

raid, confiding the helm to one of his best men, proceeded to examine the condition of Sambo.

It was evident that the aged negro had been stunned, but whether from the effect of apoplexy, or violence offered him, it was impossible to decide. No external wound was visible, and yet his breathing was that of one who had received some severe bodily injury. In a few minutes, however, he recovered his recollection, and the words he uttered, as he gazed wildly around, and addressed his master, were sufficient to explain the whole affair:

"Damn him debbol, Massa GERALD, he get safe off, him bilkain."

"Ha, Desborough! it is, then, as I suspected—quick, put the helm about—two of the lightest and most active into my canoe, and follow in pursuit. The fellow is making for the shore, no doubt. Now then, my lads," as two of the crew sprang into the canoe that had been instantly lowered, "fifty dollars between you, recollect, if you bring him back."

Although there needed no greater spur to exertion, than a desire both to please their officer, and to acquit themselves of a duty, the sum offered was not without its proper weight. In an instant, the canoe was seen scudding along the surface of the water, towards the shore, and, at intervals, as the anxious Gerald listened, he fancied he could distinguish the exertions of the fugitive swimmer from those made by the paddles of his pursuers. For a time all was silent, when, at length, a deriding laugh came over the surface of the lake, that too plainly told, the settler had reached the shore, and was beyond all chance of capture. In the bitterness of his disappointment, and heedless of the pleasure his change of purpose had procured him, Gerald could not help cursing his folly, in having suffered himself to be diverted from his original intention of descending to the place of confinement of the prisoner. Had this been done, all might have been well. He had now no doubt that the voices had proceeded from thence, and he was resolved, as soon as the absent men came on board, to institute a strict inquiry into the affair.

No sooner, therefore, had the canoe returned from the unsuccessful trip, than all hands were summoned and questioned, under a threat of severe punishment, to whoever should be found prevaricating, as to the manner of the prisoner's escape. Each positively denied having in any way violated the order which enjoined that no communication should take place between the prisoner and the crew, to whom indeed all access was denied, with the exception of Sambo, entrusted with the duty of carrying the former his meals. The denial of the men was so straight forward and clear, that Gerald knew not what to believe, and yet it was evident that the sounds he had heard, proceeded from human voices. Determined to satisfy himself, his first care was to descend between decks, preceded by his boatswain, with a lantern. At the sternmost ex-

tremity of the little vessel there was a small room, used for stores, but which, empty on this trip, had been converted into a cell for Desborough. This was usually entered from the cabin, but in order to avoid inconvenience to the ladies, a door had been effected in the bulk heads, the key of which was kept by Sambo. On inspection, this door was found hermetically closed, so that it became evident if the key had not been purloined from its keeper, the escape of Desborough must have been accomplished through the cabin. Moreover, there was no opening of any description to be found, through which a knife might be passed to enable him to sever the bonds which confined his feet. Close to the partition, were swung the hammock's of two men, who had been somewhat dilatory in obeying the summons on deck, and between whom it was not impossible the conversation he had detected had been carried on. On re-ascending, he again questioned these men, but they most solemnly assured him they had not spoken either together or to others, within the last two hours, having fallen fast asleep on being relieved from their watch. Search was now made in the pockets of Sambo, whose injury had been found to be a violent blow given on the back of the ear, and whose recovery from the stupefaction it had produced was yet imperfect. The key being found, all suspicion of participation was removed from the crew, who could only have communicated from their own quarter of the vessel, and they were accordingly dismissed; one half, comprising the first watch, to their hammocks, the remainder to their original station on the fore-castle. The next care of the young commander was to inspect the cabin, and institute a strict scrutiny as to the manner in which the escape had been effected. The door that opened into the now untenanted prison, stood between the companion ladder and the recess occupied by the daughters of the Governor. To his surprise, Gerald found it locked, and the key, that usually remained in a niche near the door, removed. On turning to search for it, he also noticed, for the first time, that the lamp, suspended from a beam in the centre of the cabin, had been extinguished. Struck by these remarkable circumstances, a suspicion, which he would have given much not to have entertained, forced itself upon his mind—As a first measure, and that there might be no doubt whatever on the subject, he broke open the door. As he expected, it was empty.—Upon a small table lay the remains of the settler's last meal, but neither knife nor fork, both which articles had been interdicted, were to be found. At the foot of the chair on which he had evidently been seated, for the purpose of freeing himself, lay the heavy cords that had bound his ancles. These had been severed in two places, and, as was discovered on close examination, by the application of some sharp and deli-