CHAPTER IV.

THE WORLD BEFORE HIM.

Far up in the bow of the steamer, "Prinz Eitel Frederick," southward bound from New York, a youth was leaning over the rail. His eyes were fixed on a circling flock of gulls skimming above the choppy, slate gray waves as easily as a boy coasting down an icy hill. The wind was whipping across the deck at an eighteen-miles-an-hour clip, and his hair was rumpled about his face like a football player's in a bad scrimmage. But he made no move to seek a shelter. On the contrary, he seemed to be thoroughly enjoying his exposed position and drank in the crisp, salt air with long, deep breaths of satisfaction. He did not even think it necessary to put on the gray checked cap that he had stuffed into the pocket of his overcoat.

As a matter of fact, Rod Standish was enjoying the tingling Atlantic breeze. The corner in the bow had been his favorite position during the three days of the voyage. The sharp wind, with its sea odors, helped him to think—and no one realized better than he that he had some serious thinking to do.
The events of the past ten days unrolled themselves before him like the unreal, fantastic happenings of a dream. At times, he fancied that he would awake with a jerk to find himself back in his old room at Boston, with nothing more important on his mind than the next day’s classes. And then the ocean wind, lashing across the waves, would strike him in the face and force him back to the grim realization that he was an orphan—alone, with the world before him, and the last prop gone from him forever.

When Rod Standish saw his father’s casket lowered into the little plot of ground in the Mount Auburn Cemetery, and turned away in the drizzling rain for the weary drive back to his room, he hadn’t given a thought to the question of finances. He had taken it for granted that the contents of the little leather bag that the hospital attendants had given him with his father’s clothes would be amply sufficient for his needs.

With him in the cab were Jack Winters and his father who had insisted on accompanying him to the cemetery. It was the latter who first directed the youth’s attention to the need of an immediate inventory of his capital. Leaning toward the boy, Mr. Winters rested his hand sympathetically on his knee as he said kindly, “I wish you would tell me, frankly, Rod, just how you are situated financially.”
The boy turned his eyes from a study of the wet gray pavement outside. "I am afraid I don't know, sir."

"Don't know?"

"I mean that I have not examined the bag where father kept his money. From what he said, I fancied there was quite a little sum there."

Mr. Winters looked grave. "Where is the bag?"

"I locked it in a drawer in my room."

"If you don't mind, I will go up with you when we get back and we will see just how you stand."

The three went to Rod's apartment in silence. Even light-hearted Jack found few words to say, while Mr. Winters seemed instinctively to appreciate Rod's desire not to talk.

The youth walked over to his table and unlocked and opened the drawer.

"Here is the bag, sir. I wish you would count the money, if you will."

Mr. Winters emptied the little stream of green-backs and gold pieces onto the table and rapidly calculated the total.

"Is this all, Rod?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I am afraid there is not as much here as you expected."

"How much does it make?" the boy asked.
"Just three hundred and twenty-five dollars. Perhaps you have already paid the funeral expenses?"

Rod shook his head. "I told the undertaker to send his bill tomorrow. He said it would be in the neighborhood of two hundred dollars."

Mr. Winters pursed his lips. "Then that will leave only a little over a hundred dollars. Have you made any plans for yourself yet?"

"I think I should leave for Panama as soon as possible."

"My dear boy, do you think that is wise under the circumstances? Panama is a long way off and you will be among complete strangers. Why not stay here where at least you will have friends?"

"I think it was father's wish that I go to the Canal. I have a letter from him to a close friend on the Isthmus which ought to secure me employment at once."

Mr. Winters slowly emptied the slender stock of money back into the bag.

"I am a rich man, Rod, and I would like to help you. It would be a real pleasure for me to assist you. Jack tells me that you are in a fair way to take the first honors of your class. Why not finish your course, and then if you wish to go to the Canal later you will have a civil engineer's degree back of you?"
There was a twinkle in Mr. Winters' eyes as he spoke. Rod gazed at him in bewilderment.

