

When the strong arm of Hannibal Strike came to his support amid the breakers, he was quite exhausted by his exertions in breasting the waves; added to which a blow from a floating portion of the wreck had severely, and, as it was soon discovered, fatally, injured him. When borne to the Dolphins, he was speechless, the blood gushed from his mouth, and an artery was found to have been ruptured. A surgeon from the adjacent town was speedily in attendance; offers of superior accommodation to that of the humble hostelry arrived from the neighbouring gentry; but the stream of life ceased not to pour, in spite of the skill of the mediciner, and ere long the shipwrecked stranger made his abiding home in the little churchyard of Lannassy. The reader is now acquainted with particulars which came not to the knowledge of the parties engaged in kindly offices about the dying man, till their care being unavailing, the coroner's inquest that sat on the body elicited what we have narrated.

But, leaving the Dolphins, let us make our way to the cottage of Jan Pentreath, where, after having undergone more remedies than the Humane Society would ever have sanctioned, and found restoration in some of the many, a handsome young man was snugly sleeping between the blankets of a low truckle-bed. There was a blazing fire on the hearth, on either side of which two old women were seated at a little round table, bearing cups and saucers, *matchless* of their kind; together with a black tea-pot that had for its neighbour a suspicious-looking case-bottle: a loaf of course brown bread, a potato patty, and a few salted pilchards, completed the preparations for the sociable afternoon meal of Peggy Pentreath and Gracy Dolcooth—"Help ee self, then, an Gracy, and, if it's only for the nonce of it, put in a drop o' the liquor. A dish o' tea is a comfort then, please sure, after being up all night, and a fussing all day as us a been. Give the bottle a lift, then, there be plenty more where that's a come from. Well, now, if that aint a nice handsome gentleman, after all! and the neighbours does say he's got a power o' money. I only wish un would wake and have a morsel to ate. Help eeself to the tattie fuggan, Gracy. They tells me he's the son o' the voregin gentleman that's dead, up at the Dolphins."

"And so he be's," answered Gracy, taking up the conversation as soon as Peggy had stopped to sip and blow a saucerful of hot tea:—"It all came out afore Mr. Roberts, the crowner; my Peter was there, and he told me that this young vellow was the old man's hare, which means a rich squire's son. But, please, sure, the gentry won't lev un stay here long. While you was wanting, there came a power o' company to know how he be's, and to look at un sleeping; and that Muster Smart said he wanted to get un to don'tify a box as he called it; and it seems he's a got poor Hannibal Strike in the prison for stealing of un."

"Ah! Grassy, cheeld venne! I heard something o' that when I was out. That Smart's a cantankerous young toad! He wants to swear old Hannibal took the box from the pile o' goods his people were a-guarding; but I'll be sworn it's all a lie; they pays un for lying up at the custom-house."

Thus in an under-tone prated the watchful guardians of the sleeper, who, though he had slumbered heavily during the whole morning, showed as yet but little likelihood of waking. We will now proceed to the town of Lannassy, where, in a wretched prison, the more miserable on account of the little use made of it, was Hannibal Strike, seated on the damp floor of his cell, the authorities not having made up their minds whether he should have his place of confinement fitted up with the accommodation of a truss of straw for the night, or whether it might not be expedient at once to dispatch their prisoner to the county-gaol. Hannibal had passed one examination before the magistrates. The coxswain swore that the case seized in the possession of the wrecker had formed part of a pile of goods which he and his comrades had collected—how it had been abstracted he knew not, but he identified it by certain marks which had engaged his notice. In addition to this evidence, Mr. Smart gave so exaggerated an account of Strike's offences against the revenue, and threw so much suspicion on his general character, that, as the magistrates were anxious to make an example of some of the parties engaged in wrecking the night previous, it was thought but just to press the matter against one who, they imagined, had actually restolen what had not long before been rescued from the grasp of the plunderers.

Hannibal solemnly denied that he had done any thing worse than just save the case from the waves, though he candidly confessed that he was carrying it home to see what it might contain, and in a tone of apology, said that the gentlemen might talk as they liked, but nothing should make him believe that there was any harm in a poor man's taking what the sea gave him. Evening was fast approaching when Nanny Strike, the afflicted wife of the fisherman, and the sobbing Mary were admitted to the prisoner. They brought news that the magistrates did not mean to forward him to Bodmin till the next morning, and he was now permitted to have a flock mattress, together with a plentiful supply of straw, and furthermore the solace of companionship till eight o'clock.

