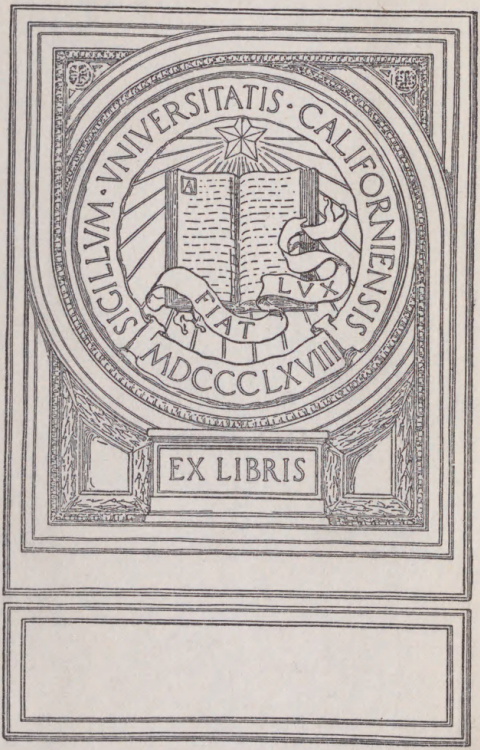
BILLY BUMP IN '49

BY

S. G. GOODRICH

(PETER PARLEY)

ILLUSTRATED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THE

ADVENTURES

OF

BILLY BUMP

ON THE

PACIFIC COAST.

A TALE OF '49.

BY

S. G. GOODRICH
(PETER PARLEY).

With Many Illustrations.

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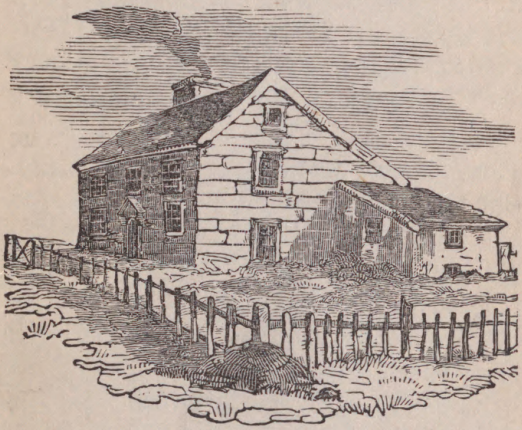
BILLY BUMP IN BOSTON.



CHAPTER I.

It may, perhaps, please and instruct our youthful readers to look over the correspondence of Master Billy Bump with his mother. The boy, it appears, was about fourteen years old when he left home for the first time in his life, and made his way by

railroad and steamboat to Boston. His native place was Sundown, the precise situation of which we cannot tell, as it is not laid down on the maps. Somebody asked Bill where he was from. "From Sundown," was the answer. "Sundown?" said the inquirer—"that must be in the western country." "Yes," said Bill, "and five hundred miles beyond!" This description of the place, though not very precise or minute, will be sufficient for all practical purposes. We must add that Bill had been born and brought up in a frame house, away from the refinements of society, and with no other education than what his mother had given him, which was confined to reading and writing. The only books he had seen were the Bible, Watts' Psalms and Hymns, Burns' Poems, Robinson Crusoe, Parley's America, and a stray number of Merry's Museum. He had also seen two or three newspapers. All these, however, he had read; and it is wonderful how much one may learn from so small a library. We need only say further, that Bill came to Boston to live with his uncle, Benjamin Bump, who had grown rich,

and was now dwelling in a fine house in Beacon Street.

Billy's first letter we omit, and begin with the second—remarking, by the way, that we shall take the liberty to make some little improvements in the original; though, in the main, the letters will be inserted as they were first written.

FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER.

BOSTON, *November* 7, 184–

MY DEAR MOTHER:

I wrote you some days ago a bit of a letter, to say that I had got here, safe and sound, though my ideas were so joggled up by the lokymotys and the steamers, and the one thing and another, that I was not quite sartin that I was me. However, I've found myself out, and though it all seems like a dream, here I am at uncle Ben's—sure enough.

Now I must tell you every thing, as you told me to. Uncle Ben's house is a parfect curiosity. It's six lofts or stories high, and has as many rooms and entries, and turnings

and windings, as a woodchuck's burrow. It's all painted, every mite on't—except what's covered up with paper, figgered and colored in a strange higglety-pigglety sort of way. Whether them figgers mean any thing or not, I don't know. I asked cousin Lucy about it, and she only said, "Bill, I guess you're a quiz!" When you write agin, mother, tell me what a quiz means.

But the most wonderful thing about uncle Ben's house is the stairs, which are a kind of ladder, to go up from one loft to another. These turn round and round like a screw—and why they don't tumble down I can't say—though I've studied 'em for hours together. It always makes me giddy to go up these stairs, for in our house there was no such thing. I can climb a tree, and run along the limbs as well as a squirrel; but there is something to make one's flesh creep in going up stairs, and I think going down is wus.

For the first week I used to get lost every day in this house. If I set out to go into the kitchen I'd find myself blundering into somebody's bedroom, or perhaps fetch up in the cellar. But I've got the geography of

the place in my head now, and by counting my fingers, and looking right and left, I get along very well.

Some people may think it very well to live in such a fine splendid house ; but it makes a plaguy deal of trouble. I must tell you, dear mother, how I've been mortified. I ketched cold coming here, and it settled in my head ; so I couldn't help hawking and spitting a good deal. Well, all the floors are covered with fine carpets, and when I spit on them aunt Lizzy rolled up her eyes ; uncle Ben looked at me as if I'd been a rattle-snake ; and cousin Lucy snickered right out. What it was all for I couldn't tell. I saw that there was something in the wind. I felt a kind of perspiration all over ; and to ease my awkwardness I blowed my nose with my fingers. I expect I must have done it with considerable force, for every living soul rushed out of the room.

There I was, all alone, feeling very queer ; yet what the matter was I could not exactly say. I wished myself at Sundown with all my heart. I wanted to see you, dear mother ; and when I thought of you the tears came

down my cheeks. While I sat in the room crying my aunt came in. She came up to me and sat down, and took my hand ; and then she spoke kindly. She told me that she had not come to blame or scold me ; but only to tell me something that it was necessary I should know. I thought my aunt a proud woman, and when she is dressed up in her silks and lace, and all that, she looks so. But, really, she is very good and kind ; and when you forget her stately appearance, she reminds me of you, mother.

Well, what do you think she said to me? Why, she said that among well bred people hawking and spitting are disgusting, and are regarded as a kind of indecency ; she said that well-bred people always did these things privately. She told me that blowing the nose with the fingers was really awful. "What were the fingers made for then?" said I. At this my aunt laughed, which placed me at my ease ; and so I said, "Well, my dear aunt, I dare say I am a very ill-bred, awkward boy ; but I hope you will forgive me. I was brought up there in Sundown, away from people like you and cousin Lucy;

and though I could shoot wild turkeys, tree opossums, snare partridges, and ketch 'coons, I never heard much of the fine arts. But I desire to learn, and shall be very much obliged if you will tell me what is wrong and what is right."

"That's well said," was aunt's reply; and she added, "it's no fault of yours, Willy, that you are not acquainted with the manners of refined society, since you have not been in a situation to learn them."

"But," said I, "what is the use of these *refined manners* as you call them? Why is not my simple way as good as yours? Why are not fingers as good to blow the nose with as a pocket-handkerchief?"

"Let me tell you, William," said my aunt, seriously, "that cleanliness is a source of great pleasure. One who has not been used to it can hardly imagine how much pleasure there is in personal neatness. Besides, such is the effect of the habit of keeping one's self neat, clean, tidy, that you generally find a dirty person coarse-minded, low, and vulgar in his tastes; while one who is scrupulously clean and neat, you generally

find pure, elevated, and refined in mind and feelings. Neatness is, therefore, called a virtue. It is not a mere point of manners ; it is an essential part of character. If you would be refined and elevated in your mind and heart, practise all those things which belong to personal neatness."

My aunt said a good deal more, which I can't well remember ; but the substance of it all was that my way of hawking and spiting before people was shocking, and would make my presence intolerable to well-bred people ; that my way of blowing the nose was out of fashion, and would subject me to ridicule. She said these things showed an ignorance of, or insensibility to, that neatness which is essential to refinement of taste and feeling, and essential also in order to qualify any one to associate with well-educated people. I thanked my aunt, and promised to follow her advice as well as I could.

But I had still other troubles. At dinner the table was all shining with plated castors and carvers, and platters ; and there was such a variety of meats, and soups, and sauces, and fixings, that I couldn't well tell

what any thing was, nor, indeed, what I wanted. For the first day or two, at dinner, my head had a queer buzz in it, and there was a kind of watery mist over my sight. So I got into a heap of accidents. I will try to tell you all about it.

It was the first day, and we had just sat down to dinner. Lucy was next to me. The fellow who waited upon us brought some water to me in a pitcher, and asked me if I'd have some. "Yes," said I; and taking the pitcher I drank a lot—for I was monstrous dry. When I looked up the servant was trying to suppress a smile; Lucy was red as a beet; and everybody else had a kind of choking appearance. What it was all about I could not imagine—but I began to feel dreadful hot.

Lucy saw that I was in trouble, and kindly handed me a glass, which they here call a *tumbler*. I then understood that I should hold it to the servant for some water: this I did; but the tumbler was clear as crystal, and not being used to the article, I did not distinguish between the bottom and the top. I held it bottom upward. The servant did

not perceive my mistake, but poured the water out, which came all swashing into my lap. I jumped up, and in my leap turned over my chair, and carried away my plate, which was smashed into forty pieces.

It was some time before order was restored; and during the whole dinner I did not know whether I was in the body or out of the body. The next day my aunt told me that I took salt with my fingers, and that this was esteemed bad manners. She said I should always take salt with the salt-spoon. "But suppose there ain't any?" said I. At this she laughed outright, but said, "In such case, Will, I must allow you to do the best thing you can."

My aunt told me various other things; she said it was bad manners to eat fast and ravenously, like a dog; that I must not take meat in my fingers, for it was filthy; that I must not put my food into my mouth with a knife, for I might cut myself, and besides, the taste of the steel blade was disagreeable. She said I must not help myself, with my own knife and fork, to meat, or vegetables, or butter, or any thing of the kind. She told

me all this very kindly ; and though I felt humbled at finding myself so ignorant, I thanked her sincerely, and shall try to follow her advice.

I have many more things to say to you, dear mother, but I have filled my sheet. Pray write me soon. I ought to be very happy in this fine house, and among such good friends, and in a way to improve and learn so much ; but, strange to say, our poor cabin seems to me a thousand times more beautiful than this lofty mansion ; and the hills, and woods, and streams of Sundown are much pleasanter than the streets of Boston.

What would I not give to see you, dear mother ! How is Rover ? I thought I saw him one day in the streets of Boston ; and it made my heart leap. I ran up to the dog, and looked in the creature's face ; but he did not know me, and turned away. This made me feel as if I was really in a strange land. Pray take good care of Tommy, the little lame duck. He ought to be shut up every night, or the foxes might get him.

Give my love to old Cocky-doodle. I'd

give a dollar to hear him crow. It would do me good to see any thing from home—even the old broom handle. Good-by, dear mother, and give my love to father and to everybody. I forgot to speak of old Trot; I hope his back has got well. Do tell father to have the saddle stuffed, so as not to rub the skin off agin. Farewell.

Your dutiful and affectionate son,

WILLIAM BUMP.

CHAPTER II.

LETTER FROM BILLY TO HIS MOTHER IN SUNDOWN.

BOSTON, *December*, 184-.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

I wrote you a letter more than a month ago, and hoped before this to have had one from you. I am really very hungry for a letter. There's a great deal going on here, and every day I see thousands of people—but still I want to hear the news at Sundown. How is old Trot? How are all the hens? How is the little lame duck? Is Rover well? Have the wolves caught any more of the sheep? Has anything been seen of the black fox since I left? Has father shot any deer, wild turkeys, or coons lately? Has the fire in the woods gone out? Do write me, mother, and tell me all these things. I am contented here, but if you do not send me a letter I shall start and try to find my way to you.

I must now tell you what has happened

since I wrote. The funniest thing was this. One night I was suddenly awoke by a strange sound, which seemed to come from my pillow. It went—dz-z-z-z—dz-z-z-z—dz-z-z-z! At first I thought myself in the woods, and imagined that I heard a rattlesnake. I fumbled about for a stick—but getting hold of the pillow, I knew I was in bed. Then I thought, "It is only a dream!" and so I lay down again. But pretty soon I heard the same sound—dz-z-z-z—dz-z-z-z-z!" This is very droll," said I; "what in nater can it be?" It was dark as pitch, and after straining my eyes and feeling all round, I could discover nothing.

Well, I lay down again, and soon dropped to sleep. But suddenly I felt a terrible pain in my leg. I jumped out of bed and screamed like a wildcat. I was half asleep, or I should not have made such a noise. The cry started the servants near by. Up they jumped, and rushed, pell-mell, into my room. Two or three of them brought lights—and there we were altogether, cutting a pretty figure, I assure you. What's the matter? what's the matter?" they exclaimed, all at once.

"Why," says I, "there's a rattlesnake, or a snapping-turtle, or some other varmint, there in my bed. It's half bit my leg off!"

At this the women lifted up their eyes and hands, and the men began to look into the bed. They did this gingerly, and as if they really expected a rattlesnake to jump out of the sheets and give 'em a mortal bite. It was a very droll sight altogether; and frightened and bewildered as I was I couldn't help smiling. John, the boldest of the men, after seeking about for some time, exclaimed, "There he is! there he is!" At this awful moment the women scampered away; but John courageously proceeded to attack the monster who had caused the row. Taking up a hearth-brush, he made three or four furious plunges into the bed, and finally succeeded in subduing the viper. It was no great things, after all—being merely a *wasp*. But the fellow made a considerable stir, for all that!

I get along very well at Uncle Ben's. I like Lucy very much, though I'm half afraid of her, she knows so much. She can tell all about geography, and grammar, and history,

and everything else. She makes a terrible racket on a big thing in the parlor called a *piano*. This, they say, is music, and perhaps it is—but it sounds to me as if all the bull-frogs, and all the cat-birds, and all the wild-cats, and all the king-fishers in creation had got together in a box, and every one was trying to see which could make the most noise.

Lucy is trying to teach me a curious game called *chess*. It is played on a board nicely painted in squares. On these we put a parcel of queer things beautifully carved in ivory. Some of these are called *bishops ;* these have a sly, sideway motion, and do great execution if you don't look out. Some are called *knights ;* these have horses' heads, and go leaping and jumping and *gambading* right and left over everybody. It's a droll game, and I am getting to like it.

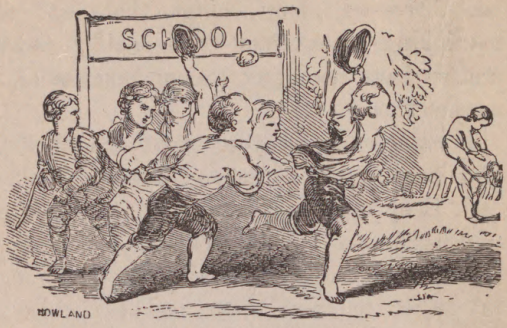
Well, we have other games, and dances, and all sorts of things, to make time pass away. Here, in a big house, all this is quite necessary, else everybody would be weary and unhappy. In Sundown we can go into the woods, and there no one can ever fail of amusement. There are so many things to

see there—so many things that set one a-thinking—that time runs rapidly away, and we have no regret except that the days are so short.

I must now tell you about the *library.* This consists of at least five hundred books; and Lucy says they tell about everything under the sun. She says there is one book there that gives a description of the manner in which the world was made! I hardly dared to look at it but I took a peep just to see what it was called, and saw on the back of it the word *Geology.* Now, would you believe it, mother, Lucy has read that book through from A to &!

I'm going to school soon, and I mean to know as much as Lucy in time. For the present I read Merry's Museum and Parley's Tales. You remember that I had Parley's America at home, and in this you taught me to read. I love it better than any other book in the world. And I must tell you, mother, one very interesting thing—I believe I have seen Peter Parley!

The other day I was going along in Beacon street, and I met an old man walking with a



cane. He was very handsome, and appeared so pleasant that I stopped and looked at him. He stopped too, and though he was very richly dressed, and seemed a fine gentleman, he spoke to me. "Good-morning, sir!" said he, in a mild voice, and bowing to me. "Good-morning, sir," said I—and just at that moment it flashed into my mind that he must be Peter Parley, for nobody else could be so gentle and kind to a poor boy like me. So said I, "Are you Peter Parley?" At this the old gentleman laughed very heartily, and after a few more words went along. I followed to see where he went. He entered a very splendid house, and I could see *Otis*

on the door. I have no doubt it was Peter Parley, though some of the boys told me his name was *Harrison Gray Otis!*

I have a great deal to write, mother, but I have not time now. It takes me a good while to write a letter, and I am afraid you can hardly make it out, after all. But do write to me very soon. I send my love to everybody. Give my thanks to the old Indian, Bottle Nose, for the coon-skin cap he sent me just before I left. It got me into a scrape here—but I can't tell you about it now. I will do so in my next, if I can. Farewell, dear mother!

From your affectionate son,

WILLIAM BUMP

CHAPTER III.

LETTER FROM MRS. BUMP TO HER SON.

SUNDOWN, *January* 18—.

MY DEAR SON:

I have received your three first letters, and they have given me both pleasure and pain. I am pleased to know that you have reached Boston and are safely at your uncle's house. I am also pleased that you find yourself comfortable there, and that you like your uncle and aunt, and cousin Lucy. I cannot but hope that it will all go well with you. At the same time I have been pained at the mortifications you have experienced, in consequence of your ignorance of the manners and customs of genteel and refined people.

You must know, Willy, that your father and myself started in life with as fair prospects as your uncle and aunt. We lived in Boston, and for ten years we knew nothing but prosperity. But in consequence of a bad turn in business, your father lost his pro-

perty, and became what is called a *bankrupt ;* that is, he could not pay his debts. He owed a proud, rich man, by the name of Quincy, some money ; and this man threw him into prison. Now your father had been a kind and generous man, and had done nothing but good in the world ; and to be shut up in prison, as if he was too bad and wicked to see the light and breathe the fresh air, and go abroad among his fellow-creatures, made him sick at heart.

He was in prison for a whole year, and when he came out he was sadly changed. He spoke bitterly of the state of things in Boston ; for, he said, a hard, cruel man, like this Mr. Quincy, because he was rich and bore a great name, could do a very wicked thing, and nobody thought of blaming him. Your father said he would not live among people who were mere worshipers of riches and power ; and so he prepared to go to a new country, where he could forget his troubles.

Well, I had saved a little money by hard work, and I got more by selling a watch that my grandmother gave me. With this we set

off; but our troubles had only begun. When we reached the town of Worcester, your father was arrested for a debt to a bank. He was carried back to Boston, and again shut up in prison. I went to the president of the bank, whose name was Minot. He was a wicked-looking man; but he pretended to be very righteous. I begged him to let my poor husband out of prison; but he replied, "It is impossible." "And why?" said I. "Because," said he, "it is the custom of a bank never to release anybody." I pleaded hard; but the president was deaf to my entreaties, and I went away.