"How can I finish my college course without funds?"

"I think we will have no trouble in arranging that. I am willing to take a chance on your honesty. I will advance the money to complete your education, and you can repay me after you have graduated!"

With a shout Jack sprang from his seat in the corner and seized his friend's arm.

"Hurrah, old fellow! We'll take our diplomas together after all!"

Rod gazed from Jack to his father with a sudden understanding.

"Jack Winters, this is your doing!"

"Well, I'll admit father and I talked it over. But you didn't need much urging, did you, dad?"

Mr. Winters was studying the mingled emotions on Rod's face while pretending to be examining the odd workmanship on Captain Standish's bag.

"What do you say, my boy? Is it a bargain?"

Rod walked over to the window without replying and stood looking down into the street. Mr. Winters motioned Jack to keep his seat as the latter made a move to follow him. It was fully five minutes before Rod turned.
"I thank you, Mr. Winters," he said huskily. "I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I would be made of stone if I didn’t appreciate your kindness and that of Jack—but I can’t accept it!"

"Can’t accept it, Rod!" Jack burst out in dismay. "And why won’t Your Royal Highness condescend to—"

"Don’t, old man! You don’t understand. It isn’t because I don’t appreciate your generosity, and all that it would mean to me, but honestly I think I have thought it all out and I don’t feel that under the circumstances it would be right for me to take your offer. You see father had strict standards on the subject of borrowing. I dare say he could have gotten the money easily enough for me to finish school if he had felt it was the best thing to do. Even if I were situated where there was some definite chance of paying it back, I don’t want to start my life on a line which I know he wouldn’t approve if he were here. And I know you wouldn’t want to have me."

Mr. Winters reached over and seized the boy’s hand. "Good for you! Spoken like a man! Not another word on the subject, Jack. If you are ever placed in the same position, you can pay no greater tribute to your father’s memory. Put on your hat, Rodman. You are coming out to
the house for dinner. No, I won't hear of a refusal. You are under my orders now!"

Rod was to hear more of Mr. Winters' generosity, however. The next afternoon when the youth called at the office of the undertaker, who had charge of his father's funeral, he met with a surprise.

"There is no bill, Mr. Standish," the proprietor of the establishment said when the boy asked for his account. "My services were paid for this morning. You friend, Mr. Winters, gave me his check for a complete settlement, and told me to send you the receipt. My clerk was about to mail it to you."

Rod's eyes closed tightly and he found it hard work to fight back his emotion.

"All right, Mr. Gallagher. I will take the receipt now, if you have it ready."

The lad left the office with two resolves in his mind. This settled it. He would leave for Panama at once but before going he would return to Mr. Winters the money he had expended. If he stayed in Boston longer he saw that Jack and his father would force their generosity on him in spite of himself. If he did not want to meet their kindness with positive rudeness, there was only one course to follow. He must leave—and leave without delay.

Entering the Boston post office he made his
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way to the money order window. When he left it, he had lessened the contents of his father's money bag by nearly two thirds and had tucked into his pocket a slip of paper which the United States government would redeem at the order of Mr. Winters for the sum of one hundred and ninety dollars, the amount of the undertaker's bill.

Leaving the post-office, the youth made his way to the agency of the Hamburg American Steamship Company.

"When does the next boat sail for Panama?" he asked the clerk behind the desk.

The youth turned to a large red placard at his elbow.

"That will be the 'Prinz Eitel Frederick.' It leaves the New York dock at ten a. m., the day after tomorrow—Saturday."

"And what will the passage cost me?"

"You mean first cabin?"

The lad calculated swiftly. "How much will that be?"

"Seventy-five dollars to Colon. That is the Atlantic port of Panama, you know."

"You give me a ticket," the boy said abruptly, bringing his father's bag into view again.

"By the way, can you tell me what time I can get a train to New York tonight?"

