staffordshire, where somewhat similar works had been carried on, which they could secure at once for a comparatively small sum. Their scheme seemed to be a good one, so I wrote agreeing to join in it. We started a company, therefore, with a capital of £10,000 in ten shares of £1,000 each, of which I took six shares, the remainder being divided between them by Williams and Smith.

Whilst this business was being settled, Trevance's negotiations with Mr. Turner were brought to a satisfactory conclusion. This cross-grained relative was at last convinced that he would have to give way in the end, so he thought it better to accede to the proposal made to him, and avoid the expense of a lawsuit. The rents produced eight thousand pounds a year; out of this, in addition to the five hundred a year promised to Mr. Turner for the five years of his occupancy, four hundred a year was allowed him for
repairs and improvements, making a gross total of four thousand five hundred pounds; so Trevance came into possession of his property with at least fifty-nine thousand pounds to his credit at the bank.

My income was just a tenth part of what Trevance had, and a few thousands had accumulated during my absence, owing to Edith's careful management. It was this accumulation which I invested in the New Patent Engine Company.
CHAPTER XVIII.

One day I was sitting with Edith telling her some of our adventures, when there was a ring at the front door, and Trevance was ushered into the room.

I had asked him to come and pay me a visit when he could spare the time, and I had told him that he need not give notice of his coming, for we should be glad to see him at any time without ceremony, as there were only Edith and myself to be considered, my aunt always keeping her room. But his coming just then was a surprise, for I did not at all expect him, as I thought that he was still in London, where he had gone as soon as he had sent in his ultimatum to Mr. Turner.

When he was thus suddenly announced, I exclaimed, as I shook hands with him,—

"My dear fellow, where have you sprung from? How glad I am to see you here!"

"Well, you see," he replied, "I wanted to talk over
a few things with you, and so I thought that I would take you at your word, and put myself upon you for two or three days, if I don't intrude."

"Delighted to have you," I said. "Oh! I forgot; this is my sister, Edith. Edith, you have often heard me speak of Trevance?"

After a few formal words were interchanged, Edith was summoned to my aunt; and as soon as she left the room, Trevance said to me,—

"I thought you told me that your sister was a little girl. I should never have come so unceremoniously if I had known what she was. What a bear she must think me."

"Well, my dear Trevance, she was a little girl when I used to talk to you about her; but you forget that more than eight years have passed away since then. And as to her thinking you a bear, she will forgive you for my sake."

When Edith made her appearance again, Trevance apologized so humbly and appeared so sorry for his intrusion, that she quite pitied him, and did all that she could to set him at ease; saying that she could not look upon him as a stranger, for she had heard me speak of him so often that she seemed to have
known him for a long time; and as for his coming being an intrusion, it was a great kindness to enliven our solitude. After this he appeared to be always doing something to prove that he was not truly a bear; and she, on her part, made him really and unaffectedly welcome.

The object of Trevance's visit was to get me to give him some plans for cottages, as he had determined to rebuild almost all the cottages on his estate. So for the next four or five days I was pretty busy, drawing plans and elevations and sections.

I had always told him that when he came to visit me I would ride about with him, and show him all the objects of interest in the neighbourhood; but I had been too busy to leave my work now, so one day when he came to look at my plans, I said to him, "

"I am afraid that you must find it very dull here; but I want to finish off these things quickly, and then I shall be able to take some good rides with you."

"Thanks," he replied; "I shall be glad of your company; but I can't say that I have found it dull. Your sister has shown me all the pretty places close at hand—Morval, and Heligan, and Trelawne, and Polperro. By-the-by, you ought to be proud of that
same sister of yours. She has as clear a head for business as old Mr. Carlyon, and he is one of the shrewdest men I know. One forgets how young she is when one is talking with her; I wonder that you don't cultivate her society more than you do.

"Come, now, that is good! Here you come unexpectedly to a man's house, when he is enjoying his sister's company after years of absence; you give him work that keeps him occupied all day long; and then you abuse him for not being more with his sister. That's what I call black ingratitude!"

"Who is that who is guilty of such a crime?" asked Edith, who was just entering the room as I spoke the last words.

"Why, Trevance," I answered, "he gives me a lot of work to do, and then blames me for not riding about all day long with you."

And then she prettily defended our guest,—

"Oh, I am sure Mr. Trevance could not have meant anything of the sort. He was saying only this morning how very grateful he was to you for so kindly interesting yourself about these cottages of his. I am sure he won't think any more of what you have said."

"My dear Edith, you remind me of something that
happened to a clerical friend of mine in New Zealand. It was a Sunday evening. He was returning to New Plymouth, after having had evensong in the country; and on walking down the hill by the barracks just entering the town, he was met by a soldier, who was zig-zagging up the hill on his way to his quarters. The soldier stopped in front of him and said, in a very reproachful tone, 'What, drunk on a Sunday!' The clergyman said, 'Come, let me pass on.' The soldier asked, 'Who are you? What's your name?' In reply the clergyman mentioned his name, and added, 'If you don't let me pass, I shall inform your commanding officer.' Whereupon the soldier held out his hand, and said, 'Come, shake hands, and I'll say no more about it.' The man knew that somebody had taken too much, and that somebody was in fault; but he did not lay the blame on the right person. So, in this case, Trevance abuses me, and then he is to shake hands and say no more about it."

But Edith saw that there was no real quarrel, and so she joined with Trevance in a hearty laugh at my story.

However I finished all my work that evening, and the next day we took a long ride together; and I cer-
tainly was surprised at the way in which Edith took her part in the conversation, whatever it might happen to be. To be sure, Trevance was constantly appealing to her, so that she was obliged to make some remarks; but it was the clearness and justness of her observations which surprised me. And when we were talking about her afterwards, Trevance observed,—

"One would never imagine that your sister had led this retired life here. She is like a person who has looked out upon all that has been going on in the great world, and who has made good use of her powers of observation. She is worth a hundred of the girls that you generally meet; there's so much in her, though she does not know it herself."

It must not be supposed that Trevance was a fool who "wore his heart upon his sleeve for every daw to peck at." He would not have spoken in this way to every one; but the case was different with me, who had been more intimate with him than a brother from very early boyhood; and even to me he would not have spoken so warmly if he had been in love with Edith. There was no doubt that he admired her and liked her greatly; but I knew well that the feeling which he had for her was not love.
When he had been with us about ten days he expressed a wish that I should return with him to Trevance and spend a little time there. The next day accordingly we left with the understanding that I was to return to Trevenna in a fortnight.

How pleasant it was to be staying again with Trevance in his own house. Since we were last there together we had traversed incredible distances, the world was eight years older; but with us time had almost stood still. It was very strange to see and to feel that we were quite as young as when we left, and yet to perceive signs of the lapse of years on every one else.

The fortnight passed very pleasantly, and when I left to go home Trevance had begun with great energy his work of rebuilding. I remained at home with Edith till after Christmas, and then a certain degree of restlessness seized me, and I felt a longing to visit distant lands. I had no desire to renew my acquaintance with other spheres, I had had quite enough of them; but the forests and pampas of South America, and the strange beauty of the Eastern Archipelago, had a great attraction for me.

At this time I went to stay a little time with
Trevance, and on talking the matter over with him, he said at once that he could not accompany me; for what with his cottage building and other improvements, he would have quite enough on his hands to occupy him. Trevance's refusal to go with me did not, however, deter me; for after talking about it I felt as if I could not settle to anything at home; so I told him that my mind was made up and that I must go.

A few days after this conversation with him he gave me a great proof of his kindness, for he told me that he had written to Williams and Smith and paid them what they considered their share for the balloon; that he had stored it with provisions, guns, ammunition, and tools of various sorts; and that he hoped I would now accept all as a present from him.

It was really exceedingly kind of him to do this; and when I thanked him, I told him that I had a faunot to ask of him in return, which was this—that during my absence he would call now and then at Trevenna to see how all was going on, and that he would help Edith, if at any time she required his advice.

When this was all settled I began to make pre-
parations for my departure. My first care was to get some one to go with me. I knew a clever old ship-carpenter at Looe, named Daniel Pengelly, whom I hoped to persuade to be one of my companions; then Richard Dingle, the son of Trevance's game-keeper, offered himself; and one day when Trevance took me over to a friend's for some shooting, I met with a young fellow of eighteen who was willing to be my lieutenant. His name was Spencer Lloyd. His father had been a captain in the navy; but both father and mother were now dead, and he was left alone in the world with nothing to do. He was clever, and cheerful, and fond of adventure; so he was just the sort of person for the post to which I appointed him.

I now determined that if I could arrange with Pengelly we would start in about a fortnight. I went back, therefore, to Trevenna and told Edith, who sadly said that she was not very much surprised, as she had seen latterly that I could not settle down to anything quietly at home; but she hoped that I would not put myself in danger, and, above all, that I would not venture to voyage to other planets.

I assured her that I certainly should not do so,
and that I hoped never to be more than three months, at the furthest, without writing to her. I told her also that I had asked Trevance to look them up now and then, and to give her any help that might be necessary, and that she was to apply to him if she were ever in any difficulty. She said that she certainly would do so, for she would have great confidence in him.

After I had thus settled matters with Edith, I walked to Looe, and had a talk with Pengelly. As I anticipated, I met with no difficulty from him; he was ready for anything of the sort; and so all my arrangements were satisfactorily made. This being so, I wrote to Williams and Smith, requesting them to send accounts and pay my share of profits to Edith, who was authorized to act for me in my absence.

At last the time of my departure drew near, and I took leave of my aunt, who seemed to think that I was only going away for a few days. But the parting with Edith was very different; and as I sorrowfully tore myself away from her, I began to accuse myself of great selfishness in carrying out this plan of mine; but the last farewells were said at length, and I had gone too far to retrace my steps.
CHAPTER XIX.

At Trevance I found fresh marks of kindness in various little additions to the stores and fittings of the balloon, which was now furnished quite luxuriously. In the course of a day or two my lieutenant and crew had arrived, and by the twenty-second of January everything was ready. On the morning of that day, therefore, we took our places in the car, I bid adieu to the kindest friend that ever man had, the balloon was set free, and once more I was sailing in the air.

Where was I going? I have already said that I wished to visit the Eastern Archipelago and the forests and pampas of South America; but, what place should be my first destination?

One thing settled the point for me. A vision of a bright young face very often presented itself to me. I had seen it but once, it was true; but I will confess that I had often wished since then to see it again, and to know something more of Miss. Montague.
She had taken my fancy (as one's fancy may be taken fifty times) when I saw her for the first and last and only time on board the "Ocean Queen." But it was no mere passing fancy. During the few hours that we spent on board that vessel, I caught myself again and again looking at that pure sweet face and those wondrous eyes of hers. And the vision of her beauty had come before me often and often since that time, and I longed without any definite ulterior purpose to look upon her once more.

Should I, then, now indulge my fancy by seeing her again or should I not? I decided, of course, in the affirmative, as any one in my case would have done. I was not bound to any particular course; I was free to go where I chose, so what wonder is it that I made up my mind to steer for La Plata? I could not foresee all the bitter grief, all the terrible anguish that would result from my becoming better acquainted with Miss Montague—mental tortures that I would not undergo again for all the wealth of the universe. But I must not anticipate; I wish to relate things just as they happened to me. If there is anything melancholy in my story, I would ask, is any life one of unclouded sunshine? However, bright and
joyful it may be for the most part, are there not some sorrows mingled with the gladness? And is not our very joy rendered more intense by its contrast with sufferings which we have gone through? But I have made a mental resolution not to moralize, so I must get on with my story.

We kept at a moderate elevation, unless when the wind happened to be much against us, and then, by ascending or descending, we always found a current that was more favourable to us. When it was practicable we availed ourselves of the trade-winds, and at such times we kept up at a height of about three hundred feet, and so we saw many vessels of various sorts and sizes; and I daresay we created a great deal of astonishment and speculation by our appearance so far from land. But we kept on our course without stopping to pay any visits, and thus in about a fortnight we reached La Plata.

We would not descend near any large town lest there should be difficulties about passports, or something else; so we went a few miles inland from Buenos Ayres, and seeing a large house pleasantly situated with gardens round it, we came down into a field a little way off. As I knew enough of Spanish
to make myself understood, I left the rest with the balloon whilst I walked towards the house. Meeting with some men, I made a few inquiries of them, and learnt that the name of the owner of the property was Don Pedro d'Alcazar, a gentleman who was kind to all his dependents and much beloved by them in return. In short, the character of this gentleman was so favourable that I walked up to the house and sent in my card. This brought out the Don himself, who welcomed me with true Spanish politeness, placing his house and all that he had at my disposal.

When I told him how I had come, he begged me to conduct him to the balloon, and he said that he hoped we would remain with him as long as I wished to stay in that part of the country. I thanked him and told him that I should like to continue my voyage the next day. When we reached the balloon I introduced Spencer Lloyd to him, and then I introduced him to the balloon. He greatly admired all our arrangements for utilizing every available bit of space, and the way in which we could enclose ourselves in waterproof curtains in cold or wet weather. But when we took a short sail with him, though he was a little alarmed at first, yet afterwards he greatly enjoyed it, and was
SKYWARD AND EARTHWARD.

quite astonished at the ease and readiness with which we could ascend or descend, turn to the right or to the left, go quickly or slowly, just as we pleased.

When we descended he allowed us to place the balloon in a large empty barn, and took measures for having a guard stationed to protect it throughout the whole night, lest any injury should happen to it. We then spent a very pleasant evening with him, in the course of which I made inquiries respecting the settlement of Hernandez, formed by the passengers of the "Ocean Queen." He told me that it was a very great distance off, in the extreme north of the country, and that he had heard very little authentic news about it. He said that my best course to get there would be to trace upwards the River Parana, and then its tributary, the Vermejo, till we reached the settlement on the banks of the latter river, somewhere about lat. 26° S.

The next morning we found that the Don had invited quite a large party to breakfast, in order that they might see us start on our voyage. Many of them were pleasant, well-informed men, and there was the greatest excitement amongst them, and indeed in the whole neighbourhood, to see the balloon.

After breakfast we all adjourned to the court-yard
in front of the barn, and then our aerial ship was brought out and the inflation commenced. When this was completed I expressed my regret that I could not take them all a short distance, in order that they might be able to say that they had been in a balloon. I said, however, that if any gentleman wished to go with me to Hernandez I would gladly take him. Upon this there came from the crowd behind me a voice saying,—

"I'll go, if you like to take me."

