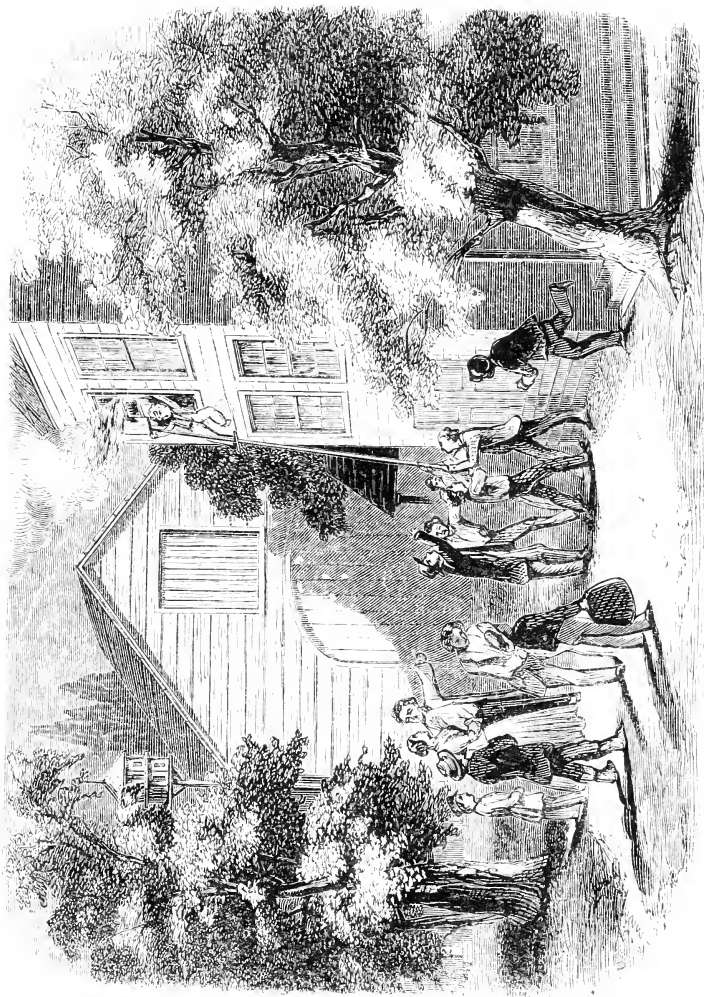


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THE RESCUE.

HARPER'S STORY BOOKS.

A SERIES OF NARRATIVES, DIALOGUES, BIOGRAPHIES, AND TALES,
FOR THE INSTRUCTION AND ENTERTAINMENT
OF THE YOUNG.

BY

JACOB ABBOTT.

Embellished with

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1854

C O N G O ;

OR,

JASPER'S EXPERIENCE IN COMMAND.



JUN 1851

NEW YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS



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P R E F A C E.

IN the preceding volume of these Story-books we saw how Jasper learned to obey. In this you will see how he learned to command. Every boy who desires to become an energetic and efficient man must be taught both of these arts. He must learn to obey, or he will never acquire any proper habits of self-control, and can never become an agreeable or useful associate with others in those great enterprises which can only be undertaken by combinations of men ; and he can not direct advantageously the labors of others in such departments as may be committed to his charge unless he also knows how to command.

You may perhaps think that, however difficult it may be to obey, it is always an easy thing to command, but you will learn from this story that there is an art in that as well as in other things:

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C O N G O.

CHAPTER I.

JASPER PUT IN COMMAND.

At work in the garden.

Going down to the brook.

WHEN Jasper was about twelve years old, and was living with his grandfather, Mr. Grant, in London, he went out one morning early in the spring to make his garden. He raked off the weeds, and sticks, and straws which had remained on the ground during the winter, and then loosened the earth around the roots of the trees and shrubs, and around the permanent flowers. He was next going to dig up a piece of ground, to make a place to sow annual flower-seeds in; but he began to feel tired of work, and so he thought he would go down into the field behind the garden, and see how things looked by the brook.

There was a gate in the back wall of the garden, which was fastened by a bolt on the inside.

“I can go out by this gate,” said Jasper to himself, “only I must be sure to come back this way, so as to bolt the gate again. It will not do to leave it unfastened.”

Jasper went down to the brook, and, after following it for some time, he came to a place where it entered into a thicket of trees and shrubbery, and here the brook divided into two branches.

A discovery.

The island in the brook.

Planning.

Jasper pushed his way in among the trees of the thicket, and, following the brook down, he found that the two branches united again a short distance below, so as to form an island. The island was covered with bushes, and in the middle of it were several stumps and logs, more or less decayed, and two or three pretty good sized trees.

“I’ll have this island for mine,” said Jasper to himself, “and I’ll clear it up and make a pretty place of it.”

So Jasper began to pick up the bits of branches and fragments of decayed wood which lay about the ground, and to pile them up together in an open place in the middle of the island.

“When I get the pile made,” said he to himself, “I’ll set it on fire, and burn this old trash all up. That will be the easiest way to get rid of it; besides, it will make a good bonfire.”

After working in this way about fifteen minutes, Jasper heard a bell ringing at the house.

“Ah!” said he, “that is the first bell for breakfast.”

So he jumped over the brook to the main land, and went back through the garden gate into the garden. He bolted the gate on the inside, and then, gathering up the tools which he had been using, he went into the tool-room and put them away. He then went into the house and got ready for breakfast.

At breakfast he told his grandfather about his island.

“Grandfather,” said he, “I have discovered an island.”

“That is great,” said Mr. Grant. “Christopher Columbus did no more when he first discovered America.”

“And I want you to give it to me,” added Jasper.

Conversation at the breakfast table about the island.

“To carry away with you when you go back to New York?” inquired Mr. Grant, very gravely.

“Oh no, grandfather,” said Jasper; “I could not carry it away; but I want to clear it up, and have it for mine while I am here.”

“That is, you want what we call a lease of it,” said Mr. Grant.

“Yes, sir, I suppose so,” said Jasper; “but what is a lease?”

“Why, when we give a person a lease of any property,” said Mr. Grant, “we give him the possession and use of it for a time; but it remains our property all the while, and when the time expires, then the property comes back to us again.”

“Yes, that’s it, grandfather,” said Jasper; “I want a lease of the island for all this summer. I am going to clear it up, and make a garden on it.”

“Won’t the cows get into the garden?” asked Mr. Grant; “there are cows in the field.”

“Ah! but they can’t get over the brook,” replied Jasper. “The banks are pretty steep all around, and where they are not steep I am going to make them so.”

“Then how will you get over yourself?” asked Mr. Grant.

“I shall make a bridge,” said Jasper.

“You will want some help to do all that work,” said Mr. Grant. “You may have Martin, if you like.”

Martin was a boy about sixteen years old, who was at that time at work for Mr. Grant.

“You could have Martin to work for you all this afternoon, if you wish, only, I suppose,” added Mr. Grant, “you would not know how to command him. You have learned pretty well how

Learning how to command.

Martin under Jasper's orders.

to obey, but you have never yet taken any lessons in learning how to command."

"Oh, I can command him well enough," replied Jasper. "I shall look about and see what there is to be done, and tell him, and he will do it."

"Very well," said Mr. Grant; "I'll tell him, after breakfast, that he is to be under your orders this afternoon."

Accordingly, after dinner that day, Mr. Grant called Martin, and told him that he was to be under Jasper's direction for that afternoon.

"He wants to clear up an island, he says, down in the pasture," said Mr. Grant; "you may go with him and help him. Do whatever he directs."

Accordingly, after dinner, Martin and Jasper went down to the island together.

"Now, Martin," said Jasper, "what I want you to do is to help me grub up these roots, and stumps, and bushes. I'm going to leave a fringe of bushes all about the margin of the island to serve for a hedge, and to keep the cattle from getting in; but I am going to clear up all the ground in the middle of the island, so as to make it smooth and pretty, and then I am going to dig up a small place for a garden. The rest I am going to have for green grass."

"That is an excellent plan," said Martin.

So Martin went to work, under Jasper's direction, to carry the plan into effect. Jasper cut down all the bushes that grew in the centre of the island, leaving a dense thicket, like a hedge, all

Clearing up the island.

The bonfire.

A series of interruptions.

about the sides of it. He laid the bushes on his pile, and presently he set the pile on fire. He also gathered up all the decayed stumps and branches, and other fragments of trees, which lay about the ground, and dug up the stumps that came up easily, and threw them all upon the fire.

While Jasper was thus employed, Martin did the heavier work. He pulled up the stumps and roots that came hard, and he cut down an old dead tree which stood in the middle of the island, which, though it was dead, was only dry and not decayed, and so was very hard to cut. Jasper tried this tree first himself, but he could not do any thing with it.

Things went on so pretty well for about an hour, but then Martin began to get somewhat out of patience by Jasper's calling him off so frequently from one piece of work to another. A laboring man, or even a boy, who is accustomed to steady work, likes, when he has commenced on a job, to go on and finish it; but Jasper, finding continually new things to do, was perpetually calling Martin from one thing to another in quite a vexatious manner.

For instance, at one time, while Martin was at work digging out a big root, Jasper, who had gone down to the lower point of the island, below a fringe of bushes, where Martin could not see him, suddenly called out,

“Martin, I want you to come here.”

“Shall I need any tools?” asked Martin.

“I don't know,” said Jasper; “yes, you may bring an iron bar.”

Martin is called from his work to see about making the wharf.

So Martin laid down the pick with which he had been digging the root, and went to Jasper, carrying the iron bar.

“I want you to see whether you can pry up these stones,” said Jasper, pointing to some stones that lay imbedded in the ground, on the shore of the island.

“What for?” said Martin.

“Why, you see, I’ve an idea of making a wharf of them,” replied Jasper. “If I can get out these stones, and make a wharf of them here on the lower point of the island, then I can build a dam a little way below there, and so have a pond to sail my boats. You see, there is quite a wide space between the banks of the brook here, right below the island, and if I can make a dam so as to fill all this space with water, I can have a good pond.”

“It is an excellent plan,” said Martin; “but then you had better finish clearing up the island first, and afterward begin on this job.”

“No,” replied Jasper, “I want to have you see if you can get these stones out now; for, if they won’t come out, then I shall have to give up the plan, and I am in a hurry to know.”

So Martin went back, and brought the shovel and the pick, so that he could dig about the stones in order to get them out. While he was at work upon them, Jasper strolled along up the shore of the island, and soon disappeared from view behind the thicket.

Martin dug out one stone, and while he was at work on the second, he heard Jasper’s voice calling,

“Martin!”

Another summons.

Plan about widening the brook.

“Halloo!” said Martin.

“I want you to come here, and bring the shovel.”

“I’m busy digging out these stones,” replied Martin; “I can’t come now.”

“Yes, yes,” said Jasper; “I want to see about widening the brook here. You can go back to the stones in two or three minutes.”

So Martin, grumbling at his master’s capriciousness, took his shovel and went to the place where Jasper was.

“You see,” said Jasper, “the brook is not quite wide enough, or, rather, the banks are not quite steep enough here to keep the cows from jumping over, and I want to see if we can make them steeper. We ought to know this now, because, you see, if we can’t keep the cows out, it is of no use for us to try to make a garden.”

“But, Jasper,” said Martin, “it is a great deal better to wait until we have got the other jobs done that we have already begun, and then take hold of the widening of the brook all together. You see, we want different tools and things in order to do this work.”

“What different things do you want?” asked Jasper.

“Why, we want a pick, and a shovel,” said Martin, “and an iron bar to pry out the stones.”

“Well,” said Jasper, “you have got them all.”

“And we want a wheelbarrow to wheel the sods and the gravel away in,” added Martin, “and a board to stand upon, to keep my feet out of the water when I am digging.”

Martin's objection.

It is overruled by Jasper.

“Oh, no matter about those things,” said Jasper, “just to dig a little. I only want a little done now, just to see how it will look.”

“Besides,” continued Martin, “if you are going to build a dam, the sods and the gravel that we shall get in widening the brook will be just what you will want for the embankment. So it will be a great deal better to wait until you are ready to begin the dam, and then lay boards down, and so wheel what we dig out of the brook right to the spot.”

“Oh, never mind about that,” said Jasper; “we will do it so when we get ready to go to work regularly; but now I only want you to widen one little place, so that I can see how it is going to look, and you can throw the sods and the gravel any where.”

“Very well,” said Martin, in a resigned tone of voice, “it is just as you say; it makes no difference to me: Mr. Grant put me under your orders.”

So Martin went for the rest of his tools, and then began to work, as Jasper had directed, in widening out the brook. Jasper stood looking on a few minutes, and then said he would go and see to the fire.

So he went into the middle of the island again and replenished the fire. He then looked at the stump of the tree which Martin had begun to dig out, but which he had left when Jasper called him away to see about the stones.

“Ah!” said he, “this is just the thing. I’ll finish digging out this stump while Martin is away.”

Jasper worked a few minutes, and then he began to be tired.

Stump-digging.

Another project.

Martin called again.

The truth is, that digging out a stump is very hard and vexatious work. Wherever you try to put in your shovel you find roots in the way, and when you strike your shovel down upon them to cut them off, if they are big they are so solid that you make no impression, and if they are small they yield to the blow, and then spring back again immediately, and all your efforts are vain.

“It is of no use to dig out all these roots,” said Jasper to himself; “it will do just as well to cut them off below the level of the ground. Then, when the hole is filled up, the gravel will be as smooth as if there were no roots there.”

So Jasper began to call Martin.

“Martin,” said he, “I want you to come here for a minute or two.”

“I wonder what new plan the boy has got now!” said Martin to himself.

He, however, obeyed the order, as he was in duty bound, and leaving his work in the brook, he went in through the thicket to the place where Jasper was.

“I think,” said Jasper, “that it is not of any use to dig out any more of these roots, and so I want you to cut them off. Then I can pry the stump right over, and put it on fire.”

“But you can’t dig the ground up for your garden,” said Martin, “unless you first get the roots all out.”

“No matter,” replied Jasper; “I will have the garden in another part.”

“Then, besides,” said Martin, “I can’t cut the roots off down so deep in the ground without spoiling your grandfather’s axe.”

A controversy.

A point of difference as to obedience of orders.

“But I have taken all the stones away,” said Jasper, “on purpose, so that you might not hit any of them.”

“Ah! but it is not the stones merely,” replied Martin. “The bark of the roots is all full of grit and gravel, and it would spoil this axe to cut them through.”

“No,” said Jasper, “the worst would be that it would dull it a little, but you can grind it again to-morrow.”

Thus Martin insisted that it would not answer to cut these roots off with his axe, while Jasper, on the other hand, insisted that he should do it.

“Grandfather told you to obey my orders,” said Jasper.

“He told me to obey your orders to-day,” said Martin, “but not to-morrow.”

“Well, I don’t give you any orders for to-morrow,” said Jasper.

“Yes you do,” retorted Martin, “by requiring me to dull the axe to-day, so as to sharpen it to-morrow.”

“That’s a very different thing,” said Jasper.

“No,” replied Martin, “it is just the same thing. If I have to work to-morrow in sharpening the axe which I dull to-day, don’t you see it is making me work for you two days instead of one?”

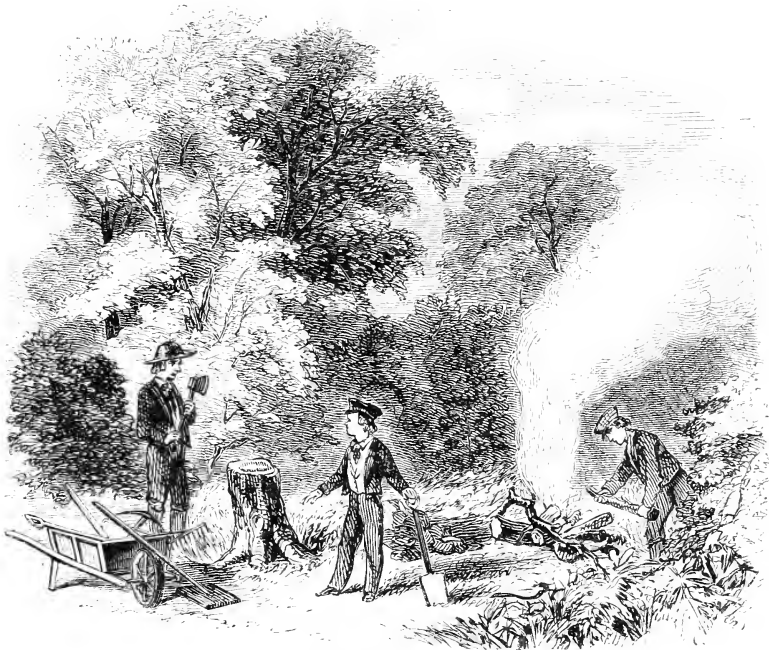
“No,” said Jasper, “it is no such thing; and if you don’t cut the roots of the trees, I’ll cut them myself.”

So saying, Jasper approached Martin, and was going to take away the axe from him in order to cut the roots, but Martin held the axe behind him with one hand, and the other he held out as if to keep Jasper away.

Jasper's anger.

The result.

Martin leaves him.



MARTIN REFUSES TO OBEY.

Jasper now began to feel quite angry, and he struck Martin's arm. The blow which he struck was not a violent one; still, it was a blow.

Martin immediately turned round, and, putting his axe upon his shoulder, began to walk away. He passed through a gap in the thicket that formed the border of the island, threw his axe

*Jasper's surprise.**Reflections.**Working alone.*

across the brook to the main land, then leaped over himself, and, taking up his axe, walked across the field toward the house.

Jasper ran to the margin of the island to see where Martin was going.

“Martin,” said he, “are you going away?”

“Yes,” said Martin, “I am going away.”

Martin turned his head to give this answer, but did not stop. Jasper was confounded at this sudden change in the aspect of his affairs. At first he was inclined to follow Martin, and attempt to induce him to come back and resume his work again; but he thought it doubtful, on reflection, whether he should succeed in bringing him back if he were to try.

“Besides,” said he to himself, “what is the use of my having a workman if he will not obey me, and do as I say?”

So Jasper went on working alone. He could not dig out the stumps, but he made great progress in clearing the ground of all other incumbrances. The fire served not only to burn up the old wood, but it was also good company for him, and prevented his feeling lonely. At last, when the fire went out on account of there being nothing more to burn, Jasper gathered up the tools and carried them home.

A talk at the tea-table.Jasper's account of the difficulty.

CHAPTER II.

A CONVERSATION.

THAT evening, at tea, Mr. Grant asked Jasper how he got along with his work during the afternoon with Martin.

"I got along with my work pretty well," said Jasper, "but I could not do any thing at all with Martin."

"Why, what was the matter?" asked Mr. Grant.

"He would not mind me," replied Jasper. "He would not do as I said."

"That's extraordinary," said Mr. Grant.

"And at last," continued Jasper, "he went off and left me."

"Why did he go off and leave you?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Because he was not willing to do what I wanted him to do," said Jasper. "I wanted him to cut off some roots, and he would not, and so he came off and left me to finish the work alone."

"Is that a full and fair account of the matter?" interrogated Mr. Grant.

"Why, yes, grandfather," said Jasper. "I could tell you more of what we said and did, but that's the substance of it. He would not do what I wanted him to do, and so he came away."

"It is very extraordinary," said Mr. Grant, "for I expressly ordered him to work under your direction."

"Well, he would not," said Jasper.

Here there was a pause. Mr. Grant waited a moment to see

Mr. Grant's advice.

An impartial relation of the transactions.

if Jasper would make any farther explanations, but he did not, and so Mr. Grant resumed :

“ It seems that some difficulty arose between you and Martin,” said he, “ and I have no doubt that if Martin himself was here, he could tell me in five words what it was ; but he is not here, and I do not like to send for him, for that will look as if I could not trust you to give me a fair account of the matter. But I *can* trust you, I am sure. Think how ungenerous it would be in you to take advantage of his absence to give me a wrong idea of what he did—to make charges against him that are not really deserved—when he is not here to defend himself.”

On hearing these words, Jasper resolved to be honest, and to tell his grandfather the whole story in a fair and impartial manner ; so he began at the beginning, and went on to the end, and gave his grandfather a full account of all that had happened. He explained how he had at first made Martin discontented by ordering him about from one place to another, giving him every minute a new piece of work to do before he had finished the other, and then that he had directed him to cut the roots of the tree, and that Martin had refused because he thought it would dull the axe.

“ So, then, that was the reason why he would not obey you ?” said Mr. Grant. “ He was afraid of spoiling one of my tools ?”

“ Yes, sir,” said Jasper.

“ And now, on reflection, do you think that was a good reason ?”

“ Why, I am not sure, grandfather,” replied Jasper. “ I think now that that was a good reason why I should not have ordered him to do it ; but, if I ordered him to do it, I don't see why he

An excellent principle.

Its limits.

An example.

ought not to have obeyed me. You put him under my orders, and if I ordered him wrong, then, it seems to me, he ought to have obeyed, and left me to be responsible for it to you."

"Good!" said Mr. Grant. "That is a true principle, and an excellent good one within its limits. What you mean is this: that when one person is under the rightful authority of another, he must obey the orders that he receives, even when they are wrong."

"Yes, sir," said Jasper.

"Well, that is a good and true principle, with one proviso; and that is, that the commander, in giving his orders, keeps within the limits of his rightful authority. If he goes beyond the limits of his authority, then the other is not bound to obey.

"There are always limits to authority," continued Mr. Grant, "either express or implied. There are limits even to the authority of a captain or a general in war. If a captain orders a soldier to fire at the enemy, the soldier is bound to obey, because it is within the power of the captain to order the soldier to fire at the enemy whenever he pleases. The soldier must obey, even if he knows that it is the wrong time to fire."

"How could it be the wrong time to fire at the enemy?" asked Jasper.

"Why, you see, a party of the enemy might be coming into an ambuscade," said Mr. Grant, "where the captain and a great many of his soldiers were waiting to seize them and make them prisoners. Now, if the captain were to order a soldier to fire on the first one that came, the report of the gun might alarm the rest, so that they would run away. Thus it might be very unwise to fire. The

The captain's order to his soldier.

A judge's authority.

soldier might *know* that it was unwise ; still, he would be bound to obey, if the captain ordered him to fire, because it is entirely within the just limits of the captain's power."

"And what sort of a command would be beyond the limits of his power?" asked Jasper.

"Why, suppose the captain should have a quarrel of some sort with his own general," replied Mr. Grant, "and should determine to kill him, but, not being willing to kill him himself, should order the soldier to do it. He might say to the soldier, The general is going to review the troops to-morrow. In doing it, he will pass down the line directly in front of you. Have your gun loaded with a bullet, and when he gets opposite to you, shoot him. I, who am your captain, command you to do it, and you are bound to obey your captain in every thing."

"He would not be bound to obey him in that," said Jasper.

"No," rejoined Mr. Grant ; "to order a soldier to shoot his own general is something beyond a captain's authority.

"It is just so with other kinds of authority," said Mr. Grant. "A judge on the bench, when a prisoner has been tried and found guilty by a jury, has authority to issue an order to the sheriff to hang him, and the sheriff is bound to obey ; but if he were to give the sheriff an order to hang any private enemy to whom he owed some grudge, a man who was not accused of any crime and who had not been tried, he would exceed his authority, and the sheriff would not be bound to obey him.

