

might rescue her from her present captor, but yet, he felt that he had rather she would pine and die in the wild abode of the bandit, than again fall into his power. Yes, Malcolm, with all his seeming recklessness, was deeply, kindly alive to the miseries of his fate, and although his song was gay and cheerful, his heart was swelling with a load of wretchedness, few hearts have ever known, which very few can ever know. Suddenly his voice was hushed, for a strange phenomenon had caught his sight, and seizing the arm of Francis, he pointed to a distant part of the cavern, where glowed two brilliant lights, which appeared like small round balls of fire. The terrified Francis buried his face in his hands to shut out the vision, but the gaze of Malcolm was rivetted on the place, and after the lapse of a few moments, the lights disappeared, and then were seen again at a small distance from the place where they first appeared. Malcolm fancied he heard a slight rustling sound at the moment, and a new thought darted through his mind. Perhaps it was some beast come to banquet on the dead, and if so, it must have some passage from the cavern to the world without. Springing to his feet, he darted forward, and at the next moment was at the place from which the light proceeded. He was right, but the terrified animal darted away but not so quickly as to elude the grasp of the determined Malcolm, who still retained his hold until the creature entered a hole at one corner of the cave, and by a vigorous effort escaped from its captor. Malcolm stooped to follow, but the place was too small to admit him, nor dared he leave it, lest it might not again be found.

Francis had called after him as he left his side, but in his eagerness he answered not, but now he called his friend to follow him, announcing the discovery he had made. Francis obeyed, for although he saw no advantage likely to result from the discovery, he had learned to submit to the will of Malcolm, and guided by his voice, he at last succeeded in reaching his side.

"Well," he said, as he sunk on the ground beside his friend, "will you inform me what is your purpose now?"

"Why merely to enlarge the pathway of our wretched friend, and endeavor to make my way to a place more to my fancy than this is, for the beast must, methinks, sometimes visit the world above, and in order to do so, he must have a pathway!"

"But may not his pathway lead through his den and might he not question our right of journey through his home, and dispute our passage?"

"Any way I have a mind to intrude myself on his hospitality! for if he is so unkindly disposed,

he should not have sought our acquaintance by his late visit, so set to work man, and aid me in enlarging this opening!"

Francis although he saw but little to hope from his toil, did as Malcolm desired him, but they soon found that their progress was but slow, and Malcolm exclaimed! "Now if we only had something to work with, how the work would speed! I wonder if a stick, or sharp stone might not be found! Aye! a bone of some former luckless wight! there must be many scattered about this den! Hasten and search, or remain here to mark the place while I search myself."

Francis who trembled in dread at every motion lest he might like Malcolm stumble over a decaying corpse, preferred to remain, and Malcolm commenced his search, and after some considerable time in which he again came in contact with a skeleton of which but little now remained, he succeeded, and returned triumphant. Francis shuddered as he took the bone which had once formed a portion of a human being in his hand, but life and liberty were at stake, and he plied his labor almost as assiduously as did his hardy friend. Soon the loosened earth, and small stones became an impediment, but this was easily removed within the cave, and for many hours they continued to work without cessation or rest. They had now penetrated to some distance, for the earth was soft and easily removed, and life with all its sweet enjoyments depended on their efforts.

At last, too weary to prosecute their work longer, they determined to indulge themselves in a short rest, and Francis was soon wrapt in sleep. Not so Malcolm;—his mind was too fully set on the hope of liberty which was now strong within his breast, and he sat supporting the head of Francis which he had raised from the damp ground, determined that the quiet slumber of his friend should not be disturbed. Some time had passed away, when his ear caught a slight sound, and turning his head, the glaring eyes of the beast again met his gaze. But the monster retreated again on finding his course obstructed, and Malcolm gleaned hope from the little incident, for he felt assured that he was still pursuing the way by which it had entered the cavern. For more than an hour did Francis slumber on, and when he awoke, he felt renewed strength to assist at the labor on which so much depended. Ere long a cooling breeze, very different from the confined damp and chilly air of the cavern, became perceptible, and they knew that some change awaited them. But what was their surprise, when not long after, they found they had reached a wide open space, and on attempting to leave the nar-