On looking round to see who spoke I perceived a wiry tough-looking man of about five-and-thirty advancing towards the car. He had rather a pleasant face, full of energy and determination; but his clothing was not made by Esole, though it did not fit him badly; it was of leather, from head to foot, with pockets in every conceivable and inconceivable place. He carried a knapsack on his back, and a long rifle on his shoulder.

As I turned to look at him Don Pedro whispered to me.

"He is your man; by all means take him."

I had however already decided upon doing so, for there was something in the man's honest fearless look that I liked; so I replied to him at once,—
"Well, my friend, you shall come."

Whilst he was getting into the car, Don Pedro beckoned me to accompany himself to the house, and then he told me something about my new friend. He was a famous hunter, known and feared by all the Indians in South America, who called him Eagle-eye, from his clear sight and his unerring aim with his rifle; and this was the name by which he was always called. He could also speak all the languages of the southern continent like a native, and he had been more or less everywhere from Panama to Cape Horn. I afterwards found out that his real name was Thomas Cooper, and that he was a native of Hampshire; but had left his home when he was very young.

On my return to the balloon I found that everything was ready for starting, so shaking hands with Don Pedro, and thanking him for all his kindness, and taking leave also of his friends who had breakfasted with us, I got into the car; and when the ropes which held the balloon were cast off, we sailed about just over the heads of the people, to show what we could do, and then, amid shouts of astonishment from the crowd, we rose up a few hundred feet and sailed northwards.

Our new friend, Eagle-eye, proved very useful to us
in telling us the geography of the country which we passed over; and by his advice we descended every day to shoot some game, so that we had no occasion to open any of our tins of preserved meat. Of course this plan delayed our progress somewhat, but then it added enjoyment to the trip.

I cannot say that the look of the country made a very favourable impression on me. The pampas, with their dreary monotonous stretch of grass-land, broken here and there by woods and lakes of salt water, were not inviting. For a few weeks' hunting they might be enjoyable; but I could never fancy making a home on them. And yet this was the sort of country on which the Montagues were settled.

In a few days we came in sight of Hernandez, to which the river and the number of houses scattered about gave a more cheerful look than that which other parts of the country presented; but things appeared to be in a very rough state at present.

It was about mid-day when we got there, and as we slowly descended I saw Miss Montague a short distance from the house feeding some pigeons; presently she looked up, and then ran quickly into the
house, from which she soon came out again, accompanied by her brother.

By this time we had reached the ground, and they came forward to welcome us—Alfred Montague with cheery words of friendship, and his sister with the silent but expressive language of those wonderfully lovely eyes of hers. As you looked at them, you did not think whether she was beautiful or not; the eyes held you by a kind of fascination, and as you met them when turned upon you, you felt what a depth of loving trustfulness there was in her nature; and you felt also that there could be nothing done in sight of those eyes but what was true, upright, and pure. But looking at her when her attention was fixed elsewhere, you saw that hers was a face of faultless beauty—the beauty not only of form, but of expression too.

The Colonel and Mrs. Montague now came out and pressed us to take up our quarters with them. The former was at first somewhat disappointed that Trevance had not come with me; but I told him that my friend was hardly yet settled again on his property, so that he was obliged to remain at home for the present. He then replied that he hoped his young friend would not forget his promise to visit Her-
nandez as soon as he could. This promise of Trevance’s was evolved, I believe, out of the Colonel’s imagination; but as he seemed to think that it had been given, it was not for me to dispute the fact.

There was no safe place to put the balloon in, so I left it just inflated enough to float, moored securely to some posts, with Lloyd and the two men in it to take care of it; whilst Eagle-eye and I came down in acceptance of the invitation which had been given to us.

We stayed there rather more than three weeks, and found the Colonel always restless and scheming, and his wife always busy in household matters. With Alfred Montague and his sister, however, I often rode out; and several times I took them little trips in the balloon, which greatly delighted them; and at last Miss Montague became quite expert in climbing the rope ladder to get into the car.

I felt very much for them, to have been brought to live in such a place; and, from two or three expressions which fell from their lips, I could see that they cordially hated the life. Oh, how little did any of us anticipate the wretched end of that ill-fated settlement! But I must not now look onwards.

Whilst I was enjoying myself, Eagle-eye was
proving himself of real service; for he settled some differences between the Colonel and the wandering Indians of the pampas—differences which might have been productive of serious consequences, if matters had not been arranged. But he told me afterwards that the Colonel had such big notions of his own authority, and knew so little how to manage the Indians, that misunderstandings would be always occurring.

The weather was delightful whilst we were there, and the time passed on so pleasantly, and oh! so rapidly! The day which I had first fixed for our leaving drew near, and yet the Colonel never dropped the slightest hint about our prolonging our stay. He never appeared to hear when the other members of the family said how much they had enjoyed our visit. And I believe that they had thoroughly enjoyed it, for it was a sort of holiday to them, and there was besides, a mutual liking that we had for one another.

Was it more than a mere liking? I often asked myself this question with regard to Katharine Montague, and I as often thought to myself that I wished I could be sure of some warmer feeling on her part. What my feelings were towards her I hardly knew. I did not stop to think about them or to
analyze them. This much, however, I did know, that it was happiness to be near her. I longed to be able to do her some service, merely that I might feel that I had been of use to her, and that I might get her thanks from her deep speaking eyes. She seemed at times to be a being altogether above me—a being to be loved with a love expecting no return; but at other times I looked at her with the wish that I could call forth her deepest affections—that I could look down into her eyes, and read there the sweet signs and tokens of a love that should be all my own.

Once or twice I fancied, when I turned suddenly towards her, that there was a look of tenderness in her eyes; but then she was so full of a large-hearted sympathy, and her eyes were so immediately turned away, that I could not appropriate the look to myself. And whenever we happened to be alone together (which was but seldom), she was so full of shyness, and timidity, and reserve, that it seemed as if she were under some restraint, and this feeling re-acted upon me, making me feel awkward, and nervous, and diffident, as if there were some barrier between us.

But still the time of our visit passed away all too soon for me.
CHAPTER XX.

In the midst of my happiness the day fixed for our departure came, and could not be postponed. Fate, in the shape of Colonel Montague, was unpropitious, and I had to go away with all my unsolved doubts creating a turmoil in my heart.

Heavily, therefore, I took my leave, promising, in reply to the entreaties of Alfred Montague, that if possible I would visit the place again in the course of a year or two. I arranged with him also that he should write to me at the post-office, Cape Town, where I hoped to be in about five months; and I promised to write to him from Manilla, where I intended to call in the course of my wanderings.

Then we sailed away northwards for Brazil, in which country we stayed between five and six weeks. The forest scenery there came quite up to my pre-conceived notions of it—magnificent trees, with bright flowering creepers stretching from one to the other
feathery palms, and (in the more open parts) a carpet of flowers of the richest colours, with birds of the gayest plumage flying from tree to tree—all formed a scene unimaginable to those who are only acquainted with places where nature is less lavish of her gifts.

But there were many serpents in this Paradise—venomous, deadly things, which might readily be mistaken for a piece of stick or the small branch of a tree. However, I am not competent to write the natural history of the country, so I will go on with my journey.

From Brazil we sailed over to the northern continent, passing over Central America, Mexico, Arizona, and California.

In Arizona we saw some very remarkable scenery. The rivers in that part of the world have the habit frequently of running through deep narrow valleys. These valleys and, in fact, all gorges, are locally called cañons; and the most wonderful cañon that we saw I will attempt to describe.

We were sailing northwards at the height of about one hundred feet, following the course of the river Colorado, when we saw before us that the river issued from a deep chasm in the mountains. We entered the
chasm, which was only just the breadth of the river; and when we had advanced into it a few hundred yards the scene was one calculated to strike us with awe and astonishment. It was as if the river had chiselled out this channel for itself, leaving on either side a perpendicular wall of rock of four thousand feet high. Between these lofty prison walls the waters flowed ceaselessly on their solitary course, forming rapids here and there in their swift descent to the plain, as if they were hastening on to liberty, and eager to get away from their gloomy confinement. It was a most wonderful piece of scenery, and dreary and depressing beyond description. Eagle-eye told us that two men, fleeing from Indians in the higher part of the country, made a raft and launched it on this river. In time they entered this cañon, which almost killed them with dismay. Passing through a rapid, one of the men was hurled from the raft, and his companion saw him no more, for he and the raft were hurried away down the stream; and there this poor man was between the towering walls, alone on the raft, without the means of guiding it, without food. As his only means of safety, he lashed himself firmly to the raft, and for many, many fearful hours he was carried on by the
stream, sometimes dashed about by the rapids, and once whirled round and round in a whirlpool, till the life was almost whirled out of him; at last, wet, bruised, famished, and almost senseless, he was carried out of danger to a party of his countrymen on the bank of the river.

This story, told within that great cañon, between those walls of awful height, and in sight of those foaming rapids, made our blood curdle, and we were glad to get away to a less terrible region.

We sailed on over many scenes of fearful grandeur, and ten days after leaving Brazil we were over San Francisco. But we had no wish to stop there, so we steered a straight course for Manilla. We crossed the Pacific without meeting with anything worthy of record, and on the evening of the sixteenth day after leaving San Francisco we reached Manilla.

I may here mention that I made it a rule that we should never land near a large town in the daytime, as I thought it safer to keep the balloon from the chance of injury from rough usage. As, however, we came to Manilla in the evening, I descended without fear; and, taking Lloyd with me, I entered the city and inquired my way to the house of the British
Consul. He received us kindly, and gave me letters from Edith and Trevance, giving a satisfactory account of things at home. I then availed myself of the opportunity which the Consul kindly gave me of answering these letters, and also of writing to the Montagues, telling them that I hoped to get letters at the Cape, though uncertain of the time of my arrival there. I say that I wrote to the Montagues, for though my letter was addressed to Alfred, yet I thought most of his sister whilst I wrote it; her eyes seemed to be turned towards me whenever I lifted mine from the paper, and it was to her that I was speaking by my pen.

When I took leave of the Consul, I told him that if he would look out in the morning he would see our balloon, for we should remain sailing over the city till eight o'clock, when we should take our departure. During the night we remained floating at our moorings just out of harm’s way; but at daybreak we got up our anchor, and sailed backwards and forwards at an elevation of about two hundred feet above the city. At first we did not attract much notice, but by degrees the whole population seemed to be watching us; and at eight o’clock we waved the British ensign by way of farewell, and then sailed quickly away.
Our intention now was to spend the next two months amongst the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, going from one to another, from the Philipines to Sumatra and New Guinea, and the intervening islands. And the voyage was not altogether without adventure.

One bright calm day, when we were lazily sitting or lying about in the car, whilst the balloon was sailing on between Java and Borneo, about six hundred feet above the sea, we suddenly heard the sound of musketry and loud shouts just beneath us. Looking over the car we saw six or seven large prahus full of men attacking a British merchant ship. It was evident that the ship would soon be in the hands of the pirates, who were all armed, and in the proportion of five to one of our countrymen. There was no time, therefore, to be lost; so, giving charge of the balloon to Pengelly, with directions to bring it down three hundred feet lower and to keep it there, I gave rifles and ammunition to the others, who were all good shots, and told them not to throw away a single bullet, but when I gave the word, to begin firing as rapidly as they could whilst taking sure aim. I then got out for myself a sort of mitrailleuse, firing ten shots at once, and when
we were all ready, and there was a pause in the fighting below, I gave the word to fire.

It was amusing (if anything could be amusing at such a time) to see the effect of our first volley. No one knew where the shots came from, and the fighting ceased as if by common consent for a minute or two, giving us time to load and fire a second time; and then the ship's crew poured in a steady volley upon their enemies, which enraged them so that they continued the contest with fresh energy. But our cool rapid aim from the almost motionless balloon soon produced an effect, for I believe that "every bullet had its billet," in fatal truth; and when the quarter from which the unexpected help proceeded was discovered, the sailors, seeing our ensign, gave a ringing cheer; but the pirates were filled with terror, and leaped into the water, where they were either drowned or devoured by sharks.

When we descended low enough to talk to the people on board the ship, we found that one of the sailors was killed and four others were wounded, but not very severely. The ship was the "Emerald," of Liverpool, with a valuable cargo on board; the pirates had taken advantage of her being becalmed to attack her, and but for our
assistance they would certainly have taken her. It may be imagined how full of thanks the captain and crew were; and when they learned who we were, the former said that he should certainly let his owners know that they owed the preservation of ship and cargo to us. Of course we were glad to have been of service, but we could not have done less than we did.
CHAPTER XXI.

Time passed quickly away amongst these beautiful islands, where scenery, flowers, fruits, birds, and insects were sources of never failing enjoyment. And our mode of travelling was so easy that it added to our pleasure; there was motion—rapid motion—without the feeling of motion. We could draw our curtains on one side or the other as a shelter from sun or rain; or if we felt cold, we could shut ourselves in completely, leaving only opening enough for ventilation. We could come down to land when we liked, and go quickly away on the approach of danger; and if at any time we should be caught in a storm, we could go rapidly into a higher or a lower stratum of air, where we should find calmer weather; but whilst in the midst of a storm no harm could happen to us, for we should not feel the force of the wind when carried along with it.

So the time passed very pleasantly and very quickly; our two months lengthened into more than four, and
even then we were unwilling to leave. But the time came at last when we must go, and we sailed westward, taking about three weeks to get to Madagascar.

In this island we spent a month very pleasantly. Near the sea the climate seems to be unhealthy for English constitutions; but a little way inland it is much pleasant, and the scenery and vegetation in many parts are beautiful. The people, too, are friendly and agreeable, except where contact with a low class of Europeans has made them otherwise.

There are four or five independent tribes in Madagascar. The so-called Queen of Madagascar is in reality only the sovereign of the Hovas, who have about a third of the island in subjection. All the tribes, however, look up very much to Europeans; and I have no doubt that a man like the late Rajah Brooke settling on the island would become practically the ruler of the country, and would greatly improve the moral and material condition of the people.

After a month's stay in Madagascar we crossed the Mozambique Channel and entered the continent of Africa, a few miles to the north of Quilimane, which is a Portuguese settlement, and a place where a good deal of business is done in slaves.
Now, to proceed. We kept for the most part at an elevation of about three or four hundred feet, so that we could take a good survey of the country over which we were passing; and then if we saw anything of special interest we could readily descend and land if we pleased.

