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A STARTLING POSITION.

MARK REED'S ESCAPE.

CHAPTER I.

ONE day last week a man came into my shop. In his hand he carried a small cage, of foreign workmanship, containing a bird unlike any I had ever seen before.

So many of the creatures have passed under my eyes, that a glance generally suffices to tell me at once what breed or kind it is likely to belong to, but this was so new to me that I left what I was about, and came across to the front shop to look closer

But my attention was fixed upon the cage, and, as the fellow had set it on the counter, and was wiping his face with his handkerchief, I stooped to gaze at the bird.

I had just opened my lips to ask him a question (the man, not the bird), when, with a loud cry, I might say a yell, and an exclamation, which I could not write down, he grabbed the cage, and rushed from the shop as though he had a mad bull at his heels.

I looked up in amazement, and there stood my son