

were feeling their life shaken in them to the depths. I have never had the opportunity of examining the idol-worshipping mind of a savage; but it seems possible that the immutability of aspect of his little wooden God may sometimes touch him with a similar astounded awe;—even when, and indeed especially after, he has thrashed it. Had the old man betrayed his mortality in a sign of curiosity to know why the hubbub of trouble had arisen, and who was to blame, and what was the story, the effect on them would have been diminished. He really seemed granite among the turbulent waves. "Give me Gammon's life!" was farmer Fleming's prayerful interjection; seeing him come and go, sit at his meals, and sleep and wake in season, all through those tragic hours of suspense, without a question to anybody. Once or twice, when his eye fell upon the doctor, Master Gammon appeared to meditate. He observed that the doctor had never been called in to one of his family, and it was evident that he did not understand the complication of things which rendered the doctor's visit necessary.

"You'll never live so long as that old man," the farmer said to Robert.

"No; but when he goes, all of him's gone," Robert answered.

"But Gammon's got the wisdom to keep himself *safe*, Robert; there's no one to blame for *his* wrinkles."

"Gammon's a sheepskin old Time writes his nothings on," said Robert. "He's safe—safe enough. An old hulk does n't very easily manage to founder in the mud, and Gammon's been lying on the mud all his life."

"Let that be how 't will," returned the farmer; "I've had days o' mortal envy of that old man."

"Well, it's whether you prefer being the fiddle or the fiddle-case," quoth Robert.

Of Anthony the farmer no longer had any envy. In him, though he was as passive as Master Gammon, the farmer beheld merely a stupefied old man, and not a steady machine. He knew that some queer misfortune had befallen Anthony.

"He'll find I'm brotherly," said Mr. Fleming; but Anthony had darkened his golden horizon for him, and was no longer an attractive object to his vision.