On the third day after reaching the mainland, as we were approaching a dense wood, we saw emerging from it a body of three or four hundred men. It was a slave party, about three-fourths of them being recently-captured slaves, and the remainder were the slave-drivers taking them down to the coast. We could plainly see the poor captives walking in single file, joined together yet separated from one another by forked sticks passing from neck to neck of each of the slaves.

Presently we saw one of the poor creatures stumble, upon which one of the drivers struck him with the stock of his musket till he rose again. But the poor fellow was evidently very feeble, for soon he fell again; and then we saw one of the human brutes at the side snatch something from the poor slave's arms, and fling it to a distance, and immediately there rose up such a bitter wail of agony as went deep into our hearts. The poor creature was still receiving the blows with
the musket when we had descended low enough to see that it was a woman who was being beaten, and that it was her infant which had been snatched and flung from her.

Our blood boiled with indignation, and Eagle-eye seized a rifle: there was a sharp short report, and when the puff of white smoke cleared off, the tormentor was stretched lifeless on the ground. The sudden shot, coming from no one knew where, threw the whole party into confusion, and before they could recover themselves our breech-loaders had sent eight more bullets home to their mark; and then the slavers, catching sight of the balloon, fled terror-stricken on the road to the coast.

I landed immediately with Lloyd and Eagle-eye, and the whole band of captives threw themselves on the ground when we approached. On going to look at our victims, we found one of them still alive, though life was ebbing fast; and discovering that he could speak a little French, and also the language of the slaves, we made use of him as an interpreter, and told the slaves, through him, that if they would return home, we would endeavour to protect them on their way.
I then walked to the place where the infant had been thrown, and found that it was comparatively uninjured, in fact more frightened than hurt, for it had fallen upon a thick tuft of grass. I took it up, therefore, and carried it to its mother, whose delight at the recovery of her lost treasure was unbounded. This act of mine seemed to give confidence to the others, for their faces lost the terrified expression with which they had looked at us before. Whilst we were unbinding them, the wounded man died; but the people understood what to do, and that we would accompany them, through what was perhaps a hostile country, till they reached their own land. Accordingly they turned their faces westward, and we accompanied them in the balloon.

We passed several villages on the way; but no one offered to molest our party. Probably the sight of the balloon awed the people, for they did not at all like to come very near it, though apparently the whole of the population of each place turned out to see the strange sight.

A week's journey brought our people to their own tribe, and great were the rejoicings at their return. The story of their deliverance was told seemingly over
and over again, and consequently we and our balloon became the objects of the greatest attentions. Yet there was a strong element of fear mixed with all the gratitude of these people; they never became familiar with us during the three days of our stay; and it was perhaps quite as well that they did not do so, for too much familiarity might have bred contempt.

If we had been so inclined, I daresay we might have settled down amongst these people and have become their rulers; and this was the case not only here, but amongst all so-called savage races. In dealing with them we invariably found that confidence begat confidence, kindness begat kindness. Get the love of a savage (and it is not such a difficult thing to get) and you can do almost anything with him.
CHAPTER XXII.

AFTER leaving these people we steered south-west, sailing slowly on towards Cape Town; but stopping every day for the purpose of shooting and cooking. In this way our progress was of course not very rapid, although during the night we partly made up for the time spent in hunting.

One day, in the midst of mountains, I got separated from my companions, and the balloon was not in sight, for it was hidden by some of the hills which surrounded me, nor did I know where to go to look for it, as I had paid no attention to the way which I had been going; and now the night was rapidly drawing on.

However, I felt that there was no cause for alarm. I knew that my companions would not leave me; they would be sure, when daylight came, to ascend above the tops of the mountains so that I might see the balloon, and then I should be able to discover my
whereabouts to them. I therefore determined to make myself comfortable for the night. My first proceeding was to find a place where I should be safe from the attacks of wild beasts; and it was not long before I discovered a narrow cave amongst the rocks, just by a little basin formed by the small stream which ran at the foot of the hills.

Having fired my pistol into this cave in order to find out if it were already tenanted or not, and having received no reply, I next proceeded to gather a heap of dry grass for my bed, and to collect a large quantity of wood, which I threw into my cave. Then I ventured in myself, and kindled a fire, which lighted up the whole place. It was about twelve feet long by three or four wide, so that it did not require a very large fire to render it secure. After this I roasted some of the game which I had shot, and made a good supper; then rolling a large log of wood on to the fire, I lay down on my heap of leaves and slept soundly.

Perhaps some one may think here, "How was it possible for him to have gone to sleep in a situation in which there must have been a considerable degree of danger, without first praying to the only One who could keep him in safety?" In answer to such a
question, I will say that I should not have thought of doing such a thing, whether in a situation of danger or of safety; but I do not think it necessary to say that I did not forget my prayers (which I regard as being as necessary as eating and drinking) on any particular occasion, as if I wished to blow a trumpet to call attention to such things.

I slept soundly in my cave and undisturbed till just the break of day. Then I rose up, made up my fire, and whilst my breakfast was cooking I enjoyed the luxury of a bath in the little rocky basin through which the stream flowed just by the entrance to the cave, after which I came in to my breakfast. Whilst I was eating it, my eye fell upon some stones sparkling brightly amidst the sand upon the ground, so I picked up several of them, thinking that I would get one or two of them polished in England as a memento of my adventure.

By this time the sun had tipped the mountain peaks with gold, and the sky was bright and clear; so I came out of the cave to look for the balloon, and at last I discovered it—a small speck just overhead. But the speck was growing larger and larger every minute; my fellow-travellers were evidently descend-
ing to look for me. I therefore brought out some of the burning logs from my cave, and soon made a good blaze; but as they might easily fail to see this, I got the heap of grass on which I had slept, and having sprinkled it well with water, I threw it on the fire and made a dense smoke, which lasted for several minutes. When this cleared away I had the satisfaction of seeing the balloon about a hundred yards distant, coming towards me; and in a few minutes more I was in my old place in the car, receiving the congratulations of those who had lost me, and whose alarm (it seemed) had been far greater than mine.

I now determined to sail quickly to Cape Town, for I was anxious to get letters from Arthur Montague. In the silent night watches, aye, and in busy daylight too, there was one image that would come into almost all my thoughts. I thought of our former voyage—our adventures in the Moon and in Mars—and there immediately came before me an eager up-turned face that had listened to my story on the banks of the Vermejo. I thought of my own home, Trevenna, and of Edith's joy at seeing me again; but it was the picture of Katharine Montague that would take the place of my sister.
I had no doubt now in my mind as to the nature of my feelings towards her. It was no mere liking, I was convinced of that; it was a great absorbing love, that made me feel capable of doing anything for her sake. Even if her marriage with another would make her really happier, I felt—yes, I am sure I felt—that I could give her up. My own life would be darkened by a black cloud of sorrow for the rest of my days; but I said to myself that I could endure the sorrow, if by so doing I could give her joy; for what is love if it will not bear the proof of suffering?

But had I any right to indulge these feelings? Had she given me the slightest cause to think that she returned them? It was, however useless for me to attempt to reason with myself. Who ever does listen to reason when he really and deeply loves one who is worthy of the deepest and truest love? Oh! if I could then have foreseen the heart-consuming grief, the bitter, bitter anguish that was to come, I should have been utterly and entirely wretched. But it was coming all too soon.

We reached Cape Town in a little more than nine months after we had left Hernandez, and leaving my companions with the balloon in a sheltered spot at
some little distance from houses, I walked into the town to go to the post-office. On inquiring there, I found letters from Edith, Trevance, and Alfred Montague: this last, as being the best, I reserved, and read the two former first. I found from them that everything was going on just as usual: that my aunt was getting more feeble, and that Trevance was keeping his promise of looking in at Trevenna now and then to see if he could give Edith any help.

Having disposed of these two letters, and having found a quiet place where I could enjoy the other, I opened it. It was blotty and partly illegible, but after the first few lines I read, "The Indians have been very troublesome again." A little lower down the name "Katharine" caught my eye, and immediately after "is dead." My brain grew dizzy as I saw the words; they were blotted, as if tears had fallen upon them. My own eyes were now full, but I looked at the letter again, and again I read, "Katharine is dead."

"Dead! dead!" I said to myself; and I remember nothing more till I found myself in bed in a dark room; but I heard a slight movement, and I said,—

"Who is there?"

There was in my mind a vague sense of some over-
whelming calamity which had come upon me, so that I hardly dared to speak; and when I did speak, it was with great effort, and my voice sounded strange to me. In a moment a little light was let into the room, and Eagle-eye stood at my bedside, and took my hand in his; then he told me to lie quietly and take some beef-tea. My mind felt very wearied, as if by much thinking, so I silently obeyed him, drinking from the cup which he held to my lips, and almost immediately fell asleep.

Many days past before I could clearly comprehend anything; but at last I made out that after I had gone into the town I was so long absent that my friends became alarmed, and Lloyd went to look for me. He first of all inquired at the post-office, and found that I had called for my letters hours before; then he went to various hotels, and after some hours' search he found me.

It seems that I must have walked from the post-office to the outskirts of the town, and have gone into a quiet little inn to read my letter; for the waiter told Lloyd that I had walked into the coffee-room and ordered some lunch, and that I then took some letters out of my pocket and began to read them; and when he brought in the lunch he found me with my head
on the table, senseless. Just then one of the principal physicians happened to drive by, and the landlady called him in to see me. The doctor immediately ordered them to put me to bed, saying that I had got an attack of inflammation of the brain.

Such was the beginning of my illness, and in that little inn I had been lying for seven weeks, nursed with sisterly kindness by Lloyd and Eagle-eye in turns. The only words that I had uttered had been in delirium, when I repeated, over and over again, “She is dead. She is dead.” It was, as I said, some time before I could take in all this; but when they told me what my constant cry had been, then those fearful words of the letter came back to me, “Katharine is dead”; and the consequence was that I had a relapse, and it was several days before I recovered lost ground.

At last, on the sixty-third day after I was first taken ill, I asked Lloyd to read to me Alfred Montague’s letter.

This was it:

“My dear Penrice,—

“It is with a heavy heart that I sit down to write to you, but I know that you will sympathize
with us in our great distress. The Indians have been very troublesome again. They took offence at something or other that my father did, and they left the place uttering dreadful threats against him. Nothing, however, happened for ten days, and we were beginning to think that their threats would come to nothing, when about a fortnight ago we were woke at sunrise by a savage war-whoop just under our windows. I jumped out of bed, and looked cautiously out of the window; but no sooner had I taken a glance than our enemies fired a regular volley at the house; two or three balls whizzed close by my head, and immediately I heard Kate cry, 'She is dead!' I rushed to the room, and saw my mother dead on the floor, and Kate bending over her—"

I heard no more then. The revulsion of feeling was too much for me, and I fainted. When I came to look at the letter for myself, I saw how in my trepidation I had mistaken the blotted words "cry she" for the last part of "Katharine," and so I read, "Katharine is dead." But now that I knew what the words really were, I found myself constantly whispering, as if to impress the truth upon my mind, "It is not Katharine, but her mother, who is dead."
The letter went on to say that, on the first alarm, the settlers assembled and drove the Indians back, with the loss of eleven men killed, three being killed on the side of the English. The settlers were thoroughly disgusted with the state of affairs, and were rapidly leaving the place; but Colonel Montague declared that nothing would induce him to desert his post. "The Indians," he said, "had, no doubt, learnt the lesson that it would not do for them to attack the white man again." Poor man! he did not learn his own lesson, so sharply taught.

It may be imagined what an effect this letter had upon me. In the first place, the knowledge that it was not Katharine Montague, but her mother, who was killed, was the best restorative that I could have. But then, on the other hand, the fact that the poor girl was living in a position of so much danger, that the place was liable to be attacked at any time by the Indians, and that captivity, or death, or worse, might be her fate—this thought retarded the progress of my recovery.

I was reduced to a mere shadow, and so very feeble that I could not hold a pen, so Lloyd most kindly acted as my secretary. He wrote for me to Edith, to
Trevance, and to Alfred Montague, telling them how ill I had been, but that I was now convalescent, and that as soon as I was able to get away I meant to go to Hernandez.

Nothing could exceed the kindness of my four friends; no trouble seemed to be too much for them, and one or the other of them was almost always with me. But in spite of all their care, my recovery did not advance so quickly as it ought to have done; my good doctor, therefore, recommended that I should go a little distance up the country. So, as soon as I could be moved, I was taken by easy stages about fifty miles inland; and there change of air and change of scene soon produced a good effect upon my health.

But still it was a month before I felt strong enough to think of taking another aerial voyage; at the end of that time, however, I would not be restrained any longer. When it had been seen how ill I was, the balloon and car had been securely packed and put in a place of safety; so I now despatched Lloyd and the two men to bring it, whilst Eagle-eye remained with me.
CHAPTER XXIII

I did not now require any nursing, so I strolled about by myself, whilst Eagle-eye made longer excursions in different directions. At this period I lived much in the past and in the future—calling to mind the many happy hours which I had spent in Katharine's company, and picturing the happy time which I hoped was coming when I should tell her of my love and take her away from the wretched place in which she was living.

On the sixth day after Lloyd and the two men departed they came back in the balloon; and who should come back with them but Trevance? Oh! what good it did me to see his bright handsome face again! I felt then that things must turn out well, since he had come to join me. But my appearance had not a very exhilarating effect upon him; he told me some time afterwards that he thought he had come out to see me die, I was looking so wretchedly thin and weak.
As soon as the first greetings were over, he said that my sister had sent him out with orders to stay as long as he could be of any service to me.

"Dear Edith! what a good girl she is!" I said.

"Yes," he replied, warmly, "indeed she is. I have to thank you more than I can tell you for asking me to look after her in your absence; for (do you know?) I have persuaded her to let me look after her always. I hope that you have nothing to say against it."

"My dear fellow," I answered, shaking him by the hand, "it is the very thing of all others that I could have wished for her. I cannot tell you how pleased I am. You have for a long time been like a brother to me, and now you will be really one. I feel sure, too, that she will make you a good wife."

I need not relate all that passed between us on this occasion; but the more I thought of the matter, the more was I pleased, for not only was Edith the very girl for Trevance, but he was one who would love her as she deserved to be loved, and whom she could love and respect in return.

It was pleasant to see how all the noble qualities of Trevance's nature expanded with his happiness. He knew that it would give Edith pleasure for him to be
with me, so he had come without repining; and now
he offered to go with me to La Plata, as he thought
that I still required to be taken care of.