"Twelve o'clock. That will reach New York
at seven in the morning. If you wish to reserve a berth, you can use our telephone,” the clerk added obligingly.

Rod hesitated a moment. Then he walked across to the instrument and called up South Station. The monotonous voice of the man in the ticket office at the other end of the wire, saying mechanically, “All right, I’ll hold number seven for Standish,” came to him with something of a shock. He had taken the final plunge. In less than eight hours he would be embarked on the long journey that would end—how?

When he returned to his room, Rod sat down at his desk and pulled his pad and pen toward him. For over ten minutes, however, he drummed absently on the blotter without writing a stroke. The last step in his double resolve was the hardest of all. Finally with an exclamation of impatience, he dipped the pen into the ink and covered a closely filled page before he paused. Then he sat back with a sigh and read what he had written.

“My dear Mr. Winters and Jack—

“This is to tell you that I am leaving for Panama tonight. You will probably be surprised at my decision, and to tell the truth, I am surprised myself. You will guess my rea-
son, and I may as well confess it. I am running away from you. There, I’ve said it! When I found that you had paid the undertaker, I realized that if I gave you another opportunity you would find a way to force me to accept your money in spite of all I could do. Much as it hurts me to do so, I feel that I ought not to give you the opportunity. It would only make it harder for both of us. I enclose a money order for the amount of the bill that you paid for me. I wish I could tell you how much I thank you. But I am afraid that is impossible. I can never forget your kindness, and will always think of you and good old Jack as the two friends in my life that have meant most to me. If I seem abrupt or unappreciative, forgive me. That is all I can ask.

“Yours gratefully,
Rodman Standish.”

And this was how Rod left for Panama.
The hum of the great city’s traffic was strangely stilled and the flickering street lamps seemed only to emphasize the murky blackness of the November night as the youth, from the misty window of the Pullman, watched the outskirts of Boston drop from view. He sighed softly as he turned away. When would he see it all again? When and where would he get
his next view of Jack Winters’ cheery face? Little did he realize the exciting event through which he was destined to pass before he was to answer these questions.
A VOICE suddenly interrupted Rod’s musings in the bow of the “Eitel Frederick.” It was a pleasant, kindly voice in spite of the slow, measured tones of the speaker. Rod turned to find at his elbow an elderly, slightly stoop-shouldered man, with very precisely trimmed white whiskers. He was smiling as he held out his hand.

“You seem to have a difficult problem on your mind, my boy.”

“I was thinking, Judge,” the lad answered as he made room for him beside the rail. “And the wind helps to clear my thoughts.”

Judge Arnold darted a shrewd glance at the youth’s sober features. During the three days on ship-board, he had had several long conversations with the boy, and had found himself much attracted by the lad’s reserved, straightforward bearing. This fact was increased when he learned that the boy was bound for the Panama Canal. Judge Arnold was one of the American legal advisers at the Canal Zone and...
was returning to his duties after an extended vacation in the United States.

"Is there anything in which I can help you?" he asked after a moment's silence.

Rod shook his head. "I am afraid not, sir."

"Panama is larger than most Americans are apt to think," the Judge said pleasantly. "I have lived there so long that perhaps I could give you some information that would be of assistance to you. Do you expect to be there a great while?"

Rod hesitated. "I hope to obtain work there."

"Indeed! May I ask what kind?"

"I shall try to get an engineering berth of some sort. You see I have been a student at the 'Boston Tech,' and in another two years would have had my diploma."

The Judge glanced at him in surprise. "Why don't you finish your engineering course?" A sudden flush swept the boy's face. Judge Arnold reached over and put his arm sympathetically about his shoulders.

"There, I'm afraid I have asked something that is none of my business! Forgive me!"

"Oh, it isn't that, sir!" Rod said hastily. "And really I am obliged for your interest. You see I have just lost my father, and, and—there wasn't enough money left for me to finish at the university. That is all."
Judge Arnold looked thoughtfully out at the waves for a moment without answering. There was a strange moisture in his eyes when he turned.