After six months your father was again set at liberty, and we were about to start upon our journey, when another president of a bank, by the name of F——, sent a writ against him; and a third time he was put in prison. I went to Mr. F. to beg for the release of my husband; but he said he had nothing to do with it, and I must go to the lawyer of the bank. I went accordingly; but the lawyer told me he had nothing to do with it—I must go to the president. It seemed very strange that men of such high

station should be guilty of this kind of meanness and falsehood ; but so it was.

All this time your poor father's health was failing, and I found it almost impossible to keep up my spirits. A sense of sorrow and desolation, which no words can express, weighed me down to the earth. I should have given up in despair, had it not been for the support I obtained from the source of all goodness, mercy, and truth. Forsaken of all beside, I was not forsaken of God. The bank president could not hear me ; but a greater than he listened to my prayer. The lawyer shuffled me away with a poor evasion ; but God is very unlike a lawyer, and he never sent me away without a blessing.

And thus I was sustained through this dark hour. I was able to earn enough for my own support, and to contribute something toward making your father's prison fare more tolerable. I often went to him, and had the pleasure to find that his despondency would give way to cheerful and hopeful conversation.

But I must not lengthen out these details : it will be enough to say that, after a long

period of suffering, we set out upon our journey and reached this distant spot. Here, in the wilderness, your father built our cabin; here you were born; and here, for fifteen years, has been our home. We are, for ourselves, content. Your father looks upon Boston with a kind of dread—a feeling like that with which a voyager remembers the rocky and dangerous shore upon which he has been wrecked. I do not, myself, desire to return there; but when your uncle, who had become rich, and could do so much for you, offered to take you and give you an education in Boston, we did not feel that we ought to neglect the opportunity.

And now, my dear William, I have told you our history, for the sake of enforcing the counsel and warning which I am about to give you. Remember that a great city is full of great good and great evil. You will there find wealth, splendor, elegance, luxury, knowledge, refinement. These are by no means to be despised; on the contrary, it is lawful, it is laudable, to strive to possess them. They are good things in themselves; but the possession of them is dangerous, because it is

apt to puff up the heart with pride and conceit. A rich man, surrounded with the signs of his power, hardly feels responsible to God; he almost feels as if he was a god himself, and ought to be looked up to, if not worshiped.

This is one source of danger. Another is, that amid the excitement which a life of luxury brings, we are likely to forget God; likely to forget that we are every hour liable to go astray; every moment in danger of sin and death. Nor is even this all, dear Willy—there are such things as truth, honesty, candor, frankness, manliness. These are the true ornaments of character: these give beauty to the soul, as bloom and fine features give beauty to the countenance. There is danger that city life may efface these, and cultivate art, cunning, and duplicity in their place. Oh, I would rather see my son a rough woodsman of the west, with honest, blunt truth upon his face and lip, than to see him the richest man in Boston, at the expense of his integrity, his honor and his manliness.

There are other dangers in a great city,

springing from low and vicious company. I hope your position may prevent you from this danger; but still let me beg you to be on your guard even here. If you are ever tempted to do anything the propriety of which you may doubt, ask yourself, "How will mother like it?" and be governed accordingly. There is still another and higher rule which I commend to your observance. In doubtful cases, inquire, "How will God like it?" Take him always into your counsel: he is your best friend and safest adviser. He will never lead you into the wrong path; he will never desert you in the hour of trial and trouble.

My dear boy, do not be weary of a mother's long and anxious words. Let me tell you all I feel. Continue the habits in which you have been trained, of morning and evening prayer, and of daily reading in the Bible. These are great duties and great privileges, as well in the city as the country. Keep all of good that you learned here, and change only in as much as you improve in goodness.

And now that I have said so much on these high and important points, let me

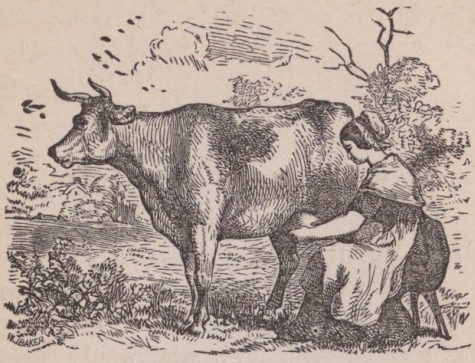
express my pleasure at finding you likely to improve your manners by learning the customs of genteel people. These are desirable, and if regarded as secondary to real virtues, they are surely to be commended. Everything that makes us more agreeable can make us more useful, and of course more happy. Study, therefore, to learn the agreeable ways of refined and elegant people.

And do not think, William, that in talking so much about duty, and virtue, and religion, I wish you to overlook the lawful pleasures and amusements of life. Far from it. I wish you to be cheerful, gay, happy, as befits your years. I do not desire to see my boy with an old man's air or face. Be a boy—lively, earnest, playful in the hours allotted to amusement; be a boy—earnest, thoughtful, studious, in the hours assigned to study. Be a good boy always.

And now I must say a word as to news. Old Bottle Nose has just returned from his buffalo hunt. He brought with him about a dozen Indians, who remained here some days. They had a sort of war-dance near our house, and a droll scene it was. One

was called Grisly Bear, and he was dressed in a skin of that animal. All were dressed so as to appear as fierce and hideous as possible. Their dance was a kind of play, or pantomime, in which they described, by their actions, the scenes which had befallen them in war. One of them was a great wag. He described himself as pursuing his enemy in the woods, when he came across a skunk standing in his path. The manner in which he put his finger on his nose was very significant, and made us understand what he meant as well as if he had said it all in words.

The owls have lately made sad havoc with the chickens, and the turkeys we had raised have all run off with a flock of wild ones that came near the place. Old Molly is well, and I milk her night and morning just as before you left us. Your father is in good health, but he is getting less fond of hunting than he used to be. He has, however, shot several deer, and the other day he brought home a beautiful young fawn which he found in the woods. He had quite a battle with a panther last week. The creature sprang at him from a tree as he was passing by, and



gave him a scratch in the arm; but your father beat him over the head with a club, and the fellow made off. Old Trot is well as ever, and I have no doubt would send his love if he could.

I have got quite to the end of my paper, and so I must say farewell, and God bless you, my dear Willy.

Your affectionate mother,

ABIGAIL BUMP.

CHAPTER IV.

LETTER FROM BILLY TO HIS MOTHER.

BOSTON, *April*, 184-.

DEAR MOTHER:

It is a very long time since I have written to you; for it was winter, and no one was going to Sundown who would carry a letter. I have many things to say, but I must first thank you kindly for your letter of January last. Dear mother, it made me weep, again and again, to think of the hardships you and father suffered in Boston many years ago. Oh, I could not believe such people lived in the world as would put my good father, so gentle, so kind, in prison. I never heard the story before, mother, and it made me quite sick of Boston when I had read it. It is, indeed, a sad thing to be rich if it makes us cruel and hard-hearted. It is equally sad to be poor and suffer the opprobrium of the haughty and the proud.

I suppose a poor boy like me can hardly

get rich ; but if I can be I will be, so as to make you and father happy and at ease, and to show that riches do not always spoil the heart. And believe me, mother, I will not forget your counsel. I read the Bible every

day, and, to say truly, I do not know that there is much merit in my doing so, for to me it is the most interesting book in the world. The stories in the Old Testament are so beautiful and so wonderful that they quite charm me. And the New Testament is not the less interesting. What a wonderful story is that of Jesus Christ! There is nothing in the world like it. I have been reading history; and though Alexander was a great man, and Cæsar was a great man, and Bonaparte was a great man, still Christ seems to be as much above them all as are the heavens above a house built by human hands. These conquerors were all full of self; they conquered nations to puff up their own pride and love of power. Now I see nothing very great in this; it is, indeed, rather common-place. But Christ sought to bless the world. He saw that mankind had strayed from their good and great Father, and that they had become wicked and estranged from him. And he died; he gave his life to restore them, to reconcile them. How poor is all the genius of conquerors by the side of this! How original, how deep

how high, how truly glorious and godlike was Jesus! how flat and contemptible is the whole race of conquerors in comparison!

And believe me, dear mother, I will try to avoid bad company, and to keep you in remembrance, so that you may be a good angel ever present to protect me. And now I must give you a journal of some things that have happened to me.

You remember the coon-skin cap old Bottle Nose gave me just before I set out for Boston. Well, when it came cold weather, I put it on and went into the Common. You know this is a large, open place, set out with trees, where people walk. Perhaps you remember the pretty sheet of water in the Common, called the *Frog Pond*. Well, at the time I speak of, this pond was frozen over, but the ice was not strong enough to bear people. However, the boys were all round the pond, and some were venturing upon the ice. I went among them, but no sooner did they see my cap than they seemed to pick me out as a curiosity. One young fellow came up and said, very rudely, "What's the news in Coontown?"

"What do you mean?" said I.

"What's your name?" said the fellow.

"Rattlesnake's Teeth!" I replied; "and you'd better keep out of the way."

"Indeed!" said the boy; and giving a wink to two or three of the chaps who had gathered round, he added, "we'll see! we'll see!" In an instant one of the rogues took hold of the long coon's tail that hung to my cap behind, twitched it off, and tossed it upon the ice. As I set out to give him chase, another boy caught the long tail of

father's coat, that you had fixed up for me, and in an instant just one half of it was torn off. I cut a pretty figure; but I was so angry I did not mind anything. I flew at the fellows, but they scattered like so many partridges; however, they came up behind, and in a short time I had only one leg to my pantaloons. At this time I was near the edge of the Frog Pond, and seeing the fellow who first set upon me near by, I clutched at him, caught him by the hand, and jumped upon the ice. In we went, with a swash, breaking the ice, and sprawling about in the water. The fellow screamed, but I dragged him along to my cap, and I made him pick it up and put it on my head. He was as tame and obedient as a caged opossum. I then took him ashore, and, strange to say, all the boys came up and shook me by the hand, and said, "How are you, Rattlesnake's Teeth?" and "You are a good fellow, Rattlesnake's Teeth;" and ever since then we have been the best friends in the world, though some of them call me Rattlesnake's Teeth to this day.

I expected Uncle Ben would give me a

peeling for getting into such a scrape and losing my clothes. But, to my great astonishment, he laughed heartily, and told me I had done just right. "These Boston boys," says he, "are pretty rough customers, and are very uncivil to strangers; but if they find a person who gives them as good as they send they allow him credit for spunk, and take him into favor. It is a good deal so all the world over, Bill—a man who will stand by himself when wronged is apt to gain respect."

The next day Uncle Ben took me to a place called *Oak Hall*, a building in Ann street, painted to resemble oak boards. It makes no great figure outside, but it is one of the seven wonders of Boston within. Why the man there has more pantaloons, I should think, than there are human legs in all creation. He has heaps of coats and jackets piled up like haystacks. The place is a perfect hive of tailors, clerks, and apprentices. I wanted to see the man who was at the head of this establishment, for I expected to see somebody at least as big and proud as Goliah. What was my amazement to find

on seeing him, that he was a mild, amiable, gentlemanlike person, with black eyes and hair, and without any more pretense than if he kept a common shop.

Well, Uncle Ben told him I wanted some clothes, and I was very soon fitted out. He bought me three coats, five waistcoats, and four pair of pantaloons. I told Uncle Ben I did not know what on airth to do with so many things, for I had never before had but one suit at a time. He only said it was time for me to alter my habits; and, having the clothes packed up, we went home. But I do wish you could see Oak Hall. It beats Babel all hollow.

Boston is so full of wonderful things that I shall not attempt to describe them, particularly as you have lived here. What a difference between this and Sundown! Of all the things I have seen, the sea strikes me most. It is so vast, so blue, so beautiful! It is always in motion, too, and seems, therefore, to have a kind of life. It never looks the same two days in succession. And then it has a movement called the *tide;* the waters rising and falling every twelve hours. This

really looks as if the earth was breathing · and Lucy tells me that it has led some learned men to consider the world as a great animal. If so, I suppose the woods are the hair ; volcanoes are, no doubt, the sores ; and, perhaps, wild beasts are the vermin.

And then the ships—what monsters some of them are ! And they go quite round the world, too ! Some of the ships I have seen have been to China, and some have been to India and other places on t'other side of the world.

There is a funny place here called the *Museum*. The building is large and handsome, and it is full of all sorts of curiosities. I have not room to tell about them here ; but I shall try to describe some of them in my next.

I must now bid you farewell. Give my love to father, and believe me ever your faithful and affectionate son,

WILLIAM BUMP.

CHAPTER V.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER.

BOSTON, *May*, 184-.

MY DEAREST MOTHER:

When I sit down to write to you, I have so many things to say that at first I can say nothing. My head is full of thoughts, all trying to get out at once—and so none of them get out. I think my mind is like a garret full of rats with only one hole by which they can escape; when the rats are frightened they all rush for the hole and try to get out together; but pushing, shoving and squealing, they get stuck fast, and don't get out at all. It is just so with my ideas—they are so eager to escape that they get wedged into a heap, and there they stay. Now if I could see you—and if I could see you looking at me—I should get along very well, even without words.

But, after all, pen, ink and paper are good things when one is fifteen hundred miles

away from home and friends ; and in spite of my awkwardness in using them, I would not for the world give up the privilege of writing to you.

Since my last letter, nothing of great importance has occurred in Boston, though many things have taken place interesting to me. I go regularly to school, and hope I am improving. I am studying geography, grammar, history, and arithmetic, besides reading, spelling, and writing. I love geography very much ; it is like traveling all over the world and seeing different countries and nations. I like to think of being in Europe, and seeing London and Paris, and all the great cities and the splendid buildings. And I like to think of being in Africa, where the negroes hunt lions and elephants. But it seems to me that Asia is the most wonderful part of the world. It is there where Adam and Eve lived, and it is there where Christ also made his appearance. Oh, how I should like to go to Jerusalem and see where he used to walk ; where he preached his Sermon on the Mount ; where he turned the money-changers out of the Temple ; and where he was crucified !

And then the strange people of Asia—the Tartars, who are such splendid horsemen; the Arabs, who travel over the deserts upon camels, and at night stop and tell stories to each other; and the Hindoos, who burn their widows and drown their children, thinking these things are pleasing to God; and the Chinese, who eat puppies and rats, and furnish all the world with tea; and the Turks, with their big turbans—what a wonderful thing it is that in one little book we may learn all about these queer people.

Perhaps I like geography the more for this reason: Uncle Ben has a great many pictures of different countries, with the people who live there; and when I am studying about a country I look over these pictures. Lucy studies with me, and we learn a great deal by talking together about our studies. I don't know what the reason is, but I find that I remember a thing we have talked about much better than if I had only read about it. And then, Lucy has a great knack at drawing pictures with a pencil, and she has taught me to draw. I find I can imitate

her very well, even when I could not imitate a book drawing.

I do not like grammar so well as geography. I hardly see the use of it yet. It seems to me almost absurd to be giving names to all the little words, as Adam did to the elephants, and lions, and tigers, just after the creation. There is a monstrous deal of fuss about *a*, and *the*, and *but*, and *if*, and *to*, and *for*. Now it seems to me that a word means the same whether you call it a verb, or a noun, or an adjective; and the object of words is to tell our meaning. Lucy says that there is something more in the use of words, and that precision, accuracy, and elegance are desirable in the use of language; and that the study of grammar teaches these things. It may be so—I do not despise grammar, but it is a kind of mystery to me. I really do not get hold of it. The ideas are always like squirrels, half hid behind the branches and leaves; I can't get a fair sight at them; and in study, as in hunting, it is bad not to have a plain mark.

I have heard a funny story about a boy who seems to have had the same difficulty in

grammar as myself. He read in the book, "A noun is the name of a *thing ;* as, *horse, hair, justice.*" Now he took it wrong, and read, "A noun is the name of a thing ; as, *horsehair justice!*" "Well," said he to himself, "what on airth *is horsehair justice!*" He thought, and pondered, and studied, and considered, but all to no purpose. The more he tried to puzzle it out the deeper he got in the mire. He was like a boy in the woods of Sundown—that you have heard of —one Bill Bump—who sometimes got lost—and always found, in such circumstances, that when he worried himself he was only the more sure to miss his way.

Well, the boy at last said to himself, "Here I am, in the bogs and fogs of grammar ; and the more I study the more am I bewildered." So he gave it up as a bad job, and from nouns he went on to verbs. Now it chanced that the boy's father was a justice of the peace ; and one day when the youth went home the old gentleman was holding a justice's court. There he sat, straight as a mullein-stalk, *on the family settee*, the people being all around. Now this settee had

come down for many generations, and was *cushioned with horsehair*. As soon as the boy looked at his father a new light flashed upon him. "I've got it!" said he; "my father there—the old gentleman on the settee—is a *horsehair justice, and therefore a noun!*" Wasn't that droll?

Well, dear mother, I want to tell you about history, for I like that very much; and I want to tell you about arithmetic, for I like that very much. But I must wait till another letter. I hope you are not tired of my long stories. If you are, pray tell me so in your next. I promised to speak of the Boston Museum; but it is so full of curious things I must take a whole letter for it. The keeper of the Museum is a very queer man, and has a wonderful way of getting up interesting sights. They say he is going to have a representation of Noah entering the ark with all sorts of animals, birds, reptiles, insects, and four-footed beasts. I guess he has creatures enough in his Museum to make it all out. I suppose he can hire Shem, Ham and Japhet for the occasion. I don't know whether he is to have fishes in his procession;

but when I see him I shall ask him whether the fishes were drowned in the great deluge, or whether Noah kept a supply on board. If he can't tell I don't know who can.

Pray give my love to father. It is now spring. Dear me! how I should like to be at Sundown for a week; However, that can not be, and so I must rest content. Good-by, and God bless you.

I am your dutiful son,

WILLIAM BUMP.

CHAPTER VI.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER.

BOSTON, *May*, 184-.

DEAR MOTHER:

It is not a great while since I wrote to you; yet I now send another letter, because I have a good opportunity to send it. A man by the name of Smith is going to Oregon, and he says he shall take Sundown in his way. He will deliver the letter himself, and you will see him, and he will tell you about me. I hope he will have nothing bad to say.

By the way, this Mr. Smith is a very remarkable man. He has been all over the world, and yet he was a poor boy from Vermont. He spent an evening at Uncle Ben's, not long since, and told a heap of stories. It was very queer how he got his education. His father died when he was young, and he was put out to work with a farmer. During nine months of the year he never went to

school; the other three months he went to a school on Saturday forenoons, kept by a woman named Betty Blaze. According to his account, she was as fiery as her name.

However, here he learnt his letters. He had no book but the New England Primer. During the day he had no time to read; at night he studied his lessons by the light of the fire, for the people never heard of a lamp, and only allowed candles when company came.

