

garret each room held a separate tenant; some alone; some with a wife and children; dozens of whom we found without any furniture, worth the name. Many were opium eaters, this drug being taken to dull the appetite; to produce insensibility to misery; at times alas! to hasten longed for death. A careful enquiry was made as to the cost of living in these dens of poverty. We bought tea, sugar, fuel, candles, tobacco, opium, bread, bacon, scraps of meat, etc., as the poor did, by the penny's worth at a time. Thus tested, the fact was established that, for every article used by these wretched people, of the worst qualities, they paid three times as much as the prices given by the rich, for the best in the market. Yet the shop keepers were also as poor as their customers. In one garret we found an old man of nearly 80 years of age, all alone. He was often weeks without speaking to a fellow creature. At first he refused to talk, but when we brought out our pipes—for we ran in couples, my companion being a physician—and gave him one with a paper of "bacca," he thawed out. He stood over six feet, had been of enormous strength, and well educated, of which latter fact he seemed ashamed. After we had gained his confidence—for he was highly suspicious of our motives at first—he became garrulous over a glass of brandy, for which he expressed a longing; which comfort was provided him daily until his death. His name was William Burgess. He had been carried off by a press gang in 1783, and made to serve aboard a man of war. Having been flogged for a trifling offence, he vowed vengeance against the government. Going down channel one night in 1805 he dropped into the water, and was picked up by the crew of a smuggling smack, who were on the look out for him. He at once commenced his career as a professional smuggler on the Brighton coast; the present watering place then being only a small fishing village, most of the men being in league with law breakers of that class. Burgess became captain of a gang of fifty ruffians, who carried on a systematized trade in contraband goods. They were all expert seamen, had several smacks constantly busy in the English Channel in communication with the French Coast, as well as with the crews of vessels making their way to London from across the Atlantic with tobacco, &c. Burgess explained to us their system of signalling, and their method of taking goods from ships amid channel, for none ever come near that shore. The saying is, "At Brighton the sea has no ships and the

land no trees." Having got their cargoes of brandy, or silks, or laces, from France, or tobacco from merchantmen, they used to run in at night to some assigned place of rendezvous, being guided in their operations by signals on shore, to avoid difficulty with the Preventive Service men, who, at that time, were very inefficient, and corrupt, until a quarrel moved them to do their duty. So the smugglers were always in fear, even after bribing the officers to wink at their movements. All the goods, silks, tobacco, brandy, had to be sent to London, fifty miles away, save small lots disposed of to a few local buyers. When danger was in the air, the goods they brought in were sunk in barrels near shore until the air cleared, or they out-manoeuvred the officers.

Between the coast and London, regular trips were made by light carts, the horses being splendid animals, that were changed several times each way, at roadside stations. Every toll gate keeper was in the pay of the smugglers. Hence no delays in opening the gates in the night. Had they been chased, they also would have been closed to the pursuers, so they never were in fear of being caught on the road. On reaching London—always about an hour or two before day break—the goods were instantly after delivery, so manipulated that all trace of their identity was destroyed. Tobacco bales were cut up into shreds, ready for retailing, brandy was bottled, rolls of silk were cut into lengths for friendly mercers. Buyers were notified, so that soon after delivery, the smuggled goods were distributed all over London, or dispatched into the country. An immense trade was done in this way, all thoroughly organized, Burgess having great genius in making arrangements of this dangerous class. In one town he was in league with the Mayor. The County constabulary were bribed to silence, and to blindness, by gifts of bacca and brandy. The whole population indeed sympathised with the men through whom they got cheap spirits served at the public houses. At last the gang became too audacious. They overmastered the officers in pitched fights. They knew the coast so well, and were such skillful and daring seamen, that every attempt to suppress them proved a failure. They laughed at the revenue boats sent to intercept them, their own being so swift and well handled. One night Burgess was drinking at an inn when a young woman named Patsy Pilford, a great beauty, came in, with whom he fell at once madly in love. She was not the first, however, who had smitten him, as his

gallantries were notorious; his splendid physique, handsome face, and romantic life causing him to be regarded as a great hero all along the south coast. To this girl he became engaged after which she lent herself frequently to him as an assistant in his work. She used to take charge of the torch signalling from the cliffs to warn the boats from landing, or to guide them in. She, by torch flashes, could tell a crew to go here, or there, for safety, or what the hour was, or give other information to the smacks, by a code of signals, much after the style of those used in the navy. Her sex threw the government officers off their guard. While thus engaged, and revelling in the rich stores of silks, laces, gloves, jewels, and shawls she was storing up, the gifts of Burgess, she was brought into contact with a young lawyer, when he was riding out for exercise on the Downs. With him she fell passionately in love, and for him she determined to jilt the smuggler hero. While still helping the one, she kept up clandestine meetings with the other, who, got from her a full recital of the proceedings of the famous gang, and a promise to marry him if any trouble befell Burgess. This lawyer went up to London, saw one of the Ministers of the Crown, to whom he offered, for a reward, to betray the gang into the hands of an armed force. The bargain was concluded. A body of infantry with a few cavalry, were dispatched in plain clothes to the coast, where they remained, without having been noticed, in the out houses of a large mansion, lent to the government for the purpose, waiting a signal to attack the smugglers. With them was a small body of marines. One night, Patsy told her lawyer lover, that a great catch had been made of East Indian goods, and the whole gang would be ashore at the Cove at moonrise, about 10 p. m. She was to give the torch signal that the coast was clear. She, and her lover, stood on the cliff waving the torch; on the ground were stretched the soldiers and marines, near by, the cavalry men. As soon as the boats were in, and the entire gang busy preparing to dispatch the goods, the lieutenant in charge, through a trumpet summoned the gang to surrender in the King's name. They refused, he ordered an attack to be made, the smugglers were armed, and fought desperately, even against the commands of Burgess, who saw the situation at once, and wished to capitulate. However, after a few desperate hand to hand struggles, in which several smugglers were killed, and soldiers wounded, the Burgess gang of 40