The Cruise of the "Kingfisher."

CHAPTER XV.

"'My Dear Rath,-I know that you will be glad to hear that I am quite well. I should like to say also that I am quite happy; but I find that I miss very cold and wet and foggy here in England, and I think of the times you at the beautiful sea all green and glittering, and the sky all blue; and how kind and good you always were to me. And oh, Rath! though I an back in the big world again, I often wish myself back with you and the cows and the chickens, fishing and shooting and cooking the dinner. I hope you are quite well and happy course, I want you to miss me a lit tle, but not to be unhappy. And I hope you remember your promise when we parted: That you wouldn't forget me while you could help it, and that you wouldn't fall over the cliff again or be reckless in any other way

"Your loving mate, STELLA." She read this at first laughingly but as she went on, the laughter died out of her voice, her eyelids quivered, her eyes grew moist, and her breath came rather unevenly.

hands clasped loosely at the begin ning, but gripping each other tight! towards the end. He did not know what was the matter, what ailed him, but there was a dull, aching pain in his heart which made him catch his

and made no sign of the agony which rent him. When she had finished, she to flow from the rocks; as if the

"There! That's the letter."

She was about to tear it up, but he

think," he said, quietly, and with such a note indicated

He folded the paper into a small square, and put it in his breast-pock-

with sudden and suspicious cheerfulness; and she swept her hands across hair from them: but ner hand was moist after the action. 'Now, you begin by making strokes

"It seems easy enough," he said; but, needless to say, his imitation was crooked and zigzag. "The pencil's so

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said in that letter that I was not to

of and will have plenty of people i

talk to and live amidst, but I shall h

quite alone again. You see, I have

While he had been speaking, th

girl's heart had responded like a

harp whose strings are swept by

ignorant and inexperienced hand. U

seen by him, her colour came and

went pale, her lips quivered, and the

long lashes hid the tell-tale tears in

her eyes. Instinctively her hand stole

out to him to touch him with a wo

man's consoling touch; for when a

girl's heart is throbbing with pity

and sympathy her fingers itch to ex-

press it. But something, of which

she knew nothing, held her back. Sh

drew her hand from him before

came in contact with his bare arn

nungry all day-and she scarcely

"There is some medicine in th

"I know: but she will not take any

She lies back in the chair all day a

if she were half asleep; but I know

that she is not sleeping, for I see he

lips move, and sometimes hear he

nurmur some words."

supboard by the bed," he said.

speaks."

only you, Stella."

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"No, it isn't, Rath. It's a long hand, but it's not big-for a man's; at least, I think not. And you needn't hold the pencil as if it were dagger," she added, as he had progressed to pothooks and hangers See, like this. Oh, you stupid! Here et me guide your hand."

She put hers over it, and the warm fingers closed over his in a soft em-

"That's better."

He paused in the middle of a line and reflectively regarded the hand which guided his.

"What a small hand you've got Stella!" he remarked. She drew in away quickly, and, holding it before er, regarded it critically. "It's a pity it's so small," he observed; "that why you can't hold things properly. But it's-it's pretty, somehow like a bird's claw."

"It's like nothing of the sort," she retorted, indignantly. "A bird's claw. Go on with your lesson please, and never mind my hand." "Guide me again." he said. "I can

But she would not. "You must learn to do it without a little better; and I really think you

will learn to write presently.' After a pause, he said: "Yes: but I don't see the use of it sha'n't want to write any letters

rom a reverie, though her eyes had een fixed on his painful efforts on

the stony road of caligraphy. "Did you mean what you wrote in that letter to me, or was it only make

A faint color rose to her face, bu she said, indifferently: "What was it? I forget now what

"That you would miss me you had gone away; that you were

happy here on this island." "Yes, of course; wouldn't you miss me?" she replied, casually.

"Yes," he said, slowly, without and she said in a voice which, be stopping his pothooks and hanger: cause of her effort to control in Yes, sometimes when I think of the ounded cold and indifferent: "I must go now. I can't leave m; nother any longer. She is not well." He looked up at her gravely, as she stood beside him, tall and graceful a moment, while his eyes rested on as one of the Indian girls who some times accompanied the braves to th expression in their lovely depths, an "What is the matter with her?" he asked. Her face was turned away rom his as she answered: sun had ceased to shine or the stream "I don't know. She is weak, andand takes no interest in anything

birds had given up singing forever,

and it was not worth while to get the

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He nodded solemnly. "It is as my father was before he amed condition. Once I got died." "Rath!" she cried, "you don't think that—that she is going to die?" He regarded her with pity in hi has cured me and I strongly urge dark eyes. everyone with a weak throat to use it "I hope not. But, Stella, why are

sleep-my father said-sleep and rest. And you would not be alone as

She looked at him enigmatically for

moment, then turned away. When

she had gone, Rath took out the 'specimen" letter, and tried to decipher it; but he could not do so. It did not matter, for he had it by

CHAPTER XVI.

The lessons continued daily, and But Stella did not guide his

glided upon them, Rath had less time nstead of one-demanded a great The Thirty deal of his time. But, hard as lie She had become a real helpmate by share: but he seemed gradually to

"You sit there and rest while I drag these logs down to the clearing," he would say. "And you can sing if you like. Somehow I can always work better while you sing."

And she would sit on one of the felled trees and sing "Robin Adair," or "Hail, Smiling Morn," or "Where the Bee Sucks;" and Rath, inspired by the sweet, lark-like voice, would work with renewed energy.

and went to his nest in the hollow of the tree-at Stella's instigation he had made a hut of it by walking round it-he often lay awake thinking of would be able to arrange for her de parture; and the prospect of his loss of her would lay heavily upon him.

and thoughtful: for in the midst of will be in the great world you talk mote her with a kind of compunc ion. How could she be so happy and

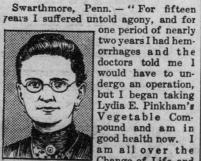
And one day she came running Rath, who was repairing the cow hed with sweet-smelling pine logs. vorse!" she said, pantingly, her lips uivering, her eyes full of tears. He leant on his axe and regarded

er sympathetically. "You must come!" she said, half istracted by her anxiety. "Oh, come at once, Rath! I am frightened!"

(To be Continued.)

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