It was thoroughly unselfish of both of them; because
of course it would have been far pleasanter for them
not to have been separated. Edith had written to me
by Trevance, telling me of her engagement; and it was
very pleasant for me to see both from her letter and
from his conversation how entirely they trusted one
another; and, no doubt, this perfect confidence made
their separation less difficult to bear.

On the day after Trevance's arrival we took leave
of Africa, intending to sail in a straight course to
Hernandez; and when I took my place in the car,
with nothing to do but to be as lazy as my weakness
required me to be, I felt that each minute, as it brought
me nearer to Katharine, was making me stronger too.

It was more than twelve months since I had seen
the Montagues, and more than eight months since
Alfred Montague's letter had been written; and how
much might have happened in the latter interval!
The suspense was fearfully trying, and all the more so
because I could not tell Trevance about my love for
Katharine. If I had felt sure that it was returned, if
by word or look she had given me reason to believe that such was the case, I would have told him; but I was full of doubt and uncertainty.

I thought over again and again all that had occurred whilst I was at Hernandez; and though I could recall the evident delight which she felt in all our excursions, and the pleasure with which she joined in our conversations, and how once when I was prevented from taking a ride she had remained at home; yet I could not help remembering that when we happened, on rare occasions, to be alone together, she had altogether retired into herself, so that I felt myself ill at ease when I addressed her. How, then, could I be otherwise than in doubt as to what her feelings were?

But did I at the time know what my own feelings were? Perhaps not. But I knew them now. And often and often have I blamed myself for not having been more open with myself and with her when I had the opportunity. Yet it may be that I was not altogether in fault then; the knowledge of the greatness of my love had come upon me since; had I felt then as I did afterwards, nothing would have kept me back from telling her of it.

But though I could not tell Trevance my heart’s
secret, yet his society did me good; and this independently of all the help that he was to me in relieving me of the command of the balloon, for he took me out of myself, and gave me other interests to think about.

And now occurred something which still more occupied my thoughts.

On the eighth day after leaving Africa, when we were about a hundred miles from the South American coast, in lat. 27° S., long. 46° W., we saw what appeared to be a vessel on fire, and on descending sufficiently near to see clearly with our telescopes, we found that such was really the case; but there was another vessel lying to at a little distance, which Trevance and I supposed to be rescuing the crew of the burning ship. When Eagle-eye examined her, however, he said that he believed her to be a pirate. He told us that many vessels were lost every year in these latitudes; they sailed from port, and were never heard of again; and yet no storms had been reported to account for their loss. Now, though it was well known that vessels were too often sent out in an unseaworthy condition, yet this could not have been the case in every instance of loss; so suspicions of unfair play had been excited, but no one knew where to fix the blame.
When we heard this, we descended so as to keep the smoke of the burning vessel between us and the suspected pirate, yet so that we could keep some sort of watch upon her; and soon we saw enough to convince us what she was, for we heard five shots fired, and then we saw five men fall over her side into the waves.

On seeing this act ofatrocity, we held a short council among ourselves as to what we should do. It would be folly to attack her, as she was doubtless well manned and well armed; the only feasible plan, therefore, seemed to be to keep her in sight and accuse the captain and crew when she should reach a port.

She was now standing northwards—a brigantine—with all her stu'n-sails set to windward, sailing any number of knots to the hour; and we determined not to lose sight of her; but just as we were settling when it would be safe for us to begin the chase, we fancied that we heard a cry as if for help, so thinking it possible that some one might still be on board the burning vessel, we went as near to it as we could, and gave a loud shout. Yes! a reply came back to us, but from the sea, and not from the vessel; and before long we picked up a man, who proved to be the captain of the
burnt vessel. He was a Frenchman, and when he had put on some dry clothes, he told us his story.

The pirate had joined them in the afternoon, and as there were only a few men on deck, and nothing suspicious in her appearance, she had been allowed to come close alongside; but scarcely had she done so than a black flag was run up to the peak, and men sprang from various hiding-places, and overpowered the crew of the ship without a shot being fired. When the crew were pinioned, the ship was plundered of everything valuable, and prisoners and plunder were put on board the pirate vessel. The ship was then set on fire in different places, and the pirate lay to for a while, getting up her stü'n-sails and stowing away her plunder. By this time the evening was drawing on, and the captive crew were brought forward one by one, and their hands were tied together by a bit of cord; but when the captain's turn came he managed to keep his wrists a little apart, so that he was not really very tightly tied. After this they were all blindfolded, a plank was run out so as to project over the side a little, and one by one the poor creatures were marched over into the sea. Fifteen had been disposed of in this way, when their heart-rending cries, as they fell helpless
into the water, made the remaining five declare that nothing should induce them to stir from where they were standing. They were therefore taken by force and placed on the plank, and as the pirates left each man there, he was shot. The captain felt that resistance was useless, so he quietly allowed the pirates to lead him to the plank; but as soon as ever they let go their hold of him, he sprang into the sea, so that the shot which was fired did not hit him. When in the sea, he floated quietly on his back, rightly supposing that the pirates, believing him to be securely tied, would not look after him. Soon he had the satisfaction of hearing the pirates' voices grow more distant, and then he slipped his hands from the cord, pulled the bandage from his eyes, and swam towards the burning ship, thinking that he might possibly find there some means of escape from death. In the dusk and smoke he did not see us; but hearing our voices he called for help, supposing that the vessel in which he imagined us to be, was on the other side of his own burning ship.

Such was the horrible story which the French captain told, and which made us more determined than before that we would closely follow the pirate. The moon soon rose, and enabled us to keep the brigantine
in sight, whilst we were pretty sure not to be seen ourselves. Just before sunrise she slackened her course, and we saw with surprise that her foremast was being stripped of sails and yards, and in a short space of time she was transformed into a schooner; at the same time we observed some men over the side washing off some black paint, so as to bring to light a white streak round her; and so she was completely changed in appearance from what she had been before. She then made straight for the land, and anchored off a small port for a couple of hours, whilst a boat went to the shore; but on the return of the boat from the town, she immediately stood northward, and we followed her to Rio Janeiro.

No sooner had we seen her anchored than we brought the balloon down in a quiet place out of the town, and Trevance, the Frenchman, and I got a conveyance and drove to the French consul's. This gentleman took the matter up so warmly, and managed the authorities so well, that before night the pirate vessel was seized, and her captain and crew lodged in jail.

The very next morning they were brought to trial on a charge of murder and piracy. Five-and-thirty
blood-thirsty looking villains they were as they stood in the dock, looking defiantly at the crowd of mercantile men who flocked to hear the case. When our evidence was given, stating how we saw the ship "Josephine" on fire, how we heard the report of five guns and saw five men fall over the side of the pirate vessel into the sea, and how we followed the said pirate vessel to Rio Janeiro, their counsel quietly asked what was the rig of the vessel which we saw lying to near the Josephine. I, being under examination at the time, replied, "A brigantine"; upon which he said that he should be able to prove conclusively that his clients' vessel was a schooner; and then the said clients chuckled insolently to one another. But when I detailed how the brigantine with a black hull was changed on the high seas into a schooner with a white streak, their countenances fell for a moment; but they brightened again when their counsel put in the schooner's papers, which he said would be found quite correct. Singularly enough, the papers purported to have been issued by the custom-house at the very port where the schooner anchored for a short time on her way to Rio.

The pirates' counsel then asked triumphantly if that
was all the evidence that could be brought against his clients; to which the counsel on the side of the prosecution said that he had one more witness to produce. The prisoners, doubtless thought dead men tell no tales; but he should call one of the five men who were seen to fall over the side of the pirate vessel into the sea, he should call the captain of the "Josephine."

It is well known that men like the pirates are often very superstitious, so it was not surprising that they should look eagerly towards the witness-box. And when the man whom they supposed to be lying at the bottom of the Atlantic stepped briskly into his place, their consternation can scarcely be imagined. Their cheeks grew pale and their lips quivered, and they could hardly believe the evidence of their senses; indeed one man fainted and had to be taken out of court; and as he was not brought back to the dock, it was rumoured that he had turned evidence against his late companions.

This rumour proved to be correct, for after the captain of the "Josephine" had given his evidence, which produced a strong impression on all who heard it, the man was brought forward and placed in the witness-
box, and there he told such a tale of atrocities as had hardly ever been heard of. He related how vessel after vessel had been captured, plundered, and burnt or scuttled—how every single soul of every crew had been drowned or shot—and how the custom-house officers of the small port before mentioned had been bribed to give fresh clearance papers as often as needful. Such a record of unmitigated horrors excited the crowd in court to such a degree, that order was with difficulty kept.

The evidence was conclusive, and all the prisoners were condemned to death—a sentence which would have been immediately carried into effect by the populace if a guard of troops had not been called to escort the pirates to prison.

In consequence of this episode we were objects of great attention; but we had been detained two long already from prosecuting our journey, so that we could not stay to accept any of the numerous civilities which were pressed upon us. One request, however, we felt obliged to accede to; and that was, that we would ascend in our balloon in sight of the public.

Accordingly a place was securely fenced round, so that the balloon should not be damaged by the crowd,
persons being admitted within this enclosure by a limited number of tickets; and two days after the trial of the pirates the ascent was made. There were within the enclosure several scientific men, who examined with the greatest interest everything connected with the working of the balloon; but the thing which astonished them most, I think, was the extreme toughness of the delicate-looking membrane of which the balloon proper was composed. We made two or three short trips of five or six hundred feet ascent, with a different party each time, just to show how easily we could work the balloon; and at last, having received the thanks of everybody, we sailed away due west for Hernandez.

We went at such speed that very few days must bring us to the place; and as the distance lessened, so my restlessness and anxiety increased. My mind was harassed with constant thoughts about what might or might not have been. Had the Indians been satisfied with the blood which they had already spilt? Had they learnt the lesson which the Colonel fancied that they had been taught? Had they left the settlement at peace? If not— I dared not think of that "if not." It contained a story too full of horrors and atrocities
to allow me to suffer my mind to dwell upon it for an instant. I drove the notion from me, saying to myself,—

"No, it cannot be; she is too good, too pure, too gentle, to be the subject of violence."

But yet the thought would force itself upon me.

"What do these Indians care for goodness, and purity, and gentleness, when their wild passions of vengeance are roused?

I brooded upon such questions as these far too much; but Trevance was the means of taking my thoughts somewhat away from these things, for he often asked Eagle-eye about his adventures, and Eagle-eye, in reply, would relate wonderful hunting exploits—adventures with pumas, lassoing of horses, everything almost, except one thing: he never alluded to any encounters with Indians, and yet I well knew that there had been not a few in his career; but whenever I began to question him about these, Trevance would instantly ask some explanation or some further particular about some quite different thing, and so my questions were never answered.
CHAPTER XXIV.

On the fourth day after leaving Rio we drew near to Hernandez, and Eagle-eye suddenly said to us,—

"I'll tell you what it is, gentlemen, I have been thinking that most likely the settlement has been given up, and that we shall find the place deserted. You know what young Mr. Montague said in his letter—that the people were disgusted and were leaving the place. Well, I'm thinking that very likely they're all gone."

"But," I interposed, "you know that the Colonel said he would not leave, whatever others might do."

"Yes, I know; the Colonel was obstinate enough; but he wouldn't be such a fool as to do what he said. That speech of his was made when he was hot and his blood was up; but when he began to find that he would be left (so to say) alone, you may depend upon it he would think better of it, and go with the rest."
Then taking a telescope, he looked down for a little while, and giving the glass to Trevance, he said,—

“There, sir, just as I’ve said: all cleared off, not a stick of a house left on the place.”

He had seen it all along without the glass, and was only trying to prepare me for it. I got my own telescope, and saw for myself that his words were true. There was not a roof or a wall, not a bullock or a sheep or a horse about the place; it was completely deserted. I only hoped that Eagle-eye’s suggestion might prove to be true, and that the Colonel had really followed the example of others, and left the place before the Indians could avenge their defeat. But as we neared the ground the hope grew less and less. I thought it looked as if the houses had been burnt. We came still nearer, and then I was sure of it, I could distinctly see the charred timbers. There must have been fighting too,—yes, there were the remains of two or three horses, which the vultures had been feeding upon; and, more horrible still! there was what had once been a human head stuck on a pole, but now little more than a ghastly gory skull, the flesh having been stripped off by the birds of prey.

Oh! how my heart sickened at the thought of all
that might have taken place! But there was no time to waste in mere thought.

We now landed from the balloon, and saw but too clearly that the Indians had been there, and that they had not been defeated. They had cut off a white man's head, and stuck it on a pole; they had burnt the houses; they had driven away the cattle; they had—what more had they done? How many had they killed? Were any taken prisoners and reserved for torture and indignity?

There was nothing to enable us to answer these questions. Some of the people might have escaped down the Vermejo, so Eagle-eye said. But he was obliged to admit that it was not likely. In all probability the attack was made quite suddenly, admitting of no preparation for escape.

What then was become of Katharine? Far better perhaps, I said to myself, had she died when her mother was shot. I thought of her after that sad event, obliged by that obstinate, hot-headed old fool (I could not help thinking of him so) to live on there with her brother in daily or hourly expectation of another attack; the spirit of her young life gone; overwhelmed with foreboding anxiety and fear, and enduring (so to
say) the bitterness of death continually for nine months till the final attack was made, which took place, we thought, about ten days before our arrival.

"We must follow them," I said to Trevance, "for rescue or revenge."

He wrung my hand, and replied,—

"My dear Penrice, I have read your secret for some time past, and I promise you not to leave the country till we know all that is to be known. We are brothers now, and Edith would wish me to act in this way. We will follow them for rescue, for I feel confident that we shall find her."

I could only press his hand in reply, for I could not trust myself to speak a word. I felt nevertheless how truly kind it was of him to promise to stay away from Edith for an indefinite time, and to go with me on what might prove after all to be a fruitless errand.

It was easy to see in what direction the Indians had gone after the attack on Hernandez. The cattle which had been driven off were so numerous as to leave a very broad trail; it was therefore settled that Trevance and I should follow this trail as long as it continued perfectly distinct, the balloon keeping a few hundred feet above us; but that when we got to any
difficulty Eagle-eye should come down to our help. But we must wait till morning, as it was too late to attempt to do anything that evening.