"In case of soldiers and judges," continued Mr. Grant, "the limits of authority are always exactly defined by law, and such

Implied limitations.

Their meaning.

A new disclosure.

officers almost always know exactly where the boundaries are ; but in the common affairs of life, though the boundaries are just as real and just as important, we do not see them so easily, and sometimes it is quite difficult to find out where they are. The limits are not expressed—they are only implied.”

“I don’t know exactly what you mean by that,” said Jasper.

“Why, in your case,” said Mr. Grant, “when I put Martin under your command for the afternoon, I did not tell you in express words how much authority you were to have over him, but left you to infer it by your own good sense from the nature of the case. I won’t attempt now to define them exactly, but I think you will see yourself, on reflection, that I did not mean to authorize you to command him to spoil my tools, or to injure my property in any way.”

“Yes, sir,” replied Jasper, “I do see it now.”

“Still,” continued Mr. Grant, “I should not have thought that he would have come away and left you on that account. I don’t see why he did not stay and help you in other ways. What was the real reason why he came away?”

“Why, I suppose,” said Jasper, hesitating, “I suppose he thought I struck him.”

“Ah!” said Mr. Grant, “that throws new light on the subject. He thought you struck him.”

“Yes, sir,” replied Jasper ; “but I did not mean to strike him exactly.”

“How was it?” asked Mr. Grant. “Tell me all about it.”

“Why, you see,” replied Jasper, “I wanted to take the axe to

The degree of wrong attached to Jasper's exhibition of temper.

cut the roots of the tree, and he would not let me. He held the axe behind him, and then put out his arm to keep me from taking it, and so I struck his arm."

"There was no great harm in that," said Mr. Grant; "still I think it was wrong."

"Yes, grandfather," said Jasper, "I think so myself now."

"It was not any thing very bad," rejoined Mr. Grant. "For a *man* to strike his workman because he was angry with him would be very bad, but for a boy like you to do it on a sudden impulse is no great thing, provided he sees the wrong, after he has committed it, and makes reparation."

Perhaps Mr. Grant made too light of Jasper's offense in striking Martin, and yet it must be confessed that while we are young, and before we have learned the habit of self-control, the movement of the arm to resent any supposed injury or wrong follows so exceedingly quick upon the emotion of resentment that the action is almost involuntary. It is, however, none the less really wrong.

It was, however, not Mr. Grant's way ever to exaggerate in any degree the faults or offenses of children. While he was very firm and decided in the measures which he adopted in the government of Jasper, he was always very indulgent in estimating his conduct, and was very ready to take into view, of his own accord, every possible excuse and palliation.

"I don't think it was any thing very bad, your striking Martin as you did," he continued, "though it is not surprising that he was very much hurt in his feelings by it. To be struck when

Viewing the matter in a new light.

An honest apology.

you don't deserve it is something very hard to bear. I don't know that I blame him for going away. Do you?"

"Why no, sir," said Jasper, "I don't think I do."

"Suppose," continued Mr. Grant, "that you had been working for somebody, and had been doing as well as you could for them, and that they should get out of patience with you, and come and strike you, would not you have gone off and left them?"

"Yes, sir, I would," said Jasper, firmly.

"Well, now, I think you will feel better," said Mr. Grant, "if you go and tell Martin so. Do just as you please about it. You see, you naturally feel a little uncomfortable when you think of having struck Martin in that way, but if you go and tell him that you ought not to have done so, that will take all the uncomfortable feeling away. Besides, I should not wonder if it should make Martin feel better about it too."

"I'll go and tell him this minute," said Jasper.

So Jasper went out to find Martin, while his grandfather rose from the table and went into the library. Martin was watering the horse at the pump in the yard.

"Martin," said Jasper, "I think you did exactly right to come off and leave me this afternoon. I would have done just so if I had been you. I had no business to strike you."

"Well, now, I have been thinking of it," said Martin, "and I rather thought I did not do quite right. You did not hurt me any."

"That makes no difference," said Jasper.

"At any rate, it is of no consequence now. And I'll tell you

An excellent settlement of the difficulty.

The old axe.

what I can do about that stump. I have found an old axe in the shed that I can cut the roots off with and not hurt it at all, and I'll go and do it the next time your grandfather can spare me to go and work for you."

"Good!" said Jasper; "that will be just the thing."

So Jasper returned into the house, and went to the library to find his grandfather.

"Well, Jasper," said Mr. Grant, when he saw him coming in, "have you settled the affair with Martin?"

"Yes, sir," replied Jasper.

"Did you settle it pleasantly?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Yes, sir," said Jasper, "very pleasantly indeed."

"And do you feel better about it yourself?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Yes, sir," said Jasper, "I feel a great deal better; and Martin says that he has found an old axe to cut the stump roots off with, and that he will come and cut them for me the first day you can spare him."

"Ah! but I don't see how I can spare him very well to work for you any more," said Mr. Grant, "I have got so much for him to do myself. How long will it take him to cut the roots off?"

"I should not think it would take him more than half an hour," said Jasper.

"Well, you may have him to-morrow for half an hour," said Mr. Grant, "but after that I think you must hire your own help. If you want any body to work for you on your island, I'll pay him, but you must find him."

"How must I find him?" asked Jasper.

Hiring help.

Mr. Grant's offer.

Jasper's determination.

"I don't know, I am sure," replied Mr. Grant. "It is always very difficult to get hired hands in this part of the country. You see, every body has a farm of his own, and so they don't like to go and work for other people. All I can say is that if you can find any body to work for you, I'll give you the money to pay them. If you can't find any body, then you will have to do the work yourself."

"I'll go and ask Martin," said Jasper.

So Jasper went out into the kitchen to find Martin. He asked Martin if he knew where he could get a hired hand to help him about his work.

"Do you want a man or a boy?" asked Martin.

"Which would be best for me, do you think?" asked Jasper.

"Why, I suppose a man would do more work," said Martin, "but then a boy can bear being ordered about better."

"How do you mean?" asked Jasper.

"Why, you always change your plan pretty often, you know," replied Martin, "and you want your workman to leave one thing and go to another a good deal. Men don't like to do that. They always want to finish one thing before they begin another."

"Ah! but I am not going to do so any more," replied Jasper. "I am going to let my man work more steadily."

"There's an Irishman that they call Patrick that lives in the edge of the village," said Martin, "and another man named Thompson. They both go out to work."

"I mean to go to-morrow," said Jasper, "and see if I can hire either of them."

More planning about the work on the island.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST APPEARANCE OF CONGO.

THE next morning, at breakfast, Jasper asked his grandfather if Martin could go that forenoon and cut up his stump.

“At what time do you want him?” said Mr. Grant.

“At eleven o’clock,” said Jasper, “when I get through my studies.”

“Very well,” said Mr. Grant; “he may go.”

“And then this afternoon,” added Jasper, “I am going to the village to see if I can hire a man for myself.”

“Yes,” said his grandfather, “that will be a good plan. You can hire a man or a boy.”

“Which do you think would be best?” asked Jasper.

“Why, a man will do the most work,” said Mr. Grant, “but a boy would be the best company.”

“On the whole, I think I’d rather have a boy,” said Jasper.

“Take which you please,” said Mr. Grant, “only you must not hire him but for one day. After we have tried him for one day we can tell better whether we shall keep him or not.”

According to the arrangement thus made, at eleven o’clock Jasper called Martin, and they together went down to the island. Martin, of course, carried the old axe. On the way Jasper said that he was going that afternoon to see if he could find a man or boy to work for him all the time.

How boys can be taught to be careful in the use of their tools.

On the island.

“If you get one,” said Martin, “I advise you to ask your grandfather to give you this old axe, and then you and your man can grind it up sharp, and always have an axe to use of your own that you can dull as much as you have a mind to.”

“But I should not want to dull it at all,” replied Jasper, “after taking so much pains to grind it.”

“That is the very reason why I wanted you to grind it yourself, in order that you might know how much hard work a good edge costs, and try to keep it when you get it. Nothing makes a boy so careful of the edge of a tool as his having turned the grindstone in getting the edge.”

Martin and Jasper leaped over the brook to the island. When they reached the place, Martin immediately began to cut off the roots of the stump. He cut them as low down as he could, so that when the hole should be filled up again, and the ground leveled, no traces of the stump should appear. The work was soon accomplished, and the stump was rolled out upon the ground.

“Now,” said Jasper, “the difficulty is to know what to do with it, for I have not got any more fire to burn it up.”

“Can’t you make a new fire?”

“I have not got any more sticks,” said Jasper. “I have cleared the ground up all about the island.”

“Then I don’t know what you will do,” said Martin; “and I can not stay to help you. Mr. Grant only gave me leave to come down here to get the stump out, and that work is done.”

Just at that moment Jasper heard a voice at a distance calling to him,

A new acquaintance.

Flip.

He comes down to the island.

“Jasper! Jasper!”

Jasper ran to the margin of his island, at a place where there was an opening through the fringe of trees, and looked in the direction from which the sound proceeded. He saw a boy standing on a gate which led toward the house. It was the gate that Jasper and Martin had passed through in coming from the little green lane into the pasture. Jasper perceived at once that it was a boy of his acquaintance named Flip. I don't know whether that was his real name, but it was what the boys generally called him.

“Halloo, Flip!” said Jasper; “come down here.”

So Flip set out to come down just as Martin did to go up, and they passed each other midway between the island and the gate.

Flip was considerably younger than Jasper, but he was a very bright and pleasant boy. As soon as he came near the island he asked Jasper what he was doing.

He stood, in asking this question, on the main land, while Jasper remained on the island. The branch of the brook was between them.

“I am making me a farm,” said Jasper. “I'm clearing the land now, and presently I'm going to dig up a piece of ground for a garden. The rest I'm going to have for a mowing field.”

“But the cows will get into your garden, I'm afraid,” said Flip. “There are always cows in this pasture.”

“Ah! but I have left a fringe of bushes all about the island,” said Jasper, “so that they can't see that there is any garden there. Besides, I am going to widen and deepen the brook all around, and then they can't jump across, even if they do see.”

A proposition.

Partnership.

Working in company.

“Then how will you get across yourself?” asked Flip.

“Why, you see,” said Jasper, “I suppose we shall have to have a bridge.”

“But, if you have a bridge, then the cows can go over too,” said Flip.

“Ah! but I shall contrive some kind of bridge that the cows can not get over,” said Jasper. “I could manage that well enough if I only had somebody to help me do the work. If you will help me you shall own the farm with me.”

“Agreed,” said Flip, eagerly. “I’ll help.”

So Flip jumped across the brook, over to the island, by way of taking possession of his new property.

“And now,” said Jasper, “the first thing to be done is to get rid of this old stump that we have been digging up out of the ground. One thing we can do with it is to roll it off into the woods out of sight, only I don’t see how we can get it across the brook.”

“We might lay a plank across,” said Flip.

“But we have not got any plank down here,” said Jasper, “and it is a great deal of work to bring one down.”

“What else can we do with it?” asked Flip.

“If we could find sticks enough to put under to make a good hot fire,” said Jasper, “we might burn it up.”

“That’s the best plan,” said Flip. “We can find sticks enough in the woods, I am sure.”

So the boys went to work getting sticks, and old dry stumps and logs in the woods. The piles that they found they brought

Gathering fuel for the fire.

A statement of plans.

down to the margin of the brook and threw them over upon the island. In the course of half an hour they had accumulated quite a pile of fuel.

“The more we get the better,” said Flip, “for we shall have a bigger fire.”

“Yes,” said Jasper, “and there will be more ashes left; and the more ashes there is, the better it will be for the crops on my farm.”

“On *our* farm,” said Flip.

“Yes, *our* farm,” rejoined Jasper, accepting the correction. “This afternoon,” he added, “I am going into the village to try to get a man to come and help me do some of the hard work on my island.”

“That’s good,” said Flip; “I’ll go with you. But who is going to pay the man?” he asked.

“My grandfather,” said Jasper; “and, besides paying the man, he is going to let me have the wagon to go and get him; so I shall have a ride at any rate, if I don’t get a workman. I am going to have the wagon immediately after dinner, and I’ll come for you at your house.”

“No,” said Flip, “I’d rather come to *your* house, and then I shall have a longer ride.”

This arrangement having been made, the boys resumed the work of gathering wood for the fire, and continued to prosecute it industriously till the bell rang for dinner. Then Jasper and Flip went together to the house, and Flip went home, promising to come again as soon as he had finished his dinner.

An expedition.

The boys setting out.

Conversation about the bridge.

The horse was harnessed into the wagon at one o'clock ; Martin and Jasper harnessed him. A few minutes before he was ready Flip came. Mr. Grant had given Jasper no instructions whatever in respect to hiring his man, having preferred to leave him to his own judgment and discretion.

"He can not make any great mistake," said Mr. Grant to himself, "for one day's work of a man is of no serious consequence any way ; and if a boy always walks in leading-strings he never will learn to go alone."

As soon as the wagon was ready, Jasper went into the house to tell his grandfather that he was going.

"We are all ready, grandfather," said he.

"Very well," said Mr. Grant ; "I hope you will have good luck."

So Jasper bade his grandfather good-by, and went back to the wagon. Flip was already in, and was holding the reins ; Jasper got in, and they drove away.

On the way they began to talk about the kind of bridge they should have over the brook.

"I have thought of a kind of jumping bridge," said Jasper.

"What kind of a bridge is that ?" asked Flip.

"Why, one way to make it," said Jasper, "would be to find a big stone with a flat top, and put it in the middle of the brook, at some place where the banks are high and firm. Then, when we wanted to go across, we could jump from the bank on one side to the stone, and then from the stone to the other bank ; but the cows, you see, would not dare to do that, so they could not get over."

The jumping stone.

Another plan.

The post.

“Well,” said Flip, in a tone of satisfaction, “that will be an excellent plan.”

“Only,” added Jasper, “I think it will be very hard to find a stone large enough and high enough to make a good firm step. And then, if we should find one, it would be very hard to place it right. If we were to get it there, and roll it over into the brook, it would go down into the mud, and then we could not do any thing with it; so I thought of taking a post.”

“A post?” repeated Flip.

“Yes,” rejoined Jasper; “a short post with a good broad end. We would saw off one end of the post flat and square; that would be the end to step upon. Then we would sharpen the other end.”

“We could not do it,” said Flip.

“But our man can do it,” said Jasper. “You forget that we are going to have a man. Then, when he has sharpened the lower end of the post, we will put it on the wheelbarrow, and wheel it down to the place where we want to have our bridge. We will have it in a place where there is a good soft bottom, so that the post will drive.”

“It is soft bottom almost all along there,” said Flip.

“Then,” continued Jasper, “I’ll hold the post in its place, and keep it steady, while our man drives it down with a great beetle.”

“Oh, Jasper,” said Flip, “you could not hold it.”

“Yes,” said Jasper, “I’ve thought of a way. You see, I’ll take a long strip of wood, and nail one end of it across the post,

The ill success of their expedition.

Jasper in perplexity.

A resource suggested.

just below the square end, and that will keep the post upright while our man drives it."

"That will be an excellent way," said Flip.

"I have planned it all out," said Jasper. "I planned it at dinner to-day. Grandfather helped me."

The boys were not successful in hiring either Patrick or Thompson. Patrick was engaged for four or five days to work in a garden, and Thompson had gone with a team to a neighboring town to bring a load of seed potatoes, and they did not know when he would be back. After having made these applications and received these answers, Jasper felt quite perplexed. He did not know what to do. He let the horse walk slowly along the road, while he and Flip sat in the wagon considering.

"If we only knew somebody to inquire of," said Jasper, hesitatingly.

"I know a fellow, that lives right round the corner here in a little lane, that perhaps could tell us," said Flip.

"What's his name?" asked Jasper.

"Congo," said Flip.

"That's a queer name," said Jasper.

"Yes," rejoined Flip, "and the fellow is a queer fellow. Perhaps he would come and work for you himself, though I don't know as he would; and, if he would be willing to come, I don't know as he would do."

"Why would not he do?" asked Jasper.

"First, he's only a boy," said Flip, "and, next, he's black."

No prejudice against color.

Congo.

They find him at work.

“That’s no matter,” said Jasper; “I’d just as lief have him black, or blue, or green, or any other color he’s a mind to be, if he’s only a good strong fellow to drive the post for the jumping bridge.”

“He is a good strong fellow,” said Flip. “I saw him throwing a beetle with the other boys a few days ago, and he threw it farther than any of them.”

“Then let’s go and see him,” said Jasper.

So saying, Jasper whipped up his horse and drove fast round the corner where Flip directed him, and soon came to the house. It was a small house, quite in the outskirts of the town. There was a little yard by the side of the house, and a path, bordered with hollyhocks, led up from the open gate to the end door. As the boys drove up to the place, Jasper saw a colored boy, considerably larger than himself, at work digging by the side of the door.

“There he is now,” said Flip; then, in a louder voice, he called out,

“Halloo, Congo!”

Congo looked up from his work, and responded in the same tone,

“Halloo, Flip!”

“What are you doing?” asked Flip.

“I’m setting out a hop vine, to grow up over our door,” answered Congo.

“Well, Congo,” added Flip, “here’s Jasper, who wants to know if you will come and work for him.”

The proposition considered.

Inquiries.

The result.

Congo looked a little surprised at this proposal, and, after a moment's pause, he asked,

“What does he want me to do?”

“Why, he wants you to help him clear some land, and to dig out some stones—don't you, Jasper?” (here Flip turned to Jasper, and spoke in a lower tone)—“to build your dam with.”

“Yes,” said Jasper, “and all such things.”

“Well,” said Congo, “I'll go and ask my mother.”

So Congo went into the house, and presently he came to the door again, bringing his mother with him. She was a very good-natured-looking colored woman, about forty years old. His mother questioned Jasper more particularly about the business, seeming to be at first somewhat in doubt whether Jasper was in earnest in the application that he had made. At last she asked who would pay if Congo went there to work.

“My grandfather,” said Jasper, “Mr. Grant.”

“Ah! well,” said she, “if Mr. Grant will pay him, he may go. I want him generally here at home to help me, but, if he can earn any money, that would help me more still. At any rate, he shall come up this evening and see Mr. Grant about it. What time shall he come?”

Jasper, after a moment's reflection, said that he thought seven o'clock would be a good time; and the affair being thus arranged, he and Flip rode away, well satisfied with the result of the expedition thus far.

At tea-time Jasper told his grandfather that he had found a boy to work for him.

Talk with Mr. Grant.

A good rule as to the payment of wages.

“I could not get a man,” said Jasper, “but this is a good strong boy. Don’t you think he will do, grandfather?”

“Yes,” replied his grandfather, “I think he will do very well, if you can only manage him.”

“A boy will be easier for me to manage than a man, at any rate,” said Jasper.

“On the contrary, I think you will find him a great deal harder to manage,” said Mr. Grant. “It is no easy thing to manage a boy, I assure you. And how much are you going to pay him?”

“Why, you are going to pay him, grandfather,” said Jasper.

“No,” said Mr. Grant; “I’ll give you the money, but you must pay him yourself. I can’t have any thing to do with it.”

“And how much do you think I ought to pay him?” asked Jasper.

“I don’t know any thing about it,” said Mr. Grant. “You had better inquire what the customary wages are. It will be bad if you pay him either too much or too little.”

“I know it would be bad if I paid him too little,” said Jasper, “but what harm would there be in my paying him a little too much?”

“Why, he would tell other boys of his age who are working for less than what you paid him, and that would make them discontented with their wages. Perhaps they would complain, and that would make difficulty. Then, besides, you will probably not employ this boy very long; and if, while you do employ him, you pay him more than the market price for his work, and he finds afterward that he can not get so much from other people, then he

It is best to pay the market price.

Making the engagement.

will be discontented and dissatisfied, and will perhaps say that if he can't get as much as you paid him he will not work at all. So it is never best to pay a workman above the fair market price for his labor."

"And how am I to find out the market price?" asked Jasper.

"I'm sure I don't know," replied Mr. Grant. "You must find out somehow or other for yourself. If I pay the money, that is all that I can do. You must do all the business."

"I'll go out and ask Martin," said Jasper.

So Jasper went out and asked Martin. He also asked one of Mr. Grant's hired men who was in the kitchen at the time. After obtaining all the information that he could, he came to the conclusion that he ought to pay the boy twenty-five cents a day with his board, or thirty cents a day without his board. He concluded that the latter would be the best plan.

Mr. Grant approved of this, and accordingly, when Congo came, these terms were proposed to him.

Congo seemed entirely satisfied with the terms, and said that he would come the next morning immediately after breakfast.

"We make the engagement for one day at a time," said Mr. Grant, "though perhaps Jasper will want you longer, if you are a good boy and behave well. You look to me like a good boy, and I believe that you must be a good boy, for I have never heard any thing against you. There is only one thing that I have any concern about."

"Yes, sir," said Congo.

Mr. Grant had paused a little when he had finished the above

Mr. Grant's conversation with Congo about what he should do.

sentence, and Congo thought that he was to say something, and as he did not know what else to say, he said "Yes, sir."

"The thing is about bad language," said Mr. Grant. "Sometimes pretty good boys get into the habit, almost without knowing it, of using some bad language."

Here Congo began to hang his head, and to look a little confused.

"I want you to be very careful about that," continued Mr. Grant; "and if you ever find yourself on the point of using any language which you don't think is quite right to use, check yourself at once. You see, I would not have Jasper learn to use bad language on any consideration whatever.

"The way it works," added Mr. Grant, "is this. A boy who is perhaps himself a pretty good boy, like you, hears other boys use bad language, and he gradually falls into the habit of it himself. He never means to use it when any respectable person is hearing him, but often he forgets, and sometimes he is overheard speaking loud words by somebody he does not know is listening. Thus people find out, sooner or later, that he uses bad language, and then they think that he is a bad boy, when perhaps, in other respects, he is not, and then they won't trust him. We never think so well of people when we know that they use bad language; so you will be very careful, won't you?"

"Yes, sir," said Congo, "I will."

"It is very easy indeed," continued Jasper's grandfather, "for a boy to lose his good reputation, and to get a very bad reputation, and that is a great misfortune, for a bad reputation is not so easy

Jasper's proposition.

Congo agrees to it.

to get rid of. So I wish you to be very careful and not fall into any such habits."

Congo inwardly resolved to be very circumspect, and he replied to Mr. Grant, "I will, sir."

"Very well; then I suppose that Jasper will engage you to come and work for him to-morrow. I do not know; it is for him to decide; but you can tell your mother that, if he does engage you, she can depend upon his paying you for your work at night whatever he agrees to pay."

So Jasper and Congo went away. As soon as they got out of doors, Jasper said that he would engage Congo to come the next day, and would pay him thirty cents for his day's work if he boarded at home.

This plan seemed very satisfactory to Congo. He preferred, on the whole, to board at home. So he said, "Well, I'll eat my breakfast before I come away, and bring my dinner with me; then I will eat my supper at night after I get home."

So the plan was all settled.

Congo punctual to his engagement.

About grinding the axe.

CHAPTER IV.

CONGO'S WORK.

CONGO came the next morning before Jasper had finished his breakfast. Jasper saw him through the window as he sat at table.

"Ah! there he is," said Jasper. "I'll finish my breakfast, and then go out and set him at work, so that he shall have something to do while I am at my studies."

