



SCHOOL NOTES.

*Nov. 1901.*

**C**HRISTMAS Term began on Wednesday, September 18th, and the School will break up for the holidays on Friday, December 20th.

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Monday, December 16th, is the first day of the Cambridge Local Examinations.

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As a result of the Science and Art Examinations held here in June, the following have gained certificates:—

MATHEMATICS.—Stage I.

First Class.—Annett i., Blackett i., Bradley i., Ward.

Second Class.—Hadfield, Levy, Pybus i.

CHEMISTRY, INORGANIC.—Stage I.

Second Class.—Annett i., Bradley i.

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We are pleased to hear that A. Varty has secured one of the Coal Mining Exhibitions awarded by the West Riding County Council. The value of the Exhibition is £20 a year, tenable for two years.

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Congratulations to Thomas Conyers Elliott, who recently passed the Preliminary Examination of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, Edinburgh. Elliott has already gone north to prosecute his studies.

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On Saturday, October 12th, the Head Master won the Guisboro' Golf Cup. His score was one down. This would mean a good round on any links, but on the Guisboro' course, with its numerous traps and pitfalls, it is something more than good. We speak with

feeling, having ourselves made unwilling acquaintance with the snares of these uplands. It may be mentioned that Mr. Lee-Jones would probably have established a record if he had not been obliged to pick up at the last hole, as he had done 17 holes in 76.

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The insidious "Gossima" has found its way into the School, and most of the boarders have been badly bitten. We hear that a tournament is to be started, and a prize offered by Mr. Lee-Jones.

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Whilst the Eleven were doing battle at Ayton, the rest of the School organised a Paper Chase. The trail was laid by way of the Applegarth, up Butt Lane, across the railway line, up the Shale Hills, and along High Cliff. Sowerby and Pybus iii. were the first hares. The hounds lost the trail after crossing the railway, but instinct led them to High Cliff where there was a roll call. The next pair made for Hutton Village, and there the youth of the place turned out of school to make scathing remarks. No hares were caught on the way home, for the excellent reason that they lay behind a hedge and allowed their pursuers to go by. The run was enjoyed by everyone, and there were no casualties except one cap (Kennedy ii.) and one tie (Matthews). The finders of these articles will be suitably rewarded.

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On Monday, October 14th, Mr. Abbott, who had paid us a ten minutes' visit the week before in order to whet our appetites, came back to the School to give an hour's lesson in

Shorthand—or “Swiftograph,” to give the system its proper name. Since then shorthand writing has become epidemic here, and at all hours of the day small boys are to be seen tracing mysterious curves and circles with a familiarity that sends a chill down the spines of sober-minded people. Masters will have to be more than ever guarded and consistent in their speech lest they be confronted and convicted by their random utterances of a month or so back taken down verbatim by some terrible shorthand fiend in boy's shape.

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Mr. Crossland, who was visiting Guisboro' on behalf of the Bible Society, addressed the boys on the afternoon of Friday, October 18th. With the aid of variously coloured ribbons he contrived to make figures interesting even to the petty scholars. Some of the latter were much concerned at the appalling amount of black ribbon required to represent the heathen races.

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We have received the Summer Term number of the “Coathamian,” and notice that the teaching staff at Coatham this term is an entirely new one. In Messrs. Thomson and Guest the School has lost two good men.

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### PRIZE DAY—JULY 26th.

**I**N this keen October weather, when the air bites shrewdly and the trees begin to grow bare, it requires some effort of imagination to go back to the breathless month of July, with its glare and heat—when by day the courtyard reminded one of a spacious oven, and by night the air was melodious with the thin hum of sleep-destroying insects of the mosquito tribe. Yet it is necessary that some account of Prize Day should appear in this Magazine, even though one has to rely on the local Press for detail.

The function was held, as usual, in the big Schoolroom, which was well filled. In the absence of the Chairman of the Governors, Sir J. W. Pease, Bart., M.P., the chair was taken by W. C. Trevor, Esq., and proceedings began with a performance of the well-known “Trial Scene” from the “Merchant of Venice.” The cast was as follows:—

Bassanio	...	...	G. B. Craig
Antonio	...	...	F. Kennedy
Salerio	...	...	J. Ridsdale
Duke	...	...	...G. Heslop
Gratiano	...	...	L. Levy
Nerissa	...	...	R. Graham
Portia	...	...	G. Hadfield
Shylock	...	...	H. C. Annett

Whilst all did creditably, chief honours must

be awarded to Annett, whose interpretation of Shylock's part was worthy to be ranked beside Clarke's rendering of the same character two years ago. Annett has histrionic powers which only require to be developed. His work in the rehearsals had left something to be desired, but he fairly rose to the occasion on Prize Day and did himself and the part full justice. As for the ladies, they may be described in one word—they were charming. Criticism seems ungallant here; but perhaps Hadfield might have won even more hearts than he did if his utterances had been less hurried. There was scarcely enough of Heslop to make an imposing Duke; but his sonorous voice stood him in good stead, and he displayed a gravity befitting his position. Kennedy was good as Antonio, though deficient in gesture. The other parts were fairly well sustained; indeed, when the short-time for preparation is taken into account, one might say wonderfully well.

After the actors had left us, Mr. Lee-Jones presented his report, and made it quite clear to everyone that the School is doing good work and more than holding its own. He mentioned that the much-desired laboratory might be ours in the near future, and hinted at the possibility of a girls' department being added to the School in the years to come.

What would Bishop Pursglove think of that? Alderman Hugh Bell, J.P., distributed the Prizes and Certificates. In the course of his speech Mr. Bell alluded to the difficult position occupied by our School, situated, as it is, in a small town and in a sparsely populated district. He expressed the hope that the Technical Instruction Committee would provide us with the means for carrying on our work more effectively, and regarded with favourable eye the entrancing prospect of a girls' department.

W. Charlton, Esq., J.P., moved the vote of thanks to Mr. Hugh Bell, and was seconded by Dr. Stainthorpe. This vote, and others, was carried with exceeding clamour and then the company dispersed—some towards the station, some homewards, but most in the direction of the Library, where tea was provided.

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#### SCHOOL PRIZES.