Oh! that weary night of the most dreadful suspense! The balloon was moored to a large block of stone by the river’s bank, and all night long I sat gazing out over the broad plain stretching around us. One great agonizing thought filled my mind. I scarcely heeded anything that went on around me. At supper I mechanically ate what was put before me, but I heard nothing of the conversation that went on. I was like a man in some fearful, horrid dream. The watch was set and changed, but still I sat on, looking out over the plain, the great grief at my heart swallowing up every other feeling.

With the earliest dawn I shook off my inaction, and as soon as Trevance was ready we began the pursuit for rescue or revenge.

For eight hours we followed the trail, and then we lost it on the bank of a small river, a tributary of the Vermejo. It was perhaps as well that we did lose it then; for when Eagle-eye, in obedience to our signals, came down and took us into the car, we were pretty well knocked up. That night, however, I passed just
as I had passed the night before, and they afterwards told me that I looked so wild and haggard the next morning, that Trevance put some morphine into my coffee, which sent me off into a sound sleep.

Whilst I was asleep Trevance and Eagle-eye went down to try to discover the trail; but in the afternoon they came back disappointed, having discovered several trails on both sides of the river, showing that the marauders had separated and gone in different directions, and there were no signs to indicate which we ought to follow. In this difficulty, therefore, they came back to report progress.

It was not long before I made up my mind as to the plan to be adopted, and my proposition was this: to take the spot where the trail stopped on the bank of the river as a centre, and to sail in the balloon round and round in ever-widening circles, until we came upon some of the Indians. This proposal was agreed to by the others, as being a quicker and more certain plan than following any one of the numerous trails would be.

Accordingly we began that very afternoon; and towards evening the next day we saw some moving object on the pampa, and the telescope soon showed
persons on horseback, and cattle. These, then, were certainly some of the party who had been at Hernández. How my heart beat with expectation as we drew near to them! We should perhaps soon learn something about Katharine Montague. Perhaps—yes, perhaps she might be with this very party. We might be able to rescue her before many hours had passed.

But it was necessary to proceed with great caution. It would not do to discover ourselves to the Indians; so whilst it was yet light we did not dare to come nearer than three or four miles; but (alas for my hopes) even at that distance it was pretty evident, so Eagle-eye said, that there were no captives in the party. But even if it were so, and these men were only driving cattle, still we might somehow be able to learn something.

When night came on, Eagle-eye volunteered to go down and reconnoitre. He knew the language and the customs of these Indians, and if he were discovered he was well known to them, and would be safe from harm; so he was clearly the fittest person for such an undertaking. He did not, however, wish to be discovered by them; because, as when they had last seen
him he was with the Montagues, his appearance might excite suspicion.

We dropped down silently in the shades of the evening within a few hundred yards of the Indian encampment, and then Eagle-eye descended by the rope ladder and soon disappeared in the direction of the huts. What he did we learnt from his own statement.

He first went to the place where the sheep were feeding, and coming suddenly upon one in the dark, he stunned it with a blow from the stock of his rifle; and then carrying it to the margin of the stream by which the encampment was made, he skinned it and put himself inside the skin, after having thrown the carcase into the stream. Then he took his way towards the huts, looking like a sheep which had strayed from the rest of the flock. In this way he was enabled to overhear some of the conversation of the Indians, from which he learnt that they were anxious to come up with the party who were with the chief, journeying to a place which they mentioned, about one hundred and fifty miles to the south of where they then were. He understood that there was to be a great gathering of the whole tribe, as it was
expected that the prisoners would be tortured and put to death.

This was the substance of what he learnt; but how many or of what sex the prisoners were he could not discover.

Was Katharine indeed among the number? Or were these prisoners from some other place—Indians, perhaps, of some hostile tribe? Every human being at Hernandez might have been slaughtered, and we might now be on a hopeless errand. Still we must press on; our uncertainty must be changed to certainty; besides, had I not determined upon "rescue or revenge?"

It is true that there was a little change coming over the spirit of my resolves. In my calmer moments I had sometimes thought, "What right had I, a private individual, to take life for life?" Such thoughts as these had come to me more frequently since I had been refreshed with sleep; and in the still silent hours of that night when Eagle-eye reconnoitred the Indian camp, a better influence seemed to be more completely around me, and I reflected that revenge is human, forgiveness is divine. If indeed Katharine had been killed, would not her pure spirit in Paradise
even now be asking that mercy might be shown to her murderers? If she were permitted to hold communication with this lower world, would she not tell me that in the place where she was now dwelling all was peace and love, and that each man’s duty in the world was to try as far as he could to make the world a Paradise?

Oh! how much happier the world would be if men would more generally yield to such better thoughts! Now that I can look back calmly on that part of my life, I feel very thankful for those softer influences. The spirit of vengeance, indeed, frequently asserted its power over me, but throughout the night I could feel that it was getting weaker and weaker; and when the morning light brought the time for action, the feeling in my heart was, “Rescue, if rescue be yet possible; but if not, a life-long sorrow as cheerfully borne as may be.”

Eagle-eye’s report led, of course, to a change of plan. Instead of circling round and round, we determined to go straight for the place mentioned by the Indians as the place of meeting; and if on our way there, we should not see anything of the party of whom we were in pursuit, we would take that place as
a centre (not of a circle, but) of an arc of a circle, with a radius continually lengthening till the object of our search should be met with. But on first reaching the place of rendezvous we must make preparations for the rescue which we hoped to be able to accomplish.
CHAPTER XXV.

At early dawn we started, and reached our destination in seven hours, without having seen any Indians on our way. The place was well known to Eagle-eye, and was just the place for an encampment—a miniature grassy plain, of about a quarter of a mile wide, gradually sloping down to the edge of a small lake, and backed by a wood of a mile or so in depth, which came nearly to the shores of the lake at the two ends of the plain. There were no signs of any Indians about, so we lowered the balloon, and landed so as to look about the place a little. Nearest the lake the wood was very thick, being almost choked up with undergrowth; but further back it gradually got thinner, until at last it was quite free from brush-wood, and the trees were so far apart that we could easily sail the balloon amongst them.

Whilst we were reconnoitering, Eagle-eye decided upon the plan of operations. It was useless, as we all
knew, to attempt a rescue by force; therefore it would be necessary to resort to stratagem: and when Eagle-eye detailed his scheme, we all agreed to it as being the plan most likely to be successful.

He therefore remained on the edge of the wood to make his preparations, whilst we ascended in the balloon to keep a look out for the approach of any Indians; but when night came on we went down and picked him up again. He told us that he had made a small bark canoe, which I was to take charge of, concealing it and myself among the reeds growing at the edge of the lake, at a spot which he would show me, from which I could see all that went on at the camping ground. If there were prisoners in any hut, I was to get at them as best I could; and when I heard the report of half a dozen maroons in quick succession, I was to make my way as quickly as possible to the lower end of the lake with any prisoners whom I could save.

The next morning I got out from my stores one of the large sheets of India-rubber which had been sent to me from London with the balloon; this I spread out on the ground, and placed the canoe in the middle of it. I then got some light tough twigs, which I
fastened to both sides of the canoe for about half its length, and tying the tops of these twigs together I made a frame-work under which a person could sit comfortably. After this I brought up the India-rubber over the frame-work, and making it fit as well as I could, I fastened all the seams with India-rubber varnish, so that there was a sort of water-proof cabin at one end of the canoe. The other part of the sheet was then drawn over the canoe like a large sack, the mouth of which could be securely tied on the inside, and so the whole canoe would be in a water-tight case.

For ventilation I had four India-rubber tubes of three feet long, so fixed that one end of each tube opened into the cabin, and the other end had a small wooden float attached to it to keep it above the surface of the water. Lastly, a paddle was fixed in the stern to be used for sculling.

When everything was thus completed, the canoe was slung to the car, and carried by the balloon to the lake. Before the slings by which it was supported were removed, I got into the cabin and fastened up the opening; then bags of stones which had been provided were let down from the balloon on the canoe.
till the roof was only just above the level of the water. This was all that I wanted, as the weight of an additional person would sink it a foot or so beneath the surface.

I was then brought to the bank, where I opened the sack-like mouth, and arranged the bags of stones on each side of the canoe as ballast, and so contrived that I could, when I pleased, drop them into the water from the inside. The canoe was then securely hidden among the reeds, and I went up again in the balloon. In the meantime Eagle-eye had cleared away all traces of work and of footprints, so that no suspicions should be excited.

About noon the next day we saw a body of Indians coming over the plain towards the head of the lake, so Eagle-eye and I took our places in the canoe, with a stock of provisions to last us over the next day, as it was uncertain how long we might have to be on the watch. And as soon as we had taken up our quarters, the balloon ascended out of sight, with instructions to descend at night and to wait in the open part of the wood during the next day, till Eagle-eye should join the party, and then at nightfall to pick me up at the lower end of the lake.
The Indians of this part of the country have many customs similar to those of the North American Indians, but these customs are fast dying out. It was from his knowledge of these customs that Eagle-eye acted.

He was dressed in skins, with feathers and paint, as a priest or magician of the Mocovi Indians, who inhabit the plains of Gran Chaco, where we were. It is now only very rarely, and on occasions of the greatest importance that a magician would dress in this way; so the very fact of his being so dressed, would attract the greatest attention when he was seen; and this was the very thing desired by him. In his girdle he carried his only weapon, or at least his only visible weapon, a small tomahawk; and in the numerous bags and pouches hung about him were the materials to be used in his incantations. One bag, however, contained a quantity of damp gunpowder, which had something mixed with it to increase the smoke emitted by it, another bag had six maroons connected by string saturated with saltpetre, and in a third bag was a box of matches.

And so our watch began. Every fibre of every muscle and every nerve of my body was stretched to the highest pitch of tension, and yet I scarcely
spoke or stirred as hour after hour passed away. One, 
two, three, four hours passed, and yet there were no 
Indians to be seen. Had they gone in some other 
direction? Was Eagle-eye mistaken in thinking that 
he heard this spot named as the place of rendezvous? 
Or had the Indians any suspicion that they were being 
waited for, and had they therefore turned off to go 
somewhere else?

Four hours and a half our watch had lasted, and 
then Eagle-eye whispered to me,—

"Here they come."

Yes, here they were, coming towards us along the 
edge of the lake, about a mile and a half from us. 
Oh! how my heart beat when I saw them! For a 
second or two I closed my eyes to recover my com­
posure. Was Katharine really amongst them? And 
if so, in what condition, or reserved for what fate? 
Or had the torture and the death of the captives 
already taken place? Were we too late for the rescue? 
Oh! the agonizing bitterness of that thought! Too 
late for the rescue! How could I live if it should 
indeed prove to be so? The thirst for vengeance was 
gone, so I was able to pray earnestly for strength to 
do what had to be done, and for patience to bear what
had to be borne; but still, the anxiety of that watch was almost more than I could endure.

On they came by the lake, slowly following the windings of the bank; but as yet they were in too compact a body for us to see how many they were, or if there were any prisoners amongst the number. In about a quarter of an hour the party reached the camping ground, and we eagerly watched them from our covert as they rode into the open space.

Unsuspectingly they rode on, and then dismounting from their horses they began to erect their huts. More than a hundred Indians were now on the ground, and still they came on, men and women and children, but no captives had yet made their appearance.

At last, just as I was beginning to think that we had had all our labour in vain, and a painful sense of wearying disappointment came over me, Eagle-eye touched me on the arm, and I saw a body of men, with their long rifles ready for use at a moment's notice, ride on to the ground. Looking intently as they came nearer, I saw two who were unarmed riding in the midst.

Then our search and our watching had not been in vain. The two prisoners were, without a doubt,
Katharine and her brother. In an instant Eagle-eye's strong grasp was on my arm.

"Keep still, or you will ruin everything," he whispered in my ear.

It was an involuntary movement on my part which he restrained. I knew not, indeed, that I had moved; but the sight of her captive in the hands of those cruel pitiless Indians was almost maddening. I felt at the moment as if I could have rushed forth, and carried her off in the face of them all; but a minute's cool reflection told me that the plan which we had agreed upon was the only one likely to be successful, so I compelled myself to keep still.
CHAPTER XXVI.

We saw the prisoners conducted to their huts at a distance from one another, but both of them near the margin of the lake, in which direction there would be the least chance of their attempting to escape; and still more fortunately, the hut in which Katharine was placed was the nearest to my hiding-place. We noted it carefully, so that we might be able to find our way to it in the dark if necessary.

Oh, how wearily the hours dragged on throughout that night! But time goes on, even with those who are heaviest at heart, and so it was with us.

About two o'clock in the morning Eagle-eye whispered to me that he must set forth to reconnoitre. Accordingly I was left alone to my own anxious thoughts and forebodings. When about an hour and a half had passed, I was startled by hearing some one calling out something in the camp, and this was immediately followed by the sound of many voices. My
first impression was that Eagle-eye was discovered and taken prisoner; but presently I perceived a cluster of red lights in the sky, which I thought had doubtless attracted the notice of the Indians.

Whilst I was looking at this curious cluster of meteors with surprise, Eagle-eye joined me.

"Do you see it?" he asked.

"Yes," I said. "Is it not wonderful?"

"Wonderful to the Indians," he replied. "It is our friends burning Bengal lights. I had asked them to do so about this time; and as soon as I saw the lights I shouted out in the camp, "Look at the sky;" and then I came straight to you. But I guess that those lights are now the subject of anxious discussion. The Indians will look upon them as an omen, which they will not know how to interpret."

Then he told me that he had actually seen Katharine, who was looking very pale and worn, and that he had warned her to be on the alert. He had crept cautiously up to the hut, and gently lifting the skin covering, he had peeped in; she was sitting just opposite to him near the embers of the fire, and an Indian girl was sleeping close to the entrance. Katharine was looking as if absorbed in grief, and it was not till
he had made a slight noise by scraping with his nail on the skin that he attracted her attention, and then he beckoned to her; but she evidently distrusted him, Indian as he seemed to be, for she would not move from her place. He therefore took a paper from his belt and threw it towards her, and on the paper he had written,—

“Friends are at hand to deliver you. Remain in the hut till you are called by your English name, and then follow without fear him who calls you. Your brother's safety is being cared for. Destroy this as soon as you have read it.”

He saw her take the paper, and as she read it a bright gleam of pleasure flashed across her face; then she nodded to him (as if agreeing to what was written) and burnt the paper.

Eagle-eye was so careful to relate every minute particular of his adventurous reconnaissance that it took him more than an hour to tell his story. I did not think of it then, but it struck me afterwards that he was tedious on purpose that the time might not hang so heavily.