Jasper always spent the two hours between nine and eleven at his desk in his grandfather's library attending to his studies.

Mr. Grant had given him the old axe, and the first thing that Jasper did when he went out was to take Congo into the shed to look at it.

"The first thing," said he, "is to grind this axe. You see we shall want a sharp axe all the time; besides, I want it now to sharpen the post for my jumping bridge. Can you grind it, Congo?"

"I can't grind it alone," said Congo. "Nobody can grind an axe alone, unless they have a grindstone that goes by water."

"Is there any grindstone that goes by water in this town?" asked Jasper.

"Yes," said Congo; "I know where there is one, but I think this axe needs to be *set* before it is ground."

When an axe has been dulled, and ground again and again a

Work laid out.

Widening the brook.

Making a rampart.

great many times, it gets worn very short and "stubbed," as Congo called it. In such cases it is common to take it to a blacksmith's, and let him heat it in the fire, and then hammer on the cheeks of it while it is red hot, so as to push out the edge, as it were, and make it thin bladed as before. This is called setting the axe. It not only renders it much easier to grind it, but makes it of much better shape when it is ground.

"I can carry it to the blacksmith's and get it set," said Congo, "if you wish, and then, after that, you and I can grind it."

But Jasper wished to see the blacksmith set the axe, and so he concluded to wait until the afternoon, and then to go with Congo and see the work done. So he laid the axe aside, and then took Congo down to his island and told him what he was to do.

"In the first place," said Jasper, "go all around the island, and wherever you find a place so narrow that a cow might jump across, dig away the bank a little on one side or the other, so as to make it wider."

"Yes," said Congo; "and what I dig I'll put along on the edge of the island, and that will make a sort of rampart, which will help keep the cows off."

"Good!" said Jasper; "that will be an excellent plan. I thought of having it all wheeled down to a place where I am going to build a dam; but the rampart will be better."

Having thus assigned Congo his work, Jasper left him and went back to the house, in order to be ready to begin his studies at nine o'clock.

Congo worked very well; indeed, he took quite an interest in

One thing accomplished.

The blacksmith's shop.

Setting the axe.

the island operation, and he widened out the brook in a very handsome manner. Jasper got through with his studies at eleven o'clock, and then he came down to see how Congo was getting on. He was very much pleased with what was done.

"I'll risk the cows getting over now," said he; "indeed, we can hardly get over ourselves. Immediately after dinner we will go and get the axe put in order, and then we will make the bridge."

Accordingly, after dinner, Jasper and Congo, and also Flip, who had come to help them work on the island, went to the blacksmith's with the axe to have it set. The blacksmith first took the handle off, and then put the axe into the fire and heated it red hot. Congo blew the bellows for him while the axe was heating. The blacksmith then laid the axe on the anvil, holding it in his gripping-tongs, and hammered on the sides of it near the edge until he had brought it into a good shape again. In fact, he made it very much like a new axe; only, of course, it was now rather smaller and lighter than a new one.

"There," said the blacksmith at last, "I think that will do."

So saying, he took the axe with the tongs and put it into the fire again.

"Then what are you going to heat it again for?" asked Jasper.

"To temper it," said the blacksmith. "By heating it in order to hammer it I have taken the temper out, and now I must temper it again. A steel instrument, after it is forged, must always be tempered."

The process of tempering steel is performed by heating it and

Farther renovation.

The grindstone.

The axe in prime order.

then plunging it in a peculiar way into cold water, which, by cooling it suddenly, somehow or other makes it very hard.

“And now,” said the blacksmith, “I advise you to get a new handle to your axe instead of putting this old one in. You can get a good one for a shilling at almost any of the stores in the village, and then you can come here and grind the axe, if you choose. I’ve got a stone that goes by water under my shop.”

Jasper gladly acceded to this proposal. He paid the blacksmith for setting the axe, and then he went with Congo, who carried the axe in his hand, to one of the stores to buy a handle. Jasper looked over all the handles which the man had, and chose the one which he thought the most smooth and slender. Then he and Congo went to a joiner’s shop, and had the handle put in. The joiner fitted the end of the handle to the socket in the axe, and then drove it in, and wedged it in the firmest possible manner. Then he rubbed it all up and down with fine sand-paper until it was made so smooth that Jasper took great pleasure in having it in his hand, so that, in going back to the blacksmith’s, he carried it himself instead of giving it to Congo.

There was a sort of basement below the blacksmith’s shop where the grindstone was that was turned by water. It was carried by means of a brook which ran behind the shop. The blacksmith went down with the boys and set the stone a going, and then Congo held the axe on until it was ground. He made it very sharp indeed.

The axe was now all ready, and the boys set out on their return home.

Cautions about using the axe.

The bridge timber.

The chopping-block.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “I put that axe under your care. I shall consider you responsible for it. You must not cut any thing with it that has got any nails in it, or any grit, or hard knots, or any thing else that will dull it.”

“Why,” said Congo, “when it gets dull, you can grind it, can’t you?”

“Yes,” said Jasper; “if we dull it we shall have to go to work and grind it. You will have to turn the grindstone to sharpen it up again; and I think we shall find it a great deal easier to be careful of it and keep it sharp, than to grind it after it is dull and the edge of it full of notches. And you must find some good place in our sheds or shops where you can keep it, and keep it safe. Then, whenever I want it, you can go and get it.”

“Yes,” said Congo, “I will.”

The first use, of course, that was to be made of the new axe was to make the jumping bridge. For this purpose Jasper selected a post from a pile which lay behind the barn, and Congo pulled it out for him. Congo then carried the post to a saw-horse, and sawed it off at a place which Jasper designated. Jasper had ascertained what length to saw off from the post, by measuring the depth of the water at the place where it was to go, allowing also, at the same time, for the distance to which it was to be driven down into the mud.

When the post was sawed Congo carried it to a chopping-block in the shop, and there Jasper held it with the lower end upon the block, while Congo, with the new axe, hewed the end to a point.

The chopping-block was a great block made by sawing a piece

A beetle or mallet is better than an axe or hammer for driving a post or stake.

off the trunk of a large maple-tree. It was as large round as a barrel, and two thirds as high. It stood up in one corner of the shop. It stood very firm upon the floor, and the wood was very hard, so that it made a capital place for any work that required a solid place. It was just the place to sharpen the post upon.

“There!” said Jasper; “now we will carry it down to the brook, and set it in its place. We can drive it down with our axe.”

“That will not be quite so well as to drive it with a beetle,” said Congo, “if we only had a beetle; for the axe will bruise the head of the post, and that will make it not so good to step upon.”

“Then we will get the beetle,” said Jasper. “There is one in the wood-shed. You may carry the post, and I will carry the beetle.”

“No,” said Congo, “I can carry them both.”

So they went to the wood-shed to get the beetle, and when they had found it they all set out together to go down to the island. Congo carried the beetle on his right shoulder, and the post under his left arm. He seemed quite proud to show Jasper and Flip how easily he could carry them both. Jasper carried a hammer and a long strip of board which he had prepared, and Flip had in his hand some nails.

When they reached the place where the post was to be set, they nailed one end of the strip of board across near the top of the post, and then, when Congo had placed the point of the post down in the bottom of the brook at the place where it was to be driven, Jasper held the top steady by means of the strip of board. Congo then drove it down with the beetle until it would go no farther.



THE JUMPING BRIDGE.

Trying the bridge.

The pond.

Jasper's pleasure-grounds.

Jasper and Flip began to jump back and forth over the brook, stepping on the post in the middle in order to try the bridge. They found that it answered the purpose perfectly.

“And now,” said Jasper, in a tone of triumph, “I should like to see a cow dare to go over that bridge!”

Jasper was so much pleased with Congo's work that day that, after asking his grandfather's consent, he engaged him for another day, and afterward for another and another. He employed him in building the dam down below the island, and the wharf or pier at the lower part of the island, to stand upon in sailing boats on the little pond made by the dam. He also built a sort of hut on his island. The frame of the hut was of posts set in the ground, two long posts and two short ones. Congo dug the holes for these posts and set them in the ground while Jasper was at his lessons.

The roof of the hut was made by sloping rafters covered with sheets of bark. The ends of the rafters were supported by cross-bars which passed across, one between the two long posts and the other between the short ones. The sheets of bark were laid on lapping over each other like slates or shingles on a common roof.

Jasper laid out pretty paths along the shores of his island, and also by the sides of the little pond below it; and as there were a great many trees and bushes there, it was a very shady and pleasant place, especially as the grass grew up and made it green. Jasper often invited the children of the village to come and play there, three or four at a time. Some of these children were girls, and they were a little afraid to go across on the jumping bridge, and so Jasper made what he called a drawbridge there.

Description of the drawbridge.

Jasper meets with a funny difficulty.

The way in which he made the drawbridge was this. He selected a wide and thick board, and let Congo saw it off of a length a little greater than the brook at the jumping bridge. This board Congo carried down and put in the hut. Then, whenever any girls came, or any other persons who were not of the jumping kind, Jasper would let Congo put this board down in such a manner that the ends of it should rest on the bank on each side, and the middle of it on the post in the centre. The post assisted very much in keeping the centre of the board steady when people stepped upon it. By this means the most cautious and timid people could go across the bridge without fear, and yet it was of no service to the cows, for it was always taken up and put into the hut before the boys left the island.

It was this circumstance, that the new bridge could be taken up and let down again at pleasure, that led Jasper to call it a drawbridge.

Things went on in this way for a week or more; then Jasper began to find that Congo was getting out of work. In fact, Jasper was beginning to be in the condition in which so many masters find themselves who wish to keep a man, but can't find enough for him to do. How Jasper contrived to obviate this difficulty will appear in the next chapter.

Jasper's success with Congo.

Mr. Grant's suggestions.

CHAPTER V.

THE SEED-CORN EXCURSION.

I DON'T think that Jasper would have succeeded in managing Congo so well, and in going on so long without getting into difficulty with him, had it not been for the many conversations that he had from time to time with his grandfather, and the good counsel which he received from him in respect to the proper course to be pursued.

"In the first place," said Mr. Grant, "you must manage so as always to have work enough for him to do."

"I always have plenty for him to do when I am there," said Jasper; "but sometimes, while I am away at my studies, he gets through what I set him about, and then he does not know what to do next."

"Yes," said Mr. Grant; "I should think that would happen often. You must guard against that by always having a good quantity of steady work on hand, which he can turn to when he has nothing else to do."

"Then another principle is," continued Mr. Grant, "that, as a general thing, when you have once given him a piece of work to do, you must not call him off from it to any thing else until he has finished it."

"Sometimes I change my mind," said Jasper.

"Ah! but that you must not do," replied Mr. Grant. "When

Consideration necessary.

Jasper sees the beauty of benevolence.

any thing occurs to you as desirable to be done, don't call out immediately to Congo to come and do it as soon as the idea of it comes into your head, but wait till you have considered fully whether it is really best to do it or not. Estimate in your own mind how much time it will require, and consider what other things must be omitted or postponed if that is undertaken. Consider, too, when is the best time for doing it, if you decide that it ought to be done, and then finally, when all these things have been arranged in your mind, then, and not till then, give Congo your order. And when you have once given him the order, do not interfere with him until it is fully executed."

"Yes, sir," said Jasper, "I see that is the best plan."

"Then you must have proper consideration for your workman. A master ought always to remember that his laborer, though a laborer, is still a man, and that he has all the feelings, and desires, and aspirations of a man. You ought to see to it that Congo, while he works for you, has a good time. A laborer will have a good time if his employer is kind and considerate in dealing with him, and does not exact from him what is beyond his powers."

"I think that Congo does have a good time," said Jasper.

"I presume he does," said Mr. Grant. "Does he know how to read and write?"

"I don't know, sir," replied Jasper. "I mean to ask him."

"I would," said Mr. Grant.

"And if he does not know, I mean to teach him," said Jasper.

"That will be an excellent plan," said Mr. Grant.

"That is, I will teach him if he is willing to learn," said Jasper.

The island cleared.

New work in hand.

The corn-field.

“Yes,” said Mr. Grant, “that is all that you can do. You can not teach him unless he is willing to learn.”

Jasper often held such conversations as this with his grandfather in respect to Congo, and it was in a great measure owing to the influence of them that he succeeded so well in managing him. After the island was finished, he began to experience some difficulty in finding employment for him, until at last his grandfather proposed to him one day that he should have a corn-field. There was a yard behind one of Mr. Grant’s barns, which had been used a year or two before as a hen-yard and pig-yard. The cattle had been turned into it, too, a good deal in the winter, for it was in quite a sunny place.

This yard was inclosed with a high fence, made with slats, placed pretty close together to prevent the hens from getting through, though this fence was now somewhat out of repair. The ground was quite rich, but it was very uneven on account of the pigs having rooted it so much. It had also been very much overgrown with weeds during the preceding summer, and the stalks of the weeds were still standing.

“You might take that piece of ground,” said Mr. Grant, “and make a corn-field of it. I want to have it leveled and cleaned, and the only way to do that is to plant it for a year.”

“What do you mean by cleaning it?” asked Jasper.

“Why, getting the weeds out,” said Mr. Grant.

“But, grandfather, there are no weeds in it now. They are all dead. There is nothing left of them but the old stalks, that Congo and I could pull up in half an hour.”

The way to undertake it.

Spading up the ground.

“Ah! but the ground is full of the seeds of the weeds,” said Mr. Grant, “and in a short time you will see the young weeds coming up all over it. The only way to clean the ground is to let the seeds come up, and then kill them with the hoe. After one crop is killed another will come up, and so on all summer; but, by the end of the summer, if the ground is kept well hoed all the time, it will be pretty well cleaned, and then we can sow grass in it for the next summer. If I were to sow grass-seed now, the weeds would come up with the grass and spoil it.”

“Then why won’t they come up with the corn?” asked Jasper.

“They will,” said Mr. Grant; “but corn is so large that you can walk about among the hills, and hoe the ground over, and kill the weeds. Now I want the ground cleaned, and if you will plant it with corn, and keep it well hoed, you shall have all the corn you raise to sell in the fall, and the money shall be yours. The ground is very rich, and it will produce an excellent crop.”

Jasper was greatly pleased with this proposal, and he set at work upon the corn-field the very next day.

It was necessary to dig the ground instead of plowing it, for the place was too small for a plow to work to advantage in it. For two or three days Congo was employed during the forenoons, while Jasper was at his studies, in digging. When Jasper came out at eleven o’clock, he took another spade, and they both, master and man, worked together. As they dug the ground they leveled it. Before they begun the digging they had pulled out all the old stalks, and burned them in a little pile in the centre of the field.

A rule in pulling up weeds.

An expedition.

Its object.

In pulling the stalks up they were careful not to shake them, for they wished to keep in all the seeds that had not yet fallen, and burn them in the fire.

One morning, just before Jasper went in to attend to his studies he called Congo to go with him into the carriage-house. When there he pointed to a small open wagon.

“I am going away this afternoon in that wagon,” said he, “and I shall want you to go with me to drive; and now this forenoon I wish you to see if you can fix some box or board on before here to make a driver’s seat for you. I am going to take my little cousin Lottie with me on the wagon-seat.”

Jasper did not tell Congo where he was going nor what he was going for. This was in accordance with his grandfather’s advice.

“It is generally not best,” said Mr. Grant, “for an employer to give his workmen much information about his plans and designs, except so far as is necessary to enable them to perform well the part which they have to do, or so far as they wish to ask for advice or information in respect to some of the details of the work.” So Jasper, in this case, merely directed Congo to get the wagon ready, without telling him any thing of the nature and object of the expedition.

The object was to get some seed-corn of a particular kind to plant the corn-field with. There was a farmer who lived about six miles off, among the mountains, who had this corn for sale, and Jasper was going to get some of it. His little cousin Lottie, who was about seven years old, was going with him for the sake of the ride.

Congo's seat.

The party setting off.

A beautiful ride.

Jasper gave Congo directions to harness the horse into the wagon, and to bring him to the back hall-door at half past one; and when, at that hour, Jasper and Lottie went to the door, they found Congo all ready. Congo had made quite a good seat for himself by placing a board across the front part of the wagon. He had nailed two cleats across the ends of the board, on the under side, at such a distance from the end that when the board was put across the wagon these cleats would shut down over the sides and keep the board in its place.

Congo was seated on this board when Jasper and Lottie came to the door.

"Is your seat comfortable?" said Jasper; "because we are going out six miles, so that the whole distance, going and coming, is twelve."

"Yes," said Congo, "it is very comfortable indeed. It is a spring seat, for the board is thin and has a spring; besides, I folded up a horse-blanket and put it on for a cushion."

Jasper helped Lottie into the wagon, and then he got in himself. He had a basket in his hand to bring the corn home in. He and Lottie took their seats, and Congo mounted upon the board; then, after telling Congo which way to go, Jasper directed him to drive on.

During all the morning of that day it had been very pleasant weather. The air was balmy, and the sun shone bright and clear; and as the grass was now every where quite green, and the leaves were out upon the trees, Lottie promised herself a delightful ride. Indeed, it was in a great measure because the day was so fine and

Prepared for a reverse of weather.

Lottie wants some flowers.

the season so charming that Jasper had invited Lottie to go with him.

The weather had changed somewhat before the party set out, but still it was very pleasant riding. Jasper and Lottie took great-coats and cloaks, by Gertrude's advice, thinking that it might be cool coming home in the evening. Indeed, it began to be a little cool already, for the sun was obscured, and a general cloudiness had overspread the whole sky. So they also took an umbrella.

The party went on, however, very pleasantly. They stopped a moment at the door of the house where Congo lived, in order that Congo might tell his mother that he was going away, and that he should not be at home at the usual time that evening.

"She never likes to have me out in the evening," said Congo, "unless she knows exactly where I am."

After passing out of the village, Congo, by Jasper's direction, turned off into a road that led through a retired part of the country among the mountains. At last they entered the woods, and Lottie was very much delighted with the different shades of green in the young foliage of the trees, and in the beautiful moss which was growing on the ground beneath them.

At last she spied a number of flowers growing among the moss in a pretty green bank by the road side.

"Ah!" said she, suddenly, "look, Jasper, look! See those beautiful flowers."

"Would you like some of them?" asked Jasper.

"Yes, *indeed*," said Lottie.

"Then I'll let Congo go and get you some," said Jasper.

Gathering a bouquet.

Jasper's regard for Lottie's apprehensions.

So Jasper ordered Congo to stop.

“Do you think you can climb up that bank,” said Jasper, “and get Lottie some of those flowers?”

“Yes, easily enough,” said Congo.

“Then give me the reins and try,” said Jasper.

So Congo handed Jasper the reins, and then, after getting down from the wagon, he climbed up the bank, and gathered the flowers. Lottie pointed to the ones which she wanted.

Congo gathered quite a bouquet of flowers, and when he handed them to Lottie, he got into the carriage again and drove on. Lottie was exceedingly pleased with the bouquet.

After going on some distance farther, they came to a bridge leading across a brook. On one side of the bridge was a place to drive through the brook for the purpose of watering horses.

“Do you think the horse wants to drink?” said Jasper, when he came in sight of this brook.

“No,” replied Congo. “Martin watered him just before we set out.”

“Never mind,” said Jasper, “we’ll water him again. Or, at any rate, we will let him go through the brook just for the fun of it.”

“But I’m afraid to drive through the brook,” said Lottie.

“Oh, there is no danger,” said Jasper—“no danger at all. Still, if you are afraid, we will not go.”

“I am not much afraid,” said Lottie; “so you may go if you think it is best.”

On the whole, Jasper concluded that, since the horse was not

THE FLOWERS.



Clouding up.

A snow-storm in prospect.

What becomes of the birds ?

thirsty, it was not best to go through the brook if Lottie was at all afraid, and so he ordered Congo to go directly on over the bridge.

In the mean time the sky became more and more overcast—so much so, in fact, that Congo said, if it had been in December instead of April, he should expect that it was going to snow.

“But it never snows in April, I suppose?” said Lottie.

“Oh yes,” replied Jasper, “it snows very often in April.”

“Then,” said Lottie, “what becomes of the poor little birds and the flowers?”

Besides the flowers which Lottie had seen here and there by the wayside, her attention had been strongly attracted by the birds which were every where singing among the branches of the trees.

“I don’t know what becomes of them,” replied Jasper. “They hide away somewhere or other, I suppose; for the next morning, when the sun comes out, they come out too, brighter than ever. But the thing that concerns me most,” he added, “in case it snows, is to know what is to become of us.”

“Oh, I shall not mind it,” said Lottie. “It won’t hurt *this* bonnet if it does get snowed upon.”

“Ah! but I am not thinking of you or of your bonnet,” rejoined Jasper, “but of the horse.”

“Why, will it hurt *him* to be snowed upon?” asked Lottie.

“No,” replied Jasper, “it will not hurt him to be snowed *upon*, but to be snowed *under*. When there comes much snow, wheels can’t go: at least it is very hard indeed to draw them.”

The scenery along their route.

Where Mr. Tooly lives.

“Then, if it begins to snow,” said Lottie, “we had better turn about and go home.”

“Perhaps,” said Jasper.

So they went on. After passing through the woods they came out into the open country again, where there were to be seen farm-houses here and there along the road side. There were fields, too, where the farmers were plowing or harrowing, and flocks of sheep nibbling the young grass in the pastures. The road led up and down a great many long hills, and over several little rivers, and at one time for half a mile it skirted the border of a pond. At last, about four o'clock, Jasper thought they must be drawing near the place where they were going. It was at a farmer's, he said, whose name was Tooly.

“Congo,” said Jasper, “when we get opposite to that man out there with the oxen, stop and ask him if he knows where Mr. Tooly lives.”

So Congo stopped and asked the question. The man was at work by the road side with oxen, getting out a large flat stone. He was just hooking the chain round the stone, and without stopping his work, or even looking up from it to see who was speaking, he said,

“Third house from here, on the left hand—a one-story yellow house, with three barns. Come, now! gee, Star-r-r-r!”

These last words were, of course, spoken to one of the oxen, and Congo drove on.

“That man seems to be in a great hurry to get his stone out,” said Jasper.

At the end of the expedition.

Finding Mr. Tooly.

“Never mind,” replied Lottie, “he told us all that we want to know. I’ll look out for the yellow house.”

So Lottie kept a good look-out ahead, and after going about a mile beyond the place where they had inquired of the man, the yellow house came into view. There was an open yard on one side of the house, with a big wood-pile on the farther side of it.

“We may as well drive right up into the yard,” said Jasper. “Oh no,” he added, correcting himself, “you may go first, Congo, and ask if Mr. Tooly is at home. I’ll take the reins.”

So Congo handed Jasper the reins and went up to the house. In a few minutes he returned, and said that Mr. Tooly *was* at home. He was out in one of the barns. So Jasper drove up into the yard.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “you may stay here and take care of the horse while I get out and go and see if I can find Mr. Tooly.”

“And let me get out too,” said Lottie.

So Jasper, after getting out himself, helped Lottie to get out, and then said,

“You had better stay here, Lottie, and look about the yard while I go and see if I can find Mr. Tooly. You see I don’t know what sort of a place he is in.”

So Lottie staid, and Jasper walked away toward the barn.