“You take me back to my own youth. That was exactly my situation forty years ago. I was just half through Harvard when my father died suddenly, and I was thrown on my own resources. There ought to be a peculiar bond of sympathy between us, my lad.”

“What did you do?” Rod asked as the Judge paused.

“Oh, I left college, rolled up my sleeves, and went into a country law office!” The Judge turned the conversation abruptly. “May I ask what suggested the Panama Canal to you?”

“My father had friends there,” Rod answered, “and I have a letter to one of them—Captain Gray, perhaps you know him?—who, I am sure, will help me.”

Judge Arnold nodded thoughtfully. “No doubt! You will find him at Colon, I think. If you need another friend, I wish you would let me know.”

“Thank you!” the youth said gratefully. “By the way, you referred to Panama as a large country. I was always under the impression that it is what we call ‘a tea-cup republic.’”

“Viewed by the standard of the United States,
perhaps it is,” the Judge answered laughing. “As a matter of fact, however, it has an area of 32,800 square miles. While this is only about one-eighth the size of our own state of Texas, yet I think you will admit that it represents a good deal of ground.”

“I believe I have read some place that only about one-half of Panama is settled. Is that true?”

“To be accurate, less than a third of the country is settled, and only a little more than one-half has ever been fully explored. Incredible as it may seem, there are still large sections that have never known the foot of a white man!”

“Why is that?”

“Principally because they are almost impassable jungle. A half mile from the Canal, the foliage is so thick and heavy that progress can only be made with the aid of machete. I think I can safely say that the jungles of Panama are the densest on the American continent!”

“What is the population of the country?”

“Three hundred and sixty thousand—only a little more than half of the population of the city of Boston!”

Rod gazed at a flock of gulls at the right of the boat reflectively. They were engaged in a merry battle for a stream of scraps that had just been emptied from the ship’s galley.
"I have heard you often refer to the 'Canal Zone,' Judge. What do you mean by that?"

"That is the American section of the republic of Panama. It is a strip ten miles wide and fifty miles long, which we obtained from the Panamanian government by treaty. Panama wouldn't sell it to us, but our possession is practically as complete as though we owned it. It is governed by American laws and protected by American guns. The Panamanian government has no jurisdiction inside its bounds—and we have no jurisdiction outside."

"And, of course, that is where the Canal is being constructed?"

"Yes. Panama is only about fifty miles wide at this point. In fact, this is the narrowest section of the western continent. If you had the Twentieth Century Limited down there you could travel from the Atlantic ocean to the Pacific in less than an hour's time!"

"But isn't there a railroad in Panama?"

"Oh, yes. It is called the Panama Railroad, and it is one of the most curious lines of traffic in existence. It was the first railroad ever constructed across the American continent!"

"How long ago was that?"

"A little more than fifty years. To be exact, the line was completed on the 27th day of January, 1855. It was in the height of the Cali-
fornia gold fever. Before this time, the western pioneers who didn’t care to take the long journey from St. Louis to the gold fields by wagon train, had to go down around Cape Horn and come up the west coast of South America, a four months journey. The Panama wilderness was so forbidding that there were few who had the hardihood to try to cross it. The obstacles of the men who built the Panama railroad in fact are almost unbelievable. There are those who say that it cost a life for every tie. Of course this is exaggerated, but there is no doubt that hundreds of lives were lost before the line was finally completed!"

"You are not telling Mr. Standish that story about the coolies of the Panama Railroad, are you, father?"

Rod turned as a girl’s merry voice broke into the conversation. A young woman of seventeen, with brown eyes that seemed to be always laughing, and a mass of brown hair, on which a blue Tam’o’Shanter was tilted rakishly, was swinging along the deck on the arm of a tall, young man with a long, gray ulster and a thin, little brown moustache. His most noticeable feature was an eye-glass which he managed to keep in its awkward position in spite of the sweep of the wind.