LATIN.—Form III, F. Kennedy; Form II, H. Petch; Form Prize II, C. King; Form Prize I, N. Ridsdale.

FRENCH.—Division I, H. C. Annett; Division II, F. Ward; Division III, A. Sockett.

DIVINITY.—Division I, J. Bourn; Division II, F. Ward.

MATHEMATICS.—Division I, J. Morgan; Division II, F. Ward.

BATTING AVERAGE.—H. Ramsden.  
 BOWLING AVERAGE.—J. Lancaster.  
 CHALLENGE CUP (SPORTS).—J. Lancaster.

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CAMBRIDGE LOCAL CERTIFICATES.

JUNIOR LOCAL.—Third Class Honours—F. Kennedy, J. Morgan. Passes—H. Annett, H. C. Annett, N. Tate, L. Levy, G. Sanderson, G. Hadfield, A. Million, J. Bourn.

CAMBRIDGE PRELIMINARY LOCAL.—Passes—C. Tones, J. Hadfield, F. Ward, J. Blackett, G. Pybus, W. Brown, G. B. Craig, H. Petch.

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SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT.

ADVANCED FREEHAND DRAWING.—Second Class—J. Morgan, J. Bourn, G. Sanderson.

ADVANCED MODEL DRAWING.—Second Class—C. Plews, J. Morgan.

MATHEMATICS. STAGE I.—First Class—N. Tate, J. Morgan, F. Kennedy, J. Bourn. Second Class—L. Levy, A. Million, H. Annett, W. Clarkson.

MATHEMATICS. STAGE II.—Second Class—A. Kennedy, P. Wilson.

CHEMISTRY, INORGANIC. STAGE I.—First Class—F. Kennedy. Second Class—H. Annett, J. Morgan.

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FOOTBALL.

AS usual at the beginning of a new season we have to note the absence of several illustrious names from the team-lists. Our last year's captain has gone, and everyone knows what that means to us. Sanderson, too, is no longer available, and the writer, whilst watching this season's matches, has often found himself longing for just one quarter of an hour of these redoubtable wingers. Heslop, who played many good games as inside to Sanderson, is now adorning the Shell Form at Trent College; the buoyant Nipper is by this time in Natal; and the genial Clarkson probably allows his kicking talents to lie dormant in the wilds of Baden. Then there are others, who left us in the middle of last season—such as Bewick, whose half-back play was marvellous, and Bourne who was not only a fine back but a humourist and who, with Morgan, contributed much to the gaiety of the team.

From the improvement that is noticeable in the play of those members of last year's team who are still with us, one can well imagine what a powerful combination a school would have if fortunate enough to keep the same eleven for two seasons. Not many schools can do this, and seldom, if

ever, does the same eleven do duty for three seasons; but in cases where a school is able to place the same set of players in the field as it did a twelvemonth before, the increase in effectiveness may generally be reckoned at quite fifty per cent.

Lancaster is captain this year. He knows the game well, and sets an excellent example of hard work to his men. Kennedy is vice-captain, and he, like Holmes and Pybus, is considerably better than he was last season. The rest are new to their places. The defence is good on the whole, but there is some weakness forward. Up to the time of writing none of the five seem able to keep their positions in the field. This is probably due to want of confidence in one another—a man thinks his partner is not fit for his share of the work, and strolls over to do it for him. Perhaps they charge into one another, and the enemy makes off with the spoil—that is to say, the ball. Next, there is too much impotent dallying with the ball and square passing on the part of the outside men. A winger should keep well out, and dash down the line directly he gets an opening. And he should centre on the run instead of waiting till someone comes to tackle him, or until all the opposing defence has dropped back into goal. On this point it is worth while quoting the words of Mr. C. B. Fry, who is, perhaps, the finest amateur back of the day:—"Speaking as a back, I have always found the most difficult forward tactics to deal with are those of the straight-through no-delay type; and in front of goal 'He gives twice who gives quickly' is a true saying."

Lastly, the shooting must be more serious. Some of the efforts directed at goal in the Coatham match were pitiful indeed. If the forwards will only play the game as they know how to, we may look forward to a successful season.

The summary of results up to and including October 19th, is:—

Played.	Won.	Lost.	Goals—For.	Against.
4	2	2	13	11

The following matches have been arranged since the cards were issued:—

Nov. 23.—v. Old Boys. Home.  
 Dec. 7.—v. Middlesbro' Banks. Home.  
 Jan. 25.—v. Middlesbro' Banks. Away.

Stockton will only be played once again, viz., on Feb. 22nd, away.

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SCHOOL v. STOCKTON G.S.

At Guisboro' on Sept. 28th, when we won comfortably by 6 goals to nil. Guisboro' defended the Abbey goal in the first half, and soon got to close quarters, Lancaster opening the scoring for the season within a few

minutes from the start of the game. Our forwards continued to try the Stockton defence severely, and Watson put us two up. A third goal was registered by Pybus. Then Stockton broke away and got a couple of corners, which, however, they made no use of. Play once more was carried to the Stockton goal, and a penalty was awarded the home team. Lancaster took the kick, but sent the ball over the bar. His mistake, however, was of no great consequence, for almost immediately Ward headed through from a good corner kick by Levy. Half-time score—Guisboro' 4; Stockton 0.

After the interval the visitors were sent to very little advantage, and showed an entire want of method and combination. Our fifth goal came from the foot of Levy, and the last was neatly headed through by Pybus from a nice centre by Watson. This game could hardly be said to test the abilities of our team to any extent. Forster in goal was not overworked, and was quite equal to all he got to do. Kennedy played a strong game at back, and his partner for his first appearance, did very well, though he was apt to get flurried when pressed. Holmes put in a strenuous and useful game at centre-half and showed an amazing appetite for work. Tate tackles well, and when he is a surer kick will make a good half. Hutton, though brisk and clever at the start, fell off at the finish. Forward the veterans gave a good account of themselves, and the new men promise fairly well, but must learn not to wander from their places.

SCHOOL.—Forster; Kennedy and Allison; Hutton, Holmes, Tate; Levy, Pybus, Lancaster, Walson, Ward.