A moment after he had gone, a little girl of just about Lottie’s age came to the door of the house. She had in her hand a small heart-shaped tin cup, such as cakes are baked in. She stood on a flat stone, which served as a step to the door, and gazed

Charlotte and Lottie.

A visit to the kitchen.

earnestly at Lottie, Lottie at the same time gazing earnestly at her.

At last the little girl beckoned to Lottie, as if she wished her to come nearer. So Lottie walked forward a few steps toward the girl.

The girl then beckoned again, and Lottie went a little nearer.

“What is your name?” asked the girl.

“Lottie,” she answered. “And what is yours?”

“Charlotte,” replied the other.

“Why,” exclaimed Lottie, “that’s my name in full, only they call me Lottie. How funny!”

Here the two children burst into a joyous fit of laughter at the oddity of their both having the same name, and from that moment they felt perfectly acquainted with each other.

“Come in, and see the cakes that we are baking,” said Charlotte.

“Wait till Jasper comes back,” said Lottie, “and he will tell me if I can go in.”

“Oh, never mind him,” said Charlotte.

“But he won’t know what is become of me,” said Lottie.

“I’ll tell him,” said Congo. “You need not be afraid to go in. He would not have any objection.”

Thus encouraged, Lottie went into the house. Charlotte asked her into a neat, pleasant-looking kitchen, where a very attractive spectacle met her view. The table was covered with pies, cakes, and apple turn-overs, which had just been taken out of the oven, and Charlotte’s mother was taking out more.

Baking pastry.

Jasper in the barn.

The festoons of corn.

“Mother is going to have company,” said Charlotte, “and so she is baking some cakes and pies; and one of the pies, and two of the turn-overs, and four of the cakes are mine. See, here they are, all together on the end of the table.”

Then, turning to her mother, she said,

“Mother, I believe I will eat one of my cakes now.”

“Very well,” said her mother; “they are yours to do what you please with.”

“I want to give Lottie a piece of it,” said Charlotte. “Besides, I think cake is never so good as when it just comes out of the oven.”

So Charlotte took one of her cakes, and then inviting Lottie to follow her, she led the way to the step of the door again, and there they sat down together to eat it.

In the mean time Jasper had gone into the barn, and there, after some searching, he had found Mr. Tooly, with a large boy, employed in getting out and looking over his hoes. Jasper told him that he had come to buy some of his seed-corn. Mr. Tooly said he had some of a very fine kind to sell, and, laying down his hoes, he told Jasper that he would go and show it to him.

So he led Jasper along through various passages, leading from one barn or shed to another, until at last they came to a place where the corn was hung in festoons from the rafters of a loft. Mr. Tooly went up by a ladder and brought down one of the festoons.

“This corn comes forward very early,” said he, “and it is very sweet, so that it is the best corn for the table that we have ever had in this part of the country.”

Jasper makes his purchase.

Lottie's amusement.

Jasper liked the appearance of the corn very much. He told Mr. Tooly how large the piece of ground was that he wished to plant, and Mr. Tooly easily calculated how much corn would be required for it. Mr. Tooly began to count out the ears, while Jasper went to the door to call Congo to bring the basket to put them in.

“Congo,” said he, “see if you can find some place to fasten the horse, and then come here with the basket.”

So Congo fastened the horse and brought the basket, and Mr. Tooly put the ears of corn in it. Jasper then paid the money, and Congo took the basket and carried it to the wagon. Jasper, having bid Mr. Tooly good-by, followed him.

When Jasper arrived at the door of the house, he saw Lottie and Charlotte sitting there. Having eaten up the cake, they were talking and laughing together, and seemed apparently the best friends in the world.

“What have you got in your basket, Jasper?” asked Lottie.

“Some seed-corn,” said Jasper; “and, so saying, he held the basket so that Charlotte and Lottie could both look into it, and see the ears of corn.

“Where did you get it?” asked Lottie.

“I have been buying it of Mr. Tooly,” said Jasper.

“Hoh!” exclaimed Lottie, with an expression of contempt for the seed-corn, “you had better a great deal have gone and bought some cakes and turn-overs of Mrs. Tooly.”

Here Charlotte and Lottie, who were both brimful of fun when Jasper came out, burst into another joyous fit of laughter.

Farther negotiations.

Buying some turn-overs.

“Very well,” said Jasper. “I can buy some cakes and turn-overs too, if Mrs. Tooty will sell them.”

“You go and ask her,” said Lottie to Charlotte, suddenly becoming serious.

“Well,” said Charlotte, “I’ll go and ask her.”

In a moment Charlotte came out and reported that her mother said that she should be perfectly willing to *give* the children some of the cakes and turn-overs, but still, if they preferred paying for them, she should be very thankful for the money.

“Oh yes,” said Jasper, “we would a great deal rather pay for them. There is no reason in the world why she should give them to us.”

So Jasper took some money out of his pocket. He had a certain supply of money, which he was allowed, within certain limits and restrictions, to spend as he pleased. Some of this money he had with him now. He took a ten cent piece and a five cent piece out of his pocket, and gave them to Charlotte, and asked her to bring out as many as that would buy of either cakes or turn-overs, or both.

In a few minutes Charlotte returned, bringing with her two turn-overs and four cakes, which she gave to Jasper.

“And now,” said she, “I wish that you would buy one of *my* turn-overs.”

“Have you got any turn-overs?” asked Jasper.

“Yes,” said she, “I have got two, and I want to sell one of them.”

“Well,” said Jasper, “what is the price?”

Charlotte's delight.

Beginning to snow.

The return.

“Five cents,” said Charlotte. “Mother says they are worth about five cents.”

“Very well,” said Jasper; “go and bring it out.”

So Charlotte went into the house and brought out another turn-over, and gave it to Jasper. Jasper gave her a five cent piece for it. Charlotte began immediately to dance about with great glee, saying, or rather singing,

“Ah! I’ve got some money! I’ve got some money!”

Jasper wrapped the turn-overs and cakes in a newspaper which Charlotte brought him, and put them into the top of the basket over the corn. Just as he had finished this operation he saw that it was beginning to snow.

“Look, Congo, look!” said he. “It is beginning to snow. We must not stay a moment longer. Unfasten the horse and turn the wagon round, and we will get in immediately.”

While Congo was turning the wagon, Jasper and Lottie put on their cloaks, and then, getting in, Jasper opened the umbrella, and the party set out on their return home.

The snow.

A beautiful sight.

Jasper's apprehensions.

CHAPTER VI.

GETTING INTO DIFFICULTY.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “you must drive at a pretty good pace, so that we may get home before the snow gets very deep.”

So Congo whipped up the horse, and went on quite rapidly. The snow fell pretty fast, but the flakes seemed to melt as fast as they reached the ground, and they soon began to make the road somewhat wet and slippery, yet in other respects, for a time, they did no damage. When they fell upon the branches of the trees they did not melt, and thus the forest, where the road led through the forest, and the orchards, and groups of ornamental trees in other places, presented a beautiful spectacle, the branches all becoming whitened in a very extraordinary manner. The snow remained unmelted too in some places on the grass in the fields, and produced a singular effect by the mingling of white and green.

“I think it is very funny to see it,” said Lottie. “How pretty the flakes look coming down so softly among the branches of the trees like downy feathers! I’m glad it snows.”

“Yes,” said Jasper, “it looks very pretty; but if it snows much, it will make us a great deal of trouble before we get home.”

“How will it make us trouble?” asked Lottie.

“Why, it will clog up the wheels,” replied Jasper, “so that we can not go fast; and then, perhaps, it will get dark before we get home, and we can not see our way.”

Progress of the storm.

Obstructions on the way.

“Oh, Jasper,” said Lottie, “the snow will be so white that we can see the way very plain, if it is ever so dark.”

“Yes,” said Jasper, “we can see the snow well enough, but we can’t see our way in it. It will all look alike, and we can not see where the road is. However, I think Congo will find some way to get along.”

They went on without much trouble for half an hour, and then they began to find that the first difficulty which they were to encounter from the clogging of the snow was not with the wheels, as Jasper had anticipated, but with the horse’s feet. For a time the snow fell much faster than it melted, but at length the road as well as the fields began to be whitened with it, and soon it began to stick to the horse’s feet, and make balls there in the hollow inclosed by the shoe. These balls in the horse’s feet would grow bigger and bigger, until it seemed as if the horse would fall down, and then suddenly they would fly out, and for a moment the horse would seem relieved, but immediately they would begin to form again.

“You must drive very slowly,” said Jasper to Congo.

“They generally say,” replied Congo, “that we must drive fast when the horse ‘balls,’ for that makes him throw the balls out of his feet before they get so large.”

“Try it,” said Jasper. “Drive a little way, and let us see how it works.”

So Congo whipped up the horse, and made him go quite fast, and the effect which Congo had described was produced. The rapid motion of the horse’s feet broke the balls to pieces, and

The difficulty increases.

The night coming on.

knocked them out of the shoes before they became large. But Jasper did not feel easy while going in this rapid manner. It seemed to him not quite safe.

“The horse might fall down,” said he; “and if he should fall and throw Lottie out of the wagon, I don’t know what we should do.”

So he ordered Congo to drive more slowly again.

In the mean time the snow fell faster and faster, and, before long, the ground began to be covered with it to a considerable depth. The wheels now began to clog and to go heavily. It was, indeed, very hard for the horse to draw the wagon at all, on account of the double difficulty arising from the clogging of the wheels and the embarrassment of his feet by the balls of snow that were continually forming there.

“Never mind,” said Jasper, “we’ll go slowly and carefully. Slow and sure, grandfather says, is the best maxim for traveling in a bad time.”

“It is beginning to grow dark already,” said Lottie.

“Yes,” said Jasper, “but that is no matter. It can not become very dark when there is so much snow on the ground.”

Jasper was right in this opinion. It never becomes very dark when the ground is covered with fresh snow. But then the snow itself so covers and disguises the ground, and the falling flakes so fill the air and blind the eyes, that an obscurity and a bewilderment are often produced at such times which are worse even than absolute darkness.

It was so in this case. It grew colder as the night came on,

The gale.

Driving of the snow.

A halt.

and the wind increased more and more, driving the snow so much into the children's faces that Jasper was obliged to hold the umbrella down close before them to protect them from the storm. This cut Congo entirely off from his view.

"How do you get along, Congo?" said Jasper. "Can you see to drive?"

"Oh yes," said Congo, "I can see very well."

"But does not the snow drive in your face and blind you?" asked Jasper.

"Yes," replied Congo, "it drives into my face, but I don't mind that. I get along very well."

The snow was now getting to be five or six inches deep, and the horse went on wallowing through it at quite a slow pace. Congo had to strain his eyes in every direction to find the road. Indeed, the only way in which he could keep it was to watch the fences on each side, and to take a course as nearly as possible midway between them. At last, suddenly, he reined the horse and stopped.

"What's the matter now?" asked Jasper, looking out from under the umbrella.

"I don't know exactly which the road is," said Congo.

By lifting up the umbrella a little more, Jasper could see, dimly and indistinctly, that the road divided into two branches before him.

"Which seems to be the best road?" asked Jasper.

"I can't see which is the most traveled," replied Congo, "for the tracks are all buried up in snow."

Which road to take.

Looking for a house.

Another stop.

“Which seems to be the widest?” asked Jasper.

“The one to the left,” said Congo.

“Then take the left,” rejoined Jasper, “and drive on till you come to a house, and then we will stop and inquire. There does not seem to be any house about here, does there?”

“No,” said Congo; “but now I see a sort of sign, I believe it is, nailed up on a tree.”

“What is on it?” asked Jasper.

“I’ll drive along a little way to it and see,” said Congo.

So Congo drove on toward the sign-board as near as he dared to go.

“I can’t see,” said he; “the sign-board is all covered with snow. Besides, it is so dark that I don’t think we could read it if the snow was not there.”

“Then we must go on,” said Jasper, “and the first house that you come to you must stop.”

So Congo drove on.

After going on about ten minutes, Jasper called out from under his umbrella,

“Have not we come to any house yet, Congo?”

“No,” said Congo; “it is all woods.”

They went on about ten minutes farther, and then Jasper called again,

“Have not we come to any house yet, Congo?”

“No,” said Congo; “it is still all woods.”

A few minutes after this Congo suddenly stopped again.

“What’s the matter now?” asked Jasper.

 Something in the road.

What it is.

 A conference.

“There is something here in the road,” said Congo. “If I had not stopped just as I did, I should have run against it.”

“What is it?” said Jasper, looking out from under the umbrella.

“It looks like a cart,” replied Congo. “If you will take the reins, I’ll get out and see what it is.”

So Congo passed back the reins to Jasper, and got out, and then wallowing about a few minutes in the snow, he called out,

“It is a cart; and there is another cart here, and one or two plows. I suppose they have been mending the road here, only they ought not to have left their things here right in the way.”

Jasper and Lottie looked out from under the umbrella, but it was so dark, and the air was so full of driving snow, that they could make out nothing distinctly.

“No,” said Congo, after a short pause, and calling out from a distance, “I see now. This is a new road that they are making. We can’t go any farther. There is a great bank here that they are digging away. I suppose that that sign was put up to tell that we must not come this way.”

“What a pity it is that we could not read it!” said Jasper. “But now, I suppose, all that we have to do is to turn and go back again.”

“I don’t think that there is room to turn here very well,” said Congo.

“Wait,” said Jasper; “I’ll get out and see.”

So Jasper got out, and he and Congo waded about together a while in the road, and out on one side of it under the trees, to see

Trying to turn about.

An unforeseen trouble.

if they could find a place to turn. At last Jasper concluded that by taking a considerable circuit round a great stump by the road side they could get round.

“But as for Lottie,” said he, “I hardly know whether she had better get out or stay in.”

“She will get her feet and ankles very wet,” said Congo, “if she gets out.”

“So she will,” said Jasper. “Lottie, are you afraid to stay in the wagon while we turn?”

“No,” said Lottie, “if it don’t upset.”

“It won’t upset,” said Jasper, “but it will jolt you about a good deal. I’ll tell you what you must do. You must sit right down in the bottom of the wagon, and then you will be less likely to be jolted out. I’ll spread the blanket for you.”

So Jasper spread the blanket down, and Lottie sat upon it, drawing her cloak about her as closely as possible, and holding the umbrella over her head. Congo then took hold of the horse’s head to lead him, while Jasper went before, with a pole in his hand, to explore and point out the way.

They went on very well till they had got the wagon half turned, but then, unfortunately, just as the horse was coming round to get back into the road again, one of the forward wheels suddenly sank into a fissure made by the course of a small streamlet, which here ran along the ground. The fissure was so entirely concealed by the snow that Jasper had not seen it. The wheel sank in it up to the hub in an instant, and gave such a shock that it made Lottie utter quite a scream of fright.

Lottie's alarm.

Attempt to right matters.

The axle-tree is broken.

“Jasper!” said she; “ah! Jasper, we are tipping over—we are tipping over.”

Jasper came back immediately to the place and looked at the wheel, saying,

“What’s the matter now?”

“We’ve got into a deep rut or something,” said Congo.

“Yes,” said Jasper, “we have. I think now that Lottie had better get out till we get our ship righted again. Wait a minute till I clear a place on the ground for her to stand upon.”

So, with his foot, Jasper brushed away the snow from a part of the ground behind the wagon, and then lifting Lottie out, he set her down carefully upon it.

“Now, Congo,” said he, “we must be very careful, or we shall break something in getting the wheel out. If we had an axe we might make a pry, and pry it up a little before we start. That would ease it. But as we have not any axe, we must do the best we can without. You are the strongest, so you may take hold of the horse and lead him along, and I’ll push behind.”

Congo went to the horse’s head, and did the best he could to follow the instructions which Jasper had given him. The horse pulled once or twice gently, but the wheel would not come, and then, getting a little out of patience, as horses in such cases sometimes will, he determined that it *should* come, and so, when Congo attempted to start him again, he gave a spring and a plunge, by which the wheel was wrenched, as it were, violently out of the hole, and, at the same time, a loud crack was heard as of something breaking.

Jasper's self-possession.

What is to be done in the emergency.

“What’s that?” asked Jasper from behind.

“Something has broken down,” said Congo. “If you will come and hold the horse, I’ll look and see.”

“I’ll look and see,” said Jasper.

Jasper accordingly looked under the wagon, and found that the forward axle-tree was broken off close to the wheel, and that had sunk into the hole.

“The axle-tree is broken,” said Jasper, quietly.

“And can you mend it?” asked Lottie.

“No,” said Jasper, “not here in the woods, and without any tools.”

“Then what are we going to do?” asked Lottie.

“That’s for me to *consider*,” said Jasper.

Jasper examined the break-down more particularly, until he was fully satisfied that there was nothing that they could do to repair the damage sufficiently for them to go on. All this time Congo stood quietly at his post holding the horse.

“Well, Congo,” said Jasper, at length, “here we are. If there were only you and I here, we could leave the wagon and get on the horse, and ride home double; but here’s Lottie to be looked after.”

“I could not ride on the horse,” said Lottie, “in such a snowy night as this.”

“I think,” said Jasper, “the best thing will be for you to mount the horse, and ride back to the nearest farmer’s, and get another wagon or a sleigh. A sleigh would do better.”

“Very well,” said Congo, “I’ll go.”

Building a fire.

The appearance of the party.

“And, in the mean time,” said Jasper, “Lottie and I will stay here. I’ll brush away the snow under the wagon, and spread the blanket down, and then Lottie and I will crawl in under there for shelter till you come back.”

“I could make you a fire, if you wish it,” said Congo.

“Good!” exclaimed Jasper. “I have got the match-box in my pocket.”

Jasper was accustomed to carry a match-box in his pocket, in order to be always provided with the means of making a fire in any emergency which might occur requiring one.

“Shall I get some wood?” asked Congo.

“No,” said Jasper; “you had better lose no time in getting off to some farmer’s. Though, on second thought, you may get some wood, for Lottie will not like to be left alone while I go after it. I’ll be getting her established under the wagon.”

So Jasper brushed away the snow under the wagon, and spread the blanket down there. He then carried Lottie to the place, and she crawled under. The wagon, being broken down in front, was inclined over her head like the roof of a shed. Jasper immediately broke off some small dry branches from the neighboring trees, and piling them up before the open part of the little shed formed by the wagon, he set them on fire. A bright and cheerful blaze began at once to burn up, which shone in under the wagon, and also illuminated the stems of the trees around the spot in a very cheerful manner.

“Ah!” said Lottie, “what a pretty little cuddy this is!”

In the mean time Congo had gone off a little way in search of

Congo's discovery.

The school-house.

Jasper's suggestion.

wood for fuel to feed the fire. Presently Jasper heard his voice calling to him.

“JASPER!”

“HALLO!” answered Jasper, in a loud voice, standing up at the same time upon his feet.

“I see a house,” said Congo.

“A house!” exclaimed Jasper; “where?”

“Out here a little way. I think it is a house, though it may be a barn, for I don't see any light.”

“Go and see what it is,” said Jasper, “and then come back and tell me.”

In about five minutes Congo returned, saying, as soon as he came near enough, that it was a school-house.

“A school-house!” repeated Jasper, surprised.

“Yes,” said Congo; “and it seems to stand on the old road, where we ought to have gone.”

“And could you not see any houses, looking up or down the road?” asked Jasper.

“No,” said Congo. “I went out into the middle of the road, and looked both ways, and I could not see any houses or any lights.”

“Then I think we had better go to the school-house,” said Jasper, “and stay while you go for the sleigh. Can we get in?”

“Is there any fire there?” asked Lottie.

“No,” said Congo, “of course not.”

“Then I'd rather stay here,” said Lottie, “it is so much pleasanter to be where there is a fire.”

Making arrangements for Lottie.

Under the porch.

“Ah! but we can make a fire there very easily,” said Jasper, “when we once get in. There’s always a good fire-place in a school-house.”

“And now,” he continued, “how shall we get Lottie there through all this snow? Do you think you could carry her, Congo?”

“Oh yes,” said Congo, “I think I can carry her very easily.”

“Then come out here, Lottie,” said Jasper. “Come out of your hole.”

So Lottie came creeping out from under the wagon, and Jasper wrapped her up entirely in the blanket, and then Congo took her in his arms as if she had been a big bundle.

“Is she heavy?” asked Jasper.

“Oh no,” said Congo, “not at all.”

“We shall have to leave the horse where he is,” said Jasper.

“Yes,” said Congo; “but he will stand quietly.”

“I’ll go before,” said Jasper, “to show you the way. I’ll follow your tracks.”

So Jasper went on, following the tracks which Congo had already made, and Congo came after, bringing Lottie in his arms. In this way they soon reached the school-house. Congo put Lottie down under a little shed-like portico which was built over the door. In one corner of this porch was a small pile of dry wood, ready for the fire.

“Now,” said Jasper, “the difficulty is to get in. First you may go, Congo, and try the windows.”

So Congo went around the school-house, and tried the windows

A way to get in.

Consideration.

Jasper breaks the window.

all around. Every one of them was fastened down, and Congo said they seemed to be fastened by nails put in over the lower sashes.

“Then,” said Jasper, “we must break in one of the panes of glass, so as to get at a nail. You must get a stone, or a stick of wood, Congo, and break out a pane of glass. Grandfather will have it mended again. Or stop a moment; let me consider.”

What Jasper wished to stop and consider was this, namely, whether ordering Congo to break the window of the school-house was not going beyond the limits of his authority. He remembered the conversation which he had had with his grandfather on this subject, and now, though he was well convinced that it was right, under the circumstances of the case, that the window should be broken, he was not quite certain whether he ought to order Congo to break it.

“Besides,” said he to himself, “Congo may not like to take the responsibility of doing such a thing. He may be afraid that, in some way or other, he will get into difficulty about it, so I will do it myself.

“On the whole, Congo,” said he, now speaking aloud, “I’ll break the window myself. Let us find the one that will be easiest to get in at.”

They chose the window which came next to the door. They then laid some sticks of wood together, two and two, crosswise on the ground under the window, and thus made a sort of step. Jasper then stood upon this step, and with a stick of wood which he held in his hand, he broke out a pane of glass in the upper sash,

Burglary.

A candle found.

Gathering fuel.

just over the place where he thought the nail was which fastened the lower sash down. Then Congo, who was a little taller than Jasper, reached up and drew out the nail, and immediately afterward pushed up the lower sash and got in.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “grope about in there, and see if you can find a broom to sweep away the broken glass with before we try to put Lottie in.”

So Congo disappeared from the window a few minutes, but presently came back, saying that he had not got a broom, but that he had found what was better—a candle.

“If you will hand me in a match,” said he, “I’ll light it.”

Jasper handed the match-box up to Congo, and by means of it he lighted his candle. He then had little difficulty in finding the broom. With it he swept away the broken glass from the sill of the window and from the floor below. Then Jasper lifted Lottie up, and Congo took her in. Then Jasper climbed in himself.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “you may get out and hand me up a good parcel of wood so that I can make a fire. Then you may go and take the horse, and ride off as fast as you can, and get a sleigh for us.”

So Congo got out of the window, and went to the porch to find the wood. He brought two or three armfuls of wood to the window, and handed it all up to Jasper, one stick at a time, and Jasper took it in.

After he had brought the third armful, Jasper said that there was enough.

“Now,” said he, “you may go back to the wagon and unhar-

In the school-house.

