

of the two latter could keep still an instant. They ran to and fro, uttering excited exclamations, and once Fred narrowly escaped falling into the pit which he had himself dug. The incoming tide had now reached it and had filled it to the top with water, which likewise flooded the passages and gradually washed away the barriers between them. This was the very result upon which the boys had counted, and yet as Harry's strong arm drew his brother back from the edge of that pitfall, there seemed something awful in the circumstance. Nor could they realize that they had been so lately busied about so trivial a matter. Thus do the trivialities of life forever appear in the presence of its grave emergencies.

As many as were required of the best and the strongest and the bravest men that the village could afford composed the crew. And it was a compliment to Ben, of which his companions were proud, that he should have been given a place among them. They took their places silently, baring their arms, whereon the veins stood out like whipcords, and preparing to wrestle with that fierce,