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#### SCHOOL v. MIDDLESBRO' H.S.

At Middlesbro', on October 5th, we defeated the home team by 3 goals to 2 after an exciting game. Guisbro' had the aid of the wind in the first half, and attacked at once, a fine hard drive by Lancaster from long range just grazing the bar. Of the play that followed we had the larger share, and more than once splendid opportunities of scoring were lost through over-eagerness on the part of our forwards. Middlesbro' now worked their way down, and their left-winger, who was much too good for the half opposed to him, got clear in and scored, Annett having no chance. The next point also came from the home left-wing, but just before half-time Lancaster opened our account. In the second three-quarters Holmes went right-half, and the change was a wise one. Our three inside forwards, keeping the ball low, worked with great determination, and tested the Middlesbro' custodian with some extremely warm shots. At length Ward scored the equalising goal,

and presently Pybus registered what proved to be the winning point. Guisbro' played up with great dash after this, and held the upper hand to the end, although once or twice the Middlesbro' team looked like bringing the scores level. Annett did very well in goal, and the pair in front of him were generally to be relied on. Allison is not so strong or sure a kick as his partner, but is full of pluck and tackles well. At half, Holmes is a tower of strength and, as usual, did the work of two men. Tate also gave an excellent display, and had his wing well in hand. Hutton was disappointing, and does not play a robust enough game for a half. Forward, Lancaster and Pybus were most prominent, Ward also worked hard, but Watson was rather slow, and Levy was evidently holding himself in reserve for some future match.

SCHOOL.—H. C. Annett; Kennedy and Allison; Hutton, Holmes, and Tate; Levy, Pybus i., Lancaster, Ward, Watson.

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#### Batting Averages.—Season 1901.

	No. of Innings.	Not out.	Most in Innings.	Total.	Average.
Ramsden ...	12	1	18*	77	7.00
Ward ...	12	0	17	83	6.91
Kennedy i. ...	12	1	21	69	6.27
Lancaster ...	12	0	20	74	6.16
Levy ...	12	3	15	44	4.88
Pybus i. ...	12	0	17	44	3.66
Scarth ...	5	0	8	15	3.00
Annett i. ...	10	1	6	23	2.55
Holmes i. ...	12	0	7	30	2.50
Hadfield i. ...	9	1	12	14	1.75
Sockett ...	5	2	2	3	1.00

#### Bowling Averages.

	Overs.	Maidens.	Runs.	Wickets.	Average.
Lancaster...	128.3	45	230	50	4.66
Pybus i. ...	118	32	236	43	5.48
Scarth ...	27.2	17	52	13	4

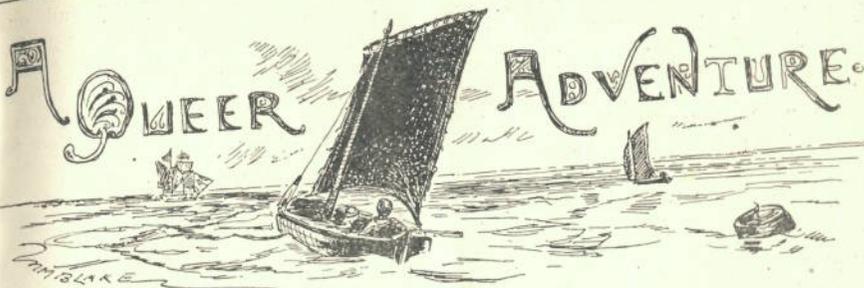
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#### SPORTS CHALLENGE CUP WINNERS.

Year.	(Cup instituted 1890).	Points.
1890 ...	Thomas Sanderson (D)	58
1891 ...	Harold Merryweather (D)	54
1892 ...	Harold Merryweather (D)	54
1893 ...	{ Edward Watt (D) ... Thomas Snowden (D) ... }	46
1894 ...	Arthur C. Miller (B)	34
1895 ...	Arthur C. Miller (B)	50
1896 ...	Thomas Taylor (B)	50
1897 ...	George Archibald (D)	40
1898 ...	Cecil Spencer (B)	52
1899 ...	Cedric Hadfield (B)	42
1900 ...	Percy Hadfield (B)	32
1901 ...	John Lancaster (B)	34

D Day-Boy. B Boarder.

Originally, points were counted on the following events.—120 Yards; 100 Yards; High Jump; Hurdle Race; Long Jump; Mile; Bicycle Race; Quarter Mile. A first scored 10 points, a second, 8; a third, 6; a fourth, 4. Of late years the Long Jump and Bicycle Race have been omitted, and the qualifying events now are:—100 Yards; 120 Yards; High Jump; Hurdle Race; Mile; Quarter Mile.



BY HERBERT HAYENS,  
*Author of "Ye Mariners of England," "Paris at Bay," "One of the Red Shirts," etc.*

CHAPTER I.

A Son of the Sea.

**T**HERE was never, as far as I can remember, any question as to the means by which I should earn a living.

My father was an old "salt," as his father had been before him, so that a love for the sea was born in me. I remember, as a boy, thinking what a shame it was everyone could not go to sea, and pitying the poor folk whose work compelled them to live on shore.

When my father retired from active work, he built a cottage near the coast in Cornwall, and took my mother and me to live there.

For several years I went to a small though very good school in the neighbourhood, and picked up a decent education. The master, knowing my bent, gave me a useful grounding in mathematics, and my father taught me the practical use of a ship's instruments.

All my holidays were spent on the water. I learned to swim like a fish, to pull an oar, and to sail a boat, so that, if I may say it without boasting, there were few, even of the fishermen about there, who could beat me.

Now and again some inshore friends used to visit us, and I'm afraid I was rather proud of showing off my skill as a boatman. However, most boys have a failing that way at some time or other, and after all there was no harm done.

Soon after my fourteenth birthday it was arranged I should go for a trip in a coasting vessel. My father didn't believe much in making things easy for boys.

"You'll get to the top, some day, young shaver," he said, "but it's just as well that you should know what it's like being at the bottom."

It goes against the grain to admit it, and I expect you boys won't think me much of a hero, but that trial trip was just awful.