Kindling a fire.

Altogether too much noise!

ness the horse. Put the harness and the cushions under the wagon so that they may not get buried up in the snow. Then get on the horse, and come here to the window again, and I'll tell you what to do."

So saying, Jasper shut down the window, and Congo went away.

"Now, Lottie," said Jasper, "the first thing for us to do is to build a fire." So Jasper carried the wood to the fire-place, and began to build a fire.

"How long do you think we shall have to stay here?" asked Lottie.

"About half an hour, I think," said Jasper; "but it may be longer. At any rate, it will be better for us to have a fire."

While Jasper was laying the wood, Lottie found some kindling-wood in a closet, and she brought some of it to the fire-place. By means of this kindling-wood Jasper soon had a good fire. It blazed up brightly in the chimney, and lit up the whole room.

"What a pretty school-room it is!" said Lottie.

"Yes," said Jasper, "it looks very pretty by this fire-light."

"I mean to go and sit in the teacher's desk," said Lottie.

So she went to the teacher's desk, and, sitting upright there, and assuming a very grave countenance, and speaking in a stern voice, as if she were the teacher addressing the scholars, she said,

"Children, you must not make so much noise! Children, I say, you *must not* make so much noise!"

Just then she heard a rapping sound at the side of the school-room.

"What's that?" said she, suddenly, looking alarmed.

Congo at the window.

Jasper gives him some directions.

“That must be Congo,” said Jasper. “It is Congo, I think, rapping at the window. I’ll go and see.”

So Jasper went to the window, and, raising it up, he saw Congo on the outside, mounted on the horse.

“I put the harness, and the cushions, and your basket of corn all under the wagon,” said Congo.

“Right,” said Jasper. “And now I want you to ride on to the next house, and see if you can get a sleigh, and if you can, come back for us. If you can’t get a sleigh, get a wagon.”

“Which way shall I go?” asked Congo. “Shall I go back that way, or go toward home?”

“Go toward home,” said Jasper. “You will be more likely to come to a house soon going that way. And when you have got a wagon or a sleigh, see if you can also hire a man to go on to the town and tell grandfather where we are, because he will feel anxious about Lottie when he finds that we are staying out so late. Let the man tell him that we are all safe, and that we shall be at home pretty soon. He can tell him that we broke down, and had to send for another wagon or sleigh to take us home.

“But let him be sure and tell grandfather not to send any body for us,” added Jasper, “for we can get along very well ourselves.”

“Yes,” said Congo, “I will.”

“And tell the man who goes that I will pay him to-morrow,” said Jasper.

“Very well,” said Congo.

Congo, having received all these directions, set off, and then Jasper, putting down the window, went to the fire.

Jasper and Lottie left alone.

What to do ?

The turn-overs.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SAFE RETURN.

“Now, Jasper,” said Lottie, as soon as Jasper returned from the window, “if we only had one of our turn-overs here, what a nice time we might have eating it, while we are waiting for Congo to come back.”

“Ah! yes,” said Jasper, “I wish we had thought of that before. I might have let Congo bring the basket here just as well as not.”

“Or at least the paper of cakes and turn-overs,” said Lottie. “It is no matter about the corn.”

“True,” replied Jasper. “The corn might as well stay where it is, but I wish we had the cakes and turn-overs here; and I might as well go and get them now.”

“And leave me here all alone?” asked Lottie.

“Yes,” said Jasper; “there would be no other way. There is no possibility of getting any body to stay with you.”

“But I should not like to be left all alone,” said Lottie.

“Then I won’t go,” replied Jasper.

“But if you don’t go,” rejoined Lottie, “then I can’t have any of the turn-overs.”

“No,” said Jasper. “You can have your choice; you can stay alone a little while and have the turn-overs, or you can have my company all the time and go without them.”

“How long do you think you should be gone?” asked Lottie.

Lottie holds the candle at the window while Jasper goes after them.

“Only a few minutes,” said Jasper; “that is, if you would be willing to hold the candle at the window for me, so that I could see to find my way back quick after I should get the parcel.”

“Oh yes,” said Lottie, “I would do that. I should like to do it.”

Indeed, the idea of holding the candle at the window while Jasper was gone afforded the prospect of an occupation, which made it seem much less lonely for Lottie to be left; and so, after considering the subject a short time, she finally concluded that she should like to have Jasper go. Accordingly, Jasper went to the window where he had got in, and opened it, pointing out, at the same time, another window at the back side of the school-house where Lottie was to stand with the light. He then climbed out of the open window, and began to walk along through the snow toward the place where the wagon had been left.

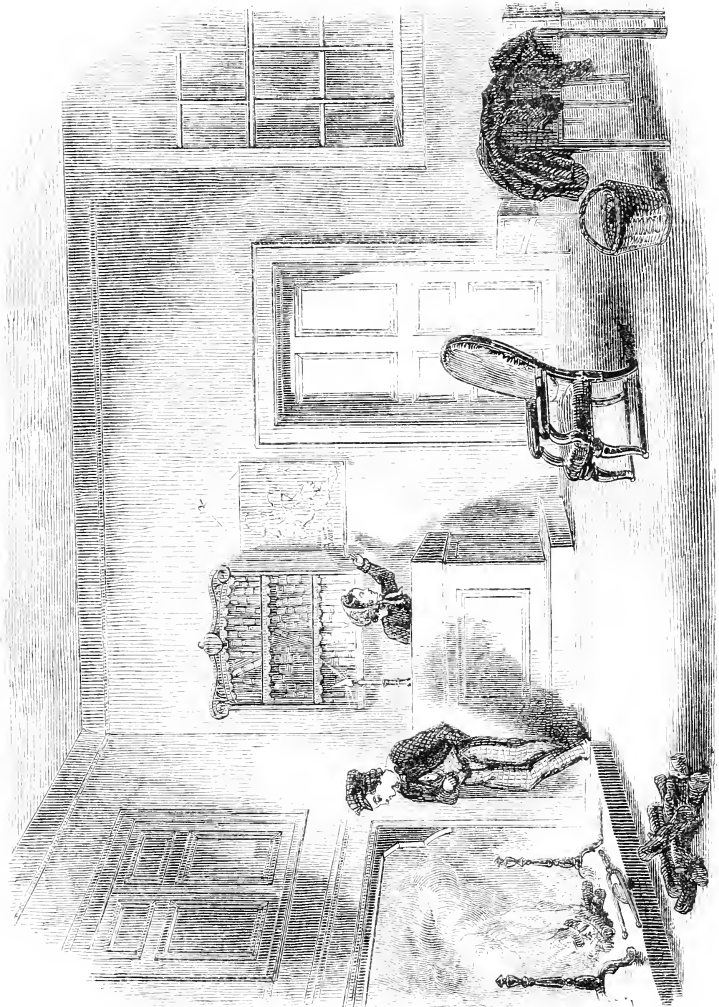
Lottie took her station at the window which Jasper had designated, and held the candle there. She tried to look out too, but she could see nothing but flakes of snow sliding down on the outside of the panes.

She waited about five minutes, and then she heard Jasper's voice again at the open window.

“Here I am,” said he. “You need not hold the light for me any longer.”

So Lottie carried the candle back, and put it on the teacher's desk, where it had been before, while Jasper climbed in at the window.

“Could you see the light?” she asked.



WAITING IN THE SCHOOL-HOUSE.

Preparations for supper.

Turning a turn-over.

The evening meal.

“Oh yes,” said Jasper, “I could see it all the way both going and coming. And now we will take out one of our turn-overs, and put it down to the fire and warm it, and then, when it is well warmed, we will eat it together.”

So Jasper took out the parcel from the basket, for he had brought the basket with him, and then opening the parcel, he took out one of the turn-overs. He then laid down the tongs upon the hearth before the fire as a support for the turn-over while it was warming, and placed the turn-over against it.

“There!” said he. “Now, when it has time to warm well on that side, we will turn it over.”

“Yes,” said Lottie, “and that will be turning a turn-over, which I think is something funny.”

So saying, Lottie went again to the teacher’s desk, and sitting down there as before, she began again to play that she was the teacher of the school, and to reprove her imaginary scholars for making so much noise.

Before long she became tired of this play, and so she came and sat down with Jasper by the fire. She said she thought it was time to turn over the turn-over.

Jasper said he thought so too. He accordingly turned it, and then, a little time afterward, when they thought it was warmed through, they took it up, and breaking it in two, one of them took one piece and the other the other, and they ate it together sitting before the fire.

“Jasper,” said Lottie, “how much longer will it be before Congo comes back?”

Conversation beside the fire.

They talk of staying in the school-house all night.

“I think it probable that he will come back soon,” said Jasper.

“And suppose he should not come at all?” suggested Lottie.

“That would be bad for grandfather and Gertrude,” said Jasper.

“I think it would be bad for *us*,” replied Lottie.

“Oh no,” said Jasper, “it would not be bad for us at all. We could stay in this school-house all night just as well as not.”

“Oh, Jasper!” exclaimed Lottie.

“Certainly,” said Jasper. “What would be the difficulty?”

“Why, Jasper,” said Lottie, “there is no place for us to sleep.”

“Yes,” said Jasper, “I could make you up a bed of cloaks here on the floor, and lay you down upon it, and you would sleep as sound all night as a baby in a cradle.”

“And what would you do?” asked Lottie.

“I would do the same,” said Jasper; “only, now and then, I should get up and put some more wood on the fire.”

“But, Jasper,” said Lottie, “there might be thieves and robbers in such a place as this.”

“Oh no,” said Jasper. “There are very few thieves and robbers in these parts; and when there are any, they don’t very often break into school-houses.”

“Well, some travelers might come along and see a light in this school-house,” said Lottie, “and they would think it was on fire.”

“Yes,” said Jasper; “but when they came to see, they would find that we were here, and then they would carry us home. So you see there would be no great harm in that.”

“Well, at any rate,” said Lottie, drawing a long breath, “I hope that Cong^d will come.”

Sleigh-bells coming.

Hurrah!

Congo and Joseph.

“I hope so too,” said Jasper; “but it is chiefly on grandfather’s and Gertrude’s account, for they would be very much alarmed if we were to stay away all night.”

Just then Jasper heard a sound as of sleigh-bells coming.

“Hark!” said he; “I hear some sleigh-bells.”

Lottie listened a moment, and then, clapping her hands, said, in an exulting tone, “It is Congo! I am sure it is Congo!”

“I am not *sure*,” said Jasper. “It may be only some traveler going by.”

The children listened, and they found that the bells, after drawing nearer and nearer, stopped at the door. Jasper went to the window and opened it. He heard voices outside, and among them the voice of Congo. He also saw that they had got a sleigh.

“Ah! Congo,” said Jasper, “you have come.”

“Yes,” said Congo. “And I have got the key of the door, so you and Lottie will not have to get out at the window.”

Congo soon unlocked the door. He then came in, accompanied by a young farmer’s son, about eighteen years old, named Joseph. Both Congo and Joseph were well covered with snow.

“Now,” said Jasper, “we will first put this fire all out, and then we shall be ready to go.”

So Congo and Joseph brought in snow and put out the fire, and then Jasper conducted Lottie out to the sleigh.

“Ah!” said she, “I am glad I am going to have a sleigh-ride.”

“And, Congo,” said Jasper, “we had better take the harness home with us, so you may go and get it, and bring it here. Bring the blanket too.”

They abandon the school-house.

A sleigh-ride.

At home once more.

So Congo went for the harness and the blanket, while Joseph locked up the school-house again, and turned the sleigh. When Congo came back, he put all the things that he had brought into the bottom of the sleigh, and then mounted his own horse, while the farmer's boy got into the sleigh. It was necessary for Joseph to go with them in order to bring back the sleigh.

"Did you send somebody to tell grandfather that we were safe?" said Jasper to Congo, as he was mounting his horse.

"Yes," said Congo, "I sent a man, and he has got there long before this time."

"Very well, then," said Jasper, "go on."

The snow was now pretty deep, and Joseph drove the sleigh along very fast. There was no longer any danger that Lottie would fall out, and so Joseph drove fast in order to keep the horses' feet free from the balls. Besides, he said, he thought that the snow was turning into rain, and so, unless he went quick, the sleighing might fail before he got home.

At length they reached the village, and drove directly to Mr. Grant's. Mr. Grant and Gertrude came to the door to receive them.

"Ah! grandfather," said Jasper, "here we are."

"Yes, sir," said Lottie, "and were you not dreadfully frightened about us?"

"Oh no," said Mr. Grant, "I was not at all frightened."

"But, grandpapa," said Lottie, "didn't you think something had happened to us by our being so late?"

"Yes," said Mr. Grant, "I had no doubt that something had happened; but then I was sure that, with such a good commander

Appearance in the morning.

How can the broken wagon be brought home?

as Jasper, and such a good man as Congo, you would get along very well."

When Jasper woke up the next morning the snow was almost entirely gone. It had been melted away partly by the warmth of the ground below, and partly by the rain which had fallen during the night. It cleared up about breakfast time. At breakfast Jasper and Lottie related over again, in full, an account of the adventures they had had. Lottie said that it was the best ride in the country that she had ever taken, though Gertrude said she was glad that she was not there.

When they had finished their account, Mr. Grant asked Jasper what he was going to do about the broken wagon.

"I don't know exactly," said Jasper. "We must contrive some way to get it home."

"I don't see how you *can* get it home," said Mr. Grant. "It is too big to put in another wagon, and too much broken to come of itself."

"Then what shall we do?" asked Jasper.

"I am sure I can't imagine what you will do," said Mr. Grant. "If you can contrive any way to get it mended, and also to get a new pane of glass put in to the school-house window, I will furnish you the money to pay; but that is all that I can do. That is my share. You must do all the contriving yourself."

"Will it do to leave the wagon where it is," asked Jasper, "till this afternoon, because this forenoon I shall be engaged with my studies?"

Jasper devises a plan.

Mounted on the old General.

“Oh yes,” said Mr. Grant. “It is safe there, I have no doubt.”

“Very well,” rejoined Jasper. “I’ll consider what to do, and decide before noon.”

After reflecting on the subject in all its bearings, and talking with Congo about it, Jasper finally determined what course to pursue. He went with Congo after dinner into the carriage-house, and there—he taking hold on one side and Congo on the other—they lifted the body of another wagon that was there off the forward wheels. Thus the forward wheels, together with the axle-tree and shafts pertaining to them, were set at liberty.

“Now, Congo,” said he, “harness the horse into these shafts. Can you ride on this axle-tree?”

“Oh yes,” said Congo, “very well.”

“You can put a board on for a seat if you choose, or you can ride on it as it is. And I want you to take our axe with you. You can fasten it to the axle-tree with straps.”

“I will,” said Congo; “and I can ride on the axle-tree myself well enough.”

“And saddle and bridle the old General for *me*,” added Jasper. “I am going on horseback. There might not be room for us both in the wagon, coming home, with the wheels, and broken axle-tree, and all of the other wagon.”

So Congo harnessed one horse into the shafts of the pair of wagon-wheels, and put a saddle and bridle on the other. Jasper went into the shop, and took a broad-bladed chisel from the bench, wrapped it up in paper, and put it in his pocket. When the horses were ready, Congo took his seat on the axle-tree of the pair

At the scene of the accident.

Prying out the wagon.

All right.

of wheels, and Jasper mounted the old General. In this way they set off together.

They arrived at the school-house without having met with any difficulty by the way. Jasper dismounted from his horse, and fastened it at a post in front of the school-house. Congo drove in behind the school-house, and entered the woods where the wagon had been left. Jasper followed him in. Congo drove carefully, looking out for a good passage-way through the bushes and trees. At last they came to the broken wagon, which they found lying safely where they had left it.

“Now,” said Jasper, “we must cut a pole for a pry, and pry the old wheel up out of the hole.”

So he proceeded to select a small, slender tree, and Congo cut it down and trimmed the stem of it to the proper length for a pry. With the pry they easily raised up the forward end of the broken wagon, so as to get it, wheel and all, on the hard ground. Then they contrived to lift off the body of the wagon, and to prop it up, so as to get the broken axle-tree and the two wheels out. After this, they backed the new wheels which they had brought with them under, and gradually letting the wagon-body down, they lowered the transom-bolt into its socket, and thus they had the wagon complete again.

“Now,” said Jasper, “we are all right. We have nothing to do now but to put the old wheels and axle-tree into the wagon, and then we can start on.”

So they put the wheels and axle-tree into the wagon, arranging them in such a manner as to leave a place for Congo to sit upon

Repairing the window.

Lottie's visit to the school-house by daylight.

the seat. Congo took the place, and drove out of the woods to the school-house by the same way that he had come in.

“Now,” said Jasper, “I want to get the sash of the broken window.”

So saying, he climbed in at the window, and with his chisel took off the side-piece which holds the sash. He then took the sash out and handed it to Congo, who stood outside. Congo put the sash carefully into the wagon.

Jasper then mounted his horse, and Congo got into the wagon, and they went back to the village.

They stopped at a painter and glazier's shop in the village, and left the sash to be repaired, and then they drove to the wagon-maker's to get a new axle-tree made to the wagon.

The next day, at dinner, Jasper asked Gertrude if Lottie could go and take a ride with him that afternoon.

Her consent was gained, and accordingly, soon after dinner, Congo came to the door with the mended wagon. Jasper helped Lottie in, and then got in himself. Congo drove first to the painter's to get the sash, and then they set out for the school-house.

They went beyond the village to the farm-house where the key was kept, and, having obtained it, they came back to the school-house and put in the sash. They put the wood back, too, which they had left under the window, and then carried the key again to the farmer's. They also paid him and the man who had been sent into town for what they had done for them on the night of the break-down, and then returned home.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONGO'S EDUCATION.

THE summer passed away, and Congo continued all the time in Jasper's service. The corn in the corn-field grew remarkably well, and all of Jasper's other operations went on successfully. Jasper paid Congo his wages punctually every Saturday night, and he increased them from time to time as Congo improved in strength and skill. Sometimes, when Jasper had nothing for his man to do, Congo worked with Mr. Grant's man, hoeing in the fields, weeding in the garden, or making hay; but then he was always at Jasper's command, and Jasper always called him whenever he required his services.

One afternoon in the fall of the year, when Mr. Grant and Jasper had been out in the orchard, overseeing the men who were employed in gathering the fruit, as they were walking up toward the house, Mr. Grant began to talk with Jasper about Congo, who had been at work with the others gathering apples and carrying them to the barn.

"He seems to be a very good sort of boy," said Mr. Grant; "can he read and write?"

"He can read some," replied Jasper, "but he can't write."

"Why don't he learn to write?" asked Mr. Grant.

"He don't like to go to school where all the scholars are white children," replied Jasper. "The white children don't like to have

Jasper proposes to teach him.

Mr. Grant suggests some considerations.

him come, he thinks, and he don't like to go. He says he don't really think the teacher likes to have him come."

"Poor fellow!" said Mr. Grant; "it is rather hard for him, is not it?"

"Yes, sir," said Jasper. "I've a great mind to teach him myself."

"That you might do," said Mr. Grant; "and I think it would be a very good plan, provided you did not attempt to teach him too much."

"How could I try to teach him too much?" asked Jasper.

"Why, you might attempt to teach him geography, and grammar, and history, and drawing, and all such things," said Mr. Grant.

"And would it not be a good plan for him to learn such things?" asked Jasper.

"It might be a good plan for him to learn them," replied Mr. Grant, "and yet not a judicious employment of your time to teach them to him."

"Then what ought I to teach him?" asked Jasper.

"You should consider what kind of knowledge is likely to be useful to him in future life, and for that purpose consider what sort of life he is likely to lead. I think he is likely to spend his life as a laborer, or perhaps as a coachman or footman in some gentleman's family. Such a kind of life as that is the one that he is best qualified for, and that is undoubtedly what he would like the best. It is one of the characteristics of the colored people to like to be employed by other people, rather than to take responsibility and care upon themselves. If those who employ them treat

The advantage to Congo of learning to read well.

The best plan to accomplish it.

them kindly, and pay them the fair wages that they earn, it is all that they desire."

"Well, grandfather," said Jasper, "and what do you think that Congo ought to learn?"

"You say he can read already?" said Mr. Grant.

"Yes, sir, he can read pretty well," replied Jasper.

"He ought to learn to read *perfectly* well," said Mr. Grant.

"It will be very useful to him all his life to be able to read well, for then he can amuse himself and his family, if he ever has one, by reading aloud winter evenings."

"Then, grandfather, what sort of a plan would it be for me to hear him read a little every day?"

"That would do," said Mr. Grant; "but that is not necessary. A more effectual way would be to lend him some of your old story-books to read himself at home in the evenings this fall and winter, only telling him that he must read aloud to his mother a good deal of the time. If you can get him interested in the reading for the pleasure of it, and his mother interested in hearing him read aloud, he will learn very fast."

"Well, I will," said Jasper; "and what books would you lend him, grandfather?"

"The most interesting books you have got," said his grandfather.

"I'll lend him my Robinson Crusoe," said Jasper.

"That will be just the thing," said Mr. Grant, "provided he can read well enough to get along with it. If he can not, you must lend him something easier to begin with."

About teaching him to write.

Making a beginning.

"I'll look over my old picture-books and see," said Jasper.

"But you must make him promise to read, a part of the time at least, aloud," said Mr. Grant, "either to his mother or to himself. That is an essential part of the business. He will improve twice as fast by reading aloud as he will by reading silently."

"Yes, I'll make him promise," said Jasper. "But, grandfather, that is not much for me to do, just to lend him books; what else is there that he ought to learn that I can teach him?"

"You might teach him to write a little," said Mr. Grant.

"Yes," said Jasper, "that is just what I should like to do. I can let him begin with a copy of straight marks."

"I don't think I would do that," said Mr. Grant. "You see, in attempting to teach him to write, you don't expect he will ever make much of a penman. All you can hope for is that he will learn to write his name and make figures, so as to calculate an account, or something of that sort. I would begin at once with teaching him to write his name. That will be very easily taught, and, if he never learns to write any thing else, that alone will be of very great service to him."

So Jasper determined that he would at once attempt to interest Congo in learning to read, by lending him entertaining story-books to read in the evenings at home, and also that he would teach him to write his name.

"I'll only begin one thing at a time," said Jasper to himself; "I'll get the reading a going before I say any thing about the writing."

Accordingly, Jasper called to Congo, when the apples which had

The story-books.

Congo makes a trial.

Prudence.

been brought up from the orchard had been all got in, and asked him to go into the shop and wait there a few minutes before he went home. After having given Congo this direction, Jasper went into the house, and selected from among his old story-books four or five which seemed to him most easy and most interesting, and took them out into the shop to show them to Congo.

“I have brought you out some of my story-books,” said Jasper, “and I want to see whether you can read any of them.”

Congo opened one of the books and began to read. He read, on the whole, pretty well.

“Yes,” said Jasper, “you read very well. I thought perhaps you would like to take one of these books home and read it in the evenings. You can read it aloud to your mother while she is at her work. Perhaps it would amuse her; at any rate, it will improve you in reading.”

Congo said that he should like to take one of the books very much. Jasper allowed him to choose the one that he thought he preferred. Of course, in making the selection, Congo could only judge by the title and the pictures. He took care, however, to choose one which was, as he said, “in good large and easy print.”