When he got to be seventeen years old he ran away, for the farmer was very hard with him. He went to Burlington, but was afraid to show himself, lest the farmer should be able to trace him out. He got employ on board a lumber boat for a time; then he landed on the west side of Lake Champlain, and determined to make his way to New York. In passing the Peru Mountains he had a terrible adventure. It was evening, and he saw, trotting along by the path, a creature like a large kitten. He ran after it and caught it. It mewed lustily; and immediately a huge beast, as big as seven or eight cats, came down, bang! from the tall trees right over

his head. The monster seemed to have at least a dozen legs—all standing out straight —with eyes of fire—and a tail as big round as a quart mug. Mr. Smith made a funny story of the scene. He threw the young creature, which was a catamount, at its mother, and ran away with all his might. The old one came bounding after him for a dozen rods, but at last she left him and went back to take care of her child.

Smith pursued his journey. He reached New York, became a sailor, then captain of a ship, and finally got to be a rich man He is going to settle in Oregon, which he says will be a great country, some time or other.

Now isn't this a very curious story? But Uncle Ben says that it is not uncommon. He declares that his own education was so bad, that, when he was full seventeen years old, he thought the earth was stationary, and the sun, moon, and stars, moved round it every day. He said that when a fellow told him the earth turned round, he laughed at him, and said, "Nonsense! If the earth revolved, as you say, all the wells would be

turned bottom up, and the water would run out."

Uncle Ben told another story to show how men of poor education get along in the world. He said that, many years ago, he knew a captain from Marblehead, who was sent to Europe with a ship. It was at a time when there was some trouble there. The owner of the ship got a letter from this captain, which had the following passage: "*Oin tu the blockhead, the wig was spilt ;*" by which the writer meant to say, *Owing to the blockade, the voyage was spoiled.*

I must tell you another of Uncle Ben's anecdotes about poor education. A rich man, who had a ship going to India, and who wrote a bad hand, among other things, ordered the captain to bring home *two* monkeys. Now he wrote the word *two* thus—*too ;* and as the captain was no great scholar, he read it 100 monkeys. Well, after a year the ship came back, and the owner of the vessel went down the harbor, greatly rejoiced to see his ship again. But what was his amazement, as he stepped upon the deck, to see a whole regiment of apes, of every size

and shape, jumping, frisking, and frolicking along the planks, ropes, and rigging of the vessel! He scolded the captain severely for his blunder; but when he saw his own instructions, he perceived that he was not to blame; so he pretended that the monkeys were bought on speculation; and Uncle Ben says they sold well and paid a good profit.

I could tell you many other stories of this kind; but as I have promised to describe the *Boston Museum*, I may as well set about it. The building is very large, and one immense room, with a gallery running all round, is filled with curiosities. These are of various kinds—stuffed birds, and beasts, and creeping things; gigantic bones; dresses and weapons of savages; portraits of famous men, and pictures of many strange and wonderful things.

It is a very queer place, altogether, and what makes it very interesting is, that the birds and beasts are so prepared as to seem really alive. And besides, they are arranged in separate apartments, those of a kind being generally together. For instance, in one place there is a congregation of owls, of all

kinds, little and big, handsome and ugly. These creatures differ very much from each other, yet they have a droll family likeness. After looking at this group for a time, I could not help laughing, they all looked so solemn, and stiff, and starch. It seemed as if they were dressed up for a great occasion, and thought it proper to look as wise as possible.

In one place there were wild swans, and wild geese, and wild ducks ; in another, there were pigeons and doves ; in another, partridges, quails, &c. There was a collection of gay parrots ; toucans, which seemed at least half bill ; birds, shining like gems, hardly bigger than the thumb ; cranes, with necks as long as a hoe handle ; birds of paradise, which seemed to glory chiefly in their tails ; vultures, which looked as if they could swallow red-hot pokers ; and ostriches, as tall as old Bottle Nose, eagle feathers and all.

Besides the birds there were foxes, and wolves, and woodchucks, and panthers, and lions, and tigers, and other four-footed beasts quite too numerous to mention. Some of

these, especially the opossums, and woodchucks, and coons, seemed to me like old acquaintances. When I looked at them I was very strongly reminded of home, for I have had many adventures with these creatures in Sundown. I believe that while I was gazing at these fellows I looked sad, for Lucy, who was with me, said, "Why, cousin Will, what is the matter?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing of consequence," said I.

"But, really, tell me what ails you. I insist upon knowing," said she.

"Well," said I, "to speak the truth, these coons and 'possums make me think of mother!" Lucy is a real witch, and she laughed so as to make all the people in the Museum look straight at us. I really felt as hot as if I had been simmering in a tea-kettle.

Well, we saw a lot of other things—enormous crocodiles, which looked like cast iron; and they had an expression about the mouth that injured their beauty very much. There are specimens of sharks, which made me shiver to look at; and serpents, which made the flesh creep even to think of; and

tortoises, whose shells are big enough for canoes.

It is quite impossible even to name all the curiosities collected together in this Museum. I was, in truth, quite bewildered at first, and it was not until I had visited the place several times that I began really to enjoy it. I do not know the reason, but when I am there I always fancy myself in the ark, and imagine all these birds, and beasts, and reptiles, to belong to Noah. There is one difference, however, between these creatures and those in the ark—these are perfectly quiet, but I suppose those that were shut up during the deluge must have had something to say. What an uproar there must have been with the singing of canaries, the screaming of gulls, the quacking of ducks, the crowing of cocks, the yelling of guinea-hens, the gobbling of turkeys, the whistling of quails, the growling of bears, the chatting of monkeys, the hissing of serpents, the bellowing of bulls, and the roaring of lions!

Besides the curiosities in the Museum, there is a place connected with it where they have plays every night. It is, in fact, a little

theatre. I hardly know if you would like t. have me go there, for some people believe theatres are very bad. Uncle Ben has let Lucy and me go here, but he does not wish us to get too fond of the theatre. He says it would take our attention from our studies ; and though he thinks pretty well of this theatre, he believes that many theatres are bad, because they are chiefly designed for foolish and wicked people, and therefore communicate vain and wicked thoughts.

I hope you will not blame me for going to the theatre, nor be displeased when I tell you that I liked it very much. It seemed half like a dream and half like a reality. I would tell you more about it but I have not room I remember nearly every word of all the plays. I did not know what power of thought and feeling there was in the bosom before I saw a play. It seems to me that the theatre ought to do good, for it makes us feel more deeply the beauty and value of truth and duty, and may make us also more deeply feel the wickedness of falsehood and vice.

I still go to school, and believe I am im-

proving I find, day by day, that I am acquiring new ideas, and, what pleases me very much, I am getting more able to express my thoughts. I wish you could hear Lucy speak. She utters every word so perfectly that it is a real pleasure to hear her. She reads beautifully. I was never before aware of the charm there is in mere words, well spoken. Nor should I have thought of it, perhaps, had not our teacher told us about it, in giving us reading lessons. He says every spoken word should be like a piece of gold coin, distinct and clear, so that its beauty and value may be readily seen. Perhaps I think the more of this from the fact that when I came here, I had a sort of lisp, for which I got laughed at. Our teacher used to say I had a mitten on my tongue. I know, at any rate, I had a strange confusion in my brain. I hope I am improving in respect to both.

Perhaps you will laugh at me—but I have been writing poetry! Don't, pray, whisper it to anybody, for I should die of shame if it was to leak out. I never write until evening, and not then until I am alone in the cham-

ber, with the door locked. I send you my first piece. I have written it over eleven times. It seems to me pretty good. I believe I like my first poem as much as a cow does her first calf; and if I make some fuss about it to you, I know you will find an excuse. I want dreadfully to show it to Lucy, but I dare not, she is so knowing. Well, here it is—

ADDRESS TO THE MOON.

O glorious Luna! fair and bright!
Thou art to me a pleasant sight.
When I was yet a little boy,
I thought thee but a splendid toy;
But now I better know thy state—
A world thou art, though not first-rate,
Because this earth of ours is bigger,
And Jupiter cuts a greater figure.
Still, glorious Luna, fair and bright,
Thou art to me a pleasant sight;
The reason why I can not tell,
Although I know it very well;
I know that poets bow before thee—
I know that lovers all adore thee;
And oft my thumping heart confesses
Fair Luna's silvery, soft caresses.
While here, in famous Boston town,
I think of thee at far Sundown.

And often dream, with fond delight
Of coons I've catched there by thy .ght

O gentle Moon! Shine soft and gay
On my dear parents far away;
And let thy gentlest rays fall clear
On hills and streams to me so dear.
This night thy dancing beams will play
On those fond scenes so far away;
They'll shed their light o'er that lone dell
Where father, mother, humbly dwell;
Perhaps they'll shine upon the shed
Where the old horse and cow are fed;
Perchance they'll wake old cock-a-doodle,
And make him say it's morn—the noodle
They'll go where father keeps his pig—
They'll go where Bottle Nose's wig
Warm from the hill-side's peeping,
While snug within the warrior 's sleeping

O Moon! Could I but share thy flight
To those dear scenes this lovely night,
How blest my aching heart would be!
But ah! such joys are not for me!
Here I, poor Billy Bump, must stay,
In weary exile far away;
And only see in dreamy view
The loveliest spot I ever knew.
Sweet Moon, good-by! But grant me this;
Give all and each I love a kiss!
Father and mother—dog and cat,
The cow, the calf, the pig. the rat,

The horse, the hens, the bread, the butter,
The door, the window, and the shutter;
And all the rest, if you have time to,
Which I can't stay to get a rhyme to.

There, mother—that's my very first! I know you'll laugh, but you are a good way off, and I shan't hear it. Don't read it to father for the world. You may say it all over to the horse and cow; tell 'em it's from me and they'll take it in good part. I tried very hard to bring Lucy into the poem, but I could get no word to rhyme with her name but *juicy*, and that didn't sound right. I really think my first effort is pretty good, considering. I intend, next, to address some lines to the Muse, but I must first find out what the Muse is. I have read about the nine Muses, but whether *the* Muse is their father or mother, their aunt or uncle, is what I am unable to determine. I think the subject a good one, there are so many rhymes to it, such as *shoes*, *blues*, *ooze*, *lose*, *snooze*, &c., &c. I can bring Lucy into this poem thus—

Spirit of air, they call thee gentle Muse—
Alas! I seek thy angel face in vain!

Forgive me, then, if, thus in doubt, I choose
Fair Lucy for the subject of my strain.

You see I got over the difficulty arising from my not being acquainted with the Muse. Perhaps, after all, as poetry is a matter of fancy, the less we know of what one is talking about the better. When you write tell me what you think of my verses. It's very hard work, this writing poetry, and reminds me of an Indian cutting down an oak tree with the horn of a buffalo. There's a monstrous deal of hacking and hewing, and counting the fingers, and trying this way and that. But yet there's a great deal of poetry turned out every year. What the use of it all is I can't say ; probably the poets find amusement in writing, even if their verses are good for nothing. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and I suspect the fun of poetry lies in making it.

Well, good-by, dear mother! Give my love to all, and believe me ever yours,

WILLIAM BUMP.

CHAPTER VII.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER, AT SUNDOWN

BOSTON, *July*, 184-.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

I have just been reading your long letter of March 7th. Like all your letters, it made me both sad and glad—sad, to think how many hardships and privations my parents have suffered and still suffer; and glad, to think how kind and good they are, and have ever been to me. It also gives me pleasure to see how cheerful you are amid your trials; how you seem to dwell rather on the sunny than the shady side of objects, and even to draw consolation from what might be deemed misfortunes.

I should derive more satisfaction from all this, if I felt that I had deserved your kindness, and had duly profited by your counsel and example. But alas! I must confess that I have come short of my duty, and—what will grieve you more—I have even been

guility of faults of which I hardly dare to tell you. But as I have promised to open my heart to you, dear mother, I shall never have any peace till I have made a full confession.

It is now about a year and a half since I came to Boston ;—but I must go back to the first week or two after my arrival. You know, mother, I never had been to meeting or to church when I came here. I had an idea of public worship, for I had heard about it, but I did not know exactly what it was.

Well, the next Sunday after my arrival, Uncle Ben took me to Trinity church, with his family. This is a very curious building, and, when I entered it, the scene was so strange that it bewildered me. I went along looking up at the lofty cieling and gazing at the people. I finally got to the pew and sat down ; but all this time I was in a maze, and quite forgot to think how I looked or acted. In fact I kept my hat on ; and so everybody began to look at me. Some rolled up their eyes, and some smiled, and I saw several boys and girls titter. What it all was about I could not imagine ; there I sat, my eyes staring about, and my mouth gaping

like an oyster on a gridiron. But by-and-by I saw Lucy put her hand quietly up to her head as a sign of something. I looked about and then observed, for the first time, that all the people had their hats off except me. In an instant the ridiculous figure I was making flashed upon my mind. It seemed as if I should die with shame. I was on the point

of rushing out of the house and setting off immediately for Sundown, when I chanced to see a young fellow in the next pew pointing his finger at me. That made me mad, and, though it was Sunday, and the people had begun to sing a psalm, I said to myself, "If I ever ketch that fellow, I'll lick him!"

Now it chanced that I often met this youth as I passed through the streets of Boston; and never did this happen but I felt a rush of blood to my face, and a sort of tingling in my fist. About a fortnight ago he came to our school, and, as ill luck would have it, he sat on a bench right opposite to me. This brought to mind my mortification in the church, and my special indignation against him for pointing his finger at me. As I was going home from school I overtook him, and, stepping up, hit him a pretty smart slap on the side of the head.

This was very wrong, I know, but it really seemed to me I could not help it. The fellow was as much amazed as if he'd met a catamount. He looked at me for explanation, and I replied, "That's for pointing your finger at me, and you may take it for

your breakfast; if you ever do such a thing again I'll give you dinner and supper out of the same dish." I was really wild with anger, for I'd kept my bile bottled up eighteen months, and now it bust out like ginger beer in dog-days.

The fellow made his escape and I wen home. The next day I was called up by the master on the charge of striking this boy. He had greatly exaggerated what happened; and partly on this account and partly because I had not courage to confess the truth, I denied it. This led to a close examination, and the result was that the boy was turned out of school as having told a falsehood. I triumphed, and my enemy was disgraced.

At first I felt very proud and happy; but pretty soon I began to be uneasy. I felt something heavy at my heart. I went to sleep in sadness, and when I awoke it seemed as if all around was dark and gloomy. I had not the pleasure I before experienced in the society of my companions; I enjoyed no sports; I did not relish my meals. It seemed as if some horrible thing had crept into my

breast and was always saying, "You are a liar!" So I grew fearful, and when anybody looked at me I suspected that they heard the voice and saw my sin in my face. I even became jealous of Lucy, and her presence ceased to please me. Her happiness, her truth, her purity, offended me, for I felt them to be a reproach.

My manners and appearance changed. Lucy noticed this, and, I suppose, talked with aunt about it; for one day, as I was coming in from school, she met me, and asked me to go into the garden with her. I could not refuse. When we were alone, "So," said she, "you are going back to Sundown!"

"How?" said I, in amazement.

"Why, you are miserable here, and of course we suppose you wish to go back and hunt coons and 'possums in your native place."

"Well, I am ready to go, if that is the decision. I had not thought of it, but I shall be happier anywhere than here."

"Indeed! How so?"

"I have lost the confidence and affection

of all around me—of my uncle and my aunt, and, what is still worse, of you."

"Of me? Heaven forbid! Am I not still your cousin? What have I done to show loss of affection or want of confidence?"

I saw the tears gathering in Lucy's eyes. I felt the wickedness and folly of my conduct; but what could I do? Should I confess my guilt—humble myself in the eyes of one whose esteem I prized above everything else? These cruel questions pierced my breast as with arrows. My pride prevailed for a moment, and I was on the point of becoming a hardened sinner. But as I again looked at Lucy a better thought came over me. "I will confess all," said I, mentally.

I told her my story without disguising the truth or mitigating my fault. When I had done, "Now," said I, "I am ready to go. Having no title to the good opinion of my friends here, nothing is left but for me to hide my shame in the far off west. To-morrow I shall say farewell." I went to the house and shut myself in my room. I refused to leave it, even for my meals. Night

came, and I heard a tap at my door. It opened, and my aunt entered.

She sat down and told me that Lucy had given her an account of what had passed. She spoke of my error as a sad and grievous fault; but said that my sorrow went far to atone for it. She soothed my feeling, though she did not spare my guilt. I asked her advice. She said I must make due confession to the schoolmaster as well as to the youth whose character had suffered through my misrepresentation. Bitter as all this was, such was my humiliation, such the real agony of my heart, that I was glad to purchase peace at so dear a price.

I went to the schoolmaster and told the whole story. He was grieved, yet he said as my confession was voluntary my repentance was of course sincere; he hoped, therefore, that my fault was not likely to be repeated. "Do you forgive me?" said I. "Certainly," said he, "certainly; for my faults in boyhood were greater than yours. And besides, this error is likely to be a warning to you, and I think you will hereafter walk more steadily and securely in the path of virtue

now that you know the danger that besets you. Yes, I forgive you; and what is more, Heaven will forgive you, too, in view of your sorrow and humiliation. But let me call upon you to be thankful that this sin came out. Had it remained concealed, it is likely that your whole soul had been ruined, just as the body may become fatally diseased by a concealed poison."

You may well believe, dear mother, that in writing this letter I am discharging a painful duty. I still feel sad and humbled, though my friends here are very kind. They do all they can to make me cheerful, and to efface the remembrance of my misfortune. Lucy, good, and true, and pure as she is, seems not to love me the less; nay, she takes every opportunity to make me feel at ease—to assure me that we are still cousins in heart as well as in name.

Do write me soon, mother, and pray forgive your erring boy,

WILLIAM BUMP.

CHAPTER VIII.

LETTER FROM MRS. BUMP TO HER SON WILLIAM.

SUNDOWN, *November*, 184–.

I HAVE received several letters from you since I have had an opportunity of writing. I am very glad to notice the improvement you are making. This gives me the more pleasure from the belief that your progress is owing as much to your industry and faithfulness in study as to your natural gifts and capacity. It is desirable, certainly, to have talents or genius ; but it is still more desirable to have industry and the habit of application. The reason is that many persons who have genius fail of success in life, while those who have industry and application are almost always successful. This truth is set forth by an ancient fable, which I will tell you.

Once upon a time a Hare, who was on a journey, overtook a Tortoise. They entered

into conversation, and it turned out that both were going to the same place—Dismal Swamp—a number of miles distant.

At length the hare said,

"Really, Mr. Tortoise, excuse me for laughing; but positively it seems to me ridiculous for a squat, short-legged, lumpy, dumpy, rumpy little gentleman like you to undertake such a long journey."

"And why so?" said the turtle.

"Because you never will get there," said the long-legged hare.

"'Never' is a long day," said Totty, quietly.

"That may be," said the other, all the time jumping, frisking, and throwing himself about as if impatient to be doing something. "But I should die if I had to waddle and waddle and waddle like you. Why I can go farther at one jump than you can in a hundred steps."

"Nevertheless," said the turtle, "I will get to Dismal Swamp first."

"I'll bet you ten thousand heads of clover of it,' said the hare.

"I do not like betting," was the reply.