The rough work didn't hurt me, being strong and hardy, but the food was vile and the foc's'le hardly up to an average pig-stye. The *Mary Jane*—that was the name of our old tub—was a wretched sailer; she regularly shipped every sea that broke, as if trying hard to wash herself clean. She never managed this, but in the effort we were kept thoroughly soaked, and at every sign of dirty weather the watch below had to turn out on deck.

I had twelve months of this kind of life, and was glad enough when the time came to leave the *Mary Jane*, which for the sake of those left on board, I honestly hoped would soon be split up into firewood.

I had written home from time to time, but there wasn't a word of complaint in any of the letters; my father had taught me to keep all my little troubles to myself.

I left the ship at Bristol, bought some shore-going clothes with my bit of money, had a good dinner—just to make sure there was still some decent food in the world, and took train to the station nearest my home.

"Well Charlie" said my father, looking me over with a critical eye, "so you've finished your cruise! Ready to sign on as cap'en, now, I'll be bound! Hoist that trunk up, and come aboard yourself."

He had hired a trap to fetch me from the station, and before long we dashed up in rattling style to the house, where mother, her eyes bright and sparkling, was waiting on the step.

You don't want to hear about the hugging and kissing, though mind you I was very glad to feel my mother's arms around me again, and I am not a bit ashamed to own it.

However we got all that over in time as well as the various remarks about my personal appearance. I had grown taller, she

said, but I was very thin and looked weak, as if I hadn't been well fed.

"Nonsense," exclaimed my father with a sly twinkle, "he's been living on the best of everything. I daresay now he'll turn up his nose at anything we set before him."

"Guess 'twill be different to what I've been used to," said I with a laugh, "but I'll try to manage, just to please mother."

So we went into the house, and sat down at the well-spread table, where I soon showed that whatever the cruise had done, it had not taken away my appetite.

For the next fortnight or so I stayed at home, going down most days into the village for a chat with the fishermen. I paid one visit, too, to my old school, and saw several of my former chums who were wild to hear about my sea-going adventures.

The master was very kind; he gave me good advice, and made me happy by saying he had no doubt I should one day be commanding a ship of my own. I need hardly tell you I thought he was a fine fellow with very good judgment.

Meanwhile my father was making preparations for launching me on my real career as a sailor. Among his old friends who still used the sea was James Morley, skipper and part owner of the *Flying Maid*, a beautiful schooner that had several times done the trip round the world.

Soon after my year with the coasting brig was up, Captain Morley arrived in London, and in answer to a letter, wrote, agreeing to take me with him as an apprentice, properly bound. His own son, Ted, was an apprentice on the schooner, so that I should have a companion about my own age.

This suited me very well, and, though sorry enough at parting with mother, I was really glad when the morning came for the journey to London.

My father accompanied me, partly to visit his ancient crony, and, of course, to get the necessary papers signed, and to see that I did not fall into mischief.

I liked the skipper, or, as we called him in sailor fashion, the "Old Man," at first sight. He was about the average height, spare of build, but tough and wiry, and with mild blue eyes that looked strangely out of place in his weather-beaten face.

"This the young 'un, Noll?"—my father's name was Oliver Milton—"he looks a likely customer, and anyhow I've some good stout rope stowed away to touch him up with. Ted, here's your new chum, Charlie Milton."

"Glad to see you," said the skipper's son, coming forward. "I hope we shall get on together."

"No fear of that," said his father; "show

him over the boat while we do our bit of business. Come on, Noll," and our two elders disappeared down the companion-way.

Ted Morley was a year my senior, and already knew enough of navigation to have gained a mate's certificate. He was a regular boy though, full of fun, and rather fond of innocent skylarking.

It didn't take long either to show he was wonderfully proud of his father's ship, and indeed the *Flying Maid* was a beauty. After my old tub of a brig it was like a floating palace. The men's quarters were large and well ventilated; the cabins—my own included—were like ladies' boudoirs; the brass-work shone like gold; the decks were beautifully clean and polished, and the canvas looked like snowy linen.

Ted was well pleased at my praise, but really the *Flying Maid* was worth all that anyone could have said of her.

"What kind of crew have you?" I asked.

"First rate! All English except that joker standing by himself on the forecabin. He's an Indian or Malay, or some such outlandish tribe. Has a name as long as my arm, but the Johnnies dubbed him Peter, and Peter it is, as long as he's aboard the *Flying Maid*."

"How came your father to ship him," I asked, for it seemed curious to have this one Oriental mixed up with a lot of English Jacks.

"Oh," replied Ted, "'twas just a case of soft sawder. You know the 'Old Man' has a heart like a baby's. Well, yesterday this nigger comes along, learns the schooner's going to call at Singapore, and wants to work his passage out. Came over, he says, in the *Star of the North*, fell ill, got laid up in hospital, and here he is stranded."

"'Twas very kind of your father to take him on."

"Hum!" said Ted, "I don't expect he'll be any use."

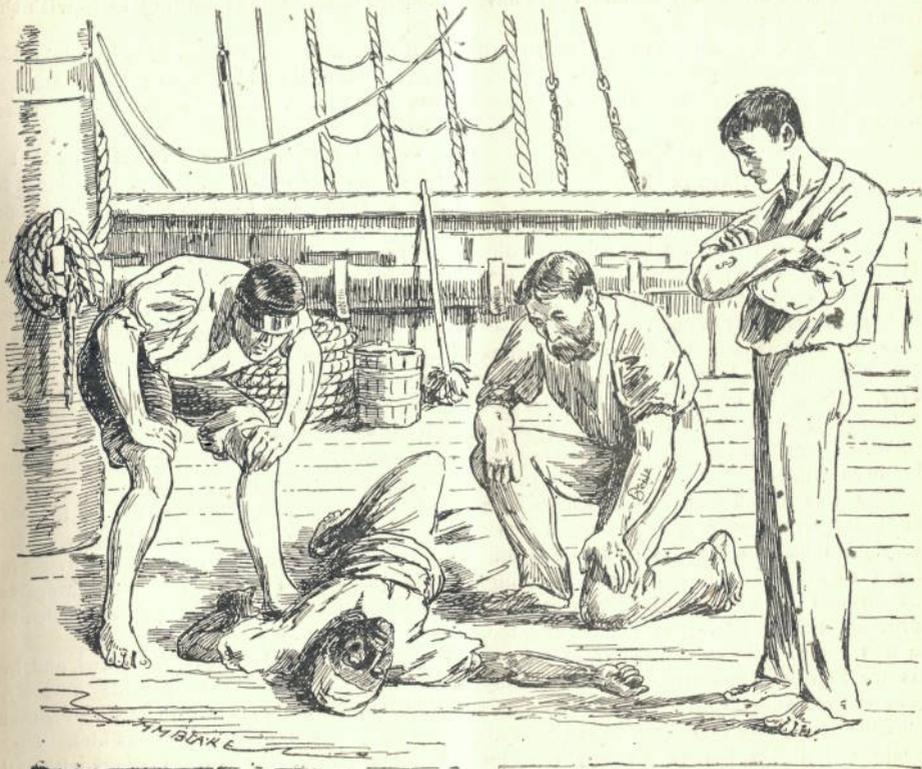
"I suppose he has his papers?"