In respect to teaching Congo to write, the first thing, as Jasper thought, was to provide a place where he could have his desk. In thinking on this subject, Jasper finally concluded to ask Prudence, the girl who worked in the kitchen at his grandfather's, if she was willing that Congo should write at her kitchen table. Prudence said that she had no objection in the world. Indeed, she said that she should like very much to have him come, and that she would

Congo does not see the use of it.

A rather sensible objection.

have a writing-book, and take writing-lessons too, at the same time.

Accordingly, a day or two after this, Jasper proposed the subject to Congo.

“Congo,” said he, “I think it would be a very good plan for you to learn to write your name. It is a very easy name to write, Congo Rood—very easy indeed, there are so many o’s in it; and when you are a man, you will have occasion to write your name a great many times.”

“What for?” asked Congo.

This question was rather a puzzler for Jasper, for he was not prepared on the instant to say what precisely would be the occasions on which Congo would be called upon to affix his signature to written documents.

“Why—why—” said Jasper, hesitating, “I don’t know exactly; but—why, you see, if you ever want to borrow money and give your note for it, you’ll want to sign your name to the note.”

“But I never mean to borrow any money,” said Congo. “I mean to pay as I go.”

“Well, then, you’ll *receive* money, at any rate,” said Jasper, “and you’ll want to give the people a receipt for it.”

“No,” said Congo; “if I only get the money, that’s all I shall care about. What do I want to give them a receipt for?”

“Why, people do give receipts,” said Jasper, “when money is paid to them. Then, again, you might have a house or piece of land, and you might wish to sell it, and then you would want to sign the deed.”

However, he will try.

In connection with Prudence.

Congo disconcerted.

“No,” said Congo; “if ever I get a house or a piece of land, I shall keep them. I shall never want to sell them, you may depend.”

“At any rate,” said Jasper, “I am sure you will want to write your name very often, and, as it is so easy, I advise you to learn. If you will, I’ll teach you.”

“Well,” said Congo, “I should like to learn, if you think I can; but I have tried to write a great many times, and I never could.”

“Did you ever try to learn to write your name?” asked Jasper.

“No,” said Congo; “I only tried writing lines in a book.”

“Ah! you’ll find it a great deal easier to write your name,” said Jasper; “besides, in writing your name, you will have the satisfaction of thinking that you are learning something useful.”

Jasper then proceeded to explain to Congo the plan which he had formed to have him write at his grandfather’s, in the evening, at Prudence’s kitchen table. He had proposed the plan to Prudence, he said, and Prudence would be quite pleased to have him come.

Congo looked a little disconcerted at hearing this proposal, and he said that he should be ashamed to have Prudence see any of his writing—at least, he should be unwilling that she should see any of it until he had got ahead a little in learning.

“Well, then,” said Jasper, “I can rig you up a place to write in the shop, at the end of the work-bench. I can put a paper, and a pen, and some ink there, and you can write at noon, while you are resting from your work.”

Writing with chalk.

Progress.

Congo learns to write his name.

“But I don't think,” said Congo, “that I could do any thing with a pen and ink, my fingers get so stiff and clumsy holding the hoe-handle or scythe so tight all day ; besides, I have tried a great many times, and never could. But there is a piece of chalk there in the shop, and perhaps I could learn with that on a board.”

At first Jasper was somewhat perplexed by this proposition of Congo's to learn with chalk on a board, from the consideration that such a mode of signing could never be practiced in the business of life. However, on reflection, he thought that Congo might learn the forms of the letters as well in that way as in any other, and that afterward he might practice with pen and ink.

So Congo began with a piece of chalk and a board. Jasper wrote the name out at full length on another board, which he placed like a sign up over the bench where Congo was to stand, for Congo thought he could work better standing than sitting. Jasper explained to his pupil the several letters, and showed how they were made, and Congo practiced every day for about half an hour writing the different syllables. He succeeded much better than he expected, and in a very short time he learned to write his name quite tolerably well.

Jasper then gave him a piece of paper and a lead-pencil, and let him practice with these materials instead of with his board and chalk, and finally he gave him pen and ink. Congo was very much pleased with his success, and was, in the end, quite proud of being able to write his name ; but he did not acquire any such taste for literary labors as to desire to go any farther in acquiring the art of penmanship.

And that is all.

His reasoning.

His improvement in reading.

Jasper attempted to persuade him to go on, telling him how convenient it would be for him to be able to write letters one of these days; but he said that he never expected to have any letters to write, and besides, there was such an infinite number of words in the language that it would take him an immense while, he said, to learn how to write them all, and unless he really learned them all he never could be sure but that some of those that he did not know would be the ones that would come in his letters.

Jasper, however, succeeded in persuading Congo to learn to write the figures, so that he could put down any sums or numbers at any time that he wanted to remember, and, having done this, he gave up the attempt to carry Congo's education any farther.

Congo was glad of this, on the whole, for he liked a great deal better to work than to study.

He, however, made great progress in learning to read. By reading aloud to his mother he improved very rapidly in the ease and fluency with which he read, and he borrowed from time to time a great many of Jasper's books.

Jasper plans a visit to New York.

Congo accompanies him.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BALCONY.

AT one time, late in the fall of the year, when Congo and Jasper had been to New York together, they met with an extraordinary series of disastrous adventures on their return. These I am going to describe; but first, in this chapter, I must give an account of Jasper's going to New York, and of something that he did there about a balcony.

Congo frequently went to New York with Jasper. Indeed, Mrs. Bleeker liked to have him come. It was more respectable, she said, for Jasper to have a domestic with him when he traveled. Besides, she liked Congo very much, and she had taken a notion to have him for her coachman some day. So she liked to have him come to New York from time to time, in order that he might learn city ways and manners a little, and become somewhat accustomed to finding his way about the city.

"Congo," said Jasper one evening, when Congo was going home from his work, "I want you to go to New York with me to-morrow; so, when you come in the morning, be all ready."

Congo was always required to dress himself very neatly when he went with Jasper to New York.

The next morning Congo came to Mr. Grant's properly equipped for the journey. He had in his hand a small parcel containing what he wanted to carry for himself. Jasper himself took no

At the rail-road station.

An excellent plan in regard to Congo.

baggage of any kind ; for, as he had full supplies of clothes both at Lendon and at New York, he was never under the necessity of carrying any thing to and fro.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “as we have no baggage to take, we will walk to the station. That will save the necessity of taking any of grandfather’s men off from their work to bring the wagon back.”

So they walked to the station, and then Jasper gave Congo the money to buy tickets for both. Congo went into the ticket office to buy tickets, while Jasper waited outside on the platform to watch for the train. In a few minutes, just as Congo was coming out of the office with the tickets, the train came along ; and as soon as it stopped, Jasper got into one of the cars. Congo followed him, keeping the tickets in his hand.

It was always Congo’s business, when he traveled with Jasper, to keep both the tickets, and then, when he showed them to the conductor, he pointed to Jasper to show who the second ticket belonged to. Congo liked this plan, because, somehow or other, it seemed to make him of more consequence in the cars. Indeed, the poor boy always, when he entered a public conveyance of this kind, had a sort of undefined fear that he might be turned out on account of his being black, and he felt doubly protected from this danger by having two tickets in his hand, especially when one of them belonged to such a gentlemanly young fellow as Jasper was. Indeed, Congo was, in all respects, quite proud of Jasper.

Congo took his place, as his custom was, on the end seat of the car forward, while Jasper sat near him, on another seat, at a win-

Arrival in New York.

Jasper greets his mother.

dow. Jasper had a book to read on the way, but Congo amused himself with observing the people going and coming at the different stations, and the boys that were continually passing through the cars with things to sell. In due time they arrived safely at New York.

“Ah! Jasper,” said Mrs. Bleeker, when Jasper went into his mother’s room, “how glad I am to see you! And how fast you grow! You are really getting to be quite a great boy. Did you come down alone?”

“No, mother,” said Jasper, “I brought Congo with me.”

“Ah! did you,” said Mrs. Bleeker; “where is Congo?”

“He is in the stable helping about the horses,” said Jasper.

“He is always so glad to get into your stable.”

“Yes,” replied Mrs. Bleeker. “And I am glad of it; I mean to have him for my coachman one of these days. And how long is your grandfather going to let you stay?”

“Only through to-morrow,” said Jasper. “I came down to do some business for him, and I am going back again day after to-morrow. I can do all the business to-morrow morning.”

“Ah! I am glad you have got old enough to do business for him,” said Mrs. Bleeker. “It shows, too, that he thinks you are a good boy, or he would not trust you with it. I shall be glad when you get to be a young man, and then you can do business for me.”

“Why, mother,” said Jasper, “I can do business for you now.”

“Oh no,” replied his mother, “you could not do such business as I have to be done. Here, for instance, is my balcony. I

Business to be done.

A balcony wanted.

Jasper's measures in regard to it.

want somebody to attend to that very much, and your father tells me continually that he will attend to it as soon as he can find time ; but he never does find time, and he never will. Now, when you get to be a young man, you can attend to all such things for me without troubling him."

Jasper made some farther inquiries of his mother about the balcony, and he found that she had formed a desire, from the recommendation of a lady of her acquaintance, to have a balcony built out from one of the bed-room windows, where she could walk out on summer evenings, and where she could keep flowers and shrubs growing in the open air.

"It would not only be very convenient for me," said Mrs. Bleeker, "but it would be an ornament to the house and to the room. You see, I should have the window cut down to the floor, and a glass door made."

"Well, mother," said Jasper, "I can attend to that business for you just as well as not."

"Oh no, Jasper," said Mrs. Bleeker ; "you would only do mischief if you were to try."

"Let me try," said Jasper, "and you'll see that I won't do any mischief at all."

Accordingly, the next morning, Jasper took a measure of the size of the window, and its distance from the floor. Congo came and held one end of the tape for him while he measured it. He made a memorandum of the results of his measurement on a paper, and put the paper in his pocket.

His mother was half pleased and half afraid when she saw him

Mrs. Bleeker is not sure of his capabilities.

In the architect's office.

doing this. She was pleased to see that her boy took such an interest in gratifying her wishes, but she was afraid that he would, in some way or other, get her into difficulty by his interposition.

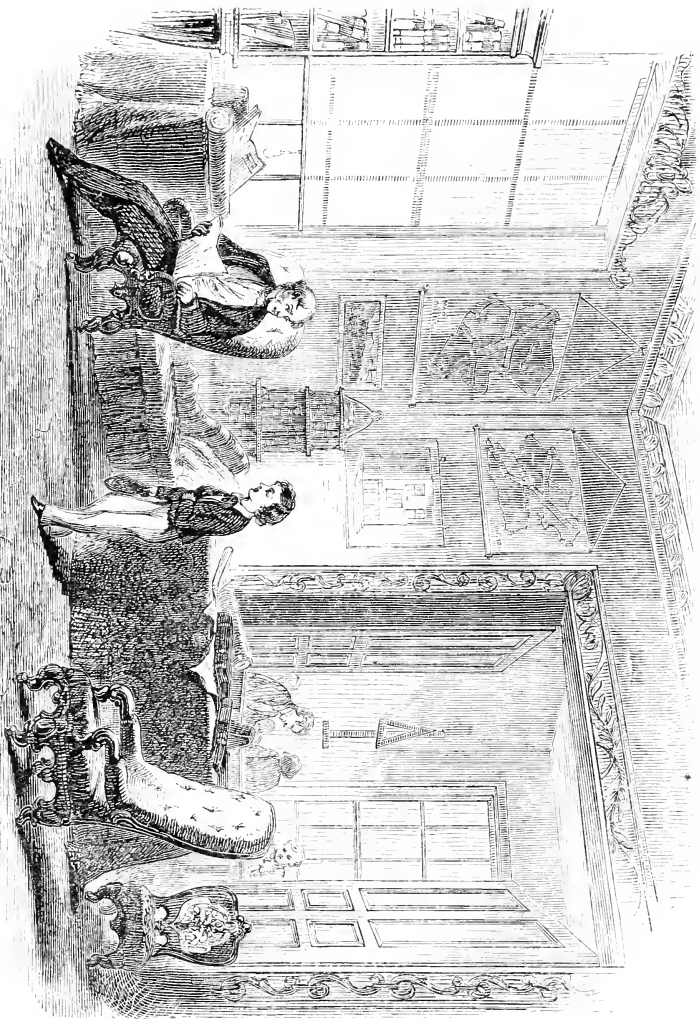
“You need not be at all afraid, mother,” said Jasper. “I won’t do any mischief. Indeed, I won’t *do* any thing at all without first consulting you. I am only going to make some inquiries now.”

Jasper then bade his mother good-morning, and set out to go down in town to attend to the business which his grandfather had intrusted to him. After doing this business he went to Wall Street, to the office of an architect whom he knew to be the one that his father employed. The name of this architect was Walkner. He was of the firm of Walkner, Strale & Co.

Jasper went up stairs and entered the office. In the first room he saw a number of clerks at work, at very large tables, drawing plans. The plans were monstrously large themselves. They were drawn on immense sheets that were cut off from rolls of paper as big as rolls of carpeting.

Jasper passed through the room, and, turning to the right, passed into another smaller room, which had a carpet on the floor, and one or two handsome mahogany desks near the windows. There was a sofa in the room too, and some comfortable arm-chairs, and a table in the middle, with books of architecture and portfolios of engravings upon it.

On entering this room Jasper inquired for Mr. Walkner. A gentleman who was sitting at one of the desks turned round and looked at him, saying that he was Mr. Walkner.



JASPER AT THE ARCHITECT'S.

Conversation with Mr. Walkner.

Jasper's frankness.

"I am Mr. Bleeker's son," said Jasper.

"Ah! it seems to me I remember you," said Mr. Walkner; "only you have grown a great deal since I saw you. Take a seat."

So Jasper sat down in one of the arm-chairs, and immediately opened his business. He said that his mother had a plan of having a balcony built before one of her bed-chamber windows, but she did not know exactly how to have it made.

"I thought," continued Jasper, "that perhaps you could have two or three little drawings made, just slight sketches, to give her an idea, and then she could choose, and if she liked any one of them, you could have a regular drawing of it afterward."

"Yes," said Mr. Walkner, "we can do that. There will be no difficulty at all. Do you know the dimensions of the window?"

Here Jasper drew out his memorandum from his pocket, and gave it to Mr. Walkner. Mr. Walkner said that that was all that he should require, and that he would have the drawings made.

"But now there's one thing," said Jasper. "Mother did not tell me that I might come and get the sketches, and so, in case she should not like any of them, then I don't know how you will get your pay."

"It is very honorable in you to give me fair warning," said Mr. Walkner, smiling, "but I think I'll take the risk of that. How soon do you want the sketches?"

"I should like them as soon as possible," said Jasper.

"I can have them ready in an hour," said Mr. Walkner. And, so saying, he called one of the clerks in from the other room, and,

Drawing plans for the balcony.

Mrs. Bleeker's preference.

taking down at the same time a volume of engravings from a bookcase at the back side of the room, he turned over the leaves of it, and while looking at the engravings, he gave the clerk directions for drawing three or four forms of balconies, on a small scale, in a style sufficiently full to give a lady an idea of the effect. He then told Jasper that the drawings would be ready in an hour, and Jasper thereupon went away, promising to call again at the expiration of that time.

Jasper then went to the bank to see his father, and afterward went to do some of his commissions, and, at last, when the hour had expired, he went back to the architect's. He found the drawings all ready. There were four of them. They were very different from each other, but they were all extremely pretty. Jasper asked Mr. Walkner if he would mark on each paper what the cost would be, as near as he could judge, of such a balcony as was there drawn. Mr. Walkner did so. Jasper then took the drawings, which Mr. Walkner had put in a portfolio for this purpose, and, placing them under his arm, went out into the street. He there took an up-town omnibus, and was soon at home.

As soon as he entered the house he went into his mother's room and showed her the drawings. Mrs. Bleeker was very much pleased with them all. There was one, however, which pleased her more than the rest.

"Yes," said Jasper, "that is the dearest one."

"I see it is," said Mrs. Bleeker. "It is almost always so. If there is any thing that I particularly like, I always find, when I come to inquire the price, that it is the dearest in the whole col-

Going down to the bank.

Jasper shows the drawing to his father.

lection. However, after all, I don't think that this balcony is very dear."

"And now," said Jasper, "suppose I go and show the drawing of it to father, and tell him what the cost will be. Then, if he says it may be made, we shall not have to trouble him any more about it. Mr. Walkner will attend to every thing."

"That's an excellent idea," said Mrs. Bleeker. "Suppose you go right down to the bank, Jasper dear, and show it to him. Morton can take you down in the carriage."

"No," said Jasper, "I'd rather go in an omnibus. But I'll go immediately."

So Jasper went out again, and, taking the first omnibus that came along, he rode down in town again, and, getting out at the proper place, he went to the bank. He found his father sitting at a desk, looking over a parcel of notes that had been handed in for discount. Jasper stood a moment by the side of his father, waiting until he should be at leisure.

"Well, Jasper," said Mr. Bleeker, at length, looking up from his work, "what can I do for you this morning?"

Jasper opened his portfolio, and showed his father the design for the balcony which his mother had chosen.

"What is that?" said Mr. Bleeker.

"It is a plan for a balcony for mother's window," said Jasper.

"Ha!" said Mr. Bleeker, in a tone of satisfaction, as he looked at the drawing, "and a very pretty thing it is too. Who made it?"

"Mr. Walkner had it made at his office," said Jasper.

"And who got him to make it?" asked Mr. Bleeker.

Mr. Bleeker is pleased with it.

It shall be called Jasper's balcony.

“I did,” said Jasper. “Mother said that she wanted a balcony, and so I got some drawings to show her, and she chose this one, if you are willing to have it built. It won't make you any trouble at all. Mr. Walkner will attend to the whole business.”

Mr. Bleeker looked at the drawings again a moment, and then, taking his pen at the same time out of his inkstand, he said,

“You are more of a man than I thought you were, Jasper.”

As he said this, Mr. Bleeker wrote on the margin of the paper containing the drawing the following words:

“Will Mr. Walkner cause this balcony to be built, and send the account to Mr. George Bleeker.”

He then put the drawings into the portfolio, and gave the portfolio again to Jasper.

“There,” said he, “take it to Mr. Walkner, and tell your mother that I like the design very much, and that when it is built it must be named and always be called Jasper's balcony.”

So Jasper took the portfolio to Mr. Walkner's office again. Mr. Walkner, when he read Mr. Bleeker's note on the margin of it, said that he would have the full drawing made immediately, and would commence the work when Mrs. Bleeker desired.

“Tell your mother,” said he, “that it will take about a fortnight to do it, and that every thing must be moved out of the room that the balcony opens from. No other part of the house will be disturbed; for the workmen, while they are doing the work, will go and come through the window by means of ladders.”

Jasper then returned home, and reported Mr. Walkner's message to his mother. She was greatly pleased at having the business

Jasper takes his departure again for London.

thus completely arranged, and she said that she would have the room cleared the very next day, so that the workmen might begin as soon as they were ready.

Of course, Jasper did not remain in New York long enough to see the balcony built, for the very next day he and Congo returned home. When he was ready to set out, his mother told him that he had done her a great deal of good by coming down.

“I don't know when I should have got my balcony,” said she, “if you had not helped me about it. I did not know that you were so much of a man.”

“I am *very* glad that I could help you about it, mother,” said Jasper; “though, after all, it is very little that I have done.”

“I think it is a great deal that you have done,” said his mother, “and I shall always call it Jasper's balcony as long as I live.”

“I wish you would write me a little letter,” said Jasper, “and tell me when it *is* done.”

Mrs. Bleeker promised that she would do that, and then Jasper and Congo set out on their journey. The remarkable adventures that they met with in going up the river will be related in the next chapter.

Going up the North River.At the Jay Street pier.

CHAPTER X.

ALMOST A SHIPWRECK.

JASPER had determined to return to Lendon by the way of the river, or, rather, *partly* by the way of the river. His plan was to go by one of the steam-boats to Hudson, and there to take the rail-road. He thought that this would be the pleasantest way to return, and he had obtained his grandfather's approval of the plan before he left home.

It was necessary to leave New York quite early in the morning, and before the usual time for the family to have breakfast; so Jasper had his breakfast alone, at a small table by the window in the breakfast-room. Congo brought his breakfast in to him on a waiter. Congo had his breakfast at the same time in the kitchen. After breakfasting, they set out together. Congo now, instead of his small parcel, had a carpet-bag, containing, in addition to his parcel, some books and periodicals, and also some other articles, all of which Jasper had purchased for his grandfather. The carpet-bag was, however, not very heavy. The two boys walked together to the Sixth Avenue, and there they took a car which conveyed them to Chambers Street. There they got out, and went down a side street leading to the river. They came out exactly at the pier where the Hudson boat lay.

There was a broad plank leading from the pier to the deck of the steamer, and a great many people were going over it on board.

Going through the gangway.

On the steamer.

Buying tickets.

Near the end of the plank, on the pier, were standing a number of women with cakes, apples, and oranges for sale. There were also some boys there, with the morning papers, which they were crying with very loud voices.

Congo and Jasper passed directly through this crowd, and went over the plank on board. There was a broad space on the deck of the steamer, where people were coming and going, and where there were chairs, and sofas, and settees for such people as liked to sit there somewhat in the open air. It was not entirely in the open air, for this was the lower deck, and, of course, it was covered by the upper deck as by a roof. It was also walled in, as it were, along the sides—except for a certain space on each side, where there was an opening for people to go out and come in—by ranges of small rooms used as offices, and for other such purposes. On the back side of the space, that is, directly aft, there was a large double door leading into the ladies' cabin.

Jasper went in upon this deck, and took his seat upon one of the sofas. Congo followed him in order to receive his commands.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “the first thing is to get the tickets.”

So saying, Jasper opened his wallet, and gave Congo a two-dollar bill.

“Go and get two tickets,” said he, “one for you and one for me. I don't know how much they will be, but you can bring me back the change.”

Congo took the money, and went to the captain's office. He had to wait there a few minutes until his turn came. He had to

The crowd at the ticket-office.

A true gentleman.

Congo's gratitude.

wait longer than that; for some rude people, seeing that he was a colored boy, pushed by him and took his place. Congo did not resist at all, nor did he even attempt to crowd forward in the least, but waited quietly until the rest had obtained their tickets. At last, however, room was made, and he advanced toward the window at the same time that a well-dressed gentleman came up on the other side. Congo was going to wait till the gentleman had got his tickets, but the gentleman made a sign for him to go forward first.

“It is your turn before me, my lad,” said he. “In fact, it was your turn long ago.”

This disposition on the part of so gentlemanly a man to take his part and do him justice went directly to Congo's heart, and he wished very much that he could do something to evince his gratitude. But there was not any thing that he could do. He could not even express his gratitude in words. He did not know what would be proper to say. So he only looked confused, and, hanging back, he said,

“No, sir, I will wait till after you.”

So the gentleman bought his ticket—which was for a state-room—and then Congo, laying down his bill on the little counter, said he wished for two tickets.

“One cabin passage,” said he, “and one deck passage.”

The captain gave him his two tickets and his change, and then Congo went back to Jasper.

“That's right,” said Jasper, when he saw the tickets. “I'll take my ticket, and you may keep yours. And now I'll go for-

A walk upon deck.