The young woman was Edith Arnold, the
Judge's only daughter. Her escort was Reginald Wingrave, an attaché of the English consular office in the city of Panama.

"What is that about the coolies?" Rod asked as the two joined the group.

"It is a rather curious tale," Judge Arnold began, "but it gives one an excellent impression of Panama in the old days. It was extremely difficult for the contractors of the Panama Railroad to obtain workmen, and the fever made such ravages in their ranks that often the progress of the line was held up while the construction camps waited for new consignments of men. At last some one hit on the idea of importing Chinese coolies. Consignments of nearly a thousand men were sent over to the Isthmus, and the Chinese laborers were put to work in the jungle.

"But the experiment did not succeed. The coolies were not used to the hardships of the wilderness. After a few weeks of working ten hours a day, waist deep in the red mud and slimy water, and bunking at night in the pelting rain, they grew discouraged and clamored to go back home. One night the situation reached a climax and the coolies broke camp in a body.

"The next morning, a gruesome scene met the eyes of the Americans. Over a hundred of the
Chinese had deliberately hanged themselves by their queues from the branches of the trees. They were quite dead. They had preferred wholesale suicide to the battle with the jungle!

"But this was not all. Scores of others reached the Atlantic, and walking out onto the shore, sat cross-legged in the sand until the tide washed over them. In the course of the week, nearly five hundred of the laborers committed suicide either by drowning or hanging, and it was necessary to hurry the others back to China to save their lives!"

"Quite a story!" drawled Wingrave, "but after all, they were only coolies. It would have been cheaper to let the whole of the beggars kill themselves!"

Rod whirled on the speaker with flashing eyes. "I don't agree with you, Mr. Wingrave! A man is a man regardless of the color of his skin."

Edith Arnold darted a glance of approval at Rod, and the young Englishman scowled. "If there had been the proper overseer down there with a long enough whip, he could have kept those coolies in order!" Wingrave growled. "Americans don't do their work with slaves!"

Rod returned. "Really! I was always under the impression that slaves were legitimate property in the
United States until 1863—and unless I am badly mistaken the Panama Railroad was built nearly ten years before that date!”

The youth flushed and Judge Arnold seeing the strained nature of the argument, skilfully came to the rescue.

“Mr. Standish, I think, infers that the American nation has never accomplished any great project by the lash and the slave. For that matter, no other nation has ever done so. I am confident that history will bear me out in this statement.” The Judge turned to his daughter. “Don’t you think this position is becoming too exposed for you, Edith? I was about to return to the cabin. Won’t you join me?”

The girl nodded to the two young men and took her father’s arm. Wingrave hesitated a moment and then stalked sullenly in their wake, leaving Rod alone.

When the passengers of the “Eitel Frederick” appeared on deck the next morning, it was, with the realization that the next day would bring them to their first port. This was the picturesque city of Kingston, the capital of Jamaica, where the steamer was scheduled to make a two-days stop. From here, Colon, the Atlantic seaport of Panama and the end of the voyage, was thirty-six hours distant. Jamaica is British territory. When Rod went ashore at Kingston, for
the first time he would be beyond the domain of the stars and stripes.

The crisp chill in the air, which had made an overcoat comfortable, had disappeared. It had been succeeded by a pleasant warmth that gave promise of rapidly increasing before the day was over, and many of the ladies had already donned light dresses. The "Eitel Frederick" had plainly passed the outer edge of the tropics. Even the color of the water had changed. The slate-gray waves had given place to a light blue almost matching the cloudless sky overhead.

Judge Arnold was enjoying an early morning promenade before breakfast when Rod stepped out onto the deck. The Judge gave the youth a hearty greeting as he paused.

"I always think of Kingston as the city of earthquakes and pirates," he said musingly as Rod fell into step at his side.

