

# Weekly



# Visitor.

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## IMPROMPTU.

Virtue distressed to Faith applied  
For strength her woes to bear;  
But Faith was weak, and turned aside  
With an half uttered prayer.

Hope o'er the sufferer bent awhile  
With wan and doubtful look;  
Shed the faint semblance of a smile,  
And her departure took.

Virtue despaired—but Charity  
In that dark hour appeared;  
Rise, sister, rise! Come, dwell with me—  
Lo! see my temples reared.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lady, there's not a harp in heaven  
But chants its lay to thee,  
To thee the immortal crown is given—  
For thou art Charity!

## THE STORY OF A CITY ARAB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BOUGHTON GRANGE."

CHAPTER XXXI.  
A SEA CAPTAIN.

By the dim light of a solitary lantern I perceived that I was in the hold of a vessel, apparently of some considerable burden; but I had neither opportunity nor inclination to make very close or critical observations. I remember only that the foul stenches arising from bilge-water, confined air, accumulated filth, and probably the cargo also, almost overpowered

me, and caused me to gasp with a sense of suffocation; and that the space was so confined that there was not room for standing upright.

Stooping over me were the burglar Kite and the dark visaged sailor.

'Now, look here!' said the former, shaking his fist at me savagely, and holding it close to my temple; 'if I had my will on yo to-night, 'tis precious little of this trouble you'd have giv us, and so I toll yo; and you may thank the Capling that you's alive and kicking now. D'yo hear?'

I did hear and my heart throbbed with gratitude to God who had put it in the heart of my unhappy father to show this mercy to me and had saved him from the guilt of further crime—and such crime!

'And there's another thing I've got to say,' continued Kite; 'you'll never be nearer death than you've bin to night. But you've got off this time; and what I say is this here; if you make a try to get away afore this here bark leaves the river, you'll taste powder as sure as you're alive now. And another thing, you're going off in this here craft on a wy'ge; and if you ever shows your face agin in this country—town or country—and I knows it you're a dead man. So now, then, Ned, out with the light.'

Accordingly, the candle was blown out, and I was left in solitude and darkness.

My first thoughts were those of thankfulness to God for the deliverance he had wrought for me, in restraining the malice, and wickedness, and wrath of these ungodly men. My next were directed to the future. But dizzy with excitement of mind, and the blows I had received, now that immediate danger seemed past, all power of thought suddenly left me;

I sunk back against the hard and rough side of the vessel, and I believe that I fainted.

For several days I remained in my now place of imprisonment, and saw no one but the dark complexioned sailor, who at long intervals brought me food, neither did I hear anything, except the occasional trampling of feet on deck, and the surging of the river against the sides of the vessel; while, half poisoned with the polluted atmosphere of the hold, I felt a deadly sickness creep over me.

This state of miserable suspense, however, was to have an end. Ere long the increased bustle on deck, and other symptoms of activity, made it evident that the vessel was getting under sail; and as her anchor was weighed, and, sluggishly at first, she quitted her moorings. A few hours afterwards I was released from my confinement, and was ordered to follow my conductor, the sailor whom I had heard addressed by the name of Ned, into the captain's cabin.

It was a dark, small place, fitted up ship-fashion, with sleeping berth and lockers; a small fire in an iron stove was dimly burning; and before it, with his legs extended, and his feet resting one on each cheek of the stove, seated on a chair the hind legs of which only rested on the floor, sat, or rather balanced himself, a tall, gaunt, hard-featured man, with grizzled hair and a deeply scarred countenance. He was dressed in a seaman's rough coat, and was smoking a large pipe, the fumes from which filled the entire cabin with a suffocating odour and an all but impenetrable mist. I must add, that a tin pot, like a shaving pot, was steaming on the fire, and a stone bottle stood on a little table at his elbow, flanked by a drinking glass and a sugar basin. Further