"You dare not!"

"Yes I dare; and, to humor you, I will take your wager."

"Done!" said the hare; and after some further talk the two parted. The hare bounded forward, throwing up his short white tail at the tortoise, as much as to say, "Do you see that? Why, I shall beat you all hollow. My legs are ten times as long as yours, Mr. Waddle. I am a genius, and can do anything; you are a drudge, and can do nothing." With these ideas the hare seemed to sweep forward like a strip of light.

The tortoise toiled on, beguiling the time by various reflections. "That creature," said he to himself, "seems to have great advantages; but will the gift of long legs cover the frailty of a giddy brain? After all, I shall win the wager. He knows his powers; he knows he can go to Dismal Swamp in a few hours, while it will cost me three days and nights of hard travel. His confidence will ruin him; while my sense of necessity will insure my success. He will be drawn away by tempting heads of clover and lovely little valleys by the wayside. He will

stop to nibble and gambol, and now and then he will doze. Perhaps, too, as he passes through the woods he will find companions, in whose company he will forget his wager. For myself, conscious that I have short legs, and that industry is my only strength, my only hope, I shall never forget my wager. It will be in my mind day and night, at sunrise and at sunset. Fortunately, as short-legged people have good constitutions, I need not stop long either for food or rest."

With these ideas the tortoise crept steadily along, and, slow as his progress might seem, it was really wonderful to see what a distance he had got by sunset. He did not stop, but went ahead. About midnight, as he was passing through a little valley, he heard a rustling sound. Peeping through an opening in the bushes, he saw about a dozen hares having a row in the moonlight. Among them he recognized his betting acquaintance, who was frisking and frolicking like the rest. The tortoise put his finger to the side of his nose significantly, and, saying not a word, went forward.

At the end of three days the tortoise was

at the swamp, and, crawling under a stone, went to sleep with one eye, keeping a lookout with the other for the hare. At last the latter came, all out of breath. "Whew!" said he; "what a heat I am in! I was really frightened lest that waddling tortoise should have got here first. Fool that he was to bet with me!" At this moment the tortoise, who was just behind, called out, "Oh, ho, Mr. Hare! you have come at last. Really I was afraid something had happened to you!"

"Clover and cabbage!" said Bunn, in utter amazement. "What, you here?"

"Certainly," said Tot; "and I've been here these six hours. I have won the bet. But don't mind—I never eat clover, and so shall not claim the wager. But promise me one thing, Mr. Hare."

"What is it?"

"Never presume upon your long legs, and never laugh at people with short ones. Take a hint from past experience. Those who perform the greatest tasks and do the greatest good in life, are not the gifted sons of genius, but the humble children of industry and toil

The Deity, who knows everything, and judges the actions of his creatures, laughs rather at the silly and presumptuous hare than at the patient and plodding tortoise. He sees the end from the beginning, and judges accordingly."

Such is the fable, and I leave you to make due application of it. I have read your poetry with satisfaction, for, although it would be poor stuff for a man, it is very clever for a schoolboy. It is good to exercise yourself in making verses, even though you never can be a true poet; for it gives you command of language, enlarges your stock of ideas, and serves to refine and give elegance to the mind.

I have read your account of your unfortunate difficulty at school. I will not say that your fault was light. It was wrong to strike the youth as you did, and it shows a dangerous spirit of revenge to harbor anger so long. For eighteen months you carried that evil thought in your bosom; and one evil thought never lives alone. It will beget others. So it was with you. You gave way to your revenge. This brought upon you the danger

of punishment. To avoid this you told a lie. The lie was the natural fruit of your revenge. Thus one evil ever brings another.

But how happy am I that in this hour of trial the kindness and wisdom of friends, through the blessing of God, saved my son! It was a moment of great danger, my dear William, to your whole life and being. Had you been permitted to go on covering up your guilt probably you had grown up faithless, hypocritical, and contemptible. I can never be too thankful for your escape.

I have no news to tell you. Bottle Nose was here last evening, and told us some curious Indian tales and fables. I shall try to send you an account of them hereafter. Your father is well. Adieu, and may God bless you.

From your affectionate mother,

ABIGAIL BUMP.

CHAPTER IX.

LETTER FROM MRS. BUMP TO HER SON WILLIAM.

SUNDOWN, *December*, 184-.

MY DEAR SON:

I did not expect to write you again so soon, but a good opportunity is offered by a party going from Oregon to New England, to send letters, and so here you have another. I promised to send you some of Bottle Nose's Indian tales, and so I give you some of them. I shall first tell you the story of

THE HAUNTED CHIEF.

Many winters ago there dwelt a small tribe along the banks of the Susquehanna, who were so famous in war that they acquired the name of the *Grisly Bears*. Every chief was above the ordinary size; they had such strength that they could rend the trees of the forest, and such speed that the wild deer could hardly escape from their pursuit. In

battle they had no fear; and terrible was the slaughter they made of their enemies. Their arrows were not only swift but aimed with deadly certainty. Fierce and fatal were their tomahawks—as the talons of the eagle when stooping upon the partridge. Keen was their eye to see the foe afar off—as that of the crow when he searches amid forest and thicket for his food. Terrible was their war-whoop —as the scream of a thousand panthers!

Near the abode of the Grisly Bears dwelt another tribe, who were so famous for their cunning that they received the title of the *Double Faces*. These people were often at war with the Grisly Bears; but so artful were their chiefs that they often got the advantage, even in battle.

At length, after a long interval of peace, a quarrel arose among these tribes, and they had many skirmishes with each other. In one of them the Grisly Bears rushed suddenly into the village of the Double Faces and carried off the daughter of the head chief. She was a girl of sixteen, and such was her beauty that she captivated all the young Indians who gazed upon her. When once

an Indian had seen her it was said that he could not help dreaming about her; and in his dreams it was believed that the maiden won his heart by magic. At the same time she was so swift and light of foot that, as she sped through the forest, she resembled a bird rather than a human being. For these reasons she became known far and near, and received the title of *Neena Moneka*, or the *Dream Antelope.*

Well, the Grisly Bears had made a capture of the famous Neena Moneka, and great was the joy of the young chiefs in the possession of such a valuable prize. The old chiefs shook their heads and seemed to fear that some mischief would accrue from the arts and wiles of the beautiful Double Face. "Wisdom," said they, "is the gift of age, and folly is the companion of youth."

The very morning after the Dream Antelope had been taken to the village of the Grisly Bears every young chief of the tribe awoke desperately in love with her. The old chiefs and the old squaws hereupon declared her to be a witch—the facts were proof positive. After long deliberation it was deter-

mined, in grave council, to put her to death. Accordingly she was tied to a tree, and the best bowmen were summoned to perform the execution. A young chief was called upon first. He was never known to miss his mark; even the flying swallow fell by his fatal arrow. The whole tribe were assembled—the grave warriors, the women, and the children. An Indian values his fame above life; and surely the young chief who is now called upon for a display of his skill, though he may love Neena Moneka, will not disgrace himself, even to save her. He draws his bow, while a breathless silence reigns around. The string twangs, but no one sees the arrow. Where is it? The maiden is unharmed. Surely she is a sorceress!

Another chief is called. He sends his arrow, but it flies wide, and goes sailing on till it is lost in the distance. Other arrows are sped, but still Neena Moneka is safe. All the young chiefs have tried their hand. "They are bewitched!" said an aged warrior named *Stony Heart;* "let an old man try his skill." He seized his bow; he drew the string to his ear, but it snapped at the

instant the arrow was about to leave it. Amazed and ashamed, Stony Heart retired, and *Fire Demon*, the foremost chieftain of the tribe, took the stand and prepared to try his skill. His arrow whirled through the air, it grazed the head of the maiden and stood trembling in the bark of the tree. The young warriors smiled; the old men and old women shook their heads.

Several other arrows were now tried, and with no better success. At length Neena Moneka spake. "Warriors of the Grisly Bear," said she, "listen! You are strong against men but feeble against a woman. Your arrows will not touch the heart of a maiden. Unbind me, set me free, and I will be the bride of the chief who captures me!"

A yell of joy burst from the crowd. They all desired to see the race. The girl was unbound, she was set free. Away she flew; but it was not the young warriors only that joined in the chase. The old warriors seemed as much fascinated as the rest, and away they scampered, each one striving to get possession of the beautiful maid. Up hill and down hill, over plain and through thicket,

puffed and panted full fifty warriors, some gray with years and scarred with a hundred battles. In vain did their wives scream, jeer, and gibe ; their clamor was soon lost in the distance. Light and swift sped the Dream Antelope, always near to her pursuers, always seeming about to be snatched by the eager grasp of one of the foremost, yet always escaping ; and often, when it was fancied that she must inevitably be taken, she would suddenly bound away, leaving her followers far behind.

Over hill and valley flew the chase. Shout, and yell, and halloo at first awoke the forest. But the warriors grew fatigued, and nothing but the crushing shrub and the panting bosom was heard. On flew the maid—on flew her pursuers. Over mountain and stream, over cliff and cataract they sped. The morning dawned ; the noonday passed ; the evening came ; the night was gone. Another day, and another, and another—the Dream Antelope fled, and the chiefs still pursued. But one by one they fell off. In a short time but a single chief followed the flying maiden. He seemed to know no

fatigue. For some days and some nights he continued the chase. They came to a broad stream where the water was rushing onward at a fearful rate. The maiden plunged into the wave. Close at hand the chief plunged after her. Down the hurrying tide they were borne. They came to the brink of a fearful cataract. The waters broke over it in foam and thunder. In the mist was lost the maiden, and in the mist was lost the warrior also. It was said that their forms were seen a moment in the snowy bubbles below. But death could not divide them. They are now in the land of spirits. On flew the maid and on flew her pursuer. And thus still they continue the chase. She is beautiful, but dim and dreamlike, with the form of the lovely Neena Moneka, but ghostly as a strip of moonlight or a group of stars seen through the summer mist. He, the youthful chieftain, has still the fire of the warrior; but he is rather a shadow gliding over the land than a man planting his foot upon the earth. Day and night, summer and winter, the Dream Antelope speeds onward; and day and night, summer and win-

ter, the beguiled Indian follows the entrancing shadow.

But what became of the other warriors? After many wanderings, one by one they returned to their village. But, alas! their wigwams were a heap of ashes; and the bones of their women and children were bleaching upon the sod. The Double Faces had taken advantage of the absence of the warriors and had made their homes a scene of desolation. Such was the fate of the Grisly Bears; and it shows that cunning is an over-match for strength. Such is the legend of the Dream Antelope; and it teaches this lesson—that the beauty of woman is the most fatal of all witchcraft.

This is a long story; but I must tell you another, for it is very curious.

Far away to the south is a land of perpetual summer. Here, in the midst of a beautiful plain, a mountain rises to the clouds. On the top is a forest of flowering trees, which are constantly in bloom. The air is ever fragrant with odors; and the songs of singing birds may be heard by day and by night. No tempests ever visit this

lovely plain. Here winter is unknown, and fruits, ever ripe and ever ripening, furnish a constant repast. The ground is soft with mossy turf, and no thorn or prickly pear springs up to injure the foot. And what is most wonderful is, that the inhabitants of this paradise are immortal. Subject to no disease, they never die; time flows on, and they continue from age to age in a perpetual enjoyment of indescribable bliss.

Such is the lovely land which, among the Indians, bears the title of the *Happy Hill*, But how is this mountain top to be reached? Ah, that is the question! Seen from a distance, its sides look smooth and gentle; but when the traveler ascends he finds it encircled by dizzy precipices and dark ravines filled with hideous serpents. Here, in the deep recesses, the moccasin, the rattlesnake, and the adder, collect in heaps, and fill the air with their hisses. Panthers, wolves, and vultures infest these horrid regions. Grisly shapes of monsters with long black wings are seen flitting in the mouths of the caves or along the deep shady hollows of the mountain.

It would be madness to attempt to pass such awful barriers set by the demons to keep mankind from this lovely paradise. One only chance of reaching this mountain top is presented. This is by a bridge consisting of a single thread, strung across a wide and roaring torrent. It is a terrific feat to cross this airy line, and demands not only great courage but long and tedious training. And even this is not enough. The adventurer must come to his work with a pure heart. If he has ever been false to his friend or his tribe his doom is terrible: he falls into the torrent and is borne within the bowels of the mountain. Here he lives forever, roaming amid gloomy caverns, hating everything and hated by everybody. His hair is by degrees turned into the writhing tails of serpents; his tongue becomes a serpent's head, and when he would speak he can only hiss. Every finger shoots into a hooked claw, and he goes on all fours like a beast.

Such is said to be the doom of the treacherous. But who can paint the joys of those who succeed in gaining the top of the Happy Hill! It is true no one has ever come back

either from the mountain top or the cataract to reveal his experience; but faith supplies the want of evidence, and every day and every hour adventurers are seen on the airy bridge striving to reach the land of immortal bliss.

Such are some of the tales which our old Indian neighbor has lately told me. They are at least curious because so different from our own fables and fairy tales. Nor are they without good intention; for after all the Indians have a conscience, and seem to set a high value upon rectitude of conduct.

I have filled my sheet so full as only to have room to say that we are all well; and may Heaven bless my dear boy.

ABIGAIL BUMP.

CHAPTER X.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER.

BOSTON, *May*, 184-.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

I have received two letters from you since I last wrote, and pray accept my thanks for them. They were very amusing, and contained some excellent advice. I suppose, by your story of the rabbit and tortoise, you fear that I may have some self-conceit, and be likely to rely upon my own superior abilities rather than my own industry.

Perhaps I am naturally vain, but I think I am getting cured of this. When I first came from Sundown I thought I knew almost everything, and could do almost everything. I felt as tall as a church steeple when I left home, but a month after I got here I seemed as flat as a pancake. Ever since that I have been growing less and less in my own estimation.

I believe the more a person knows the

more he is aware of his real ignorance and littleness. Why, mother, there is a library here called the Athenæum: in this there are forty thousand volumes, and some of them are as big as a good-sized baby. Most of them are in English; but some are in Greek, and some in Hebrew, some in Latin, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, &c. They tell about all sorts of subjects—history, geography, astronomy, chemistry, and a thousand other things I never even heard of. I was in this library one day with another boy, and he saw a book entitled *Numismatics*. "Well," said he, "I've heard of *Matthew Mattocks*, but I never heard of this *New Miss Mattocks* before!"

Well, you see, mother, if I came from Sundown very conceited, it was because I did not know how many wonderful things there were in the world. I have learned better now, and hope, as I gain more knowledge, I shall be still more modest. Uncle Ben told a story the other day that touched my case. He said that, some years ago, a famous Indian chief came from the Rocky Mountains to Washington. He was a great warrior,

and when he was introduced to the President of the United States he made a speech. "I am the Big Buffalo," said he. "What hunter can roar so loud as I? What Indian is so swift of foot? Whose arrow is so true as mine? Who knows so well as I how to hunt the grisly bear? Who can follow the trail of a skulking enemy like me? I am indeed a great Brave. Who can compare with me in skill? Who is so wise in council as the Big Buffalo?"

Well, mother, when I first came here I was a kind of Big Buffalo. I believe all Indians imagine that they are the greatest and wisest people in the world; and I am sure that all boys think they know more than anybody else. They are all Big Buffaloes till they become wiser.

It seems to me one of the objects of education is, to find our true position, to estimate ourselves aright, and, with the increase of knowledge, to acquire an increase of modesty.

You may think I am talking very wisely, but I am telling what I have heard our teacher say. He not only makes us learn what is in books, but he talks to us, gives us

good advice, and tells us stories, so as to make us understand and remember what he says. He told us, some time ago, that we ought to be modest and humble, and he gave this as one of his reasons. "No one," said he, "who thinks he is on the top of the hill will attempt to climb higher. He fancies that there is nothing more to be done; he is above everybody else. But if you can show him in fact that he is on a very little low mound, and that there are lofty regions above him from which he may see sights the most glorious—cities, nations, kingdoms, empires —there is some chance that he may be roused to new efforts and climb higher and still higher in the path of life, usefulness, duty, and glory."

I was very much pleased with old Bottle Nose's fables which you sent. How I should like to see the old fellow! It is near three years since I left home, but it seems twice as long. Yet I remember everything as clearly as if I was there yesterday. I often dream of you, and father, and old Trot, and everything else at Sundown. You can't conceive how sad I am when I wake after such a

dream and find that I am still in Boston. Pray, mother, did you ever read some lines called the "*Soldier's Dream?*" They represent a soldier far, far away from his wife, and his children, and his home. At night, after a battle, he lays himself down to rest, surrounded by the dead and the dying. He falls asleep, and then in a dream he seems to return to his home. The story is beautifully told, and is very affecting.

"When reposing that night on my pallet of straw
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain,
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw,
And thrice ere the morning I dreamed it again.

Methought from the battlefield's dreadful array,
Far, far, I had roamed on a desolate track;
'Twas autumn, and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers that welcomed me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields, traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young,
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And I knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore,
From my home and my weeping friends never to part;
My little ones kissed me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobbed aloud in her fullness of heart.

'Stay, stay with us—rest; thou art weary and worn;'
And fain was the war-broken soldier to stay;
But sorrow returned with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away."

Is it not a sad story? Perhaps I feel it the more, because it reminds me of my own case. I have written a poem in which I have tried to tell one of my dreams. I send it to you, though, by the side of the one I have just repeated, it will seem very flat.

A DREAM OF HOME.

Far, far from home, my heart oppressed,
I laid me down and sought for rest;
I slept, but longing fancy drew
A lovely vision to my view.
Methought I roamed by wave and wood,
When, lo! my home before me stood.
The scenes familiar to my gaze
Seemed lovelier than in other days
The elm that o'er the humble shed
Its leafy boughs protective spread,
The moss-brown roof, the clambering vine,
The window where the roses twine,
And O, that blessed old open door,
With narrow, beaten path before!—
So dear, so truthful seemed the view,
No shading doubt my bosom knew.
As nigh the door with listening ear
And beating heart, I paused to hear
Those voices, more than music dear—
I heard my name, and O, how blest,
When, to my mother's bosom pressed!
With ardent lip my love I spoke!
And lo! the glorious vision broke!

Now, mother, don't laugh. The poetry is no doubt foolish enough; but still I feel so much what I am writing that I cannot keep the tears out of my eyes. My heart is sadder than usual, for something bad seems to

hang over this family. Uncle Ben is very gloomy, aunt is thoughtful, and cousin Lucy looks anxious and pale. What all this means I don't know. I hope nothing bad is going to happen. But to tell you the truth, dear mother, I wish I was at Sundown. Pray give my best love to father, and believe me your dutiful son.

WILLIAM BUMP

CHAPTER XI.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER, AT SUNDOWN

BOSTON, *Oct.*, 184–.

MY DEAR MOTHER :

IT is now five long months since I have written to you. The truth is, I have not had the heart to write. I believe I said in one of my letters that there seemed a cloud over this family ! Alas, the storm has burst, and sad is the desolation which has followed.