"Why is that?" the youth asked curiously.

"Hardly a week passes that there isn't a tremor of the earth in Jamaica," the Judge answered, "and sometimes there are several 'quakes' in the course of a single day. Most of them are not serious, of course, although two or three of the most disastrous earthquakes in history have been recorded in this vicinity. In 1907 nearly seven hundred persons were killed at Kingston and most of the public buildings
of the city wrecked. Indeed, a good deal of the wreckage still litters the streets."

"But why isn’t it cleared away?"

The Judge smiled. "The Jamaican native doesn’t believe in any more work than is absolutely necessary to his scanty idea of comfort. It is almost impossible to obtain laborers on the island who will stick to their task longer than a week at a time. An old resident of Kingston told me that a year after the earthquake they were still finding bodies under the debris! In an American city, the victims would have all been recovered in a few days."

"You referred to Kingston as the city of pirates," Rod said. "What do you mean by that?"

"It was one of the headquarters of the old buccaneers of the Spanish Main. Sir Henry Morgan spent a good share of his life there, and in fact fitted out most of his pillaging expeditions in Kingston Harbor. In those days, the city was the rendezvous for all of the desperate characters of the Indies."

"But why didn’t the English government interfere?"

"Because Morgan seldom molested an English vessel, I imagine. He made most of his attacks on the rich galleons of Spain. Once he broke over the line, though, and sacked a
British frigate, and as a result was sent to London in irons. But he hid enough money to pay his ransom and buy back the favor of the government, and returned to Kingston with the rank of commander-in-chief of the Jamaica navy! When he died, he was lieutenant governor of the island.” Judge Arnold paused as the steward came up behind them with the last call for breakfast.

“We’ll have to hurry if we want anything to eat,” he said laughing. “Pirates are an interesting subject, but I think I would prefer a good steak just now!”
CHAPTER VI.

A Rescue And Its Result

The "Eitel Frederick" bore into Kingston Harbor in the first streaks of dawn the next day. The sun rises early in the tropics. Rod found it already peeping over the blue water when he clambered out of his berth a little after four o'clock. For a few moments, he stood peering through the port hole at the green fringe of shore, rising out of the waves like the bold, swift strokes of an artist sketching in the background of a picture before the eyes of an audience. The youth had never fancied that the sight of trees could be so welcome. He rapidly dressed and stepped out onto the deck.

Early as it was, he found Judge Arnold and Edith already leaning over the rail, watching the swiftly approaching shore-line. The girl waved her hand merrily.

"It is just like a toy village springing up out of the water! Come over here, Mr. Standish. The view from this side is magnificent."

"Kingston, to my mind, possesses one of the most picturesque harbors in the world," the
Judge said as the youth joined them. “Your comparison to a toy village is good, Edith. That red brick fort over at the point there with the green trees behind it and the yellow sand before it bears out the simile excellently.”

“It all seems so calm and peaceful that you wouldn’t think there could ever be anything like tragedy here!” Rod said musingly.

The Judge leaned over the rail and pointed to two blackened spars thrusting themselves out of the sluggishly moving water. “There is your answer to that remark, my boy.”

“What are they, father?” Edith asked curiously.

“Can’t you see? They are the ends of a ship’s masts!”

“You don’t mean to say there is a vessel under the water there!”

“Exactly. It is one of the examples of the awful power of the earthquake. The boat was lying at anchor when the ’quake swept the city, and it was torn from its moorings and then forced back under the waves as though a giant sledge-hammer had crushed it!”

The girl shuddered and turned her eyes away.

“Let’s change the conversation to a pleasanter subject,” the Judge suggested as he put his arm about Edith’s shoulders. “Kingston contains one of the most beautiful botanical gardens in
the world. You can promise yourself a rare treat when we visit it.”

“What is it called?” Rod asked.

“Hope Garden. It is filled with one of the most complete collections of tropical plants on the western continent. The British government spends a great deal of money and labor in maintaining it.”

