

him, his life and his singular doings, from Nicholas, who remembered him as a boy just entering upon the competition; and they never forgot to say a prayer for his soul.

But perhaps their greatest treat was to go down, for a few days at a time, to the cavern of the forest, where, under the guidance of Nicholas, they were constantly discovering new mysteries: secret stairs, doors opening in the rocks, shelves sliding forth from hidden recesses, and panels answering to secret springs. Many of these things, as well as the underground passages which Sedgwick and Julian had traversed, had to do with the contraband trade,—a fascinating and unscrupulous calling, in which many were engaged in the unsettled pioneer times of the colonies; whilst some of the Mortimers, like others of their class, had their own dealings with the ruthless violators of the law.

It was rather a disappointment to the boys that the smugglers, who had rendered memorable Julian's first visit to the cavern, seemed to have completely disappeared. Whether they had been terrified by Nicholas' mysterious doings and by their belief in his occult powers, whether they had been alarmed by

193121