I wish I could pass over the details of the story ; but this may not be. About three months since my aunt came to my room. She was very pale, and looked as if she could hardly stand. She sat down. "My dear Willy," said she, "I must tell you that great and sad misfortunes have fallen upon us."

"O do not say so," said I, in great ter ror.

"Nay, but my dear boy, you must know it," continued my aunt. "All the world will know it to-morrow. Your uncle has failed !'

"Failed—failed?" said I. "What does that mean?"

"It means that your uncle cannot pay his debts. He has lost two ships at sea. Several persons who owed him money have become unable to pay him. The times are very bad for men in business; and your uncle has suffered by great and heavy losses."

"But, my dear aunt," said I, much relieved, "is that all? Why, you, and Lucy, and uncle are all the same. Why not be happy, then, as before?"

"Ah, William," said aunt, with a sad smile, "when you know the world better you will learn to judge things more wisely. We are not the same in the eyes of the world. We must quit this house; we must give up all this furniture; we must go to a cheaper dwelling and live in a very humble way. This I do not mind. But do you know, Willy, that when rich people become unfortunate, they are sure to be treated with contempt."

"No, indeed."

"Yet such is the fact. Many envious peo-

ple rejoice in their downfall, because they think the more others are down the better is their chance of getting up. You have seen many people courting and flattering us while we were deemed prosperous and while we were in fashion ; and most of them will turn their backs upon us, and say evil things of us, as soon as our calamity is known. We shall hear no more of their flattering speeches ; we shall see no more of their admiring looks. But all this is not my chief source of trouble. I can bear to become the scorn of the world, if so Providence decrees ; but I have great anxiety for others. How my poor husband will bear this, Heaven only knows. He is proud, and has too much set his heart upon wealth and the position which wealth gave him. I fear the impossibility of meeting his engagements will break his heart, strong as it is. And poor Lucy, too, how sadly are her prospects blasted ! But I have cause to be thankful, for the dear child seems an angel sent to cheer us in this hour of gloom. And you, my dear Willy—I suffer on your account. I know your poor mother must feel disappointed to find that we are not able

to do as we intended—that is, to establish you in business."

My aunt was going on in this way—the tears streaming down her cheeks—when I begged her not to be unhappy for me. I thanked her for being so kind as to tell me her sorrows, and besought her to point out some way in which I might be useful. We went and found Lucy, and talked the matter all over. Lucy was very cheerful, and almost put her mother in good humor. We parted at last, for it was late at night. I did not sleep, but walked my room, revolving all sorts of plans for the future.

The next day Uncle Ben's bankruptcy was the town talk. All the gray, old, wrinkled men, who have plenty of money and nothing to do, talked it over in State Street, at places called insurance offices. His business and character were all thoroughly discussed. Some people were charitable, but the majority turned up their noses. There were a set of shallow fellows, who, being conscious of knowing less than other people, looked wise and said, "*It's just what we expected: we knew this would happen three months ago!*"

Well, it was a very bad business. Uncle Ben owed ever so much money, and had not more than half enough to pay it. His creditors were very hard with him ; and the richest were, of course, the hardest. And beside, there were some cases very aggravating. Uncle Ben had taken the money of widows and orphans to keep, and this was gone with the rest. He did not intend to do any harm —very far from it. But people said he had speculated, and run too great risks. These things cut him to the heart. He put a brave face upon it, especially in the streets. There was a stern smile about his lip, and one deep cloud-spot across his brow ; but beside this he seemed the same as ever. He met his creditors ; he spoke and acted calmly. Some of them said cruel things to him ; but he replied without irritation. He came home ; he spoke cheerfully to us all, at least in words. He retired to his room and begged to be alone. No one dared to intrude upon him. We could hear groans and sobs, though low and stifled. It was fearful to hear these agonies of a great and proud man.

The next day Uncle Ben was found to be

in a high fever. He became delirious, and remained for two weeks in a critical state. The disease at last took a bad turn, and at the end of three weeks from the first attack he breathed his last. O mother, it was dreadful to see poor aunt. I know she would have died had it not been for Lucy. I cannot tell you about the funeral, it was so sad. Dear me! it makes me wretched to think that there are such melancholy things in the world as death and funerals, and losing friends whom we shall meet no more.

I must now close this sad letter. I do not know what we shall all do. The furniture is to be sold next week. When I write again we shall all have left the big house in Beacon Street. It makes me feel very, very bad; not for myself, for I could go back to Sundown. If I could forget aunt, and Lucy, and all the sad things that have happened, I should rejoice to go home; but I cannot leave them now. They have been kind to me, and I am ready to die for them, if so God wills it. The only pleasure I take is in thinking of some great thing I can do for them. But I fear this is only idle fancy. However, I am now

nearly eighteen, and I shall try to do something.

Give my love always to father, and take ever so much for yourself; and good-by, dear mother.

WILLIAM BUMP.

CHAPTER XII.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER.

BOSTON, *Nov.* 1848.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

WHEN I wrote to you last, we were in a very uncertain and unsettled state; but now our plans are all formed. What do you think? I am going to sea! This will sound very strange to you; and, indeed, it seems almost a dream to myself; but it is really so, and in two days I shall sail for the Pacific Ocean. I must tell you how all this came about.

You know that Uncle Ben was largely engaged in the trade along the western coast of America. He used to send out various kinds of goods, to be sold at different places, such as Valparaiso, Panama, San Francisco, etc. Some of his ships went quite to the Northwest Coast, touching at Oregon, and places still farther north.

Well, it appears that he had an agent sta-

tioned at San Gabriel, which is a small place on the coast, south of San Francisco. He was a Spaniard, and for some years he managed very well; and Uncle Ben was so well pleased with him that he sent him a whole cargo, worth thirty thousand dollars, or perhaps more. The man sold it all, and sent Uncle Ben a small part of the amount. The rest he laid out in some speculation, and lost it all, as he said, and so was unable to pay it.

This took place a number of years ago, and it was supposed that the claim was entirely lost. But a short time before his death Uncle Ben heard from some who had been in that quarter, that this person, whose name, by the way, was Diego Naldi, was living in the interior of the country, and that he was very rich, with an immense farm, and several thousand cattle. Now, as Uncle Ben had been very kind to this man, he naturally thought he would pay this debt, if he could get some one to go and see him; and he was laying plans to have this done when he was taken away.

Uncle Ben's estate has turned out better than was expected, and it will only fall thirty

or forty thousand dollars short of paying all his debts. His creditors, therefore, feel pretty liberal ; and some of them put their heads together, and made an arrangement to send some one out to San Gabriel, and see what could be done with Diego Naldi ; and it is agreed that half of what is obtained shall go to aunt and Lucy !

Well, when all this was fairly planned, I took Lucy aside, and told her that I intended to propose myself to go on this very expedition to Señor Naldi ! She looked thoughtful, and her eyes were as blue as a patch of clear sky after a thunder shower. We had a long talk on the subject, but Lucy at length approved my plan and soon brought aunt into the scheme. Then we set to work to get the consent of the men who had charge of the matter, and they at last consented ; and so it is now all settled, and in two days I am off.

Now, mother, what do you say to all this? Is it not droll to think of your awkward, ignorant Billy Bump, who left you, only three years ago, a rough child of the forest, going on an errand of fifteen thousand miles, and

relating to an interest valued at thirty or forty thousand dollars ! No doubt you will think it very absurd; and father will say we are all mad. But let me explain the matter a little. In the first place, mother, I have not been idle since I came to Boston. I have been pretty industrious in my studies, and my teacher has spoken very well of my success. Since Uncle Ben's death I have devoted myself to taking care of aunt and Lucy, and have also been engaged in assisting the persons charged with settling Uncle Ben's estate. I have been so fortunate as to obtain their confidence ; and thus it is that I am entrusted with this business.

Lucy will write you on this subject, and give further explanation. I am very much occupied, and have little time to devote to anything but my business. Still, my dear mother, I can find time to write to you, and to think of you ; but I feel that it will be gratifying to you to hear from some one, beside myself, how the case stands. I know you will be apt to fancy that it is a mad piece of business altogether ; but if my friends here think well of it, you will,

perhaps, think well of it, too, after a while.

I must, however, whisper to you, mother, that even if I fail in getting anything of this Señor Naldi, there is another scheme in my head which I may adopt. It is said that there is gold in dust and small lumps in the mountains north of San Francisco, and it is so plentiful that a person may pick it up at the rate of an ounce a day. Most people laugh at all this ; but I am sure it is true. I have seen a man who has been there, and I have seen some of the gold that he collected himself, to the value of two thousand dollars. Now I mean at least to look into this matter, and if there is such a quantity of gold in the country as they speak of, I mean to have a chance at it.

And now, dear mother, farewell. I shall write to you as often as I can, and Lucy will write also. Farewell, and may God bless my dear parents.

WILLIAM BUMP.

LETTER FROM MISS LUCY BUMP, IN BOSTON, TO HER AUNT AT SUNDOWN.

BOSTON, *Nov.*, 1848.

MY DEAR AUNT:

THIS is the first letter I have ever written to you; but it will not be deemed intrusive, as it comes from your niece, and must relate chiefly to your son William. He is going on a distant voyage, charged with important business; and he wishes me to write so as to satisfy your mind, if any doubts should exist as to the prudence of the enterprise. It is true William is only seventeen years of age; but he is very manly, and has judgment and capacity quite beyond his years. His progress in study has been great, owing to his diligence; his desire to learn has made him successful in acquiring agreeable manners, at the same time that he has laid in a large stock of knowledge, considering the short period devoted to his education. He has obtained the good will and confidence of all who know him; and for this and other reasons he has been selected for the business in question.

He is in very good spirits, and I feel sure

he will succeed. I never saw such courage mixed with so much prudence. He longs to see you; and when you are spoken of the tears fill his eyes. I have only one feeling of anxiety about him. I know he is led to this expedition from a desire to serve mother, and perhaps me. Therefore, if anything bad should befall him, I should never be happy again. Mother is very dull, and takes a dark view of life and its interests; but there is something about William which inspires confidence and hope even in her. His bright, cheerful, determined face seems always to suggest ideas of success; everybody who looks at him says, "He was born to good luck."

Thus, my dear aunt, you will see our confidence, and the grounds of it. I pray Heaven will watch over William, and bring him back safely. Do write to me, and tell me what you think of all this. I shall keep you informed of all that transpires respecting William.

I am, your affectionate niece,

LUCY BUMP

CHAPTER XIII.

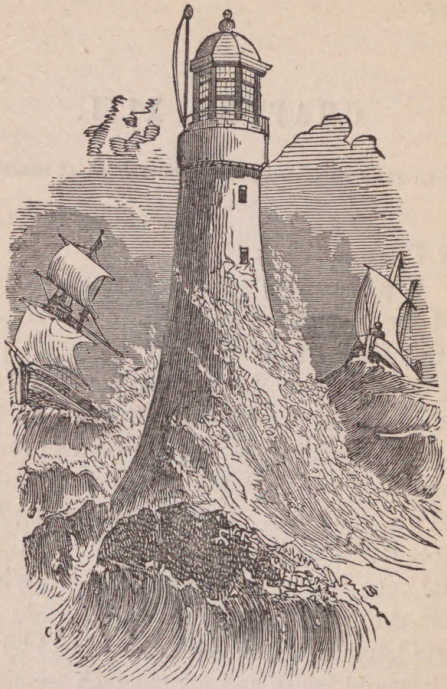
LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER, AT SUNDOWN

BRIG FIRE-FLY, *Jan.*, 1849.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

I HAVE now been two months at sea, and for the first time sit down to write. I have intended to keep a kind of journal, puting down, day by day, everything that I saw which seemed interesting. But up to this time I have failed to put my plan in execution. For the first ten days I was sea-sick and quite helpless. O, what a shocking feeling it is! I really wished myself overboard. And one thing is very odd—everybody seemed to think it funny. The captain and mate laughed at me, though my head felt as if it would burst, and my stomach seemed as if there were live frogs in it, all trying to jump out of my mouth at once. Bah! it makes me cringe to think of it!

But I am better now, and like sea-life very well. At first I could not walk about; or,



if I did, I tottered from one side to the other and often got a severe bang. It made me think of a verse in your old Psalm-Book—

"What strange affrights young sailors feel,
And like a staggering drunkard reel!"

When I came on board the Fire-Fly, she looked so big, I thought she must be quite steady and safe ; but after we got out to sea, and the wind began to blow, she tumbled, and walloped, and kicked, and jerked, and pitched, and rolled, and flirted, and hopped, and skipped, and jumped like mad. It was the oddest thing I ever met with ; for she seemed to do all these things at once. She went up, and down, and sideways, and backwards, and forwards, all in the same breath ; and such was my state of body and mind that I felt every twist and turn of the ship in my head and bowels.

However, it is all over now. I'm very hearty, and eat raw pork with a good appetite. We have no milk or cream, and in place of them use butter in our coffee and tea. I like the brig very much. She is a fine sailer, and it is curious and wonderful to see her glide along, as if she were alive, and knew exactly what to do. The sea in a storm is a strange, wild thing—beautiful, yet terrible. It seems to me like God in anger. Think of the sky filled with fleecy clouds—flying by like demons ; the sea, black as ink,

rolling in heavy billows, their tops white and heavy, and spinning into the air in wreathy spray. Think of all this, while a hollow roar fills your ears, as if all earth and ocean were in some dreadful agony—and you have a faint idea of a storm at sea. And think of yourself in a vessel that now seems a feather, tossed hither and thither by the frantic waves: think of yourself apart from all human help—the sea, the sea only around you—and between you and its fathomless depths but a single plank! It is, indeed, fearful; and nothing but the idea that a kind Father above watches over his children, even upon the lonely deep, can give peace to the mind at such a time and under such circumstances.

Nothing very remarkable has happened to us. We have met two or three vessels, and spoke one of them. She was coming from China and had been four months at sea. As we passed near the West Indies, we saw one of the islands at a distance. I frequently see flocks of flying-fish skimming over the water; and have noticed many strange and curious birds. We staid two days at Rio Janeiro, to

get water and take in provisions. This is the capital of Brazil, and is larger than Boston ; but it is a very different place. A portion of it is well built, and some of the public buildings are handsome, but many of the streets are poor, mean, and filthy. More than two-thirds of the inhabitants are negroes and mulattoes. Merchants from various countries—France, Germany, England, Spain, Portugal, Holland, the United States, etc.—are to be seen in the market-places. I often saw vultures, as big as turkeys, walking in the streets, or sitting on the roofs and chimneys of the houses. They seemed quite as much at home as the people. Nobody disturbed them, unless they came too close ; for they pick up the filth and save the lazy inhabitants a great deal of trouble. Yet they are horrid-looking things, and smell worse than anything I like to mention. They are great gluttons, and often eat so much that they cannot fly. One of our sailors thought he would have a bit of fun : so he caught one. Well, he got well paid for it ; for the creature vomited all his abominable breakfast right into the fellow's lap. How he did

scamper! and how the other sailors laughed at him! He had a strong odor about him for a week, and now he goes by the name of *Eau de Cologne!*

We are now near Cape Horn. The sky is constantly filled with clouds, and light snows frequently fall upon us. The air is dim with the frosty vapor. At the same time the wind is heavy, and the sea is terribly rough. The captain says this is one of the stormiest places in the world.

March, 1849.

I am happy to say that we have got safely round the Cape. It was tedious business. The captain and crew were worn out with hard work, care, and watching. We were about a month in passing this point of our voyage. We have seen no land for five weeks, and though we have been almost constantly beset by dark, cloudy weather, the captain seems to know exactly where we are. What a wonderful thing it is, that, without a path to guide us, we are able, by the help of a compass and a few figures, to traverse the mighty waste of waters—a desert with-

out a rock, or tree, or landmark to point the way!

If I could see you, dear mother, I should tell you of many things—how, one terrible night, we lost our mainsail, and had our rudder carried away; how one of the hands was washed overboard, and saved himself by holding on to a rope; how an albatross—a bird twice as big as a goose—fell upon our deck during a storm; and how strange and beautiful the stars are, in this far-off region, during fair weather. But these, amid many other things, I shall leave till I meet you—which I hope to do—though, when I remember that I am ten thousand miles from you, my heart sinks and I feel as though such a happiness was impossible.

* * * * *

We are still ploughing the deep, and making our way to the north. We stopped ten days at Valparaiso, which is a considerable town on the western coast of South America. I there saw several Americans, and among them a boy from Boston named John Sikes, who had been to the same school with me. He is clerk in a store here. I never liked him

in Boston, nor do I think he liked me; but the moment we met we rushed into each other's arms, as if we had been brothers. I was never so glad to see anybody in my life.

A few days ago we passed near the island of Juan Fernandez, which is the spot in which Robinson Crusoe was supposed to have lived. What a pity it is that the story of Robinson Crusoe is only a fancy tale! It really made me feel sad when I was first told no such person ever lived. I supposed Robinson Crusoe to be as much a real character as Peter Parley or Robert Merry. And, by the way, speaking of these two celebrated personages, were it not that I have read their books and seen their pictures, I should almost think that they were only imaginary characters. I have, in Boston, seen Daniel Webster, who makes such famous speeches; and Mr. Longfellow, who writes such beautiful poetry; and Mr. Fields, who makes such lots of nice books; and Mr. Kimball, who keeps the Museum; and Mr. Simmons, of Oak Hall; and Mrs. Nichols, who makes the best ice creams in the world; but I am not exactly sure that I ever saw either Peter Parley or Robert

Merry. Is it not strange that everybody seems to know these two persons, and yet I never got a fair sight at either of them, nor found anybody who had? What a pity it would be if these, like Robinson Crusoe, should, after all, turn out to be mere beings of the imagination! Yet this cannot be; for I have actually got some of their books!

PANAMA, *May*, 1849.

I am now writing from the town of Panama, on the western shore of the Isthmus of Darien. It is situated on a fine bay, and is as large as Salem or Providence. Steamboats ply between this place and Valparaiso. I found here several Americans, and some whom I had seen. I take leave of the brig Fire-Fly here, as she is bound to San Francisco, while I am going to San Gabriel. I expect to sail for that place in two days, in the schooner Beato. She is a Chilian vessel, and all on board speak Spanish. I expect a horrid dull time. However, I keep of good heart. I had a letter to Mr. Rice, a merchant here, who has been very kind to me. He has often heard of Señor Naldi, but not

of late years. He is going to give me letters to a Spanish house at San Gabriel, which, he says, will aid me very much. I shall send this letter by an American, who is going to New York, across the Isthmus. It will go to aunt, at Boston, and will be sent from there to you, at Sundown.

And now, dear mother, give my kindest love to father, and everybody, and believe me truly yours,

WILLIAM BUMP.

LETTER FROM LUCY BUMP TO HER AUNT.

BOSTON, *March*, 1850.

MY DEAR AUNT:

In December last we sent a letter to you, from William, giving an account of his voyage as far as Panama, and since that time we have had no letter from him; yet I must not conceal from you that we have had tidings of him which give us great anxiety. He sailed in a small schooner, named the Beato, from Panama, in October. She was bound for San Gabriel, with twenty passengers. We learn by the papers that the vessel had a long passage and got short of water. Three of the

passengers, one of whom was William, went ashore in a boat to get some ; but the country was uninhabited, and the boat was upset just as she came to land. The vessel had no other boat, and as the weather was rough she could not take the men in again. Accordingly she went on her voyage, leaving them there. She arrived at San Gabriel, and after three weeks nothing had been heard of them.

