THE ROSE OF PARADISE.

CHAPTER X .- Continued.

"You may ask, sir," says I, smiling; " out as for my telling you, why, that is a very different matter."

Yet I had determined upon one point almost as soon as Mr. White had informed me who was the pirate captain into whose hands the Cassandra had fallen, and that was to go aboard of the pirate craft, and to speak with Captain Edward England himself. I had known him before he had entered into the nefarious life which he now followed, and while he was still first mate of the Lady Alice. I was then with Captain Wraxel in the West Indies, and had met England at Kingston, in the island lay that to your luck, and not to me. of Jamaica, upon which occasion he had appeared to conceive quite a liking for me, though I cannot say it was returned in kind. I knew him as a wild and reckless blade, but neither blood-thirsty nor cruel, and making every allowance for the change in his nature which this wicked life might effect, I did not believe that injury would happen to me if I could once gain his promise of safety in visiting his ship.

As for the jewel, I did not believe that Captain Leach would disclose the secret of it without he had been compelled to do so; wherefore, if he had it still in his own keeping, I entertained a hope that I might by some trick or other snatch the precious stone away from him again. In that event I did not believe he would say anything, for fear that the pirates might punish him for keeping it a secret from them.

But although I could perceive, as Mr. Longways had said, that it was of great importance both to his future and mine own that the Rose of Paradise should be regained, I ventured my life not so much in the hope of obtaining the stone as of procuring some means by which all hands might be able to quit the island; for weand more especially the women-could not but be in constant danger from the bloody wretches thirsting for revenge on account of the check which we of the Cassandra had lately put upon them. Where fore I thought it best that I should boldly visit the pirate captain, for I had great hopes of being able to persuade him to allow us to escape, and even of procuring from him some means to that end.

In any case, the venture could not but be of advantage to us, for even if I should perish, their revenge might thereby be satisfied, and they might depart without molesting the rest of the ship's company, for they were pleased to regard me as the chief cause of all their mishaps in the late

engagement.

Before I dared venture aboard the pirate craft it was necessary that I should first write a letter to the captain, and also that I should have a trustworthy person to convey my communication to him; nor did I give two thoughts to this matter, for common justice pointed to Mr. White as the only fitting one to be my messenger; accordingly I sent for him, and he soon came, I told him that I desired to open communication with the pirate captain upon a matter of great importance, and that I gave him this opportunity towards redeeming his self-respect by conveying my message to Captain England. Nor have I ever seen a man more grateful than Mr. White upon this occasion; two or three times he strove to speak, and when he did contrive to do so it was only simply to say, "Sir, I thank you."

The surgeon having given me permission I wrote my letter, and Mr. White took it that very night, having no companion with him but two natives who acted as guides. I have a copy of the letter, made at the time, which runs as follows:

"To Captain Edward England:

and distressing situation.

and those intrusted to our keeping, from under the shade of the bushes and rest my- ten days ago. What I say is, hang him you, who sought to encompass our de- self for a long time. tended to them, may perish miserably in or for water. this desolate and savage land.

"I know that there is with you one I could take a single step. who is mine enemy, because of a great | As I drew nigh, two fellows who had will no doubt conspire against my life-I | side sprang to their feet and hailed me.

coming and my going. "Sir, I beseech you to grant me this cause of the weak and helplese, and am, boat, for I could go no further.

"JOHN MACKRA."

"To Captain John Mackra, late of the 'Cassandra:'

"Sir,-If you choose to risk your life by coming hither, devil a word have I to say against it. They're a wild set of blades under me, and mind the helm no better than a washing tub, so that my orders have little or no weight with them. All the same, if you're the man to come aboard, and have the courage to face the matter out, I'll do what I can to see that no harm happens to you. But if you'll take a friend's advice you'll stay where you are, and let a bad matter cure itself, for you know very well that there is no use splicing a rotten rope. As for the pickle you're in

"EDWARD ENGLAND."