"Oh, aye, they're all right, but you can never trust these niggers. As likely as not this chap's yarn's all a pack of lies. However it doesn't amount to much, except that the others will have to work a bit harder if he turns out a frost."

Soon after this the skipper and my father came on deck, and we all went ashore together, Ted coming with me for company, much to his satisfaction.

It was a great treat for me, as I had never been in London before, and though I've visited most parts of the world since then, I can safely say I haven't seen anything more wonderful than the big city.

The next day my father bought a few more things to stow in my sea-chest, and then for-



WE RAN OVER TO THE POOR FELLOW QUICKLY.

mally handed me over to the charge of Captain Morley.

"Here's your master for the next four years, my boy," said he, "whether you like it or not, and now it's a case of sink or swim for yourself."

"Oh, he'll swim right enough," exclaimed the skipper pleasantly, "or he isn't his father's son."

"I'll do my best at anyrate," said I, giving my father's hand a farewell shake.

"I'll keep a weather eye on the younker, Noll," cried the skipper, as his old friend, with a last good-bye, stepped ashore.

I watched him as he walked briskly along the quay. At the corner of the first shed he stopped, looked round, waved his hand, and then disappeared.

I felt rather glum for a day or two, thinking of my old home, but this fit soon wore off, and Captain Morley very wisely ordered things so that I should have little time for brooding.

I soon found that he was a thorough seaman, strict but not harsh, getting a full day's work out of the men, but seeing in return that they were well paid, well fed, and well housed.

Jack understands a skipper of that sort,

and though working like niggers, there wasn't a more contented body of men in the Thames, than the crew of the *Flying Maid*.

"Takes it out of you, he does," said one of them to me, with a jerk of his thumb towards the bridge, "but when it's time to knock off, we knocks off and there's no short grubbing aboard this craft."

"If a chap acts square by the 'Old Man,' the 'Old Man' acts square by him," remarked another, "but the sea lawyer that ships on the *Flying Maid* can look out for squalls."

As the two mates, Parker and Wills, who were very nice fellows, took their cue from the captain, you may guess there was little to complain of. All hands worked with a will, and two days after my father left London, the *Flying Maid* dropped down the river in a drizzling rain, to begin her voyage to the Eastern Seas.

I was quite comfortable by this time. I liked the boat, the officers and the crew, while my new chum, Ted Morley, was just the sort of fellow to get on with. And if I had been inclined to grumble at anything, why I had only to shut my eyes, and think I was on the *Mary Jane*.

So I began my apprenticeship to the sea under very favourable conditions, and had I

not come well through it, no one would have been to blame but myself.

But there was one queer surprise in store, which ear-marked, so to say, this my first voyage to foreign parts, making it the most memorable of all.

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## CHAPTER II.

### A Mysterious Parcel.

I cannot say why Peter, the oriental sailor 'took to me' as the phrase goes, unless it was because I showed him some little kindness during the first days of our voyage.

He seemed, as I have mentioned before, strangely out of place on board the *Flying Maid*. His mates on the fore-castle were just ordinary English sailors, strong, brawny, hard-working fellows, and in some respects simple as children.

Peter was about the average height, with small deep-set eyes, and skin as brown as a berry. He had no muscles to speak of, and was next to useless in hauling and heaving, but he was lithe and active as a cat, and never seemed to tire. In his own way, too, he was a good sailor, and up aloft, in dangerous weather, was more than a match for any hand on the schooner.

"The chap's certainly been to sea before," I said one day to Ted, as we watched him flying up the rigging.

"Yes," answered my chum, "and yet I don't believe he's a real sailor. He's streets above the usual cut of Lascar and that kind of trash."

"How do the men take him?"

"Oh, they're civil enough, though they don't cotton to him much."

Somehow the man interested me, and I found myself watching him a good deal. He certainly did not look like a sailor, and though doing his share of the work, did not act like one.

One very queer thing about him was his English. It was altogether different to pigeon-English, and seemed as if it had been learned from books. His face, too, was high-class, and he looked to me like a man who used his brain more than his hands, in the general run of things.

He was in the second mate's watch, where Captain Morley had placed me, so that I had a good deal to do with him. Perhaps because he was so utterly friendless, I took care to treat him kindly, and, when there was nothing going forward, to have an occasional chat with him.

At first he was shy and reserved, but he thawed out gradually, and his talk was worth listening to. He was full of information and queer yarns, but, oddly enough, they were all

inshore tales, and had nothing to do with the sea.

He knew India well, and the countries beyond, and could spin a yarn about strange customs that would make your hair stand on end.

It was just after we left the Cape that I first began to hear whispers of uneasiness in the fo'c'sle. Till then everything had gone swimmingly; the schooner had made a splendid run; we had met with delightful weather, and favourable winds had sent us scudding through the ocean at a rattling pace. On board the greatest harmony had prevailed, the work was willingly done, and we were a very jolly ship's company. Whenever possible Captain Morley, or the first mate, had given us boys a lesson in navigation, and I was rapidly picking up a good deal of the knowledge needed in my profession.

One morning my chum asked me if I had heard anything queer from the fo'c'sle.