What my feelings were as he was telling me his adventures I cannot attempt to describe. I was almost
envious because he had been able to see her, whilst I had been counting the seconds as they crept lazily by. But then I thought of the pleasant task allotted to me for the morrow—*for the morrow?* No! for *that very day*, because it was now long past midnight. I myself was to have the felicity of setting her free! In a few hours I should be speaking with her, face to face gazing into the depths of her pure trustful eyes, and feeding my love with a never satisfying fulness.
CHAPTER XXVII.

I was roused from my dreams of pleasure to come, by Eagle-eye, who whispered to me to join him in an early breakfast, for he was to get round to the other side of the camp, and make his appearance from that quarter; and I must be ready to do my part at any time—it might not be for several hours, or it might be much sooner.

When our breakfast was despatched, Eagle-eye set forth on an expedition which I could not but regard as a very hazardous one, but which he appeared to look forward to with the greatest delight. I pressed his hand warmly at parting, and wished him all success; but when he was gone I felt an unusual sinking of heart. What, if we should fail? What, if he should be discovered? Would not such failure and discovery bring additional tortures and miseries upon those whom we hoped to save?

With tormenting thoughts such as these, hours
passed on—hours which seemed to be lengthened into days, so painfully and so slowly did they drag along. Nine weary hours had passed since Eagle-eye left me, and yet there was no sign of his arrival amongst the Indians. It was three o'clock, and the camp had long been full of life, and now it was subsiding into quietness; a council was evidently being held, for several men sat on the ground smoking, and after a while one of them stood up and began to speak. After speaking for about a quarter of an hour, he sat down, and there was silence in the assembly for a few seconds.

Presently there was an exclamation of surprise, and I saw Eagle-eye leap into the middle of the circle of chiefs so suddenly, that he almost appeared to have dropped from the clouds. He walked round and round within the circle, speaking and gesticulating in a most excited manner; and in a short space of time nearly the whole camp had turned out to listen to him.

He afterwards gave me an account of all that took place. His speech was something after this manner:—

"Chiefs and warriors of the Mocovi, the puma has slunk away to his lair, the wild beasts of the pampas
and of the woods have hidden themselves, because the sun has risen in his strength. The Mocovi have shown themselves, and the beasts of prey are ashamed. Long have the pale-faces ill-treated the tribes: they have driven them from their hunting-grounds: they have taken them for slaves; they have slaughtered their cattle. The boldness of the people was gone; the heart of the Indian quivered like the grass before the wind. But the Mocovi at last stood forth: the chiefs and warriors of the Mocovi said that it should be so no more. The tomahawk had been buried in the earth too long; now it should be buried in the hearts of the pale-faces. When did a Mocovi go from his word? When did he ever shrink from carrying out his threats upon his enemies?

"The pale-faces of the Inglesi came and settled upon the land, but the Mocovi lifted up their finger, and the strangers fled to the sea. The chief of the Inglesi, however, remained with his family. He was a great warrior, none had been able to stand before him; but the Mocovi looked at him and he died. His scalp hangs at the girdle of the chief of the Mocovi, and his skull whitens on the ashes of his wigwam. But the cub of the puma is living yet. Chiefs and warriors of the
Mocovi, the Great Spirit has spoken to me. Ye saw the red stars in the sky last night. They were the words of the Great Spirit speaking to his servant. Those red words of the Great Spirit said, 'Blood! Give me the blood of the young chief of the Inglesi. Let not the sun set until his scalp is hanging at the girdle of a Mocovi.' The Great Spirit never speaks in vain. Let the young chief be brought forth to the torture. I have said.'

He then sat down, and hiding his face in his mantle, he chanted an Indian death-song. When it was concluded, the principal chief rose up and said,—

"The Great Spirit has spoken. Let the young chief be brought forth to the torture."

Accordingly Arthur Montague was brought out and bound securely to a tree. I could see him plainly from my hiding-place, and my heart sickened at the sight, but a sort of fascination kept my eyes fixed upon the scene. The captive was no sooner in his place than the women and children rushed forward with arrows and lances to torture him; but Eagle-eye sprang to his feet and waved them back with his hand.

Then he chanted something, which he told me was a dedication of the victim to the Great Spirit; then
taking his tomahawk in his hand, he flourished it about, and at last flung it with unerring aim so that it stuck quivering in the tree just an inch or two above Alfred's head. When he went up to take it from the tree, he said in a low voice,—

"I am going to save you; when you are free, follow me into the wood."

After this he began some incantations, taking things from some of his various pouches, and sprinkling them towards the four quarters of the heavens. At last he took the prepared gunpowder, and made with it a half circle round the prisoner. Presently he lighted it, and as the thick smoke rose up, he danced and shouted in front of it; then he laid down the string of maroons and set fire to the touch-paper, and as they went off he threw more powder on the half-circle, making the smoke denser than ever. Dancing and shouting more wildly than before, he jumped through the smoke several times; and then when the smoke was at its thickest, he jumped behind it and cut the cords by which Arthur Montague was bound.

Immediately they ran into the wood, and soon reached the balloon, got into the car in safety, and sailed away without having been seen by the Indians.
In the meantime I had not been idle. As soon as Eagle-eye lighted the gunpowder, I knew that my time for action was just at hand, so I left my place of observation, and crept cautiously towards the hut where Katharine was placed. Not long after I reached it, bang! bang! went the six maroons, and I lifted the skin of the hut. She was alone, pale and startled by the sudden reports, and looking away from me towards the entrance of the hut.

"Katharine," I said; and as she turned towards me, the anxious look was gone from her face, and surprise and pleasure took its place.

"Be silent, and follow me," I added; and she crept under the skin which I raised for her; and then I took her hand, and led her as noiselessly and quickly as I could through the reeds to the canoe.

There was now a tremendous commotion in the camp, and I felt sure that they had discovered the escape of Alfred Montague; it would not, therefore, be long before they found out that his sister, too, had fled; and they would easily track our way through the reeds, so that we were as yet by no means safe. It was necessary, then, to make haste; so I hurried Katharine into the cabin, and had scarcely seen her
seated before I heard them in pursuit of us. On they came, firing their guns at random into the reeds, so that several bullets whizzed close by us; but I stepped quickly into my place, secured the mouth of the covering, and just as I had done so the canoe sank below the surface of the water; upon which I sculled away from the bank, and we were safe so far.

We were now in perfect darkness, and in a state of too much fear and excitement to speak more than one single sentence each.

"Sit quite still, and don't be afraid," was what I said to her.

"I quite trust you," was her reply.

I found the sculling much harder work than I had anticipated, and after going on for some time I began to feel exhausted, owing, as I supposed, to the want of a proper supply of air. Reflecting that this, too, was probably the case with Katharine, I determined to rise to the surface at all hazards; accordingly I dropped a bag of stones on each side of the canoe, and then pushing the loose part of the covering upwards with my hand, I thought that there was no pressure of water against it; so I cautiously slackened the string which secured the opening, and feeling care-
fully, I could not perceive any wet oozing through. Opening gradually more and more I found that it was above the water; and slowly I put up my head. On looking about I saw that we were nearly close to the opposite side of the lake, and at least three miles distant, as the bird flies, from the Indian camp.

I therefore let go four more bags of stones, and began to scull to the shore. But after this I saw nothing and remembered nothing till I heard a sweet voice saying to me, in tones of sad entreaty,—

"Arthur, speak to me! oh, do speak to me!"

And then I became conscious that I was lying on the ground, and that Katharine was leaning over me.

It was getting towards evening, and the rays of the setting sun as they spread across the lake showed me her sweet face, pale, and anxious, and worn.

"What is it? What has happened, dearest?" I said, addressing her in this way quite involuntarily.

But the words had no sooner passed my lips than I knew what I had said, for a rosy blush stole over her face; while a light gleamed in her eye, and an expression came into her countenance, showing me that I had not caused her displeasure.

"You have been wounded somehow," she answered,
"and I feared that you would bleed to death; but at last I managed to tie up your arm, and to stop the flow of blood."

"I suppose it must have been when the Indians were pursuing us," I said. "But I did not know it; I was anxious to get you away, and glad, so very glad, that you were not then in their power."

As I said this I took her hand, and her grateful fingers closed on mine with a warm pressure. There was, too, a look in her eyes which seemed to me to tell of a tenderer feeling than that of gratitude; and I took courage to ask her,—

"May I now tell you something that has been in my heart for a long time?"

And there in that lonely wilderness, as the sun was casting his last level rays on the earth, I poured out the tale of my love; and she was not offended with me, but somehow or other she let me know that I might have spoken without much fear before we last parted at Hernandez. And then the name of this place recalled all her own sad story, the particulars of which she gave me. And very sad and very touching it was to hear from her how much she had suffered: how hard she and her brother had tried to persuade..."
the Colonel to go with the departing emigrants; how, before long, they were left literally alone; and how at last, after days and nights of foreboding fear, the sudden attack was made, the Colonel shot, and themselves taken prisoners, and lighted on their way at their departure by their burning home.

Her head was leaning on my shoulder when she finished the sad narration, and I kissed away the tears that had trickled over her cheek, and said,—

"My own darling, you are mine now; and such days will never happen again."

And it could not but be pleasant to me to see how, in the midst of all her sorrowful recollections, in spite of our being alone there so near our enemies, she turned to me as one who could protect her, and with whom she could not be otherwise than safe.

Nor did I myself feel that we were now in much danger. The great object which I had proposed to myself had so far been safely accomplished. Katharine was rescued from the hands of the Indians, and before many hours were over we should doubtless be safe in the balloon.

Nevertheless, we must leave the place where we were, and go to the end of the lake, as had been agreed
upon with my friends; otherwise they would not know where to look for us. But first we must eat something, as we had both of us been fasting for several hours, Hitherto the excitement had kept us from feeling hungry; but now we were very glad to attack some of the provisions which were yet left in the canoe.

Then we started on our voyage down the lake, not now under the water, but on it. I was still feeling weak from loss of blood, which had been trickling from the wound in my arm all the time that I had been paddling away from the Indians; and then it seems that I had fainted away just as we grounded close to the bank. Katharine, however, had managed to get me on shore, rip up the sleeve of my coat, and bandage my arm with handkerchiefs. Fortunately there was not now much occasion to use the paddle, for when once we got near the middle of the lake, the current was strong enough to carry us gently on.

Much talk we had during that little voyage—talk carried on in whispers, lest the sound of our voices should be carried across the water to the Indians, but how pleasant I need not say.

At last the lake narrowed to a small river, and it
was necessary for us to stop, in order that our friends might find us, I therefore ran the canoe in close to the bank; but I would not suffer Katharine to leave it, lest any wild beast should be prowling about. It was a dark, but a very still night, so that we should easily hear any animal, even though we should be unable to see it.

After we had been there about half an hour we heard the sound of voices at no great distance, and Katharine, clinging to my side, whispered,—

"The Indians!"

I pressed her close, and listened. The voices came nearer, and then I said to her,—

"No Indians, darling, but our friends in the balloon. Now you are indeed safe."

And in the excess of my joy I kissed back the warmth which fear had driven from her cheeks; and the kiss was not coldly returned. Oh! the ecstasy of that moment! How it repaid me for all that I had undergone! All the bitter anxieties, all the chilling fears, all the harrowing agonies which I had endured were then but a dream. A hitherto untasted pleasure was now mine, and the reality exceeded the expectation. Katharine was not only safe, but I felt and
knew that she was mine, loving me with all the pure freshness of her heart.

But there was not much time to give way even to such joys as these. Our friends were close at hand, and we must let them know where we were; so having damped a little gunpowder, I burnt it, and very soon had the satisfaction of helping Katharine into the car, where she was welcomed by her brother; and then I got in myself.

Tреванс was the first to grasp me by the hand, and give me his warmest congratulations on the rescue; and then the others came forward and expressed their gladness to see me safe back again. Then we conducted our lady-guest to the after-cabin, which was set apart for her use; while by a fresh arrangement of our diminished stores we were able to make up a couple of beds for ourselves in the fore-cabin.

And then, hurrah for the homeward voyage!
On the twenty-first of April, just sixty-four weeks and five days from the time of my leaving England, we started on our return. But before our final departure from South America, we had to take leave of one who, besides being of the greatest use on several occasions, had proved himself a true friend. Eagle-eye begged to be left behind; he was unfitted, he said, for civilized countries, and if he were to return to England he should often pine for the freedom to which he had been so long accustomed. We were therefore obliged, very regretfully, to set him down in Brazil; and on parting with him, Trevance, on behalf of us all, gave him a splendid rifle—the most valuable of all gifts to him, he declared.

Without him we should never have rescued Katharine and her brother; for not only did he plan the whole thing, but (as I have related) he took upon himself the task of the greatest danger. However, he
would scarcely hear our thanks, saying that it was the sort of adventure which delighted him; and then he laughingly affirmed that mine was the task of danger, as the shot in my arm proved. And so we parted from one to whom I shall always feel a debt of lasting gratitude.

Having mentioned the wound in my arm, I will say here that it was a mere flesh wound, and that it healed quickly, leaving no trace beyond a scar.

On the homeward voyage we sailed mostly at a low elevation, so as to give as much change of scene as possible to Katharine, and to assist in restoring her spirits, after all that she had undergone. We soon discovered that the Colonel's harsh and overbearing manner towards his children had effectually prevented the growth of any strong affection towards him; but still, the manner of his death and the captivity of herself and her brother had been painfully trying to one so sensitive as Katharine, though her wonderful courage and power of endurance had kept her up through it all. And now there was naturally a certain degree of reaction, which, however, abated as we approached England.

The monotony of our voyage over the Atlantic was
broken by our seeing and speaking with several vessels. It was very curious to drop down to them from a height of three or four hundred feet, and see the upturned faces of crew or passengers, expressive of the greatest astonishment.