Jasper's consideration for Congo.

ward with you, and see what sort of a place you have got there among the emigrants."

So Jasper rose from his seat to go with Congo. At the same time, he gave Congo the carpet-bag to carry.

"We must take the carpet-bag with us," said he. "Grandfather says that it is never safe to leave any small baggage about until after the steamer has started from the wharf."

Congo took the bag, and then, Jasper leading the way, they both went to the forward part of the deck. There, scattered about in the little nooks and corners made by the fixtures of the steamer, the piles of baggage, and the coils of ropes and rigging, were to be seen several families of emigrants who were going up the river. The men and women were sitting or reclining in all attitudes, and there were children playing about near them on the floor.

"Congo," said Jasper, "I think you had better have some oranges to give these children."

"I have no doubt they will like them," said Congo.

"You shall go and buy some," said Jasper.

So, after walking about a little longer on the forward deck, Jasper went back to the sofa near the door of the ladies' cabin, and sat down there. He took out from his pocket some change, and gave it to Congo.

"Go to the gangway plank," said he, "and buy four oranges and some cakes, and put them in the carpet-bag. Wrap them up well in paper first. You can buy a Sun for a cent, and that will be paper enough.

"And also, Congo," continued Jasper, "I think grandfather

The morning papers.

Congo among the emigrants.

will like to see the morning papers, so you may buy them, and bring them to me. I can read them myself, too, on the way up the river."

So Congo went and made the purchases, and in due time came back to where Jasper was sitting.

"Now, Congo," said Jasper, "give me the papers, and you may take the carpet-bag, with all the other things in it, and go forward. I'll come there and call you if I want you for any thing. And, by-and-by, after we get well under way, you may take out the oranges and the cakes, and give them to the children that are around there."

You may perhaps think that in making this arrangement Jasper evinced a great deal of kind and charitable regard for the emigrant children, but the truth is, that, in buying the cakes and oranges, his real motive was kindness for Congo. His regard for the children was a secondary consideration altogether.

He thought, if Congo had these things to give away to his fellow-passengers on the forward deck, that they, instead of despising him and treating him with contumely, as they might otherwise do because he was black, would hold him in high consideration as their friend and benefactor, and thus that he would have a pleasant passage up the river.

Jasper took the newspapers, and went up the stairs leading to the promenade deck. He found a seat there in a comfortable arm-chair near the stern. There was an awning over his head to shelter him from the rays of the sun, and a fine view on each side over the water. Jasper placed his chair on the side of the steam-

All aboard!

The steamer under way.

Jasper looking after Congo.

boat which was toward the pier, and he sat there for some time watching the movements of the men on the pier in casting off the ropes, and the hurry of the belated passengers to get on board. The last bell was ringing. In a short time it suddenly ceased, and, almost at the same instant, the great pipe ceased blowing off steam. In a moment more the steamer began slowly to move away from the pier.

Jasper remained in his seat several hours. He was occupied a part of the time in reading his papers, and in looking at the pictures which some of them contained, and a part of the time in observing the scenery along the banks of the river, in watching the movements and the evolutions of the sloops and tow-boats that were continually passing by. At last he folded up his papers, and concluded to take a little walk.

“I’ll go,” said he to himself, “and see what has become of Congo.”

So he walked forward the whole length of the promenade deck to the forward part of the vessel, intending to go down to the deck below by one of the forward staircases. He reached the head of the stair—which was, in fact, only a step-ladder, with a rope on each railing—and paused for a moment to look forward and observe how rapidly the steamer was gliding through the water. There was a point of land about two miles ahead, around which the steamer was going, and on the other side the bank of the river could be seen extending far away, till the outline of it was lost in the blue haze of the horizon.

Jasper descended the ladder a few steps, and then, looking

Making friends in the cabin.

A collision at hand.

down upon the deck below, he saw Congo seated on a box containing some sort of merchandise, with several children around him. He was dividing an orange, and giving to each one of the children one of the lobes of it. The mothers of the children were looking on, seemingly very much pleased. The carpet-bag was on the box by Congo's side.

"I'll wait here a minute," said Jasper to himself, "and see what he will do."

Jasper accordingly remained a moment where he was, looking down toward Congo, when suddenly he heard a cry of surprise and fear on the deck above, and a great running. He looked and saw an immense steamer just coming round the point of land with prodigious swiftness and force, directly in their way. For a few moments it seemed that a dreadful collision was inevitable. The helmsmen and look-out men on each steamer shouted to each other with loud vociferations, and the seamen ran to and fro, getting ready to fend off, if possible, with buffers, to diminish the violence of the shock. Jasper was so confounded that he could not or did not move from his place. He saw the head of the steamer that he was in slowly move to the left, while the steamer itself went on with great speed, although the paddles had been reversed. It was the same with the other steamer, only her head was moved to the right, viewed from Jasper's position. In a moment more the bows of the two steamers came opposite to each other, and glided by, the sides of the vessels rubbing against each other for their whole length. A boat that was hanging in the davits was crushed to pieces, and the paddle-boxes of both steamers were broken in. An

The collision avoided.

Another danger.

The steamer aground.

instant more, and the vessels were clear of each other; and, by looking back, Jasper could see the one which they had met going on as swiftly as ever down the river below them.

Jasper, who had been greatly frightened by this sudden danger, now felt entirely relieved, and he uttered an exclamation of astonishment and joy. He thought that the trouble was all over; but, in a moment afterward, he heard more shouts, and there were other evidences of excitement among the people about him. He saw the men in the wheel-house pulling the wheel round with all their force, and he could hear the rattling of the tiller chains as they ran rapidly over the pulleys. In a moment more he suddenly felt a violent shock, as if he had been pushed forward by an invisible hand. The shock was so violent that Jasper was thrown forward by it, and fell down the stairs; and he would have been seriously hurt by the fall, if he had not saved himself, in some degree, by grasping the rope with all his force, and thus, in some measure, breaking his fall.

The first thing that Jasper knew, Congo was at his side helping him up.

“What’s the matter?” said Jasper.

“I believe we have got aground,” said Congo.

This was true. In turning in toward the left to avoid the danger of a collision, the steamer had been made to head toward a shoal, and before her direction could be altered again after the danger had passed, she had struck upon it. The passengers at first were greatly alarmed. One of them, in his terror, asked a seaman if they were wrecked and were going to the bottom.

Confusion among the passengers.

Their various actions.

The old sea-captain.

“To the bottom?” said he. “We have gone to the bottom already. We can’t go any lower.”

The passengers below, on feeling the shock, all came running up on deck, and they gathered about here and there in knots, some asking what was the matter, and some giving information. In a short time it began to be generally understood that the shoal which the steamer struck upon was a muddy bank which could do the hull of the vessel no serious damage, although the sudden cessation of her motion which it had occasioned had produced so violent a shock for all on board. It was also said that, when the tide rose, she would be floated off again.

“And when will the tide rise?” asked some of the passengers, addressing the mate.

“There’s an hour more of ebb,” said he. “We sha’n’t be off under five or six hours.”

This news, as it was circulated about the steamer, produced various effects on the different persons that received it. Some were vexed, some looked disappointed and sorrowful, and some seemed to care very little about what had happened. There was one old sea-captain among the passengers, who smiled and rubbed his hands together, and seemed rather pleased than otherwise when they told him that the steamer would float again in five or six hours.

“Why, you don’t seem to think our calamity of any consequence at all,” said one of his friends.

“No,” said the captain. “A man who has had his ship lying becalmed a fortnight at a time under a broiling sun in the Pacific

The position of the steamer.

Boats coming from the shore.

as often as I have, or been driven back three days' sail out of his course by a howling hurricane, won't think much of lying quiet six hours in a pleasant day in the North River, in such a steamer as this."

As soon as the first excitement had passed away, Congo returned to his place on the forward deck with the carpet-bag, leaving Jasper to go about at his pleasure among the passengers. He considered that he had nothing to do in the case but to await Jasper's orders. So he seated himself on his box again, and resumed his occupation of amusing the children.

The bank which the steamer had run upon was on the western shore of the river, while the town that the boys were going to, and also the rail-road which runs up and down the river, is on the eastern side.

"If we were only on the other side of the river," said Jasper to himself, "and could get ashore, we might go home by way of the rail-road."

Not long after the steamer struck, Jasper, standing on the upper deck, saw a boat putting off from the western shore of the river, and soon afterward another and another. The boatmen came in hopes of getting jobs in rowing some of the passengers to the shore. They concluded very naturally that among all the passengers there would be a number that would not be willing to wait for the tide to rise, but would wish to be set ashore, in order that they might go to the end of their journey in some other manner.

They were not disappointed in this expectation; for, as soon as the boats drew nigh the steamer, the passengers began to hail them.

Negotiations with the boatmen.

What the sea-captain does.

Among the persons thus hailing them was the sea-captain that has already been mentioned.

“What do you ask to set us ashore?” said the sea-captain, addressing the man who was rowing the first boat.

“On which side?” said the boatman.

“On the rail-road side, of course,” said the captain.

“I’ll take two of you over for half a dollar,” replied the boatman, “and as many more as can go in the boat for a shilling a piece.”

“Very well,” said the captain; “I engage your boat; and I’ll go and see how many passengers I can find.”

“But, captain,” said one of the passengers, who was standing near at this time, “I thought you considered it almost nothing at all to get aground here for five or six hours, and now you are the first to want to get away.”

“Of course,” said the captain. “Because a man takes it quietly when he gets into difficulty, that is no reason why he should not try to get out of it as soon as he can.”

So saying, the captain went away, and going about the boat, he told all the forlorn and lonesome-looking women that he could find sitting about the deck or in the cabin that he was going ashore in a boat, and if any of them wished to go, rather than remain on board for the tide to rise, they were welcome to a passage with him. At the same time, he told them that he had learned that it was several miles to a station on the rail-road either up the river or down.

Quite a number of persons accepted the captain’s invitation.

The gentleman and his family.

The second boat engaged.

They said that they would run the risk of getting a conveyance to a station after they got to the land.

The second boat was engaged by a gentleman who had his wife and two or three children with him. One of these children was a boy of about Jasper's age. This boy, who had been going hither and thither about the steamer since she struck, watching every thing that was going on, came back to his father just as he was closing a bargain for the boat.

"Father," said he, "the captain is going to get out *his* boat, and send all ashore that wish to go, so that you can go in that way for nothing."

"But the captain's boat is stove all to pieces," said the gentleman.

"Ah! but he has got another," said the boy.

The father seemed to hesitate a moment, and then, after a pause, he said,

"After all, I think we had better take a boat to ourselves. They'll load down the captain's boat so that, like as not, she will capsize before they get across. At any rate, we should not have any peace on the passage."

So he closed the bargain with the second boat.

There was one boat left, and the question now arose in Jasper's mind whether he had better engage it for himself and Congo, or whether he had better go on shore in the steamer's boat. It seemed to him not best to remain on board the steamer; for, as he had no baggage except what Congo could carry in his hand, they could easily prosecute their journey if they could once get to the shore.

Jasper's deliberations.

His decision.

Leaving the steamer.

“If I go in the captain's boat,” said Jasper to himself, “I should save some money; but I am very sure, if mother were here, she would rather I would pay the expense of a separate boat rather than run any risk of being capsized.”

This consideration decided Jasper's mind, and so he hailed the third boat, and engaged the man in charge of her to take him to the shore.

There was a little flight of steps just abaft one of the paddle-boxes, which could be let down to the water for the purpose of going to or from boats alongside. The boats all gathered at this place. Jasper went to the forward deck to find Congo.

“Congo,” says he, “I have got a boat to take us ashore; but after we get ashore it will be three or four miles to the nearest station. Do you think you can walk as far as that and carry the carpet-bag?”

“Oh yes, Mr. Jasper,” said Congo, “I can walk that far just as well as not.”

“Then we will go,” said Jasper.

So Jasper led the way, while Congo followed, to the gangway, where the boats were assembled. The parties that were going in the other boats, being more numerous, were longer in getting ready, and Jasper and Congo, taking advantage of the interval, stepped into their boat and pushed off.

“Now,” said Jasper to the boatman, “lie by here a few moments till the other boats are ready. If there is not room enough for all that wish to go in them, we can take one or two more here.”

“We could take ten more here,” said the boatman.

Appearance of the boats on the river.

The sloop.

The boatman was desirous of getting as many into his boat as possible; for, although he had agreed to take Jasper and Congo for half a dollar, he expected to receive something more in case of his having additional passengers to convey.

So the boat, after going off a little way, came to a stand, the boatman resting on his oars, in order that Jasper might watch the operation of loading the other boats. First came the gentleman with his wife and children. They got into their boat, and the oarsmen of it immediately struck out across the river.

Then came the sea-captain's boat. Besides the captain himself, eight persons, several of them women with children in their arms, got into it. There was room for more, the captain said, but as there were no more that seemed disposed to come, the captain ordered the boatman to push off, and they too began to move rapidly away out into the middle of the stream.

There was now only one boat remaining, and that was the one belonging to the steamer. Seven persons got into her, mostly men. The captain of the steamer stood by the gangway superintending the operation, and, when all the seven were in, he turned round to the by-standers, saying,

“Come, gentlemen, there's plenty of room, if there are any more of you that wish to go ashore.”

But there were no more, and so the boat pushed off.

“Now,” said Jasper, “we may go too.”

So the boatman began to row. He had taken only a very few strokes before Jasper observed a small sloop coming across the river, as it were, just above where the steamer was lying.

Evolutions.

A new idea.

Sloop ahoy!

“Look out,” said Jasper, “or that sloop will be aboard of us.”

“No,” said the boatman, “she will go about in a minute or two, and then she will run across the river the same way we are going, but she will be to the leeward of us.”

Jasper watched the sloop, and in a few minutes he saw her head coming round, and in a moment afterward her sails were shaking in the wind. Very soon, however, they filled on the other tack, and then the sloop came on rapidly after the boat, though it was plain that she would pass to one side.

“She’ll go clear of us,” said the boatman, “never you fear.”

The sloop now came rapidly on behind the boat, and soon came up with her. Jasper observed that there was nobody on the deck but a boy, a little older than himself. This boy was steering. There had been a man on the deck when the sloop was going about, but, as soon as she had got well under way on the new tack, he had gone below.

On seeing this sloop passing so near him on her way down the river, it all at once occurred to Jasper that, if he and Congo could get on board, they might go down in her instead of walking down on the shore. He suggested this plan to the boatman.

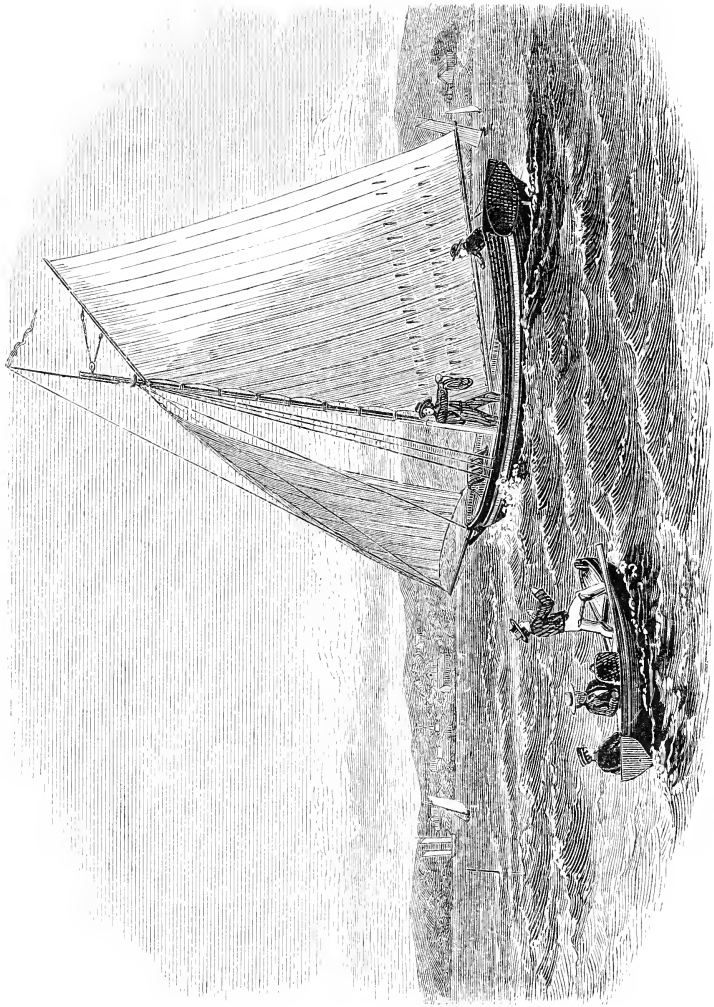
“Do you think they would take us on board this sloop,” he asked, “and land us at the first station down the river?”

“Like enough,” said the boatman.

Jasper immediately rose in the boat, and waving his hat in the air, hailed the sloop.

“Sloop ahoy—oy—oy!” said he.

“Halloo—o—o!” answered the boy who was steering.



THE SLOOP.

The sloop takes the boat in tow.

The travelers on board of the sloop.

“I want you to take us two on board,” cried Jasper, “and land us down the river at the next rail-road station. I’ll pay you for it.”

“How much will you pay us?” asked the boy.

“Whatever it is worth,” said Jasper.

The boy said nothing in reply, but, instead of an answer, he stamped his foot three times on the deck where he was standing.

A moment afterward the head of a man appeared coming up the companion-way. The boy spoke a few words to him, and then the man, coming to the side of the vessel, took up a small line that lay upon the deck, and coiling it up, he threw the coil out toward the boat in such a manner that it uncoiled as it went, and the end of it fell across the boat, where the boatman seized it and made it fast round a thwart.

“I’ll land you at the next rail-road station,” said the sloop-master to Jasper, “for half a dollar.”

“Very well,” said Jasper; “I’ll get on board.”

The question now arose to Jasper’s mind how much he ought to pay his boatman. The boatman was to have taken him and Congo to the eastern shore of the river for half a dollar, but they met the sloop before they had gone a quarter part of the distance. Still, as the change in the plan was wholly Jasper’s work alone, he did not think it right that the boatman should lose any thing by it, so he concluded to pay him the whole amount.

So he paid the boatman his half dollar, and then, when the boat was brought alongside, he and Congo climbed up on board the sloop. The boatman handed up the carpet-bag, and then pushed off his boat, and rowed away back toward his home.

Julick.

His compound character.

How he came to be steersman.

CHAPTER XI.

A DISASTROUS JOURNEY.

THE boy who was steering the sloop at the time when Jasper and Congo went on board was named Julick. He was partly a boy and partly a man. I do not mean by that that his character was intermediate between that of a man and of a boy, but that it was compounded of the two, so that he was sometimes one and sometimes the other. When he was on board his father's sloop he was usually quite a man.

He had been accustomed to go with his father in the sloop only a few weeks at the time when Jasper and Congo were taken on board of her, and it was almost by accident that he first began to go. His father's regular man was sick, and could not go that trip. At first the sloop-master was quite perplexed to know what to do, but at length it occurred to him that possibly Julick was big enough to answer for a substitute. Julick had often made trips with his father for pleasure, and he had learned something about the management of the sloop, and about the art of steering. He was about twelve years old, but he was very large and strong of his age.

"He is not quite big enough," said the sloop-master to himself; "but the Maria steers easily in smooth weather, and perhaps he will do."

So he went out to look for Julick. He found him behind the house amusing himself at a tub of water with a sham sea-fight.

A bombardment of pea-pods.

Julick's efficiency.

He and his little brother Tom had made boats of pea-pods to represent men-of-war, and then he and Tom, stationed on opposite sides of the tub, were pelting the two fleets with peas, to represent the cannonading. The noise of the conflict was denoted by the "bangs" which they uttered with their voices, varied now and then with a hiss for the fusee of a bomb-shell.

"Nonsense!" said the sloop-master; "he's a mere boy, after all. He will never do."

"Well, father," said Julick, with his hand in the air ready to discharge another ball, "do you want me?"

"I was thinking of having you go with me to Albany and steer the sloop," said his father; "Joe is sick."

"Yes, father, yes!" said Julick, with the utmost eagerness; "yes, sir, let me go; I can steer."

Julick threw away his peas and ran for his cap. His father let him go with him. As soon as he got on board he stationed himself at the helm, and steered the sloop all the way to Albany.

The sloop-master told his wife when he came home that, if it were not for taking him out of school, he would make him his steersman and dismiss Joe. "He is as much of a man on board the sloop," said he, "as half the mates you will find on the North River."

At any rate, the sloop-master resolved to keep Julick on board until Joe got well, and as Julick liked much better to make voyages with his father between New York and Albany than to go to school, he made no objection whatever to the arrangement.

And thus it was that Julick happened to be steersman when the sloop took Jasper and Congo on board.

Conversation about steering the sloop.

Tacks and tactics.

The master of the sloop, after giving Julick some fresh directions about steering, and especially charging him to knock on the deck as soon as they were within a quarter of a mile of the shore, went below again, leaving Jasper, Congo, and Julick on deck together.

“Is it hard work to steer?” asked Jasper.

“No,” said Julick, “not in such weather as this. It is only to watch the sails and keep close to the wind. And not too close either,” he added, “for if the sails begin to shiver I let her fall off a little.”

The wind was blowing up the river, and the sloop was beating down, so that she had to go back and forth across the stream in a zigzag direction, keeping close to the wind, as the sailors term it, on both tacks. Julick explained all this to Jasper, and finally he let Jasper hold the tiller a little himself, and Congo too. Congo was very much pleased to see how completely he could control the course of the vessel by moving the tiller one way or the other. He did not see why he could not learn to steer, he said, as well as to drive a team, in a reasonable time.

“Yes,” said Julick, “you could learn very well, and you could get good wages on the river. There are a great many colored men go as hands on board the North River sloops.”

“Which should you rather do,” asked Jasper, addressing Congo, “be a sailor on the North River and steer a sloop, or be a coachman in New York?”

Congo said he would rather be a coachman. He liked the care of horses. A horse had more soul, he said, than a vessel.

Putting down the helm.

Dodging the boom.

Change of view.

“I don’t know exactly what you mean by that,” said Julick ; “but if by soul you mean life, and spirit, and knowing what she is about, there is not a horse in all Dutchess that will beat the Maria. You see, now, how she’ll come around.”

So saying, Julick knocked on the deck for his father, for the sloop was now drawing near to shore. The sloop-master went forward to attend to the sails while the sloop came about, and then, when he was ready, gave the order for Julick to put down the helm. Julick immediately pushed the tiller hard over to leeward, and immediately the sloop began to come swiftly round up into the wind, causing the sails to shake and shiver with a sound like thunder.

“Look out for your heads when the boom comes over,” said Julick, calling out aloud. “Down! down with you! right upon the deck!”

Jasper and Congo dodged down just in time to save their heads from the boom, which swung over from one side of the sloop to the other with great force, as the sloop fell off on the other side of the wind. The boys, however, still remained down, not knowing but that the boom was coming back again.

“That’s all,” said Julick ; “you can stand up again now.”

The boys stood up and looked about them. A strange change had taken place. The sails were now on the other side of the vessel, and on looking forward, instead of seeing the land close before them, as they had done a moment before, there was now a wide expanse of water, with the shore of the river beyond it, three or four miles away.

