

done he sent his bill for the price agreed on, fifteen hundred dollars."

"How much is that in civilized money?"

"I couldn't say. But in the coin of this island—to which I am indebted for something dearer than life—it would be three hundred pounds. Instead of sending the money the man wrote that things had gone against him and he could not pay all his creditors. But he would deed to my father a farm in payment of his bill. This farm, he wrote, was of forty acres and easily worth one hundred dollars an acre. As it was clear from the letter that if father refused the farm he would probably get nothing, he sent a receipt in full for the fifteen hundred dollars and received a deed of the land."

"So he got four thousand dollars instead of fifteen hundred."

"Well, it had that appearance—for a few months. But when he tried to sell this four thousand dollar farm at auction he couldn't get a bid on it. Nobody wanted it. He learned that this farm was no farm at all; merely a treeless, waterless, grassless tract on the side of a barren mountain. Then he realized how completely he had been fooled."

"Outrageous! I do hope the horrid brute was punished."

"He was. Plentifully and most elaborately punished. Retribution was camping on his trail. But that did not help my father at the time. The failure to get his fifteen hundred dollars forced him to give