Of course we hope for the best. We learn that William and his companions were left at the coast, four hundred miles from San Gabriel, without a cent of money, and with no other clothes than those they had on. The coast, for the whole distance, is nearly a wilderness, and in some parts it is mountainous. Our hope is that the poor fellows may be taken up by some vessel. If not, we trust to William's courage, energy, and talent, for deliverance. My mother is greatly depressed, but I have a hope, a faith, I may say a confidence, that William will be saved. It is too dreadful to think of his perishing in the wilderness, away from home and friends. It seems impossible that one so bright, so full of thought, and feeling, and talent, should be

cut down in the very morning of life. But this suspense is dreadful. I think of poor William at every hour of the day and of the night. O! may Heaven watch over him. Ah! why did we permit him to go! It seems to me like madness even—like cruel, unfeeling selfishness—to permit him to undertake such an enterprise, just for our benefit. But I must not write thus. Your own sorrow will be sufficient without mine. I shall write soon again; and, in the meantime, our prayers for the safety of William will not cease. From your affectionate niece,

LUCY BUMP.

CHAPTER XIV.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER, AT S' NDOWN

LORETO, LOWER CALIFORNIA, *Jan.*, 1850.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

HERE I am—safe and sound—after lots of adventures and hairbreadth escapes enough to fill a book. When I get home, if that should ever happen, I mean to write an account of my experiences for the last six weeks, which, I think, will be as wonderful as the stories of Robinson Crusoe, Baron Munchausen or Jack-the-Giant-Killer. Never was a poor fellow so buffeted and banged about; and, after all, I am at the very strangest place in the world, and one I never heard of till I got to it. But I must give you a sketch of my experience.

I sailed from Panama, on the 4th of October, in the schooner Beato, being bound for San Gabriel, a place on the coast, some two or three hundred miles south of San Francisco. We expected our voyage to be about

a month in duration, but we had calms and head winds, and all sorts of mishaps, and finally got out of water. We were near the land, and two fellows, with myself, went in a boat to see if we could find some. When we got near the shore the surf swamped our boat, and we were sprawled into the water. With a good deal of scrambling we reached the land, but our boat was smashed on the rocks ; and the weather continuing rough the schooner set sail and went on its way.

Well, that was a pretty fix for an innocent youth named Billy Bump, at the tender age of seventeen ! I have pretty good courage, mother, and am more apt to laugh than cry ; but when I looked around, and took a fair account of my situation, I felt the salt constantly getting into my eyes, and making everything look as if we were in an April fog. Consider the state of the case. We were on the western coast of Lower California, a long, snaggy country, poking into the Pacific, from north to south, say five hundred miles. In looking at the coast it appeared to me like a dark, desolate region of iron. The mountains rose abruptly from the

shore to the height of two or three thousand feet, presenting not a single tree, or shrub, or blade of grass. At the feet of the rocky cliffs lay the boundless ocean, seeming smooth and tranquil at a distance, but along the shore roaring, thundering, and tumbling, like forty thousand giants dashing out their brains in vain attempts to demolish the mountains which obstructed their progress. On one of the narrow ranges of these cliffs sat three persons—Diego Mina and Bernardo Golfin, of Chili, and Billy Bump, of Sundown.

Mina was an old salt—that is, a sailor—some five-and-forty years old, short, black as an Indian, and hard and wrinkled as the trunk of an oak. Golfin was a Chilian dandy, five feet high, small body, and a little, sallow face, sunk deep in a black, swampy thicket of hair, whiskers, and moustaches. There we were, snug as three fleas in a bottle. My companions spoke nothing but Spanish, of which I did not know a sentence. On my passage, I had caught a few words, and was able to make out that in the present posture of affairs, they were both at their wit's end,

having given up their entire concerns to the Virgin Mary, and a lot of persons in the other world whom I supposed to be saints These fellows had at least one comfort—they could converse together. They had their sorrows—but they could find relief in expressing them. Never before did I feel such respect for the human tongue and the invention of language. I believe I would have given one of my eyes, or one of my ears, or any half-dozen of my fingers or toes, to have been able to talk with these two Spaniards.

We staid three days on the rocky shore, feeding upon muscles and seaweed, hoping for the return of the Beato, or the appearance of some vessel by which we might escape. But we were disappointed. At length I determined to climb the mountains, and endeavor to cross the country to the eastern side of the peninsula—a distance, as I had learned, of some fifty or sixty miles. I expected to find no inhabitants, except, perhaps, a few Indians, wolves, foxes, and rattlesnakes ; but my anxiety to do something made me perfectly fearless. I was, in fact,

desperate, so eager was my desire to be doing something.

I made my plans known to my companions as well as I could, by looks, signs, and jargon; but they rolled up their eyes, and concluded to stick by the Virgin and the saints. So I started upon my own hook. I found a narrow gorge in the cliffs, and by diligent scrambling gained the top of the first range of mountains—some two thousand feet high. The scene was amazingly grand; on one side the broad ocean, spreading out and mingling with the sky; on the other, a seeming city of mountain-peaks, dark and dingy with age, and haggard from the effects of volcanic shocks, and the long, wasting influence of time and tempest. No living thing was visible in this extended view—not a tree or plant—not an insect or a bird—save only that, far away, I saw a vulture poised in the sky, and looking steadily down, as if searching for his meal.

It was a mad project; but I determined to try my fortune, and entered this wilderness of cliffs and ridges. I have not time now to tell you my wild adventures, day by

day, and night by night, during the three following weeks. I had no money; and among these regions that was of little consequence. My shoes were thin, and were soon cut to pieces in climbing and descending the cliffs. I had on a thin linen dress: this was very well during the days, which were hot, but at night I suffered from the cold. I had with me a small bundle of muscles, which I ate economically for the first two days. On the third, I came to a ravine where there was a little river. This ran eastwardly, and I hoped, by following it, to reach the eastern shore, bordering on the Gulf of California; for here I understood there were settlements. But the river soon terminated in a little valley, in the centre of which was a small lake.

Never have I seen anything so lovely as this spot seemed, when first I came upon it. All around the scenery consisted of dreary rocks, appearing like grisly giants, guarding this lonely and sequestered valley. The lake consisted of the purest water, and its shores were covered, even though it was November, with rich vegetation, and flowers of a thousand forms and hues. Birds of bright plum-

age and sportive airs glided over the water, or glanced through the thickets. I was filled with delight at the scene, so different from the barren desolation amid which I had been wandering.

I approached the lake, and as the weather was intensely hot, and I was very weary, I prepared for a bath. I had taken off my cap and jacket, and was about to complete my preparations, when I heard a strange humming in the bushes at my side. I looked in that direction, and there lay a rattlesnake ready to spring upon me. I leaped upon the bank, but found that I had trod right in among a family of scorpions, one of which gave me a villanous stab in the calf of the leg, with a sort of natural bowie-knife which he carries at the end of his tail. I had not fairly got clear of these fellows, when I felt something come slap down upon the top of my head. I put up my hand and caught hold of a green snake, which, it seems, had fallen from a magnolia-tree, which rose above me. I looked up, and almost every leaf and flower of the tree was occupied by one of these agreeable little personages. Leaving

my cap and jacket to the rattlesnake, I went away with a hop, skip, and a jump, giving to this valley the name of *Snaky Hollow.* It is mine, by the right of discovery ; but I will give a clear deed of it to anybody who would like it.

I began to climb the mountains again, and at the end of two days I reached a ravine, where I saw some huts made of canes and leaves. There was nobody there ; so I took possession of one. The gorge or valley between the mountains was fertile in places, and I had no difficulty in finding enough to eat. There were wild figs, a kind of custard apple or paw-paw, and various other fruits in abundance. Being very much fatigued, and almost worn out, I concluded to stop here and recruit. After three days a terrible event happened. It was night, and I was sleeping in my bed of leaves, when I heard a strange, rumbling noise. I went to the opening of the hut and looked about. It was perfectly dark, and not a breath of air was stirring ; but an awful sound, seeming to come from the bowels of the earth, filled my ears. What it meant was beyond my conception. If you

can imagine some giant, as big as a mountain, suddenly smitten with a fit of the colic —rolling, tumbling, and groaning in his agony—you may have some idea of the noises which then assailed me.

I waited a few moments in mingled wonder and horror, when suddenly a rush of wind swept by, prostrating my cabin, and tumbling me in among the wreck. For a moment all was still; and then suddenly the whole heavens seemed to be on fire. The mystery was now explained: one of the mountains, which skirted the valley, was volcanic, and being suddenly taken with a fit of fever and ague, began to vomit forth fire and smoke, melted stones and lava. The latter, a seeming river of fire, was rolling down the

sides of the mountain, and threatened speedily to fill up the valley. It was becoming too hot for me; and so, without staying long to make up my mind, I took the opposite direction, and left the volcano to its fate. For a week after I could see its pitchy smoke screwing the heavens, and gliding away at last in a long, dim line, till it was lost in the sky.

My adventures were not yet at an end. In about three days I came to a considerable river. This I followed, and it soon brought me to the sea, which I knew of course to be the Gulf of California. While I was walking along the shore, a white man and two Indians sprung suddenly from the reeds and bushes, and made me a prisoner. They said not a word, nor did I. The Indians were naked as a chestnut out of the burr; but the white man had a thin dress, and a broad-brimmed, palm-leaf hat. When I was firmly bound, the man spoke to me in Spanish. I shook my head to signify that I did not understand the language. He then spoke to me in English.

"Who are you?" said he.

"William Bump, of Boston!' said I.

Never did I see such a droll expression as came over the man's face as I gave this answer.

"William Bump, of Boston?" he repeated with great emphasis; "and how came you here?"

"I was cast away on the other side."

"And how did you get across?"

"I came on foot: there was no railroad!"

The man smiled, and I thought, at the time, it was a very Yankee smile indeed. He went on:

"And so you was cast away—and you crossed those mountains? Wal—that's just like the rest on 'em. Now there ain't a Spaniard, or a Mexican, or an Indian, in all Kalliforny, Upper or Lower, that dare do what that are chap has done. It's the nature of the beast: these Yankees du beat the Dutch. They go and come, and don't mind rattlesnakes, copperheads, racers, scorpions, or volcanoes. Go-ahead is chapter and varse for them. Wal, wal—I thought I'd got to the end of creation, but this fellow 's found me out. I'm glad to see him though.

Look 'ere—what 'd you say your name was ?"

"William Bump, or Billy Bump, just as you like."

"Well, come go with me." Saying this my new acquaintance took me to a rude, though comfortable hut, at a short distance. Here were about half a dozen Indians, and around were several other huts. The shore was near by, and in a little nook of the bay, between two rocks, lay three light canoes. We entered the hut, and the man soon told me his story. His name was Paul Pike, he was the son of Captain David Pike, of Popperidge, Massachusetts. He came first to Mexico, to sell clocks, and got a little money by it. He then took to catching horses, on the plains, which he sold to General Scott's army. He was finally taken by the Mexicans, but slipped through their fingers, and took to peddling, passing himself off as a native Mexican. He found a great demand for pearls, and accordingly wrote to his brother Jim, of Popperidge, to manufacture a lot of wooden ones. These came, but did not pay. Paul then chanced to hear of the pearl fisheries on the Gulf of

California, and set out to investigate the matter.

He soon arrived, and catching two wild Indians, set them to diving for the pearl oysters. This did pretty well, and he went on until he had caught six Indians at the time I arrived. He supposed I was an Indian, and I was caught in order to catch oysters for him. Paul was perhaps disappointed at first, but he seemed delighted at last. He treated me with great kindness, and begged me to stay with him, offering me a share in his business. He expected soon to be worth a hundred thousand dollars, when he intended to return, marry the daughter of Squire Bliss, of Popperidge, and go representative to Congress from that district!

I had a hard battle to overcome Paul Pike's arguments in favor of staying with him. When, at last, he found me determined to pursue my own plans, he made me promise to return, if I did not succeed; he then supplied me with necessary clothes, gave me twelve pearls, worth twenty dollars apiece, and sent me, in a boat, paddled by an Indian, to this place; and here I am.

Loreto is the capital of Lower California, but it has not more than three hundred inhabitants. I shall leave this place for San Gabriel in two weeks, with a company of merchants and travellers going in that direction. I hope to write you soon from that place, and tell you of a happy termination to my strange adventures.

Adieu, dear mother. May Heaven ever bless you and father, and everything that belongs to my beloved but far-off home.

I am, yours truly,

WILLIAM BUMP.

CHAPTER XV.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER AT SUNDOWN

San Francisco, *July*, 1850.

My Dear Mother:

It is again a long, long time since I have written to you; but happily I am at last in a place where I am surrounded by friends and feel at home. When I wrote from Loreto I hardly expected the trials which I have since experienced. We set out from that place, mounted on mules, about the 1st of February. There were seven of us in all—two Mexican merchants, a planter with two servants, a Spaniard who professed to be a traveller, going to visit California and examine the gold mines, and myself.

We proceeded without any particular adventure for nine days, travelling about twenty-five miles a day. At first we travelled along the eastern shore of the peninsula of California, passing through an uninhabited country, except at intervals where we found small set-

tlements, chiefly of Indians, who have been partly converted by the missionaries. They were miserable-looking creatures, almost without clothing. The children were entirely naked.

Though it was the season of winter at the north, the weather was mild here; however, we began to have a good deal of rain, and finally it came so heavy that we were obliged to stay at a small place called St. Isabel for a fortnight. This delay was very tedious, and, had I been left to myself, I should have gone ahead, rain or no rain. But my companions took it very easily. They are never in a hurry. If they could get plenty of tobacco, they smoked off care and trouble, giving themselves up to a soft and dreamy repose.

I knew little of their language at first, but I set myself to studying it as well as I could, and made great progress. I asked so many questions as to the Spanish for this, that, and t'other, that they seemed to consider me quite a bore. The Spaniard, it is true, seemed to take an interest in teaching me, and we became very good friends. He called himself

a schoolmaster, and me his scholar. He remarked, by the way, that one pupil was hardly enough to live upon, but the one he had gave him quite as much occupation as he desired. The truth is, that having nothing else to do, and feeling very uneasy while I was idle, I devoted my whole time to study, and thus, before the end of my journey, I was quite ready with my Spanish phrases for ordinary conversation.

At the end of a fortnight we left St. Isabel, and, travelling between two mountain ranges, proceeded northward. The rivers were much swollen by the rain, and in several instances we were obliged to dash across them by swimming. We generally left the choice of fording-places to our mules, who seemed to be excellent judges of those matters. At last we came to a stream some ten rods in width ; the current was swift, and we were driven down quite a distance before reaching the opposite side. When we had landed the Spaniard was missing ; and an apprehension of some fatal accident immediately flashed across our minds. We waited on the bank some time, looking anxiously up

and down the stream. At last I saw the head of a mule, and a hand clinched in the mane, just above the water. It appeared but a moment, and sunk beneath the waves.

I have never experienced such a feeling as darted into my bosom at that moment. I could not resist the impulse which seemed to call upon me to try to save a fellow-being, and one who had been so kind to me. Without speaking or reflecting, I sprang from my mule, and running down the bank for a considerable distance, looked eagerly into the water. At length, beneath the surface, I distinctly saw the man sitting erect on the back of the mule, his hands grasping the mane, while he looked up with a gasping and staring look which I shall never forget. He seemed to fix his eyes on me as he swept by, beseeching my assistance. Losing all thought of my own safety, I leaped into the water, and, by some means which I cannot explain, seized the bridle of the mule. At this moment an eddy of the stream carried me under ; but being a good swimmer, as you know, I soon rose, and exerting myself to the utmost, was able to reach the land. I held

on to the bridle ; but the current was so swift that the mule was wrested from my hands, and he went down the stream. The rider, however, was thrown off, and so near the bank that I was able to reach his coat. I soon dragged him ashore, but without a symptom of life.

The rest of our party soon came up, and I was praised as a real hero. It was two hours before the Spaniard betrayed any consciousness, and for a long time it seemed quite impossible that he should live. At last he was able to sit up, and by means of a litter made of the branches of trees, we carried him six miles to a small missionary station among the Indians. In two days we resumed our journey ; but the Spaniard was very feeble, and scarcely able to sit upon his beast. He had been informed of the manner in which I had saved his life ; but, strange to say, he made no acknowledgment whatever. On the contrary he seemed to feel an aversion to me from that very hour. He was moody, scarcely answered my questions, and took pains to keep away and aloof from me. Occasionally I saw his dark, hollow eyes fixed upon me, as if

meditating some desperate deed ; and such was his conduct that I really began to feel a sort of horror creeping over me at his presence. The rest of the party noticed this, and they began to fancy that the man was about to run mad. One of them warned me to be on my guard, intimating that the Spaniard was either insane, or harbored some evil purpose towards me.

All this made me reflect, and think over what the man had said to me. He passed by the name of Señor Antonio ; he had travelled a great deal, and had formerly lived in California. He appeared to know some people in Boston, though he had never been there. He seemed quite amazed when I told him my name. He asked several questions as to my object in visiting California ; but I thought it best to say only that I came to seek my fortune in the land of gold. All this occurred before the adventure in the river ; now he did not converse with me at all.

Several days passed when I began to feel dreadful pains in my back ; I was really very ill, but I would not give out, especially as we were within a day's journey of San Diego,

where I wished very much to arrive. But as I was riding along everything around began to grow dim ; a darkness soon came over my sight, and I felt myself falling to the ground. For three weeks I knew nothing that happened. It seems that I was attacked with fever, and having been borne by my companions to an Indian hut, I was left there in charge of the people. They, no doubt, attended me carefully, according to their fashion. When I came to myself I was on a bed of grass laid upon the ground. The house was made of sticks, covered with broad stiff leaves, woven and matted together. The family consisted of a gray, wrinkled, old Indian woman, with her son and his wife and two children—a boy and girl. They all seemed delighted when I opened my eyes, and began to speak, and ask where I was, and what had happened.

I remained at this place two weeks longer, when, taking leave of my Indian friends, I mounted my mule, and, by short stages, proceeded to St. Diego. I here made inquiry about Señor Naldi, and to my infinite disappointment learned that he had left California

two years before, and that nothing had been heard of him since. Everybody seemed to regard him as a strange character: some said he was very rich, and some that he was very poor. All agreed that there was something very mysterious about him.

I had now got into a somewhat civilized country, and had no difficulty in making my way, on the back of my mule, to St. Barbara, a small seaport, fifty miles south of Monterey. After remaining here two days I proceeded, and soon found that the road was leading me among rugged cliffs and wild mountain anges. Here the path became obscure, and as evening approached, it quite disappeared among the wilderness of trees and thickets. It now became very dark, and I soon saw, by the flashes of lightning, that we were to have a tempestuous night. My mule became very uneasy, and refused to go in the direction I desired. At length I gave up the reins to him; and turning at right angles he began to clatter down the sides of the mountain at a brisk pace. Suddenly he stopped short, and refused to budge an inch. It was intensely dark and not an object was

to be seen. A flash of lightning came, and before me, on a stout Spanish nag, sat the dark and mysterious Señor Antonio. The lightning passed, and all was swallowed up in darkness.