Drawing near the pier.

The boat.

Paying the passage-money.

“What’s the matter?” said Jasper; “where are we? Where’s the land?”

“It is behind us,” said Julick; “we are on the other tack now.”

Jasper looked back, and saw there the land which had a few minutes before appeared so near. The sloop was now going away from it. She had changed her direction entirely, though both Jasper and Congo had been unconscious of the change at the time it was taking place.

In this manner the sloop went on, shooting swiftly back and forth across the river, but getting at every tack farther and farther down the stream, until at last they arrived opposite the place where the master said was the first rail-road station. There was a pier here, built out into the river for the use of steam-boats in making their landings. When the sloop arrived near the pier, the master called out to some boys that were playing in a boat, near some steps at the side of the pier, saying,

“Boys, come out here with your boat. I want you to land a couple of passengers for me.”

The boys received this invitation with an appearance of delight, as if they deemed it a great honor to be employed in conveying passengers ashore. One of them began eagerly to unfasten the boat, while the other two busied themselves in getting out the oars. They soon pushed off from the pier, and came on rapidly toward the sloop.

“And now,” said Jasper, “I will pay our passage-money.” So saying, he took out his wallet, and gave the captain half a dollar. “And how much shall I pay these boys?” he asked.

Landing.

Paying the boys.

The ten cent piece.

“Oh nothing,” said the captain; “they won’t want any pay. They are glad of an excuse to have something to do with the boat. Besides, if any one is to pay them it should be I, for the agreement was that I should land you.”

So Jasper and Congo, after bidding the captain and Julick good-by, climbed down into the boat, which the boys had by this time brought alongside, and so were rowed safe to land.

“Well, boys,” said Jasper, as soon as he and Congo had stepped out from the boat upon the pier, “the captain said that there would be nothing to pay for the boat.”

“No,” said one of the boys, “there’s nothing to pay.”

“But I think you ought to have some pay,” said Jasper; “so I will give you two cents apiece.”

The boys seemed greatly pleased with this announcement, and they all began scrambling out of the boat to get their two cents.

Jasper felt in his pockets, but he had no cents. He had, however, a ten cent piece, which he drew from his pocket and held up before the boys.

“Can any of you change a ten cent piece?” said he.

“Give it to me,” said the boys altogether, each one stretching out his hand eagerly to get the money.

“Which shall I give it to?” asked Jasper, holding back the money.

“To me!” “To me!” “Me!” “Me!” said all the boys.

“But, unless you can decide which of you I shall give it to,” said Jasper, “I don’t see how I can give it to any of you.”

Finally the boys agreed upon one of their number to act as

Jasper and Congo at the station.

Just in time for the train.

treasurer for the rest, and so Jasper gave him the coin, and then he and Congo went on.

“And now, Congo,” said Jasper, as he walked up the pier, “all that I am afraid of is that the last train will have gone. It is almost four o’clock, and I should think that the two o’clock train ought to be here by this time. That is the last train that connects so as to take us home to-night.”

It was not far to the station. The two boys walked to it together. When they reached it Jasper went in, while Congo remained with the carpet-bag at the door.

In a moment Jasper came out with two tickets in his hand, and saying that the train had not gone; but he had scarcely spoken the words before he heard the whistle.

“There she comes!” said Jasper; “we are just in time. If we had been five minutes longer in making our passage down the river in the sloop, we should have missed it.”

So Jasper gave Congo the tickets, and then, as soon as the train came to the platform, he and Congo got in. Jasper took his seat with an air of great satisfaction. He could see that Congo also, who sat at a little distance from him, looked very much pleased. As soon as the train began to move again, he nodded his head to Congo with an expression which seemed to say,

“Now we are all right. We have got through with all our troubles.”

The train went on very prosperously for about an hour, stopping in the course of that time at three or four stations, at each of which some people got out and others got in. At length both Jasper and

Stoppage of the train.

Jocose conjectures.

A smash-up.

Congo were startled by the sound of two sharp and sudden blasts of the whistle, and a sudden stopping of the train. Jasper looked out of the window, and saw trees and rocks along the wayside, which showed that they were not at a station. Besides, at a station the train never stops in that sudden manner.

“What’s the matter?” exclaimed Jasper, almost involuntarily.

There was a man sitting near him reading a newspaper.

“Cow on the track,” said he, without raising his eyes from his paper.

“Man overboard,” said another person, sitting near.

“Whipple-tree broken,” said another.

“The driver has caught the snapper of his whip in the harness,” said a fourth.

“Ah! no,” said a fifth; “the conductor has lost his hat, and has stopped to pick it up.”

“Or else he is not sure about his way,” said a sixth, “and is stopping to inquire.”

The men got quite into a frolic in giving these fancied explanations of the cause of the stopping. They all, however, really supposed that, whatever the cause might be, it was something very temporary, and that, after a few minutes, the train would go on. They waited about five minutes, and then one of the men said he would go and see what was the matter.

After being gone a short time, he returned, and, sauntering slowly into the car, took his seat, saying, in a careless manner,

“A smash-up!”

“A smash-up!” repeated those around him, astonished.

The red flag.

Slow progress.

At the scene of the accident.

“Yes. There’s been a smash-up on the road ahead, and we were stopped by a red flag that they sent down.”

“And what are we going to do?” asked one of the passengers.

“We are going on pretty soon, slowly, up to the smash-up,” replied the man. “What we are going to do then nobody knows.”

The train soon began to move again, as the man had foretold, but it went very slowly, and at length it stopped.

It was now about five o’clock, and Jasper began to feel a little solicitude lest, if they were to be detained long by the accident, he should not be able to get home that night.

“I’ll go,” said he to Congo, “and see what has happened. You may stay here and take care of the carpet-bag.”

So Jasper went out upon the platform of the car, and then climbed down to the ground, though it was a long step down. There were other persons who had got out from the other cars of the train walking along by the side of the track. Jasper followed them. He soon came in sight of the smash-up. The locomotive of the train which had met with the accident had run off the track entirely, and it now stood canting over and half upset on the sloping bank. The baggage-car behind it was broken pretty much to pieces, and the trunks and baggage were scattered about. Behind the baggage-car there was a long passenger-car, which had been slewed half round by the force of the concussion, and now lay directly across the track. Behind were other cars more or less misplaced, and at all gangs of men were at work trying to raise them up and replace them on the rails, or to get them out of the way, in order to clear the track so that the other trains might pass along.

The condition of affairs.

Jasper meets the conductor.

Jasper asked some of the men how long they thought it would take to get the track clear, but he got no satisfactory information. One man said he thought it would take about three weeks. Another said, "About as long as a kite-string." Another paid no attention to the question at all, but went on with his work without making any reply. The fact was, that, as usual in such cases, the men did not like to be bothered at their work by being asked questions about it which they did not know how to answer.

By talking with some of the passengers, however, Jasper learned that it would probably be some hours before the track could be cleared, and that, in the mean time, many of the passengers were going forward to the next station, which was about a mile distant, on foot.

Jasper was quite at a loss to know what he ought to do—whether he should stay by his train, or go forward to the station.

"I'll do what the rest of the passengers in my car do," said he to himself; "though I think the conductor ought to come round and tell us what we ought to do."

So Jasper turned his steps toward the car, and on his way he met the conductor; so he asked him what he had better do.

"I think you had better keep your place in the car," said the conductor. "We are in hopes to get the track cleared soon, and if we do we shall go on. If we don't, then you will go to the next station on foot, and the next train that comes down the river will turn about and go up again, and take you all in."

"But that will be too late for me to get home," said Jasper, "for I shall lose the connection."

His advice.

Jasper's indecision.

Night coming on.

“Then you will have to stop at some tavern on the way till tomorrow morning,” said the conductor, “and go home then. If you have not got any money, the tavern-keeper will trust you when you tell him how it happened.”

So saying, the conductor hurried on.

Jasper went back to the car, where he had left Congo, and reported the facts to him.

“I am not quite sure what we had better do,” said he.

Congo did not express any opinion in respect to what it would be best to do, for, in point of fact, he had no opinion. He only looked out of the window, as if he wished to see what the prospect was.

“It is growing toward night,” said Jasper, looking out of the window too, “and, in truth, I think it is going to rain.”

The sky was, indeed, quite cloudy, and it looked very much as if a storm was coming on.

“I’ve a great mind,” Jasper added at length, “to go on as far as the station, and wait there until they get the track cleared. I’ll go once more and see how they get along with the work. In the mean time, you may stay here and take care of the carpet-bag; or, rather, you may go too, and take the carpet-bag with you.”

So Jasper went out of the car again, and Congo followed him, carrying the carpet-bag. They made their way together to the wrecked cars, and remained there some time watching the operations of the men, who were at work with jack-screws and other contrivances, trying to raise the cars and get them back upon the rails. But they made very slow progress.

At last Jasper concluded that it would be best for him and

Going to the station.

It begins to rain.

At the hotel.

Congo to go on to the station. It was growing darker every moment, and it looked very much like rain, so they set out together on the track in the direction toward the station. There were many other parties of passengers, some before and some behind them, all going the same way.

After they had been going about half a mile, Jasper offered to carry the carpet-bag a little way to let Congo rest. But Congo would not allow him to do so. He said he could carry it himself all the way just as well as not.

Indeed, he thought that, as Jasper had all the care and perplexity of the affair upon his mind, and all the responsibility of determining what was to be done, without any assistance from Congo in respect to those burdens, it was right Congo should do his own work in full without asking any assistance from Jasper.

At length they drew nigh to the station. It was now quite dark, and it was beginning to rain. Jasper made a calculation from the time-tables hung up in the station, and he found that there was no prospect of his being able to get home that night; and, as there was a sort of hotel there—a high three-story wooden building, just across the street from the station—he concluded that he would go and see if he and Congo could get lodgings in it for the night. There was a great deal of coming and going, and a great deal of confusion, both at the station and around the doors of the hotel. Some were lugging trunks and other baggage to and fro; some were hurriedly making arrangements for going off in wagons and other vehicles that they had hired; and some were standing about in groups, fretting, and seeming not to know what to do.

All full.

One resource left.

Bob's room.

Through the midst of all these people Jasper led the way, and Congo followed into the hotel.

Jasper made his way into a sort of bar-room. There was a counter there, and a man behind it entering names in a book, and assigning people their rooms. As soon as Jasper could get an opportunity to speak to the man, he asked him if he could have a room there that night.

“No, *sir*,” said the man, emphasizing strongly the word *sir*, “I am afraid not.” He said this without looking up from his book; but immediately after saying it, he raised his eyes, and seeing a boy before him with so frank and intelligent a face, he looked surprised, and then immediately added,

“Wait half a minute, and I’ll talk with you.”

After Jasper had waited several minutes, the clerk got through his business with the other men that were there, and then, after looking at Jasper a moment more, he turned round to another young man who was behind the counter with him, and said,

“We might put him in Bob’s room. It is such a short bed that we can’t put any body else there.”

Then turning again to Jasper, the man asked,

“Are you alone?”

“Yes, *sir*,” said Jasper. “There’s nobody with me except Congo here.”

So saying, Jasper pointed to Congo, who stood behind him with the carpet-bag in his hand.

“Congo?” said the clerk. “Who is he?”

“He’s my grandfather’s hired boy,” said Jasper.

Jasper and Congo go to reconnoitre their quarters.

“Oh, well, he must tumble in any where, under the tables or in a corner. We are too full to give him any thing for a bed, but we can give you a boy’s bed in a small room.”

So saying, the clerk turned round a big book which he had upon the counter before him, and handed Jasper a pen, in order that he might enter his name. Jasper accordingly entered it, and then the clerk called a boy to show Jasper to his room.

“Come, Congo,” said Jasper, “I want you to come too.”

On the way out Jasper asked Congo if he thought he could find some place to sleep.

“Oh yes,” said Congo, “I can sleep any where. I can have this carpet-bag for a pillow, and that will be all that I shall want.”

The stairs that Jasper went up in going to his room were in the back part of the house, and were very narrow and winding. The entrance to them was by a door leading from a small passage-way near the kitchen. The boy who went to guide them led the way, carrying a small candle. The room was in the third story. It was very small. There was one narrow single bed in it, of the kind called a sacking-bed. There was a small table and a chair. There was also one window, which opened out upon the stable-yard.

There was no washing apparatus in the room; but, in a passage-way which the boys passed through in getting to it, there was a large sink, with two wash-bowls in it, and a pail full of water on a shelf at the back side of the sink. There was a tin mug with a long handle in this pail, which was evidently intended to be used to dip out the water from the pails in order to fill the bowls. This

Rooming together.

The refreshment-saloon.

Supper.

sink was for the use of the lodgers of several rooms in that part of the house.

The boy put the candle down on the table, and then went out, leaving Jasper and Congo to themselves.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “if you are going to sleep on the floor any where, I had rather you would sleep here in this room.”

Jasper thought that he should feel safer to have Congo near, in case any thing should happen in the night. The result proved that he was very correct in this calculation.

“And now, Congo,” said Jasper, after a moment’s pause, “I don’t know exactly what we are going to do for supper.”

“They were taking supper down in the supper-room,” said Congo, “when we came up.”

“Yes,” said Jasper; “but then the room was crowded full, and there was no room at all for any more. But I’ll tell you what we will do. We will go across to the station. There is a refreshment-room there, and we can get whatever we want.”

Congo seemed to like this proposal very much, and so, Jasper leading the way, they both ran across the road through the rain to the station. There they found a long counter, with cups for coffee, and plates with cakes and pies upon them, all set out. Jasper bought some sandwiches and a piece of pie for Congo, and, giving him the plate that contained them, he directed him to go out and sit down on a seat there was outside under the piazza. He would come out presently, he said, and bring him a cup of coffee.

Congo felt a little embarrassed at being thus waited upon by Jasper at his supper, when it seemed to him, as a matter of pro-

Amusement during the evening.

Preparations for the night.

priety, that he ought to be waiting upon Jasper. However, he was accustomed to obey implicitly all that Jasper said, and so he took the plate, and went away to the seat that Jasper had designated without saying a word.

Jasper ate his own supper at the counter, seated on a high stool which was placed before it. He left his place, however, for a moment, in the middle of his supper, to carry out a cup of coffee to Congo. Then he returned, and finished drinking his own coffee. Afterward he and Congo remained some time at the station, amusing themselves with seeing what was going on, hearing the conversation, and listening to the reports which came up from time to time from the train that had run off the track. At last, about nine o'clock, they went back to the hotel and ascended to their room.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “I think the best thing that we can do is to go to bed.”

So Jasper began to make preparations to go to bed. It was a cool night, and there were two blankets on the bed. Jasper took off one of them and gave it to Congo; the other he kept for himself. He also took out some things from the carpet-bag, and then gave it to Congo for a pillow.

“Congo,” said Jasper, when these arrangements had been made, “do you ever say your prayers when you go to bed?”

“Sometimes,” said Congo, rather hesitatingly.

“We ought to say them always,” said Jasper; “it is right that we should say them; and then, besides, it comforts us when we feel lonesome as we do now; so we will kneel down, and I'll say

The boys are relieved by prayer.

Roused in the night.

An alarm.

the prayers. I'll say them for both of us. If you listen, that will do just as well."

After the prayer, which, as Jasper had predicted, had the effect of greatly strengthening and comforting both the boys in their hearts, Jasper undressed himself and got into bed; while Congo, lying down on the floor, with the carpet-bag for a pillow, covered himself up with a blanket.

"Congo," said Jasper, after a few minutes' pause, "are you comfortable?"

But Congo gave no answer to this question, for he was already fast asleep.

In a very short time Jasper fell asleep too.

He was conscious of nothing more until about two o'clock in the morning, when he suddenly awoke and perceived a smell of smoke in the room. He started up and spoke to Congo. Congo did not hear him.

Jasper got out of bed, and, finding the smell of smoke very decided, he went to Congo and shook him by the shoulder, at the same time calling out to him, "Congo! Congo! wake up!"

"What's the matter?" said Congo, opening his eyes, and looking about him wildly. There was a faint light in the room from the window—for the sky had cleared up, and it was now starlight—and Jasper could just distinguish Congo's features.

"Wake up!" said he; "I smell something burning."

Congo rose up immediately, and, as soon as he perceived the smell, he uttered an exclamation of surprise, and said,

"And there's ever so much smoke in the room too!"

They go through the passage-way and find the house on fire.

“I’m afraid the house is on fire or something,” said Jasper. “We must go and call somebody. I’ll dress myself as soon as I can, and you go and see if you can find any doors to call people.”

Jasper was already slipping on his clothes while he was saying these words, and he proceeded in the work of dressing himself with so much dispatch, that by the time Congo was up and ready to go to the door he was ready to accompany him. They went together into the passage-way where the sink was, and they found it even fuller of smoke than their room. They ran across this passage, which was small, like a small entry, and there opened another door which was at the head of the stairs. The instant that they opened it a great puff of hot smoke came into their faces, and they could hear the roaring and crackling of flames down below at the foot of the stairs, accompanied by the occasional flash of a lurid light there.

“The house is on fire!” said Jasper, and he instantly shut the door again to keep out the smoke and hot, suffocating air. At the same moment he began to hear shouts and outcries below of women scrambling and people crying fire. They had just taken the alarm.

“We can’t go down that way,” said Jasper. “Let us look about and see if there is any other door.”

So they looked all about the passage-way, but there was no other door.

“Never mind,” said Jasper, “we’ll go to the window, and the people will come there and take us down by a ladder.”

Congo was so frightened that he was almost beside himself, though the composure and courage which Jasper manifested some-

Jasper displays great presence of mind.

The flames bursting forth.

what sustained him. He did not say a word, but he seemed bewildered and ready to faint with terror.

“We’ll keep both the doors shut,” said Jasper, “and so keep the smoke out as long as we can. You may open the window and cry fire, while I see if I can find a match and light the candle. It won’t be so gloomy for us if we have a light.”

Jasper perceived at a glance that the only way for them to escape from the house was by being taken out of the window by the people below, who should come when the alarm was given, and that there was nothing that they themselves could do to hasten their escape but to give the alarm from the window, in order that the people below, as soon as the ladders should arrive, might come and rescue them.

After Jasper had struck the light and lighted the candle, he went to the window himself. There were many people running to and fro in the yard, and he could see flashes of light shining every now and then upon the sky, as if the fire was beginning to break out on some other side of the house. The men that were below in the yard called out to the boys to tell them that they had gone for ladders, and that, in the mean time, they must stay where they were.

“There will be time,” they said. “Don’t be afraid; there will be plenty of time.”

The bells of the town soon began to ring, and people in great numbers came running to the scene of fire. The flashes grew more and more frequent, until at length they ended in one great burst of continuous flame, which illuminated the whole sky. The smoke grew more and more dense in Jasper’s room, though it was obvi-

The boys at the window.

The fire in the room.

Calling for help.

ous that the chief seat of the conflagration was around upon some other side of the house.

“Congo,” said Jasper, “come with me, and let us see if we can not find where the smoke comes in.”

So Jasper went out into the passage-way and looked at the door leading to the staircase, and there he saw streams of dense smoke coming in through the key-hole, and through the crack under the door. Jasper contrived to keep out a great deal of this by stuffing paper into the key-hole, and by laying down a pillow on the floor close to the door, to stop the crack. The two boys then came back to the window again to see if the ladders had come, and also, in case they had not come, to let the people know that they themselves were still there.

The people below, when they saw Jasper and Congo at the window again, called out to encourage them.

“Keep up good courage, boys,” said they. “They have got a ladder, and they are getting some women and children out on the other side of the house. They’ll be here very soon.”

Just then Jasper heard a crackling sound behind him, and, looking round, he saw the plaster curling up and coming off, and smoke and fire coming through on the back side of the room. He turned round immediately, and called out to the men below.

“Tell them to be quick,” said he. “The fire is bursting into this room.”

This announcement produced great commotion below, and Jasper saw some men running with an axe, and presently a party of them were seen bringing a long stout pole, such as is called a hay-

The hay-pole.

The peril from the flames.

Aid at hand.

pole, and, after laying it down upon the ground, they seemed to be nailing something to it, making, at the same time, a great deal of noise and clamor. In the mean time the fire had burned entirely through the partition on the back side of the room, and it began to be very hot where Jasper and Congo were standing.

“Let’s cover ourselves with the blankets,” said Jasper. “Bring your blanket out here.”

So saying, Jasper seized his own blanket, and ran into the passage-way with it to the sink, and began to wet it with water. In a moment Congo came too with his blanket, and Jasper put that into the sink too, and then wet them through with the water that was in the pail.

“Now, Congo,” said Jasper, “put this all over you, so as to cover up your back, and shoulders, and head.”

So saying, he handed Congo his blanket, and helped him put it on. He also put his own blanket on in the same way, and then they both went back to the window. It was now so hot in the room that it almost scorched them to go through, and the only way that they could live there at all was to stand with their heads out of the window, and with the wet blankets toward the fire.

As soon as they got to the window, they saw one end of the hay-pole slowly rising up from among the crowd under the window. They saw that there were two cross-bars nailed across near the top of the pole, one very near the top, and one two or three feet farther down.

“Now, boys,” said the men, shouting as loud as they could call, “cling to the top of this pole, and we will take you down. Stand

The boys are taken down by the pole, and are saved.

on the lower bar, and hold on by the upper one. Don't be afraid. The bars are nailed on very strong."

Although these directions were vociferated in the loudest possible manner, still such was the noise and confusion that Jasper could scarcely hear a word. He understood, however, from the appearance of the pole, what the men intended.

"Now, Congo," said he, "we're all safe. Climb right out of the window and cling to the pole, and the men will take you down."

"You must go first," said Congo. "There may not be time to put it up again."

"Obey me," said Jasper.

Congo said no more, but, climbing out of the window and grasping the bars of the pole, he clung to them with desperation. The men below then, having hold of the pole in great numbers, gradually moved it away from the windows, and then let the top of it, with Congo clinging to it, down slowly to the ground. The instant that Congo had let go, they raised the pole again to the window. There was not a moment to lose, for the flames and smoke were pouring out of the upper part of the window, just above Jasper's head, in such a manner as to show that he could have lived there but a very few minutes longer. They were, however, in time. Jasper threw back the blanket, sprang out of the window to the pole, clasped it tightly, and was soon taken down safely to the ground.*

As soon as Jasper reached the ground, Congo came to him with the carpet-bag in his hands, which I had forgotten to say he had

* See Frontispiece.

Congratulations.

Duty.

Conclusion.

thrown out of the window just before he descended himself. The people gathered around him, and seemed greatly pleased that he had escaped.

“But what did this black fellow mean,” said one of the men, “leaving you to come last?”

“I ordered him to come first,” said Jasper, “and he obeyed me.”

“What did you do that for?” said the man.

“Why, that was my duty,” said Jasper.

When Jasper and Congo got home at last, and Mr. Grant heard this story, he told Jasper that he did perfectly right.

“It *was* your duty,” said he, “to take care of Congo first. The captain of the ship must always be the last to leave his vessel when she burns or sinks at sea.”

After this, Jasper continued to have Congo in his employ a long time in the country, and they had a great many adventures together which there is no room to describe in this volume. When at length Jasper went back to New York again, Congo went with him, and became Mrs. Bleeker’s coachman.

And a most excellent coachman he made.

THE END.

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Water