One of the vessels which we visited was an outward-bound mail steamer, on board of which we dined and spent a couple of hours, and the captain of which kindly gave us a few newspapers when we took leave of him. After our return to the balloon, as I was reading one of these newspapers, I came upon a piece of news which was of the greatest importance to Alfred Montague. It was as follows:—

"SAD ACCIDENT.—We are sorry to record a sad accident which took place in Southampton Water on Saturday last, and which resulted in the death of the Earl of Brockenhurst, his son and heir, and two other persons. The noble earl, who was well known for his scientific attainments, had recently constructed a small sailing boat on a novel principle, and on the day in question, when the wind was blowing very fresh from the south-east, he determined to test the capabilities of his vessel as a sea-boat; accordingly,
the earl, with his son and two men-servants, embarked at Hythe. There was a very ugly sea in Southampton Water at the time, and the wind was increasing in violence. When they had left the pier about a quarter of an hour, a sudden squall caught the boat and completely capsized her, so that she filled immediately and went down. As soon as practicable three or four boats put off to the rescue, but when they got to the scene of the disaster, none of the persons who were in the boat could be seen. The bodies of the earl, however, of his son, and of one of the men were picked up on Tuesday; and yesterday an inquest was held, when a verdict of 'Accidentally Drowned' was returned in each case. This sad calamity has caused several noble families to go into mourning, and has thrown a gloom over a great part of the South of Hampshire, where the lamented nobleman and his son were much liked. We are informed that the earl, who was enormously wealthy, died without a will; therefore the whole of the property, as well as the title, devolves upon the heir-at-law, a second cousin of the deceased nobleman, Colonel Montague, who is now Governor of the settlement of Hernandez in La Plata. Mr. F. Quick, of the firm of
Messrs. Shaw and Quick, the family solicitors, has gone to South America to convey the mournful intelligence to the new earl, who will probably return to England as soon as possible.—*Hampshire Chronicle*.”

As soon as I had read this paragraph I showed it to Katharine, and then I called Alfred and said to him,—

“I believe that I have the honour of addressing the Earl of Brockenhurst!”

“What humbug!” he said. “What’s up now?”

“The fortunes of the house of Montague are up,” I replied; “and I repeat that I am speaking to the Earl of Brockenhurst, for the late earl has died, and the title comes to you.”

“Oh no, my good fellow, you mistake; there are others before me.”

“Look and see for yourself,” I said, as I gave him the newspaper.

When he had read the paragraph he was much astonished, for, as he said, he had always considered the chance of the title coming to him so remote that he had never thought much about it.

Of course, in our little community there was no
such thing as keeping the matter secret, so it was discussed by every one. Trevance, who seemed to know everybody, told us that the late earl's income was not a penny less than £150,000 a year, and that he felt sure there would be found at least three years' income lying idle at the banker's, which would enable the young earl to start handsomely. As for the late peer's scientific attainments, he thought the less said the better, as they were about on a par with his capacity as a boat-builder. Poor man! he had paid dearly for his experiment in that line, so that it would have been well for him if he had not attempted to put his theory into practice.

Trevance knew a good deal more about the property than the present owner did. He told us that Brockenhurst Castle was a splendid old building, erected mostly in Tudor times, with additions and alterations in very good taste made by the late earl; that the park, including a slice of the New Forest, granted in olden times, contained some magnificent timber; and that the great bulk of the income was derived from coal and iron mines.

Conversation and speculations about this matter helped to amuse us during the next day or two, and
then we had something else to think about; for when we were three or four hundred miles north-east of the West Indies we were caught in a violent hurricane, which carried us rapidly backwards, so that we had to ascend quickly in search of a calmer region, which we did not find till we reached an elevation of eleven thousand feet. From this height we made occasional descents to learn whether the storm still continued or not, and it was not till the fourth day that we found the wind sufficiently moderated to allow us to proceed on the low level on which we had been travelling before.

Katharine and her brother would hardly believe that there had been much of a storm, for whilst we were in it we were carried along with the wind, so that there was nothing to tell us the force with which it was blowing, except the rapidity with which we were driven backwards, and this they had not observed.

However, we very soon came upon most sad evidence of the storm, for seeing something floating on the surface of the water, we went down to it, and found it to be a portion of a raft; and on this piece of raft, with every wave washing over it, were two bodies,
seemingly a mother and her child of about three years old. On getting on to the raft I discovered that they were both alive, though senseless and exhausted.

The woman appeared to be a lady, still young, and though unconscious, she clasped the child, a pretty boy, so tightly that we had some difficulty in getting him from her arms. When this was done, it did not take us very long to get them into our car, where we delivered the lady to the care of Katharine, while we took charge of the boy. They were put to bed, and gradually restored by the judicious administration of stimulants and food; and whilst this was being done, their clothes were washed in fresh water and dried.

The little boy, who was called Charlie Wilson, soon became lively and quite a pet with all on board the balloon; but his mother could not bring herself to leave the cabin. Poor thing! she had indeed had a heavy trial! She and her husband and three children, of whom Charlie was the youngest, were on their way to England from Demerara in a sailing vessel, when they were caught in the hurricane, and the sails being suddenly taken aback, the ship was dismasted, and lay helpless on the water. While she was in this state one
of the masts knocked a hole in her side. It was useless to think of the boats, as no boat could have lived for five minutes in such a sea; so the crew, under the captain's orders, made a large raft, on which they put provisions and water, and then all—passengers (about a dozen altogether) and ship's company—managed to get on it, and cast off from the sinking ship. But the raft had been so hastily put together, that in the course of the night (as poor Mrs. Wilson supposed) it must have broken up, for she found herself and her youngest boy the only survivors of the ill-fated vessel. Her husband had tied her securely to a strong part of the raft, and so she had not been washed off by the waves when exhaustion came upon her. For three days she had been on the raft without food or water. She happened to have a small tin of chocolates in her pocket when she left the ship, and these had supported the life of the child; but nothing had passed inside her own lips.

Such was the melancholy story which Katharine heard from Mrs. Wilson and related to us. It made our hearts bleed to think of her sorrows; but little Charlie was too young to know his loss, and we could scarcely restrain his liveliness within due limits.
We made search for any other survivors, but though we saw several timbers floating about which seemed to have formed part of the raft, our search was unsuccessful; so after having circled about the place for some hours, narrowly inspecting every square mile of sea, we resumed our homeward voyage. Two days afterwards we came up with a homeward-bound ship, and, as usual, I went on board with Trevance to have a talk with the captain. Speaking about the hurricane, he said that they had only been in the outskirts of it, and so they had escaped without any damage; but they had picked up several people from a raft, which had put off from a foundered ship. Of course we eagerly made inquiries, and found, what we scarcely dared to hope, that Mr. Wilson and his two children were on board. Whilst Trevance remained to announce his good news to him, I went up to the balloon to have the intelligence broken to Mrs. Wilson. Katharine told her that we had gone down to the ship, and that possibly we might hear something about the fate of some who left on the raft with her. On her saying that it was very unlikely, Katharine replied that she would not say it was likely, but it was possible that a vessel might have picked up some. Then she
left her for a few minutes, and on returning to the cabin, she told her I had returned from the ship and that the captain had said something about some vessel having picked up some shipwrecked sailors, and so by degrees she was told that her husband and her children were really safe in the ship just below us.

It may be imagined that she was almost wild with joy at receiving news so unexpected and so unlikely; and as soon as she had sufficiently recovered herself, we put her and Charlie on board the ship, where the meeting between husband and wife, and mother and children was unspeakably affecting. However, we soon took leave of them and returned to our balloon.

We had been delayed for some time, so now we worked our engine at full power, and made rapid progress. Talking over what had lately occurred, some one made the remark about truth being stranger than fiction, upon which I said that I did not think there was anything very wonderful in these late events. We had been able to look over a large expanse of sea, and so we had discovered the piece of raft, which would have escaped the notice of persons on board a ship only a very little way off; and then we were going direct to England, and so it was only natural that we should
overtake a ship on the same course coming from the same part of the ocean.

Trevance agreed with me, and then told us the following story:—

"In the year 1850 four ships sailed from London on the same day with emigrants to found the settlement of Canterbury in New Zealand. A gentleman, Mr Z—— took his passage by the 'Randolph,' one of these ships, and sent all his trunks and cases on board; but he went into the country to see some friends, meaning to join his ship at Plymouth, where all the vessels were to touch on their way out. It so happened that on his way to Plymouth a slight accident happened to the train, which delayed him for two or three hours, and when he reached Plymouth, after midnight, three of the vessels, including the 'Randolph,' had sailed. What was poor Mr. Z—— to do? He went on board the ship that was left, the 'Sir George Seymour,' which was just on the point of sailing, and there he told his story to the captain and some friends who were on board. They did what they could to lessen his misfortune: the captain gave him a passage, and the passengers between them lent him things to supply the loss of his outfit. The weeks passed on, and when they were near the
line they approached another ship, which proved to be the 'Randolph,' to which Mr. Z—— was transferred in due course. Throughout the whole voyage none of the four ships sighted one another except these two, and neither of these spoke to any other ship whatever. Now if any great event had depended upon this gentleman's meeting with his own ship, and the story had been related in a novel, people would have cried out, 'How improbable!' and it certainly was much more remarkable than what has lately happened to us."

Trevance had a fund of anecdotes, which would have been a fortune to a regular diner-out, and which many a time helped to enliven our party in the balloon. I remember one very amusing one, but what introduced it I do not recollect.

"An English gentleman who had lately married a young French lady happened to be stopping with his wife at an hotel at Cambridge. After dinner he was called away on business, so he asked his wife to order a devilled leg of turkey for breakfast the next morning; then thinking that perhaps she would hardly understand this expression, he said that they would have it grilled. When the waiter came for his orders, the lady said to him, in the softest and gentlest of voices,
‘Waiter, if you please, we will have the devil grilled for breakfast!’"

We used sometimes to accuse Trevance of inventing his anecdotes; but he assured us that he was perfectly innocent of any such crime.
CHAPTER XXIX.

We sped on rapidly over the remainder of our voyage, and hourly drew nearer to England. At length, on the morning of the last day of April, we sighted the Scilly Isles. Soon well-remembered spots in the old country began to show themselves, and by four o’clock in the afternoon we had disembarked at Trevance, sixty-six weeks and two days after I had left it.

My first business was to send a telegram to Edith, telling her to expect me the next day; and then I went with Katharine and her brother to look for lodgings in the little village of Penkerris, or, as the people called it, Penkerris church-town, lying just outside the desmesne of Trevance. We soon found lodgings—small but clean—in the cottage of a widow who had formerly been cook in the squire’s family. As we walked through the village I was surprised to see what a change for the better Trevance had made—cottages rebuilt, schools established, church restored—the place, in short, looked
almost like a model village; but picturesque withal, for wherever it was practicable the old walls covered with ivy or other creepers were left standing.

The lodgings were close to the church, which was just outside the grounds of Trevance, and about a quarter of a mile from the house. When I had seen the earl and Katharine settled in their temporary abode, I walked back to spend the evening and sleep at Trevance.

The next day, as it was a Saint's Day, there was an early celebration at the church; and Katharine and her brother and I returned public thanks for great mercies received by us. After the service we all breakfasted at Trevance, and then I walked back with Katharine to her lodgings. It was my first really quiet talk with her since that evening by the lake in the Gran Chaco; and there was much to be said on both sides, so that our walk was not a short one.

She had not yet quite recovered her spirits, but her quiet trustfulness was more pleasing to me then, than any amount of high spirits would have been; and her whole manner indicated to me, who had studied her so well, a strength of character which few persons at first sight would have given her credit for possessing. It
was surprising to see what the events of the last few days had done for her. She had lost none of her girlish tenderness and grace; but there was now added to these a womanly dignity, such as suffering, bravely endured, confers upon some persons.

And as I looked at her now, with her head faultlessly set on a delicately-turned neck, her rich brown hair setting off a white forehead, broad rather than high, her eyes of deepest, tenderest blue, under dark pencilled brows and fringed with long dark lashes, her nose straight and finely cut, her mouth small, with lips plump and red, and expressive of every lovable quality, her whole figure graceful and almost queenly in movement or repose, I felt that even as regards outward beauty I had obtained such a prize as falls to the lot of few; and when in addition to these outward charms, I thought of all the interior loveliness which went to make up her character, I knew that in winning her love I had got that which more than compensated me for all that I had undergone.

In the afternoon Trevance drove me to the station, and I took the train to Menheniot, from whence I walked to Trevenna, where I found Edith well, and as bright and pretty as ever. I was, however, surprised
to see her dressed in mourning. It was for my Aunt Mary, who had been dead for more than two months. Edith had written to the Cape to tell me, but of course I had not received the letter, having left the colony before its arrival.

Life had not had many pleasures for my aunt latterly, so we could not feel much sorrow at her removal from us. She had left all her little property to Edith; and I am sure that the dear girl deserved it, for she had thoroughly devoted herself to her aunt, never having once left her for twenty-four hours during the last three years and a half.

So we spent a long quiet evening together; and when Edith had blushingly confessed her engagement to me, I told her of mine; which was really news to her, for she had not at all anticipated it. My letters had not contained anything that could give her a hint of my feelings towards Katharine, so of course she was taken by surprise. I promised, however, that she should see her future sister-in-law very soon; and I told her to have no fears about liking her, because she would not be able to help it.

The next day I spent with Edith in going through her accounts, and hearing all that had taken place in
my absence; and then, in my turn, I had to tell her my adventures, or, at least, some of them, which she thought very exciting. Then on Saturday she and I started for Penkerris, where I meant to take lodgings for a few days, so that she and Katharine might become acquainted with each other. When we arrived I had no great difficulty in getting a couple of small rooms (for I should sleep at Trevance), and then when all arrangements were made we went to see Katharine.

It was with no little pleasure that I introduced these two to one another, for I was proud of both of them. They were both clever and intellectual, and both handsome, though in different ways; and I could see that they took to one another at once. When I took Edith back to her lodgings in the evening, she told me that she did not wonder at my loving Katharine very dearly, for I must have been made of stone if I had not done so; and the next day Katharine was equally warm in her praises of Edith.

After we had been at Penkerris for about ten days, the Earl of Brockenhurst (I was beginning to get accustomed to the new style of address, though he had not yet publicly adopted it) had a long conversation with me. He told me that he had received a letter from
Messrs. Shaw and Quick, the late earl's solicitors, to whom he had written, and they said in their reply that Mr. F. Quick had just returned from South America with requisite information; that as the late earl had died intestate, there was no will to be proved, but that he could draw at once upon the bankers to any amount that he might require up to a certain sum; and they further requested that he would appoint an early day for seeing them on matters of business.

He then informed me that, upon the receipt of this letter, he had written to an aunt asking her to take charge of Katharine till he should get settled; and his aunt had written to him from Dawlish, where she had taken a house for a few months, saying how glad she would be if Katharine and "Mr. Penrice's sister" would spend some little time with her; and then he showed me her note of invitation directed to "Miss Penrice." I replied that, for my part, I should be glad of such an arrangement, because I also had some business which would occupy me a little time.

