

Twelve hours afterwards, the young writer came out of the room. He shook Martha gently to wake her; in the long time of waiting she had fallen asleep.

The writer looked like a man who had grown mentally and physically tired, but he smiled as a man who has conquered. "He will live," he said, "I am to write his life, from such things as he has told me. He will get well, and he will return to England with us, and conquer. Look." He placed a piece of paper in Martha's hand, upon it was written, in Aping-Ayres' handwriting:—

*I, Robert Aping-Ayres, some time known as Roberto or Robbie, have left to wiser and maybe more careful hands than my own the chronicling of the little life lent to me from God to take care of for a while before He took it again unto Himself. When whimsically I christened you "Tinwhumpinny" I little dreamed that the sound of the drum you would beat would recall me from the path down which I was fast drifting I know not whither. If I have failed in remembering your sayings and doings it is only because they cannot be chronicled. If I have stumbled and faltered in showing the depth and purity of the childish love which saved in time a wasted life which the locusts were eating, it is only because that love is above all price, beyond all power to describe.*

*But, in the words I remember so well, I live for the time when before one of the jewelled Gates of Heaven he will beat his drum to guide me in also, and I shall bring the bouquet of wild flowers he bade me gather for him, with the words, "See what I've brought you." And maybe they will become immortal flowers to bloom beside us in the Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven for ever and ever, Amen.*

THE END