I am ashamed to say that I trembled from head to foot: however, I stuck to the back of my mule, and in half an hour we were safe and sound at a little Indian hamlet, where we found comfortable lodgings. In the morning a stranger, who said he was going to Monterey, proposed to join me, and we set off together. At the end of two days we came to a large plantation, situated upon a vast plain. It was night, and we asked for lodgings, which were hospitably granted. I was shown into an upper room furnished in the most sumptuous manner. The ceilings were very lofty, with gilt cornices richly carved. The bed-posts were gilt, and the mosquito net which enclosed it, seemed to be made of fine linen lace. The chairs were very heavy, and carved with the legs of lions and the heads of uncouth monsters.

I could not well give a reason for it, but I felt very uneasy. The moon shone brightly

and I could see the furniture about the room. If I felt inclined to doze, the chairs seemed to get on all fours, and stalk before me, their heads grinning and making horrid faces at me. At last I fancied I heard a noise: the door appeared to be opened, and the flare of a lamp was thrown into the room. Immediately a tall man entered in a dressing-gown —his feet quite bare. How can I express my emotions when I saw it was Señor Antonio! He came close to my bed—held up the light, and looked in my face. He saw I was awake, and immediately spoke. "Here," said he, giving me a small bundle—"take this, and to-morrow go on your way. Open not this parcel till you reach Monterey; then you will know all. Have no fear, for you are in safety. God bless you. Farewell." Saying this the mysterious man left me.

I need not say that I had no more sleep that night. In the morning we proceeded, and in two days reached Monterey. You may well believe that I opened the parcel with a trembling hand. I found it to contain twenty Spanish doubloons, with a draft on a house at Monterey, payable to the heirs

of Benjamin Bump, of Boston, for the sum of thirty thousand dollars; and this draft was signed *Jose Antonio Naldi!*

The riddle was now solved. My travelling companion, the mysterious Spaniard was no other than the identical Señor Naldi I had come so far to see. I took the draft to the mercantile house, who readily accepted it, and informed me the whole sum would be immediately transmitted to my aunt at Boston. How shall I express the delight of that moment! Well indeed was I compensated for all my toil and all my troubles. I wished to return with the money to Boston, and see the delight of Lucy at the story of my romantic adventures and the success of my expedition. But as I had now provided for her comfort and that of my aunt, I deemed it my duty to come to San Francisco and try my luck here. I hope to make some money, so as to help you and father, and make you easy and comfortable for the rest of your lives. I am very happy at the thought of seeing you in a nice square house at Sundown, with good furniture, a fine garden, a good farm, and all the result of my efforts!

But I must not indulge too much in dreams. I have seen but little of San Francisco, and shall not attempt to describe it. I have only room to say that Señor Naldi, as I learn, is regarded as a very good man, but often subject to fits of madness which last him sometimes for months. His conduct to me is thus explained. Perhaps, too, his treatment of Uncle Ben may be accounted for in the same way. When I saw him, he had been three years in Spain, leaving his estate in California in the hands of his agent. During that whole time not a word had been heard of him.

And now I must draw my letter to a close. Good by, dear mother, and may Heaven guard and guide us all.

WILLIAM BUMP.

CHAPTER XVI.

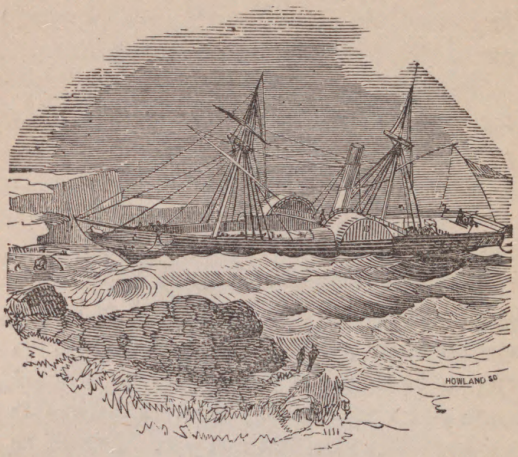
WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER.

SAN FRANCISCO, *Dec* 1850.

DEAR MOTHER:

IT is so long since I wrote to you last, that you may imagine I am dead, or lost or have forgotten you. *Forgotten you!* no, no, my dear mother. If you could look into my heart, you would not say that. I might forget everything else, but not you. Far off as I am—mixed up in this queer, wild, odd, absurd, sublime city of San Francisco—yet not a day, not an hour passes, but I think of the little brown house at Sundown, of you and father, and everything else in that little paradise.

But I must tell you what has happened since I wrote last. You know that I succeeded in recovering $30,000 of Señor Naldi, and that this belonged to the creditors of Uncle Ben. I have since learned that they gave the whole of it to aunt and cousin Lucy



They are well off now, and I am very glad of it. I sometimes feel a little proud that they are indebted to me for their good fortune. Perhaps I ought not to feel so, for they had been very kind to me, and it was natural for me to do all in my power to serve them.

But why has not cousin Lucy written to me? Has she forgotten me? Is she insensible to my efforts in her behalf? A few kind words from her would pay me for all I have done, but even these she could not bestow. Oh, how hard it is to feel that we are

forgotten by those we love, and those who owe us thanks!

There certainly never was such a place got together before, as this San Francisco. The people are rushing in from all quarters of the world—from Europe, from the United States, from Canada, Mexico, South America, the Sandwich Islands, Oregon, and even from China. The oddest looking thing you ever saw upon the water has arrived here from the Celestial Empire. It is manned entirely by Chinese. It brought a large quantity of tea and various other articles; among them was a lot of superb crape shawls, but there were no women here to wear them. They were purchased, however, and will be sent from this place to New York. Thus the trade with China, it seems, is turned west instead of east—and this at some future day is likely to be the established course of traffic between that country and the United States.

But I must proceed with my story. Immediately after arriving here, I began to think of the best means of acquiring money. This, indeed, is uppermost in everybody's mind. Everybody here, as a matter of course,

has the gold fever. Under its influence, not only reasonable, but unreasonable means are adopted for acquiring the precious metal. The leading idea is to go to the mines, and after some reflection I determined to go there myself.

I therefore joined a company of four persons, and we set out on the journey. Most people go by water, in small vessels and steamboats, but as the fare is sixty dollars a head, most of our party were too poor to adopt this course. We purchased a tent, kettle, two stools, three or four scrapers, spades, hoes, pans, &c. These we sent by a boat. Having made all our preparations, we proceeded on foot.

After travelling for six days, we reached the banks of the river Sacramento, and four days after, our tent and other things arrived in the boat. We were impatient to begin, and therefore, taking our luggage, we proceeded along the banks of the river about seven miles, to a place which had been represented as very rich in gold. We were, of course, a good deal fatigued; but the idea of digging up gold from the earth almost as plentiful as gravel

stones, kept us in a constant state of excitement. Everywhere, we met with persons like ourselves going in search of the divine metal. Odd-looking customers they were in general, and some of them were the strangest specimens you ever beheld.

At last we reached our place of destination. We could hardly stay to erect our tent, so eager were we to begin. Everything being at last ready, we took our scrapers and pans, and distributed ourselves among the rocks. The country consisted of a ledge sloping to the river; it was entirely destitute of trees, and would have had a sad and dreary aspect, but for the treasures which we knew to rest in its bosom.

Never did I look upon the rough, gravelly soil with such a keen, intense feeling of curiosity, as when I first knelt down, and began to scrape among the sand. I experienced some disappointment, for the gold did not suddenly make its appearance. I had worked myself up to a high pitch of hope and expectation, and had dreamed of picking up lumps as big as my fist—of getting suddenly rich—of returning to Boston—of going to

Sundown, and telling you of my good fortune. What delight would it be, thought I, to take you and father back to Boston—to restore you to society and friends—to see you once more happy and at ease—and to see that cloud, that gloomy frown, which has hung on father's brow for so many years, converted into smiles by the sunshine of better fortune —to experience this, and feel that I, your son, poor Billy Bump, had done it all! Such had been my dreams day and night, for many weeks, and when the moment came for bringing them to the test of experiment, my feelings were wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement.

Oh! dear mother, if you could have seen me at that moment, down on my knees, scraping into the earth with a zeal equal to that of a wood-chuck making a burrow! My cap was thrown aside—my eyes strained with gazing at every pebble that came up in the mass of earth—my hands half clenched, ready to seize the expected treasure. Thus I began and worked for several minutes without success; at length, I made a lucky dive into the gravel. Three or four shining yellow bits

came up, about the size of grains of wheat My heart beat violently—again and again I struck into the fortunate bed—my fear passed away—a sense of joy thrilled through me—and I whispered to myself, in my ecstacy, "this is not a dream—it is all true; I shall be a rich man yet."—At the same time, perspiration burst from my forehead, and in the excitement, I felt, in that lone, desolate spot, an emotion of happiness, which words cannot describe.

I worked about four hours, and as the sun had set, I returned to the tent. I had, at least, one ounce of pure gold, and my companions had been almost as successful as myself. We made our supper of ham, which we broiled for ourselves. We treated ourselves each to a single cracker, this being our first day, and one of great success. We slept each with a blanket around us, well protected by our tent. The weather, however, had been rainy, and the ground was cold and moist, so that we all felt a little stiff the next morning. However, we set about our work with great eagerness, and this day also proved successful. Thus we continued for four weeks,

averaging about an ounce of gold each day. In the meantime, nothing remarkable occurred. My hopes had now grown into confidence. I was already worth about five hundred dollars. Two years, even allowing for drawbacks, would make me rich; or, at least, rich enough to accomplish those schemes so dear to my heart. "Two years," thought I, "are a great while; but the object at which I aim is worthy of the sacrifice. May heaven bless and preserve my poor parents in the mean time!" Animated with such thoughts, I pursued my labor day by day, as sternly and steadily as if I had been a steam-engine, without feeling, and without the wear and tear of fatigue. But, alas! a turn of fortune was at hand!

You will understand that the whole region around was occupied by different parties; many of these were very wild and reckless creatures. Some of them drank a great dea and many of them spent the half of every night in gambling. When the weather got to be hot, several of these persons, who lived irregular lives, were attacked with disease. It seemed to be a kind of fever, and generally

proved fatal in a few hours. At least fifty persons near our encampment were thus swept off in the course of a few days.

A general panic was the consequence, and most of the diggers fled. Our own party had concluded to decamp, but just as we were about making our preparations, one of our number was smitten with the disease. He became giddy, staggered and fell to the ground. Three of our members immediately disappeared, and I never saw them again. The question then came as to what I should do myself. In the first moment of fear, I resolved to go ; but a little reflection satisfied me that I was wrong, and that I must stay beside our sick companion at all hazards.

Having made up my mind, I set about my plan as calmly as possible. I knew my danger, but I also felt my duty. I immediately put the tent in order and got the sick man into it. In a short time he was in a raging fever. I had no medicine, and did not know how to use it even if I had possessed any. Wher night came my situation was gloomy enough The whole region around was entirely de serted. The laugh, the shout, the hurrah

which had hitherto broken the stillness of the night, were entirely hushed.

The darkness was intense, and I had neither lamp nor candle. I sat down in one corner of the tent, occupied with very sad and anxious thoughts; I had very little hope of escape from the disease itself. In almost every case hitherto it had proved fatal. I however prayed to heaven for support, for protection, and deliverance. From this I derived courage and hope, even in a situation so forlorn. It is a strange yet gratifying thought, that however desperate our condition, however remote we may be from human help, the heart of man may yet draw down strength and consolation from heaven.

During the whole night my companion raved like a maniac. His mind seemed to be filled with horrid dreams. His history I had never known. He was a Mexican by birth, and went by the name of Carlos. He had been in the mining country before, and we took him into our party because of his experience. He was a man of middle stature, broad shoulders, intensely black hair and eyes, with very large white teeth. Whenever

he smiled these were fully disclosed, giving his countenance a singular mixture of good and evil expression. His two upper front teeth had been knocked out, opening a hole into his mouth almost large enough for a mouse to enter. As he lay upon his bed, with his pale and distorted countenance, his appearance was really frightful.

Toward the close of the second day, as I was sitting in the tent, watching the contortions of the invalid, a sudden faintness came over me. In a few moments everything grew dark, and I soon found myself stretched upon the ground. My senses rallied a little, and drawing a blanket into one corner of the tent, I laid myself down with a conviction that I was about to take my last look upon the realities of life. I rose upon my elbow and gazed around. At this moment Carlos did the same. He seemed bewildered at first, but speedily recollected himself. His eyes at last rested upon me. He made a faint effort to speak, and finally he said, "You sick, too —then we are both lost!"

"No, Carlos," said I, "the fever is past with you, and you will recover; I shall die

—I feel sure of it. Swear to me, Carlos, that you will send the gold I have gathered to my parents. Their address you will find in my pocket-book. They are poor, I am their only child—their only hope—they will mourn my loss, but this gold will be a great comfort to them. Send it to them, Carlos, and you will earn Heaven's blessing and that of my parents. Do you promise it?"

"I swear it!" said he, devoutly crossing himself. I now sank back upon the ground; my brain seemed on fire, and my reason wandered. Strange dreams filled my imagination, and terrible pains racked my body. At last reason vanished, and I became lost in insensibility.

How long a time passed, I do not know, but at length I seemed to awake from a profound sleep. All seemed strange; but I soon perceived that I was still in the tent. I gazed around, but no one was there. I spoke; I called; I screamed; but there was no reply. Terrified at the idea that I was thus deserted, I attempted to rise, but staggered and fell. I made new efforts, and crept to the door of the tent. It was the gray of

morning. Everything looked fresh and fair, but all was still. I could see no living being. I shouted as loud as my weakness would permit, but there was no reply save a faint echo from the opposite hills.

I went back into the tent and sought for my bundle. It was gone—my clothes, my pocket-book, my gold—everything had been taken away! A mingled tide of bitter emotions overwhelmed me, and I fell back upon the earth.

After a time my senses returned, and I crept out of the cabin: the fair sunshine and the fresh morning breeze revived me. Hope returned, and I determined to make an effort for life. I went down to the river, though with some difficulty, and refreshed myself with a bath, and also eat a small piece of ham which I had found in the tent. Taking a stick as a cane, I set out for a little valley which I had heard described as the residence of a Spanish farmer, about five miles distant.

By the middle of the afternoon I had proceeded nearly half the way. Feeling faint and weary I proceeded toward a small clump of bushes, for the purpose of seeking shelter

from the burning sun. I was about to enter, when I heard a hissing sound, which I well knew to be the warning of a rattlesnake. I gazed into the open space beneath the shade. There lay the stiffened form of Carlos, and on his breast coiled the hideous reptile whose threatening I had heard! On seeing me the creature glided away. My companion was already swollen and changed to a greenish hue by the poison of the serpent which had caused his death. At his side lay a large bundle. How useless was it to him—how futile had proved his treachery to me! I took the bundle without scruple. There was my own property, and among that of Carlos I found gold and jewels which afterwards proved to be worth $10,000!

But I have not space, my dear mother, to tell you my whole story in this letter. The most wonderful and painful part of my narrative is yet to come. I shall write soon, and then you will know all. In the meantime may Heaven bless you and father, and watch over your son,

WILLIAM BUMP

CHAPTER XVII.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM BUMP TO HIS MOTHER, AT SUNDOWN

SAN FRANCISCO, *March*, 1851.

DEAR MOTHER:

I CLOSED my last letter with an account of the death of our Mexican comrade, Carlos. I cannot tell you the terror excited in my mind by the discovery of his body under circumstances so terrible. I was exhausted by my illness, and my imagination was peculiarly susceptible of sad impressions. It did not give me any satisfaction to discover my lost treasure, nor to find a large addition in that of Carlos. Indeed, at the end of a few minutes a kind of loathing came over me, and after carrying the bundle for a short space, I cast it from me with a feeling of inexpressible disgust. I was by this time extremely weary and faint, and sat down to recover a little strength.

After a short space I arose, and with a languid step proceeded on my way. Reaching

the top of a small hill, I saw a valley before me in the middle of which, at no great distance, was a collection of huts, which I knew to be the settlement of the farmer I was in search of. Making a great effort I went forward, and as the evening set in I reached the spot.

I was kindly received by the Spaniard, who seemed to listen to my story with interest and sympathy. A bed was provided for me, and suitable food. In two days I was quite recovered, except that I was somewhat feeble. I now began to reflect upon my situation. What was I to do? It was a pretty serious journey from San Francisco, whether I went by land or returned by way of the Sacramento. And what was I to do at San Francisco? I had thrown away my treasure, and had scarce money enough to pay my expenses thither. My health was impaired, and I seemed quite unable to go to work again in the mines. And was I to abandon all my cherished schemes—my hope of seeing my parents restored to comfort and peace of mind?

When I thought of these things, I felt a

sad sinking of the heart—and almost gave way to despair. I went into the fields far away from the farmhouse, so that I might be alone, and gave full vent to my sorrow. I shed many tears, but my bosom was lighter for it. And now a new train of thoughts arose in my mind. "After all"—said I to myself, "why should I not keep the treasure which I found in Carlos's sack? I can make inquiry at San Francisco, and if any friend of his can be found, I can deliver the dead man's property to him; my own I can retain. I must conquer my disgust and horror at the scene with which this money is associated. It is weakness—it is folly—to yield to my feelings, when the consequence is a failure in duty to my parents and perhaps to myself."

I now wondered that these views had not occurred to me before; I felt ashamed at my conduct, and immediately set out to go and recover the abandoned treasure. I felt an intense anxiety lest some one should have found it and carried it away. The place where I had thrown it down was not far distant, and I soon reached the spot There was the bun-

dle, and on opening it nothing seemed to be missing! I now hid the parcel carefully in the leaves, not being willing to show it at the farm-house. The next day I departed. The Spaniard would receive nothing for what he had done. He seemed, indeed, sorry to have me leave; and I doubt not I should have been welcome for a year without fee or payment of any kind.

Taking a course toward the Sacramento, I went forward at a good pace. At nightfall I had reached a lofty ridge, which I supposed bordered the river. It was extremely rough and craggy, but as the moon shone brightly I pursued my journey, though I got many a tumble. At last I found myself on the verge of a cliff which looked into a glen or gorge so deep that it seemed only a sea of night. The trees around shadowed the spot so as to exclude every ray of moonlight. All around was perfectly still, and I paused a moment to look on the lonely scene. While my gaze was bent upon the glen, suddenly I saw a light, and soon after a burst of laughter, as if from half-a-dozen voices, rung upon my ear. Instantly the light vanished—the sounds

ceased — and again darkness and silence reigned around.