He then went on to say, with some hesitation, that, finding his income was even larger than what Trevance had stated, and that he had a very great deal lying at the bank, he had been talking to Katharine, and he
now begged me, as a favour to her and to himself, to accept something as a token of their gratitude—a slight token—he said, because they owed their lives to me; and then he put a small packet into my hand. I thanked him, and said that I would not refuse what they asked, though Katharine's love was more than an equivalent for anything that I had been enabled to do. He then left me for the purpose of giving Edith the note of invitation from his aunt; and when I opened the packet I could scarcely believe my eyes. It contained a banker's receipt of money paid to my account—no less a sum than £100,000!

As soon as I recovered from my astonishment I went to his lodgings to speak to him, but only Katharine was there, so I told her that I could not think of taking such a sum.

"But, my dearest Arthur, you must take it," she said. "Alfred and I have talked it over, and he will be vexed if you say any more about it, for it is really not a large sum for him; and I shall be vexed, too, and I do not think that you will wish to vex me, will you?" And then she laid her head lovingly on my shoulder, and continued, "Only think what it would have been if you had never taken us out of the hands of those
dreadful Indians! And must we do nothing to show that we are grateful? For we can never think of repaying you for life—and more than life to me—dearest,” and then a shudder passed over her.

“My own darling,” I answered, “if it will really vex you to refuse, I must consent; but my payment I take now from your lips.”

Then she said,—

“Now, Arthur, dearest, I have got a little present to make you on my own account. Alfred has been very good to me, and has given me half as much as you have got; please take it from me as my own—”

Before she could finish her sentence, I interrupted her by saying,—

“No, darling; indeed I shall do nothing of the sort. Your brother gave it to you, and yours it shall continue to be. It will be my turn to be vexed if you ask me to do such a thing. All that I ask of you is—what I shall never be tired of receiving—your own dear love.”

“And that,” she replied, “was yours before I knew it, and always will be yours. Do you know, Arthur, I used to think about you before ever I saw you? It is true. When I saw the advertisement, time after time, asking for information about Mr. Trevance, I used to
think to myself, 'Poor Mr. Penrice has no friends to inquire about him!' and then I would make up a sort of little romance, how I should find you somewhere where you had fallen from the balloon, with your arm broken, and you would be very faint and ill, and I should bring a doctor to you, and nurse you till you got well; and then you would call me your little Katharine, and take me out boating or nutting, and I should be very happy with you; and so I used to think much about you, for I was not then ten years old. That was what made me remember your name so well when you came to us on board the 'Ocean Queen'; and that made me glad to see you again when you came to visit us at Hernandez. And now it seems almost as if my romance had come true, only so much better, for you have saved me; and I am your own Katharine, am I not, dearest?"

To this question there was but one reply to be given, as I pressed her to my side, and that reply may be readily imagined by those who have been in similar happy circumstances. Then we talked about the visit to Dawlish, which she thought would be very delightful, as her aunt was a person who thought but little of herself, and chiefly cared to see others happy.
The next week saw us all in the train on our way to Dawlish, which we reached early in the afternoon. I had often admired this pretty little watering-place in passing, but now I was about to commence a closer acquaintance with it. As seen from the railroad it looks charming. There is a narrow valley running east and west at right angles from the sea; and at the foot of the hills, and on the slopes on either side, are plain unpretending-looking houses; while the middle of the valley is occupied by a broad grassy lawn, tastefully laid out with paths, and shrubs, and flower-beds, and having a wide shallow stream of water, broken by several little cascades, flowing through it.

The house which Mrs. Deane, Katharine's aunt, had taken was on the southern slope of the hill, on the right hand, and there we dined. The old lady was particularly pleasant, and expressed the great pleasure which it gave her to have Edith as her guest. "It will be so nice, too," she said, "for Katharine, as she will have a companion to take long walks with her."

The next day Alfred and I went to London, and there I turned up in my portmanteau the stones which I had picked up in the cave in South Africa, so I thought that I would take some of them to a jeweller
to see about getting them polished. I found that I had thirty-seven of various sizes; but I only took a couple of the largest; and when I showed them, and inquired about polishing, the shopman called his principal, who told me that they were diamonds, and that when cut they would be worth about £3,000 each. Upon hearing this, I went back to the hotel and got the others, which the jeweller told me were worth from £50 to £1,000 each. I therefore ordered two sets of ornaments to be made, one of fifteen stones for Edith, and the other of seventeen, including the two largest, for Katharine; and the remainder of the stones I exchanged for other things.

After having transacted all my business in London, I went northward, and paid a visit to the works of the New Patent Engine Company, where I was received by Williams and Smith, and shown everything that was going on. At the end of the first year they had made a dividend of 15 per cent., and the business was increasing so rapidly that it was now bringing in at the rate of 20 per cent. clear profit. But I soon saw that the works were capable of great extension; and on talking the matter over with Williams and Smith, they said that if the capital were
trebled, or even quadrupled, the profits would be more than increased in proportion. After carefully considering the matter, therefore, with them, we agreed to raise the value of each share to £5,000; then I would take six, and they one each. I told them also that I wished the hands to have some share in our prosperity, so I would suggest that they should receive a bonus of 4 per cent. on their yearly wages. This being agreed to, the hands were all called and the scheme propounded to them, with this understanding, that if the business did not pay 10 per cent. clear profit they would receive no bonus, but that, as it was hardly likely to return so little as that, they might look upon the bonus as almost a certainty. I further told them that we were determined, as far as we possibly could, to have a body of sober industrious men, who would conduct themselves and bring up their families so as to be a credit to the place where they lived.

Close to the works we erected refreshment, reading, and smoking rooms, made as bright and cheerful as we could make them, but where no intoxicating liquors were sold; and adjoining these were baths, where every workman was expected to have a warm or cold bath every day when he left work; for we considered
that a clean man is much more likely to have a proper degree of self-respect than a dirty man. In anticipation also of a larger number of work-people, with their families, we increased the school accommodation; and then we set apart a site and got plans for a church, to be built as soon as we should have three hundred work-people.

As soon as all these matters were arranged I was naturally anxious to see Katharine, from whom I had now been absent more than three weeks. I had, however, heard from her almost daily, for she had been very good in writing to me oftener than I had promised to be satisfied with. She had quite recovered her strength, and was able to take a walk of eight or nine miles with ease; so she told me I must be prepared for some good excursions. Edith was still staying with Mrs. Deane, and Trevance had twice been to Dawlish for a couple of days at a time.
CHAPTER XXX.

It was a bright morning in the early part of June when I left Staffordshire, but the journey was a long one, and it was not till evening that I reached Dawlish; and when I arrived, there were my two dear ones at the station waiting for me. Oh, what good it did me to see them! Katharine, too, was looking so well, and perfectly lovely, even to impartial eyes,—what, then, must she have appeared to mine?

Almost every day during that visit we took good walks, through the Luscombe woods, Powderham, Mamhead, Little Haldon; and during one of these walks it was that I got Katharine to fix the day for our marriage. We had gone by train to Teignmouth, from whence we had taken a fly to Bishop's Teignton, where we lunched with some friends; and after lunch we walked back to Dawlish, over Little Haldon. Whilst ascending the hill we had a view hardly to be surpassed in England for rich beauty. Looking back
over the fertile valley, we saw hills equally fertile rising one behind another, and in the far distance, lighted up by the afternoon sun, were the rugged tors of Dartmoor; their very ruggedness enhancing the richness of the nearer hills.

When we got to the top of Little Haldon, we turned off our direct road somewhat to the right, and then, standing on a bank, we had another beautiful view. There was a wide expanse of sea in front of us; on the extreme left we could see Portland Island (a sign of coming rain); then the line of coast from Weymouth to Exmouth, upon which the sun was shining brightly; then close at the left hand was Dawlish; just under our feet, on the right, were Teignmouth and Shaldon, nestling under the hills; then there was the river Teign, calm and placid; and at the head of the navigation on the extreme right, bustling little Newton, the head-quarters of the South Devon Railway works.

It was as Katharine and I were standing on the bank looking at the beautiful panorama before us, that she named the twenty-fourth as the day on which we were to be made indissolubly one.

In two or three days her aunt was to take her to Brockenhurst Castle, and from thence we were to be
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married in the little village church. We were both agreed in wishing that it should be with no maimed ceremony, but with the eucharistic sacrifice and blessing, as ordained by the church for her members. The wedding was to be a very quiet one, in consequence of the recent deaths in the family. Edith and another friend of Katharine's were to be the only bridesmaids, Trevance was to be my best man, and a few of the nearest relatives would complete the party. Such were the arrangements which we settled as we walked back to Dawlish, and which Katharine communicated to her aunt, from whom she obtained a premise that everything should be as she wished.

The next morning's post brought an official letter to Katharine, stating that the Queen granted her the rank of an earl's daughter, as if her father had succeeded to the title; and there was also a letter from Alfred, saying that he knew this would be a surprise, but that he had thought it right to obtain this precedence for his sister, and that he hoped she would have no objection to be Lady Katharine.

In the course of the same day my box of jewellery arrived; and I immediately unpacked one of the two jewel boxes, and gave it to Katharine; and then I
SKYWARD AND EARTHWARD.

had the pleasure of seeing my darling, with her woman's taste, admiring each article, and paying me for each with the sweetest of payments. The diamonds were certainly beautiful, but her own sparkling brightness was far more attractive in my eyes than any brilliancy of theirs could be; but far beyond all the brightness was the sweet trustful love which beamed forth in every look, and spoke in every tone of her voice.

The next day I accompanied them to Brockenhurst (for Edith had been asked to stay there till the week after the wedding), and after remaining there for three days, I returned to complete my arrangements at Trevenna, from whence I went to spend the rest of the week with Trevance.

Never did a week seem to go so slowly; but as time never stands still, Saturday came at last; then followed the quiet Sunday, and then on the Monday we started for Brockenhurst, Trevance by rail, and I in the balloon by myself. The wind was blowing softly from the south-west, so I had a pleasant voyage, and arrived at the castle early in the afternoon. My approach had been perceived, and in consequence there was a large assemblage to witness my descent, which
was accomplished in safety, and then the balloon was properly stowed away in a coach-house.

In the evening I drove to Lyndhurst, and put up at the hotel for the night; and at half-past nine the next morning Trevance and I were at the door of Brockenhurst church. But I need not describe the wedding—indeed I could not do it; if I were to attempt such a thing I should fail most egregiously. The persons most concerned have their thoughts too much occupied to enable them to give anything like a satisfactory description. The Hampshire papers, of course, gave an account more or less correct, which those who care to read will find if they look at the proper date.

The presents were all duly admired; and there were two things placed among them which had no right to be there. One was a chronometer time-piece from South American merchants, in gratitude for the detection and capture of the pirates; and the other was a handsome silver centre-piece for the dinner-table from the owners of the Liverpool ship "Emerald," with an inscription recording the delivery of the ship from the Malay pirates between Java and Borneo.

Both of these things were shown amongst the wedding presents at Katharine's special request; and in
his speech at the breakfast, the Earl of Brockenhurst alluded to them, and also to the rescue of himself and his sister from the Indians, in terms far too flattering; but then, as I told him afterwards, people generally talk a good deal of nonsense at a wedding breakfast.

When the bride retired to put on her travelling dress, Trevance went to bring our carriage to the door. Rumours of the wedding and of the intended mode of our departure had drawn people by train from all parts of the neighbourhood, and from some parts not of the neighbourhood, so that there was quite a large crowd in the park to see us start.

At a little after twelve the bride (lovely in the eyes of all, but specially lovely in mine) appeared ready for the journey; and when the farewells were said, we had to face the crowd collected in front of the castle. There was our carriage—the balloon—held down by ropes, under the directions of Trevance; and a carpeted platform or gangway led from the hall door to the car.

A cordial "good-bye" to Trevance, ditto to Edith, with a request to have everything ready for us at Trevenna in a month, and then we took our places, the ropes were let go, and the balloon rose, slowly at
first, but afterwards more rapidly, till we reached an elevation of about three thousand feet.

As the cheers of the crowd below grew fainter and fainter, and we felt more and more strongly that we were alone together, so, too, we seemed to feel that we belonged more entirely to one another; and the intense happiness of that feeling I will not attempt to describe. The queen of my heart was mine by a tie which only death itself could loosen; my doubts, my suspense, my anxieties were all at an end. I knew that all my deep fond love for her was fully returned, and my happiness was almost too great for words; but still, we contrived somehow or other to make one another understand the feelings that were in our hearts. In such a case speech is weak and powerless; there is a language which is far more expressive than the most glowing and ardent words can be.

What can equal the ecstasy of the emotions when heart feels the beating of heart, and the assurance is felt that the warmest, purest, and truest love is most fully reciprocated? Such was my case. I loved Katharine with an intensity such as I had never even dreamed of, and I was sure that she loved me with an equal love. And when I looked at her in all her
beauty, and loveliness, and majestic grace, how proud I was of her love—a priceless gift, of which I was all too unworthy.

The night was calm and bright, and the balloon required no attention; so, having set the rudder in the proper direction, we allowed it to take care of itself; and thus in three days we reached Madeira, where we stayed a week. At the end of that time we set out for our homeward journey, visiting the most romantic and out-of-the-way places in the Pyrenees, and afterwards in the Alps.

And so the month sped on, almost too quickly; however, we were not sorry to find ourselves on the afternoon of the appointed day over Trevenna.

Edith was keeping an anxious look out for us, and so she was in the field to welcome us when we descended. Then I introduced Katharine to her home, which she said she knew already from what she had heard us say about it; but I do not think that she was prepared to find it so prettily situated.
CHAPTER XXXI.

A FEW words more, and then I shall have told all that I have to tell.

Two months after our own happy day Edith became the wife of Trevance; and I gave her up to him with full confidence that they would be quite happy together, as I never saw two people more thoroughly suited to one another than they were. And that confidence has not been shaken by lapse of time. We often stay at Trevance, and we always say that Edith and her husband are among the happiest of married people.

The Earl of Brockenhurst had followed his sister's example after a lapse of two years, and the young countess is a favourite with us all. In fact the houses of Brockenhurst, Trevance, and Penrice are united in the closest bonds of affection, and visits are pretty regularly exchanged every year.

The New Patent Engine Company went on so
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