"No," said I in surprise, "what's wrong in that quarter? I thought the men were as jolly as sandboys. What is there for them to grumble about?"

"It's the nigger," whispered Ted, and he laughed, as I thought, a trifle uneasily. "The men have got it into their noddles that there's something uncanny about him. They think he's a sorcerer and has doings with evil spirits."

"Bosh!" said I, laughing aloud, "there's nothing the matter with Peter, except that his ways are a bit different from theirs."

"Likely enough," answered Ted, seeming only half convinced, "but you know what Jack is when he gets a thing into his head I shouldn't be surprised if there's trouble brewing."

He left me at that, each of us having some work to do, and I thought no more of the matter till a day or two afterwards. Then a chance word from a man in my watch brought the subject up again, and I set myself to find out what it was really all about.

This was harder work than any problem in navigation, for the sailors would have little to say, and most of their conversation was carried on by winks and nods. However, by careful manœuvring, I got at some of the trouble, and a very rubbishy affair it was.

The first thing to excite suspicion was Peter's waist-belt, a broad leathern girdle, with a deep and capacious pouch. This pocket, which hung at the side, was the receptacle for some article which none of the sailors had ever seen. The pocket was securely fastened by a strong clasp, and the belt itself was always around Peter's waist. Watch above, or watch below; lying out on the yards, or in his bunk, he never took it off.

Out of sheer curiosity at first, the men kept watch, and discovered that Peter talked to what the second mate called his "pocket-companion." Of course no one understood his "gibberish," so the sailors promptly decided he was making incantations, and perhaps by means of his "black art," casting a spell over the ship.

Then came the most startling discovery of all—Peter never slept. Time and again, one man or other, tempted by the mystery of the pocket, had crept in the dead of night to his bunk. Each had the same story to tell. There lay Peter quite still, but with his eyes wide open, and with a pale green light on his face, which showed his thin lips parted in a mocking smile.

How much truth there was in the yarn I never knew. For certain it lost nothing in telling, and there was a great deal of silly superstition added; but I have since seen too many Eastern wonders, to despise altogether what our stay-at-home folk scornfully call "old wives' fables."

However, be that as it may, the sailors began to give Peter as wide a berth as possible, while every now and then someone foretold, that the "nigger with his outlandish gibberish" would bring ill-luck to the *Flying Maid*.

For my part, believing Peter to be harmless, I went out of my way several times to do him a good turn, and to show him that he was not without a friend on board the boat.

Of course the men's remarks were supposed to be confined to the fore-castle, but they managed to leak aft, much to the officers' amusement.

Captain Morley laughed good-humouredly; the first mate said it was "a pack of rubbish;" so did the second, but Ted hardly seemed satisfied.

"It's mighty curious, anyhow," said he; "I'd like to know what he carries in that big pouch."

"A charm of some kind," said the first mate. "Part of an elephant's tusk, or a snake's poison-bag,

maybe. You forget these niggers have a religion of their own."

"Aye," said the skipper, "and all sorts of notions that seem queer to us. As to this chap, we'll take no notice, and the storm will soon blow over."

About a week after this conversation Peter gave me a startling shock. Just after four bells in our night watch, he approached me and said in the coolest manner, "Sir, I beg of you a favour."

"All right, Peter," said I, "what is it?"

The answer spoken in the lowest tones, and in the most matter-of-fact way, made me jump.

"I am going to die," he said, "though there is a thing left for me to do. Therefore, I ask of your favour, that you will assist me. In this pouch I have a little present for a man at Singapore. His name is written on this piece of paper, and where he is to be found. Will you take my belt to him?"

"Nonsense, Peter," I cried "You're a bit run down, that's all; there's nothing else the matter with you."

"Yet you will give me your promise?" he asked, "and you will not look in the bag? After all it is not much, and no one else will do this thing for me."

The fellow made me feel quite creepy, and

PRESENTLY A MAN CAME IN.



to get rid of him, more than anything else, I promised to carry the belt to the unknown man in Singapore.

He thanked me profusely and slipped noiselessly away, while I stood wondering if the incident wasn't a dream.

When I saw him the next day he was going placidly about his work, his face as smooth and unruffled as a child's, and without a trace of fear, only, once as I passed him, he whispered, "You will not forget your promise, sir?"

"No," said I, "though I hope you will be able to deliver the thing yourself."

He shook his head and smiled pensively.

"The message came last night," he said; "it is enough."

Now whoever reads this story can explain the whole affair to his own liking; I have no objection. Only on this one point there must be no mistake made. The man was not in the least bit afraid, or put out in any way. He was as cool as I had ever seen him, and what happened cannot be explained by saying his nerves broke down.

He spent that day just as he had spent others, doing his work, neatly, skilfully and without the slightest trace of disorder. To this much there is not only my testimony, but that of the second mate, and of every man in the watch.

I remember the evening well, and am not likely ever to forget it. The sun was setting in a blaze of gold; only the lightest of breezes rippled the gleaming waters, and the schooner was skimming along under all sail.

Suddenly some little matter required attention aloft, and in obedience to the mate's order, Peter and another A.B. ran up the rigging. There was, one would have said, no more danger in the operation than in a landsman going upstairs to bed. Indeed it was of such an ordinary nature that I took no notice of it, when, all at once, the mate cried out in a tone of horror, and the next instant, Peter fell in a heap on the deck.

We ran over to the poor fellow quickly, though every man knew that nothing could be done for him. He never stirred, and did not even moan, but his eyes were wide open and at sight of me he said faintly, "You will keep your promise, sir?"

"Yes" I said, with a husky catch in my throat, "I'll do what you want, Peter."

His lips parted in a satisfied smile, and so he died, without another word. It seemed as though he had waited only to hear my answer to his question. We buried him that same evening, and I took the belt, stained with his blood, to my cabin.

Of course I told Captain Morley the curious yarn, and what I had promised Peter to do.

"Well, it's a queer notion altogether," said he, "but I don't see any reason why you shouldn't keep your word. The poor chap had his private affairs, same as us. However I'll go along with you, when we get ashore."