I was none too well pleased with this precious epistle, for I could see very readily how little command Captain England held upon the wretches under him. Nevertheless, it did not alter my determination to go aboard of the pirate craft, and to speak with him. I was the more inclined to do this as I felt well assured that the pirates could not now be as hot for my blood as they had been at first.

It was necessary for me to get away from the king's town without confiding my determination to any one, or any one having knowledge of my departure, for I knew very well that there was not one of my officers but would have stayed me from acting on my plans had they been informed of them, even if they should find it needful to use force to prevent my and it was this circumstance that came

It was the evening of the eighth day how it happened : since the fight when Mr. White returned One great fellow with a dreadful scar very night, for nothing could be gained deck as though he had been shot. by further delay.

to make my way along the beach, which, blow, although it would increase the distance by five or six miles, would yet afford me a the water was out at low tide.

That night I wrote a lengthy letter to Mr. Langely, giving him full particulars as to what I was about to undertake, and also instructions as to how he should proceed in the event of my not returning from my adventure. I also wrote my will and settled all my affairs as well as I was able. This took until nigh midnight.

knowledge of any one, and by the light of up to England until he stood face to face a little wick floating in a dish of oil, the with him. flame of which I kept so well shaded that no one perceived it in all that time,

hut, and found the stare shining most suit us easy-going fellows. D'ye you beautifully in the sky, and all the air full | think you're king or emperor, and that of the noises of the night. I did not tarry | we're nigger slaves, that you knock us however, but walked straight to the beach, about as it suits your humor?" and along it towards the northern end of I had expected England would have the island, around which and beyond the shot the fellow down where he stood, but cape I knew the bay to lie, about ten he stayed his hand, and by the muttering eagues distant from the king's town.

I had only been twice upon my feet most of them with him. "Sir,-I write you this in a most forlorn | journey by about six o'clock in the morn- | what? Why, for giving this here precious "Having defended ourselves, our ship, I could go no farther, but had to lie down all the good fellows he sent to h-ll since

struction by all means in your power, we I speak of these things to show why it a terrible kick in the side without taking now find ourselves reduced to the necessity | was that my journey should have occupied | his eyes from his captain's face. of imploring aid from you, who so lately nigh upon two days, for it was not until At this time, although I heard what was sought our lives. Nor would we even yet the afternoon of the second day that I said, I thought of little of what was passing ask anything from you were it not for came within sight of a boat, drawn up on about me, my mind being beclouded with three poor and helpless women, whose the beach, which I knew to belong to the my weakness and my pains, for I had wellsafety here is a matter of uncertainty from pirates, and from which the crew had gone nigh swooned from the agony of those day to day, and who, without aid is ex. into the thickets, either to search for game two kicks upon my flank and loins.

I had eaten nothing all that day, for I | ing deathly sick and faint. "Sir, though a wild and ungoverned had not thought that my journey would A time of silence followed, though how have taken me so long, and I did not care long it might be I could not exactly tell man; therefore I ask this aid of you for to burden myself with any more food than Then I heard Captain England speak, the necessary. So I was glad to see the boat, "Furthermore, I ask that you do not not only being very weary, but also having a great distance, because of my condition. hastily refuse this plea for aid, but may my feet so badly blistered by the unallow met come aboard of your craft and wonted exposure to the hot sun on the the fellow? If you want the man's life, bare sand that it was only with pain that

injury which he hath done me, and who been lying in the shade upon the further

mean Captain Leach, lately one of my "Who are you?" says one of them-a passengers, and who, I suspect, along with great black-bearded fellow with a dirty others, betraved us into your band. But vellow handkerchief tied around his head, although I believe he would seek my life, a ragged scarf about his loins, a brace of vet I am willing to trust it into your pistols hanging from a leathern belt, and hands if you will promise me safety in my dirty shirt opened at the breast, showing a add hairy throat and chest.