"Well, these be new-vangled laws, Nanny," said Hannibal, as he sat himself on the bed. "But this be comfortable, please sure, after the hard ground—why I be nearly stiff o' the could."

"Ah, Hannibal, what be they a-going to do with ee? Dear—dear—why did ee meddle with that box?"

"Dang the box! they can't harm me—don't ee take on so, you foolish old 'oman," and the affectionate husband wiped the eyes of his weeping spouse with her apron. "And thee, too, Mally, thou silly cheeld," said he, smiling through his glistening tears on the orphan girl, "I believe ee are both come to make an ould fool o' me."

Mary answered this appeal by clinging to her benefactor, and exclaiming:—"Tis I who have brought all this—Mr. Smart is taking vengeance because I followed your warning."

"Don't ee cry, there's a good maiden—cheer up, my ould dame—why, what makes ee both hold to me so?" soothingly expostulated Hannibal. "They won't hang me, dost think, for just taking what the breakers flung me—for steal the box I never did. Oh that my boy was here to stand up for his vayther! but there's no one o' my name but a poor weak 'oman like thee, Nanny"—and the old man's head dropped on his breast as if he sorely wanted the comfort he fain would have imparted.

The constable who had locked the afflicted family in the prison was now heard approaching, and the women began to weep afresh, fearing that a longer stay with the prisoner was to be denied them. But the cause of his coming was to reconduct Strike before the magistrates. "I don't know what it all means," said the man, "but there be some of the gentry up at the Mayor's, and you're to be examined again before I lock you up for the night."

Accompanied by his wife and adopted daughter, Hannibal was now taken to the house of the principal magistrate. Here he was ushered into a room, where he found several of the town dignitaries assembled round a young man of gentlemanly exterior, reclining on a sofa, earnestly talking to a very attentive auditory. On the entrance of Strike he attempted to spring from his couch, but, as if through weakness, again fell into a recumbent posture.

"The owner of the box you are charged with having taken," said one of the gentlemen, pointing to the stranger, who was no other than the individual whom we left in Mally Pentreath's cottage, but who, as "an Gracy" had prophesied, was soon removed thence to much better quarters.

"I humbly beg his honour's pardon," answered the wrecker. "but I only took what the sea hove up, and what—As sure as a gun, if it arn't the young vellow I dragged from the water!" cried Hannibal, turning suddenly to his wife, who with Mary had been permitted to follow him into the room.

The fishermen's delight that he was now, as he considered himself, safe from prosecution, seeing that he had saved the life of the owner of the box, was soon lost in astonishment as he beheld the fixed gaze of his wife directed towards the young man, who had again risen from the sofa, and was approaching her. His wonder was complete when his good dame, with a startling scream, flung herself into the gentleman's arms and wept aloud. The hand which the stranger held out to Hannibal was most respectfully taken, and retained for a few moments with an air of bewilderment, till Nanny Strike's face, streaming with tears, was raised, and, at length finding words to express her joy, she exclaimed:—"Oh Hannibal, don't ee know him? he is our son!"

The father and husband was now the most affected of the party, as Harry Strike knelt for the old man's blessing and forgiveness. Mary, too, was not an uninterested spectatress of the scene, and soon took her position in the family group, when details too long for our limits explained that the young adventurer had been found by Mr. Mortram a poor ill-treated cabin-boy, in a ship where that gentleman happened to be a passenger; that he rescued the lad from the brutal treatment of his master, and placed him at a school in New York. There the reports of his preceptors as to his natural abilities and good conduct so delighted his benefactor, that, becoming more and more attached to him, the childless planter ultimately adopted him as his son. Education had not exhibited its effects in mental development without touching the heart of the truant wanderer. Ere Mr. Mortram made Harry his companion to Barbadoes, prior to his proposed removal to England, perfect confidence existed between the young man and his patron.

The latter had contemplated with much satisfaction the reconciliation of the lost son to his parents, and had promised his protegee that he would speedily put it in his power to compensate, in some degree, to the authors of his being for past forgetfulness. Harry Strike lamented the death of Mr. Mortram most bitterly, for he had fully appreciated the kindness bestowed on him; but, though great was the damp thus cast on the happiness he experienced at being re-united to his family, a more immediate distress arose from the charge which still rested on his father. The magistrates, who had been sympathising spectators of the scene described, consulted on the matter, and declared they could not interfere with the due course of justice, as Mr. Smart continued to press the commitment of the fisherman for having stolen property when under the protection of his men. Happily the next day it was discovered, by Harry's instrumentality, that the box, which contained papers of consequence, bore marks and appearance exactly similar to another, which, after some search, was discovered to be still in the possession of the revenue-officers.