Thinking some of the men might be tempted to examine the belt, I stowed it away in a safe place, and tried to forget all about it, but in this as you may guess, I didn't succeed by a long way. I was as curious as any girl, and would have given much to peep into the mysterious pouch, but then I had passed my word to the dead man.

\* \* \*

### CHAPTER III.

#### What the Box Contained.

The remaining portion of our voyage passed without adventure, and very glad I was when we dropped anchor at Singapore. While in London I had looked forward greatly to visiting this wonderful Eastern port, but now I could take scarcely any interest in the strange and marvellous sight. My head was full of Peter and his mysterious belt, and I waited impatiently till the skipper had finished his official business.

On the third morning he told me to get ready, and we went ashore together. Captain Morley was at home in Singapore, but even he had some difficulty in finding the place mentioned on the slip of paper. It was on the western side of the creek, right away from the English quarter with its busy shops, its crowded banks, and pleasant mansions in which the merchants lived.

The house was small, isolated, and not far from the jungle-land. It looked a poor place and I was not surprised to find the room, into which a native servant showed us, almost bare of furniture.

Presently a man came in, and I forgot all about the room in gazing at him. He was dressed in a rich flowing robe fastened by a girdle, and he wore a skull cap heavy with golden fringe. His face was creased and wrinkled all over, and his eyes glowed like red-hot coals. Before being with him many minutes one felt that he was no ordinary person.

In speaking to us he used the same kind of English that we had heard from Peter, but his voice was so soft and musical, so quaint and delicate, that it was a pleasure to listen to him.

Captain Morley related the first part of Peter's story, after which I told of his mysterious fore-warning, or crazy dream if you prefer to call it so, his last request, and my own promise.

Our host listened in silence, and not a muscle of his face showed whether he was

glad or sorry, or touched in the least by the news of Peter's death. If the man had any feeling at all he was the best actor I have met!

He glanced carelessly at the blood-stained belt, and displayed no eagerness to open the pouch, though finally he did so, and took out a piece of crumpled paper, covered with writing in a language strange to us.

This he read and then drew out a small sandal wood box, remarking as he did so, "It is well; it shows that he had not forgotten the gods of his fathers."

I hardly dared look at the skipper when the box was opened. Inside lay a mouldy tooth, a bit of dried skin, and what looked like a piece of shrivelled meat.

The native gazed reverently at the articles, touched them with his fingers, and carefully closed the box again. Then he thanked us, and asked me to write my name, and the address of my English home, on a piece of paper, which he afterwards thrust inside his robe.

"Much cry and little wool" said Captain Morley when we were on our way to the ship. "Charlie, my boy, there's a roasting in store for you!"

Of course Ted and the two mates chaffed me unmercifully, and I went about all the next day feeling very foolish. The great mystery seemed to have fizzled out in a very tame fashion.

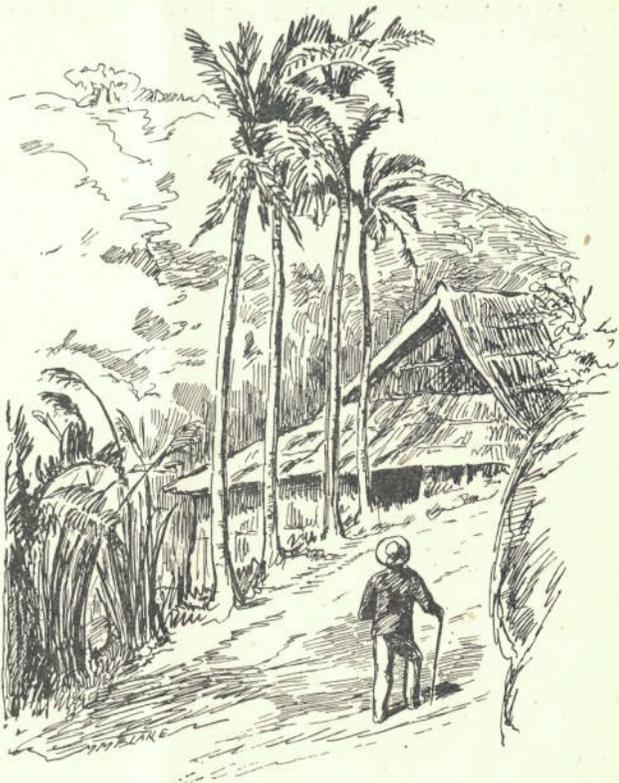
However, we had not done with the affair. A day or two later a man came on board the schooner, asking for Captain Morley. He was somewhere about fifty years old, spare, alert, with a soldierly bearing and keen eyes. He gave his name as Rendle, and said he had just come from England by the steamship *White Rose*.

I took his message, and having shown him to the cabin, returned on deck.

"He isn't looking for a berth, is he?" asked Ted, laughing.

"No!" he seems to be one of the upper crust by his manner," said I, and thought no more of him.

At the end of half an hour or so, word came along that the captain wished to see me in the cabin. Wondering what he wanted I



THE DOOR WAS OPEN, AND THERE WAS NOT A SOUL IN THE BUILDING.

went down sharp, and in reply to my knock at the door, was told to enter. The two men were sitting at opposite sides of the table; the skipper hot and excited; the stranger pale and nervous.

"Charlie," said the captain, "tell this gentleman all you know about the unfortunate nigger who was killed on the voyage out."

This seemed an odd request, but somehow I knew it was no laughing matter, so I said, "All right, sir," and began the yarn from the day I first set foot aboard the *Flying Maid*.

Captain Morley sat with his head to one side as if the business was none of his; the stranger leaned on the table drumming restlessly with his fingers, and keeping his eyes fixed on my face.

He let no word pass unheeded, and, when I came to the opening of the box, shot out a sharp, "What was the box like?"

"Just an ordinary box of sandal-wood as far as I could tell."

"What was in it?"

"Nothing particular," I answered, red as a turkey-cock—"an old tooth, a bit of skin, and a piece of dried meat."

Then he plied me with questions about the

man in the lonely house, and it was plain he had met him before. I answered them all, and Mr. Rendle's face grew longer.

"I can go home by the first boat," he said, "and might have spared myself the trouble of coming out. Still, now I am here, I may as well see the house. Captain, will you let this young gentleman go with me as a guide?"