What could this mean? My curiosity was strongly excited, and I determined to pass into the ravine, and, if possible satisfy it. Descending from rock to rock and cliff to cliff, I soon approached the place whence the light and sounds seemed to proceed. I soon saw a feeble light gleaming at the mouth of a cave. Advancing stealthily I gazed within. At first I could see nothing, but advancing a few yards into the entrance, I perceived a few blazing sticks upon the floor of a vast cavern, whose outline was faintly visible in the dusky light. No person seemed to be there, and with a degree of daring which now surprises me, I continued to proceed till I was in the middle of the rocky chamber. The scene was awfully grand. The cave was arched at the top, but it was of such a height and width as to seem like a church of enormous proportions. The walls were lined with shining pillars, as if made of snowy marble, and the roof was hung with what appeared like festoons of woven silver.

While I was gazing in wonder and admi-

ration at the scene, I heard the same noisy laughter which had before attracted my attention. I now saw four or five persons entering the cavern. One of them had a torch of blazing wood ; the rest were carrying parcels which seemed very heavy. My first idea was to present myself to them, but as they came near their faces seemed so terrible that I shrunk back into the shadows of the cave Here I remained behind one of the projecting pillars, where I could see and hear all that passed, without being myself observed.

The persons before me appeared to be all Spaniards. From the drift of their conversation I easily gathered that they were part of a desperate set of gamblers and robbers, who made this cavern their hiding-place and storehouse. They seemed to have great quantities of gold dust and large lumps of pure gold. These they laid in heaps or tossed about in bags, as if they were too common to be objects of great regard. After a short space several other persons came, and joined the first group around the fire. A large jug was now brought forward, and each took a long draught of its contents. Very soon

they grew merry, and one of them began to sing. After the song they divided in groups, and taking out packs of cards gambled with one another. At length a quarrel arose between two of the party, and after a short fight one of them was stabbed to the heart and fell dead upon the rocky pavement of the cavern.

This scene did not long interrupt the amusement of the party. The dead body was thrown aside, and chanced to fall near where I was secreted. The gamblers then proceeded. When again fully busied in their occupation, I stole away with a noiseless tread. No one observed me, and ere the morning dawned I had reached the banks of the Sacramento. I here found many parties employed in gold-digging and other pursuits, and had no difficulty in engaging a passage to San Francisco in a small sloop on the very point of setting out for that place. The passage of four days gave me opportunity to reflect upon the extraordinary scenes I had witnessed. "What," thought I, "will not men do for gold? They leave their peaceful homes; they toil in the lonely wilderness,

where they are separated from friends and all the ordinary comforts of life. They are exposed to fatal fever, to the destructive influence of the climate, and to the dangers which arise from vicious and desperate men. After all, many fail of gaining the wealth they seek; many leave their bones to bleach on the ravines or upon the rocky ledges; many disappear and are never heard of more; many return with shattered constitutions, and even if they have plenty of gold, they have not health to enjoy it."

When I arrived at San Francisco my health was fully restored. My good spirits now returned, and I began to feel quite important. I had ten thousand dollars, which seemed to me a prodigious great sum. I am ashamed to say that, by degrees, I had reconciled myself to the idea of keeping Carlos's money, without trying to find his friends. I believe, indeed, that he had no connections, for I had often heard him say that he had not a relation on the face of the earth. I therefore satisfied myself, without inquiry, to hold on to the money. A new sensation had come over me—the feeling that I was rich. It is

not easy to describe my emotions. They were, however, pleasant enough: I felt a good deal larger in my person; I had a loftier tread, spoke with more confidence, and felt that I could not possibly do anything wrong. "What!" said I, mentally, "can a young man worth ten thousand dollars—and which he has made himself—can he be otherwise than right? Poh! poh! Billy Bump is somebody now—so clear the track for the locomotive!"

I know you will say I was a ridiculous fop in all this, and so I was—but, mother, I believe nothing tries a young man like becoming rich. He is almost sure to grow hard-hearted, conceited, confident and overbearing, when his purse is full. He then says or feels that he is responsible neither to God nor man: he does what his passions prompt, and nothing can make him doubt the rectitude of his conduct. His modesty, his self-distrust—all that made him look to Heaven for counsel and to mankind for sympathy—pass away before a self-love which very soon amounts to self-idolatry. At times something of this process went on in me—during the few brief weeks

in which I enjoyed the dangerous conviction of possessing a fortune.

But the day of reckoning was at hand. I formed some dangerous acquaintances, of which there are too many at San Francisco. At first I drank with them, and then gambled. In Boston I should as soon have thought of cutting my hands off as doing either of these things: but here drinking shops and gambling houses are seen at the corners of the streets, and are indeed the gayest and finest places in the city. I was led on by degrees. Some designing men, who found out that I had money, flattered me, and made a great deal of me, and made me feel that I was a monstrous clever fellow. When I first gambled I always won. In a short time I had gained five hundred dollars. This made my heart swell with dreams of increased wealth. I had become so self-confident that I felt as if everything I undertook must prosper. "I am born to good luck," said I to myself, "I shall very soon be able to go back to Boston with twenty thousand dollars in my pocket. What a dash I will make there!"

Do not, dear mother, despise your poor, weak, giddy boy. I now see my folly, and the evidence that I am cured of it is given in this very confession. What pains me most is, that my selfishness rose exactly in proportion to my increase in cash. In these my days of prosperity, I thought more of gratifying my own vanity than of ministering to your happiness. It was when I was poor that I yearned to build up your fortune: when I had become comparatively rich, I grew so important in my own eyes as to think mainly of myself. O, what a delusion is that which comes with prosperity!

Hitherto I had only played for small sums: but one day, when I had been drinking, I grew more bold, and risked five hundred dollars. This I won. It was proposed to stake a thousand dollars. I consented and lost it. Startled by this change of fortune, I proposed to double the hazard. This was done, and again I lost. I now drank a deep draught, and proposed a stake of five thousand dollars. This also I lost. A kind of frenzy seized me. I proposed another stake of five thousand dollars It went against me, and

I was ruined. Not a dollar of all my cherished treasure remained!

* * * * *

To tell my agony of mind, when my reason returned, is impossible. Conscience, that stern monitor, which I had turned out of doors, now came in, and began to upbraid me. It told me that I had squandered money not my own: it was consecrated to my parents: it was given to me, by Providence, for their benefit, and I had fooled it away in gratification of my own vanity and passion. I believe for a time my reason was nearly overturned by the bitterness of my regret. My health soon gave way, and a fever set in. A dreadful despair seized me: I wished to die, as if this would cover my shame and appease my remorse. The disease, however, was not violent, and after a brief space it passed away. My health began to return, and with it a more just view of my condition. I saw my error in its full force, but resolved to turn it to good account. "I am young," said I, internally, "I now know my danger, and am armed against it. Perhaps it was in kindness that Providence punished me. If I had

gone on in prosperity I had been doubtless hardened in folly and iniquity ; adversity has led to conviction of my guilt, and conviction has led me to repentance. I will try again, and may Heaven aid my new endeavors."

I know, dear mother, this letter will give you as much pain in the reading, as it has me in the writing. O that I could see you and pour out my whole heart to you ! You would feel my errors deeply, but you would soothe me with kind words, with hope—perhaps with some excuses for my youth and my inexperience. I am overwhelmed with shame when I think of cousin Lucy. I dare not write to her ; she will despise me now. This is hard to bear—and it is not the less painful to know that all I suffer comes from myself. I do not know what I shall do. All before me is uncertain. I shall make some effort, and probably shall go back to the mines. For the present I can write no more.

From your erring boy,

WILLIAM BUMP.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TWO LETTERS FROM WILLIAM BUMP.

Downieville, *June*, 1851.

Dear Mother:

My last letter to you was dated at San Francisco. After reflecting a good deal upon what course to adopt, I resolved to go back to the mines. For this purpose I borrowed forty dollars, and set out with a company of three young men for the diggings up the Yuba river. I suppose you do not know much about this country, so I will tell you a few things that will enable you to understand my story. The city of San Francisco is situated on the east side of a long, beautiful bay, extending, north and south, seventy miles. Its width is thirty-five miles. As you look to the east from San Francisco, across the bay, you see the snowy tops of lofty mountains, stretching north and south, till they are lost in the distance.

The two principal rivers of this region are

the Sacramento, which rises in the mountains of the north, and flows southward 300 or 400 miles, and the San Joaquin, which rises in the mountains of the south, and flows northward about 300 miles. These two rivers meet, and enter the head of the bay together. The streams which flow from the mountains into the San Joaquin and Sacramento, are very numerous, coming chiefly from the east. Gold is found on nearly all these streams, but it is more abundant along the branches of the American and the Feather rivers, both of which enter the Sacramento from fifty to sixty miles north-east of San Francisco. The banks of the Yuba, a branch of the Feather river, are thought to be the richest of all the Gold Regions, and to this point we proposed to proceed as fast as possible.

On the last day of March, we departed in a small, narrow steamer, with a wheel at the stern, bound for Marysville, a new village at the junction of Feather and Yuba rivers, about 130 miles from San Francisco. We were heavily loaded with freight and passengers: of the latter there were about forty in number, mostly Yankees; but there were

several Mexicans, three or four Chilians, two Frenchmen, and a Chinese. The latter had picked up a little English, and was a shrewd, enterprising fellow. He wore a long, braided cue, hanging down his back, which seemed a rather troublesome ornament to carry up among the diggings. We tried to persuade him to cut it off, but he steadily refused, saying that if he lost his cue, he should cease to be a Chinaman. The thought of this seemed too humiliating to be endured.

In about a day and a half we reached Sacramento city, which consists of several streets of small wooden buildings, with several thousand inhabitants. We thence continued our course northward, steaming up the Sacramento, amid waving plains, which extended far back on either side to distant ranges of mountains. Passing by Vernon, which is a new town, we entered the Feather river, our course now lying to the north-east. Proceeding onward, we passed into the Yuba, and at the end of five days from our departure, reached Marysville, a distance of about 130 miles from San Francisco.

Here we left the boat, and started on foot,

having employed a man with a mule to carry our baggage ; each man reserving his blanket and a few articles to himself. After travelling about fifteen miles, the plains began to be exchanged for hills, low at first, but rising at no great distance into mountains. At a place called Rose's Bar, twenty-five miles above Marysville, we halted for several days, as the snow was very deep all around us. After a time, we pushed on ; our course being now through lofty and desolate regions, broken by a constant succession of ridges. We had left the river, which made a wide sweep to the left ; our course being guided over the snow by a mule track or *trail.*

Though it was now the middle of April, the snow was six or eight feet deep in some places. One afternoon, there was a fresh fall of snow, which nearly covered up the trail. When evening set in, our party mistook the route and wandered off among the mountains, I chanced to be a little behind, and as it was now quite dark, I got separated from my friends. Perceiving that I had lost my way, I called aloud ; but the wind was blowing heavily, and nobody heard me. My situation

was rather alarming, and I made great efforts to join my friends, but without avail.

I wandered on for several hours, and, at last, found myself entirely exhausted. Near by, was a thick group of pine trees, beneath which I crept. Here I scraped away the snow, and cutting off some of the branches, laid them down for a bed. I then kindled a fire of dry sticks, and after eating a small piece of dried beef, wrapped myself in a blanket, and lay down to rest. I slept soundly for some time, but at last suddenly awoke in a kind of fright. For some time, I could not imagine where I was. At a little distance, stood a strange dark figure, with small eyes, looking directly at me. At first, I fancied myself at Sundown, and thought old Bottle-nose was making up faces at me.

But this confusion of mind soon passed, I recollected my situation, and recognized in the visitor that still stood gazing at me, no other than a grisly bear. My revolver and my bowie-knife were instantly ready for the conflict which I now expected. For several minutes, Bruin and myself faced each other, seeming to hesitate which should begin the

battle ; but at last, the shaggy monster deliberately sat himself down on his hinder end, as much as to say, "I can wait for you, sir."

It was still dark, though the dawn had just commenced. The blaze of my fire had gone down, but the coals were visible, and I could see my shaggy neighbor turn his keen eye towards it, with a kind of timid glance. I then recollected that wild animals are afraid of fire, and accordingly I pushed a heap of dry branches over the coals, which in a few seconds, burst into a bright flame. The bear could not stand this, and immediately started off in great fright. I concluded to give him a farewell salute, and so sent a bullet after him. It seemed to take effect in his flank, for he suddenly stopped, turned round, uttered a hideous growl, and came bounding towards

me. I had just time to seize a firebrand, with which I stood ready for the attack. The beast came close up to me, and, as he paused a moment, I put a bullet into his forehead, between his eyes. He staggered hither and thither for a few minutes, and then seeming to recover, disappeared in long leaps, and I saw him no more.

At an early hour in the morning, I set out in an easterly direction, hoping to overtake my comrades. Just at evening I recovered the trail, and soon after my friends, who had spent a night and day in wandering about, once more joined me.

I need not tell you all the particulars of our further journey. We at length came to the forks of the Yuba river, where we determined to stop and try our luck at digging. We found a number of people already at work around this place, which soon acquired the name of Downieville. Great stories had been told of the success of miners in this quarter, and I was very eager to begin my work ; but for a week the snow was so deep as to prevent regular operations. The rivers were swollen so as nearly to cover their banks,

yet every day I prowled about, and picked up some small pieces of gold, sufficient to pay my expenses.

In May our digging began. It was very hard work, and my success was inconsiderable for a long time. Towards the end of June I met with a large lump of gold, mixed with a transparent kind of stone called *quartz*, which weighed at least three pounds, and proved to be worth about six hundred dollars. With what I had obtained besides, I have now about eight hundred dollars over and above all my expenses.

You may believe I am very thankful for this success. I am thin and a good deal worn down with hard work, but I am in good spirits; if I could get four or five thousand dollars I would return home, for I think that would make you and father comfortable; I do not care for myself. Though I be poor all my life, I shall be content, if I can see my parents happy once more. Farewell, dear mother, and give my best love to everybody and everything that loves and remembers me.

I am, your affectionate son,

WILLIAM BUMP.

San Francisco, *Nov.*, 1851.

My Dear Mother :

I wrote you some time since from a place on the Yuba river, which is called Downieville—about two hundred and thirty miles to the north-east of this city. I was about five months in the diggings, and collected over a thousand dollars worth of gold by my own efforts. I should have remained longer, but my health began to give way, and I thought it safest to return. I set out with only a single guide, and reached Marysville without any particular adventure.

At Marysville I went to a small place with my companion, which was occupied as a gambling establishment. It was evening, and there were a good many persons standing around. I was with the rest looking in at the windows. Pretty soon I came away alone ; but shortly after I observed a tall man with a slouched hat, and a short cloak over his shoulders, following me. He pretty soon came up, and spoke to me by name. I easily recognised him as the gambler who had won from me the greater part of the money I had lost at play in San Francisco.

I had a kind of horror of him, and confess that I trembled from head to foot when I discovered who he was. He perceived the state of my feelings, and immediately said, "You need not be afraid of me; go with me to the hotel and I will satisfy you of this." We went, as he proposed, and obtaining a light, we went into a small apartment together. The man took off his cloak and hat and sat down. He then beckoned me to sit down also. I complied, and the stranger said, "Do you not remember me?"

"I remember you but too well," said I, "as the person who won from me $10,000, a few months since, at San Francisco."

"And, I suppose," said he, "that you consider me as your worst enemy?"

"No," said I, "I was myself my worst enemy. I cannot complain of you, for you only did what was customary. You won the money according to the rules of the game. I ought never to have risked it in such a business. I have been severely punished, and perhaps the lesson will be worth all it cost me."

"Have you resolved never to play again?"

"Yes."

"But you have been at the diggings, and have been successful, I suppose?"

"Moderately so."

"You have a thousand dollars, I understand. Come, let us go to the table, and try your luck at monte; perhaps you will recover all your former losses."

"No, sir; I shall never gamble again."

"Be not too sure; you are young, and resolutions made at your age are often broken."

"You tempt me in vain, sir; I will not risk a dollar."

"You are determined?"

"Perfectly."

"I will give you two to one."

"No, sir; I will not play with you if you give me ten to one!"

At this point a smile of seeming satisfaction passed over the countenance of the stranger; at the same time he rose, went to the door, and asked for pen, ink, and paper. These being furnished, he sat down and wrote as follows:

MARYSVILLE, *Nov.*, 1851.

Messrs. ROBINSON & Co., Merchants, Monterey:

Please pay to the order of WILLIAM BUMP the sum of *Twelve Thousand Dollars*, value received.

Yours, JOSE ANTONIO NALDI.

This he handed to me. You may well imagine my amazement. While I was looking at him, he unclasped his huge whiskers and took off a moustache, and I discovered in a moment that the stranger who had won my money at San Francisco, and was now before me, was indeed no other than the Señor Naldi, whom I had formerly known, whose life I had saved, and who had paid me a large sum of money.

While I was still gazing at him in astonishment, he said, "I perceive that my conduct needs explanation. Some time ago, I chanced to be at San Francisco. While there, I saw some jewels in the hands of a goldsmith, which had been stolen from me by a Mexican robber and thief. I caused inquiry to be made, and found that they came from you. An agent whom I employed became a spy, and when you were excited with liquor, he made you tell him the means by which you

obtained these jewels, and acquired the wealth which you were spending so freely. Nearly all the money that you found upon the body of your Mexican comrade, Antonio, was stolen from me, and was therefore mine. I could have taken it from you by the law, but I preferred another course. I perceived that your young head was giddy with success, and I determined to give you a serious lesson. I adopted a disguise, met you with others at the gambling-table, and won your money. I learned your chagrin, your sickness, your repentance, and your departure for the mines. It was by accident I met you here to-night. I had always intended to restore the money I took from you at the gambling-table, when I was satisfied that you were thoroughly cured of your disposition to play. I have tried you and know that you are now proof against similar folly. There is an order for $12,000 —$10,000 to repay what I took from you, and $2,000 for interest !"

You may well believe, dear Mother, that I poured out abundance of thanks to the generous Spaniard. "You owe me nothing," said he, "for the money ; I have but restored

your own. If what you took from the body of Antonio was partly mine, I still give it to you. Money is of little importance to me. I have indeed more than I want. You once saved my life; perhaps I have saved your future peace of mind by giving you a sharp lesson." Saying this, Signor Naldi resumed his disguise and disappeared.

Next day, with a buoyant heart I embarked for this place, and reached it in a few hours. I am now making preparations to depart for Boston; from thence I shall travel as fast as possible to Sundown. This is a long way round, as I am hardly more than 1500 miles from you in a direct line; but it is necessary that I go to Boston to settle up the business there, which brought me to this country. After the loss of my $10,000, I had determined never to see Cousin Lucy again; but I think I shall be able to pluck up courage enough for the interview, now that I have recovered from my difficulties. Farewell, dear Mother, and believe me

Ever yours,

WILLIAM BUMP.

We have nothing further to say in relation to Master Wm. Bump, except that we learn that he arrived safely at Boston, and found his aunt and Cousin Lucy, occupying a beautiful cottage in Brookline. They were of course delighted to see him. There were two other persons there, whom he was even more glad to see. These were his Father and Mother! We need not tell the rest, but leave our friends to guess all the questions and answers that followed.