Hannibal was thus exonerated from the graver charge which had been preferred against him, and as to the offence of wrecking, it would have been invidious to make a solitary example of him. Mr. Smart very prudently procured his removal from that part of the coast; Hannibal Strike and his wife lived for many years in a commodious cottage not far from the scene of the wreck; their son Harry, who had purchased property in a midland county, in vain endeavouring to persuade the old couple to leave a locality endeared to them by the memories of past days. But the pretty Mary Harvey was not quite so inexorable: after the lapse of two years, which were not idly spent in preparing herself for the superior position which she was invited to share, she became the wife of Harry Mortram.

The name of Strike was now extinct, and we can assure the reader that we do not depart from truth out of delicacy to the feelings of his descendants, in saying that Hannibal Strike, for the rest of his life, strictly adhered to the "new-vangled" law of men and tum. Though, when there happened to be a wreck within ten miles of his cottage, the old man was sure to be there, it was merely as a spectator. Yet still as a matter of argument, to the day of his death he held the opinion of his fathers, that there was "no harm in taking what the sea threw on the shore."

SINGULAR ADVENTURE OF FOUR BOYS.—In the well known and often visited Middleton Dale, where the towering rocks stand in such majestic grandeur, capped with forest trees and mantling ivy, the threatening attitude of which has often struck with the sublimest admiration and awe the mind of the idle wanderer, the careless pedestrian, and the tasteful and inquiring tourist—amid the crags which surround the base of one of these stupendous rocks is a narrow creek, which leads through a long and subterranean passage into a cavern called the "Wonder," but which, owing to its dangerous and rugged path, is not often visited but by the most enterprising and curious, and the most daring children of the High Peakers. Four boys of the latter description, from the village of Eyam, about the age of eleven years, anxious to explore the secret cavern and narrow windings of the Wonder, a few days ago provided themselves with a candle, and immediately after dinner proceeded to carry their purpose into effect. Various are the reports as to the length of the cavern, some asserting that it extends for several miles under the neighboring hills. It is not often explored further than about three hundred or four hundred and eighty yards, to which point it appears our youthful subterranean travellers, extended their route, when unfortunately for them, a drop of water from the top of the rock extinguished their light, and left them in total darkness in the gloomy cavern. Night came on, and the parents began to be uneasy about their absence, and not returning home when darkness began to cover the earth, immediate search was made for them, and every inquiry made among their playfellows; when it happened that they found one to whom it appears this scheme of exploring the Wonder had been communicated. Provided with lights and mining clothes, two men immediately started at midnight to seek them, when at the extremity of the cavern they found the little daring creatures fast asleep, with their clothes torn, scratched, bruised, and bleeding from the wounds they had received in their attempts to make their way out in darkness. From their own accounts it appears that after the light was extinguished, they made several attempts to find their way back in vain; after which they knelt down and repeated their prayers, and then tried again, without any greater success. They then prayed again and again, and each time attempted in vain to get back, till, exhausted and wounded by falling over the ragged pieces of rock which line the windings of the cavern, and terrified by their awful situation, they sank into sleep, in which state they were found.

It is not sufficiently observed by all the admirers of flowers, that the agreeable perfume of plants, in full bloom, when diffused through close apartments, becomes decidedly deleterious, by producing headache, giddiness, and other affections of the brain. But it is in confinement alone that such effects become evident. In the garden, when mingled with a wholesome and exhilarating atmosphere, amidst objects that awaken the most delightful sensations of our nature, these sweets are a part of our gratifications, and health is promoted as a consequence of enjoyment so pure.

Who has not felt the excitement of Spring? of nature, in that delightful season, rising from lethargy into beauty and vivacity; and spreading the sweets of the thorn and the violet, auxiliary to our gratifications? Amidst the beauties of the flower-garden, these pleasures are condensed and refined; and the fragrance there, hovering on the wings of the breeze, cannot be imagined less wholesome than pleasant.

Whatever increases our gratifications, so peculiarly unmixed with the bad passions of human nature, must surely tend to the improvement of mankind; and to the excitement of grateful feelings towards that beneficent Creator who has so bountifully supplied these luxuries, which none are denied.—*Murand's Botanic Garden.*