"Certainly, but if you have guessed right you'll find your bird flown."

"I'm afraid so," muttered Rendle. "However, it won't take us long."

Wondering what it all meant I went ashore with the stranger, and led him in the direction of the native's house. A hundred yards off he stopped, saying, "If you don't mind I'd like you to go on by yourself. If, as I expect, the place is empty, come back to me here."

Accordingly I proceeded alone, and soon found that Rendle's suspicions were correct. The door was open, and there was not a soul in the building. The bits of furniture had not been removed, but all trace of the human occupants had vanished.

Going out I called to my companion, who came running up, and we searched the place together.

"It's no use," said he presently, "the old rascal has made himself scarce. Well, it's no good crying over spilt milk, though £20,000 is a big loss."

I made no answer to this, thinking that perhaps the man was crazy, and I felt rather relieved when we got back into the English quarter of the town. At the door of one of the hotels he stopped and invited me to lunch with him, which I did, and spent a very pleasant hour. He said nothing more about Peter or the box, but on my leaving he remarked that the next time I had a matter of £20,000 in my possession, he would advise me to look after it closely.

I returned to the schooner with my brain muddled by trying to make out the fellow's meaning, for I did not care to ask him.

"Well," exclaimed the skipper as I came aboard—"cage empty?"

"Yes, sir," I replied.

"Ah!" said he slowly, "then I guess there was something in the yarn after all. However he can't blame us; it isn't our business to play the detective."

"I wish I knew what it's all about, sir. I think my brain must be softening."

"There's no reason why you shouldn't know," replied Captain Morley, laughing, "you've had a big hand in the game. Look at this newspaper paragraph."

He handed me an old copy of a London daily with a paragraph marked:—

"A strange and unaccountable outrage was

committed last night at Eyton Hall, Surrey, the residence of Hugh Rendle, Esquire. Early this morning Mr. Rendle was discovered lying on his bed, tightly bound and gagged. The apartment had been ransacked in the most workmanlike manner, but, it is reported that the thief or thieves carried nothing off. Even the valuables lying on the table were left untouched. The unfortunate gentleman, who is still suffering from nervous shock, can give no information likely to lead to the capture of his assailant."

"The tangle's getting worse than ever," I muttered.

"It'll unravel when you hear the yarn. This Mr. Rendle, it appears, is an old Anglo-Indian, and spent many years in the East. For reasons of his own he did not tell the police everything, but, this morning, he gave me a description of his midnight visitor."

"Yes?" I exclaimed, wondering where all this led.

"I recognised the chap instantly; it was our unfortunate friend, Peter."

"Peter?" I gasped in astonishment. The skipper nodded.

"But he didn't steal anything," said I.

"Not according to his notions I daresay. But I'd better go back and begin at the beginning, though I can only give you Rendle's version of it. Still, I'm inclined to think there's a good deal of truth in the yarn. This is what he says. In addition to his ordinary work out here he went in rather extensively for buying precious stones, and did a pretty good business at it. A month or so before returning to England he was offered a heart-shaped ruby. He didn't tell me all the particulars, but I understood he got it a great bargain, though it was a genuine deal, all square and above board. Of course the fellow was delighted, when, just as he was ready to start, down comes a Burmese priest with a yarn about the ruby having been stolen from one of his idols."

"Could he recognise the stone?" I asked.

"He said so, but there was nothing to prove it one way or other. Well the upshot of the trouble, just then at anyrate, was that Rendle took the ruby to England where he was offered £15,000 for it."

"Whew!" said I, "that's a long price."

"Rendle didn't think so. He stood out for £20,000, and was on the point of selling it, when our friend Peter turned up, sent specially by the priest, Rendle imagines, to get the ruby back."

"That would account for the mysterious burglary."

"Just so! Well, Peter slips off, comes down to the docks, pitches me a humbugging yarn,

and gets himself shipped aboard the *Flying Maid*."

"But where was the ruby?"

"Why in the box of course. Rendle thinks it was specially contrived, with a concealed receptacle where the stone could be hidden, and that Peter had arranged with the priest to return to Singapore."

The tale seemed plausible enough, but one point remained as great a mystery as ever. How did the man know that he would not live to reach port?

When I broached that question the captain shook his head solemnly.

"Look here, my boy," said he, "we westerners think we're mighty clever, but we don't know everything. It might have been just a queer coincidence, or it might not. Anyhow the man's dead, and the ruby's gone, so there's no more to be said," and with that he dismissed the subject.

Whether Mr. Rendle ever recovered the missing jewel I cannot say, but it is hardly likely. He did not come down to the schooner again, and at the end of the week we slipped our moorings, having shipped a stranded Scotch sailor in place of the dead Peter.

At first we talked a good deal about the ruby, but other events soon claimed a share of attention, and by degrees the subject dropped out of conversation.

However, the incident cropped up yet again, and this time in a way that made me think Mr. Rendle's guess had not been wide of the mark.

After an absence of over two years the

*Flying Maid* returned to London, and I ran down home to snatch a brief holiday.

When the usual greetings were done with, my father, flourishing a letter, exclaimed, "Here's a rattling good Christmas-box for you, Charlie!"

"What is it?" I asked.

"A banker's letter, my boy, in which Price, Green, & Macpherson, the Indian bankers, advise Mr. Charles Milton, that there is a sum of five hundred pounds standing to his credit in their books."

"It's a hoax!" I said.

"Not a bit of it, I've been up to see. The money's there, right enough, though who put it there I couldn't discover. However, it's a very tidy nest egg."

When Captain Morley heard of this surprising good-fortune, he put my own thoughts into words.

"That settles the matter" he exclaimed. "The ruby was in the box without a doubt, and this is a thank-offering from the Burmese priest."

"Then," said my father, "Charlie ought to hand over the money to the man who lost the ruby."

There was no time for a visit to Eyton Hall, so I wrote informing Mr. Rendle of the circumstance, and making him an offer of the money. In reply I received a letter, thanking me for what the writer was pleased to call my honourable conduct, and expressing a hope that the £500 would serve to start me comfortably in life, which it did.