"I am Captain John Mackra," said I speech with you, that I may plead the and I sat down upon the gunwale of the

"The devil you are!" says he, and he "Your very obedient and humble servant, stared at me from top to toe as though I had been some strange creature the like of Mr. White was only gone for a little which he had never beheld before. Then, more than two days, and when he returned without another word, he put his finger to pain. But God in His great mercy dehe brought with him a letter from the his lips and gave a great, long, shrill

pirate captain. The communication ran | whistle. I presently heard a great crackling in the bushes and noise of loud voices and soon there burst out of the thickets six or eight great, bearded, dirty, villanous rascals, who came running down to the boat, having caught sight of me, and knowing me to be a stranger. "It's Captain Leach," said the one of the pirates who had not yet spoken-a young fellow of not more than twenty.

Some of those who had just come had been drinking, as could be plainly seen from the way in which they acted. One of them was for killing me off-hand, and I verily believe would have done so, in spite of all that the others could do or say, had not another of them knocked him down with an oar with such a blow that I thought at first the fellow had been killed outright.

After that they bound me hand and foot and chucked me into the stern-sheets of the boat along with the fellow who had been knocked down by the oar, and who lay without life or motion, as though neither were of more account than so much ola junk.

After that they shoved off from the beach in the direction of my old craft the Cassandra, which rode at her anchor about a mile and a half or two miles away.

The boat had hardly come alongside when the news of my coming ran fore and aft like a train of powder. They hoisted me upon deck and laid me just aft of the main-mast, whilst a crowd gathered round me and stared at me, some of them grinning and some of them cursing me.

Most of them were more or less in liquor nigh to costing me my life, and this was

with Captain England's letter, and I de- across his face gave me a kick in the loins termined that that very night should wit- which I thought at first had finished me, ness my departure upon my enterprise, and for no cause that I could see but that which to one looking coolly upon it might he was drunk and in a savage humor, seem little if any better than the frantic One or two of them sang out to him not act of a madman. Nor was it that I my- to kill me just then, but he made no self was unconscious of the magnitude of answer except by aiming another kick at these dangers, for I entered upon them my head, which I warded off with my arm only because that in the desperate state of so that it did me little or no harm. He our necessities I could see no other course drew back his foot for another blow, but out of our difficulties, and so had to choose just then an iron belaying-pin came whizthis for lack of a better. Accordingly, as | zing through the air and struck the fellow said before, I determined to set out that in the jaw, knocking him down upon the

I turned mine eyes and saw that it was There was no other choice left me but Captain England himself who struck the

"Look'ee," says he, "we'll have none of this; if killing is to be done, it is to be sound and level highway for my journey- done lawyer-like. He's come aboard ing, the sand being firm and hard when himself, and if he's to be killed he's to be killed after his trial, and not before."

There was a moment or two of pause, for Captain England had drawn a brace of pistols, and held one cocked in either hand; but just then up stepped a fellow who it was very plain to see was of some account amongst them, for his clothes were of rich stuff, and he had a gold chain with a cross slung around his neck, and All this I managed to do without the golden ear-rings in his ears. He walked

"Look'ee, Ned England," says he, "what I've got to say is this: yon're About one o'clock I came out from my carrying things with too high a hand to

of the rest I knew that the speaker carried

since the fever had left me, and found that "Look'ee, now," says he, more boldly, I was far more weak than I had supposed | "didn't we choose you for our captain myself to be, so that I had to rest myself ourselves? And here you knock us at frequent intervals. However, I man- around with belaying pins as though you aged to cover some ten miles of my owned every man of us; and all for ing, by which time I was so exhausted that sea-captain an innocent kick or two for up to the yardarm;" and he fetched me

Therefore I lay with mine eyes shut, feel-

words coming to my ears as though from

"D-n you, Burke, what do I care for take it !" and I know that he swung upon his heel and walked away.

CHAPTER XII.

I could not at that minute see that any. thing stood between me and death, for the pirates were so bent upon my immediate destruction that they set about getting ready a line to hang me up without more Potter.

Yet though I had cause to apprehend that the very next moment would be my last upon earth, the dread of death was in no wise keen upon me, for in my halfswoon I lay as one in a dream, and neither saw nor heard very clearly the preparations they were making for my destruction, and so was mercifully spared that

(Continued on Page 5.)



He Could Not Live Was what friends said, but

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