The “Eitel Frederick” was approaching within hailing distance of the dock when the breakfast call sounded. By this time, the greater share of passengers were out on deck, leaning over the rail, and drinking in the beauties of the early tropical morning. Few heeded the steward’s whistle. The rapidly nearing waterfront was more attractive than the dining salon.

The dock was filling with a crowd of yellow-skinned, thick-lipped Jamaican negroes in flapping Panama hats with the brim twisted up in front and down behind, cotton trousers rolled to the knees, and dirty red bandanna handkerchiefs, knotted about their necks instead of collars. All were bare-footed, and the bottoms of their feet were as flat as the planks of the dock. Most of them carried baskets of fruit or trinkets for sale, ranging all the way from coral beads to yams and funny little native cakes. Some of them had even made capital out of the city’s disaster, and had gathered bits of
twisted nails and melted glass from the ruins of the earthquake to sell to the curious tourists.

In the front ranks of the crowd were a motley gathering of urchins with wide-opened eyes and mouths, and tousled wooly pates for all the world like a feather duster. Some of them were entirely naked save for a knotted cloth about their waists. There was a reason for this. As the huge steamer drew nearer, they dived laughing and splashing into the yellow water at its side, and then rolling on their backs like so many porpoises, shouted shrill, pigeon-English sentences up at the staring passengers on the ship's rail. A shower of pennies rewarded them. Hardly had the coins struck the waves when the surface of the water cleared as by magic. The youngsters had dived toward the bottom like a cloud of wriggling eels in search of the glistening coppers. And they found them, too. With the coins tightly clutched between their teeth, they darted back to the surface, treading water and waving their hands for more.

Rod and the Arnolds were interested spectators of the scene as they lingered on the way to breakfast.

"I should think they would be afraid of sharks!" Rod laughed as the Judge tossed a handful of coppers among the bobbing black heads on the water.
"You don't mean to say that there are sharks in this water?" Edith cried.

"I imagine it would be difficult to find a tropical harbor where that wasn't true," her father answered. "There is an old saying in the West Indies, however, that a shark will never touch a negro! The boys in the water certainly seem to prove it. If one of us were to attempt the same feat, I don't know whether he would be safe or not."

"Well, I for one wouldn't do it for a thousand dollars," said Edith decidedly.

"Nor I, either, badly as I need the money!" Rod added as they turned into the dining saloon.

They were both destined to recall their words with startling emphasis before the "Eitel Frederick" left Kingston harbor.

When Rod emerged from the breakfast table, he found that the steamer had docked, and a number of the passengers were already assembled at the gang plank, eager for the first trip ashore. As he took his station on the outskirts of the crowd, the Arnolds appeared in company with Reginald Wingrave. The young English attache was resplendent in a new white duck suit, white shoes, and Panama hat. He was twirling a light bamboo cane jauntily as he assisted Edith down the stairs. Rod drew back
as he thought ruefully of his own well-worn suit in comparison. Edith caught sight of him, however, and called merrily across to him.

“We are going for a tour of the city. Don’t you want to go with us?”

“Really, I don’t see how we can manage it, Miss Arnold!” Wingrave put in abruptly. “With the driver, there is only just room enough in one carriage for our party!”

Rod flushed. “I am afraid I couldn’t accept, anyway,” he said, addressing the girl. “I only intend to take a short stroll.”

Edith tapped the deck impatiently with the tip of her parasol, and Wingrave looked relieved. The next moment, however, the voice of Judge Arnold broke into the conversation.

“Tut, tut, Mr. Standish! I won’t hear of a refusal. I am well enough acquainted with Kingston to know that it is as easy to secure a carriage for five persons as it is for four. Come on, Wingrave! You and I will secure the vehicle, and we’ll leave Standish to bring Edith!”

Wingrave’s shoulders stiffened, and a scowl, which he took no trouble to hide, formed on his face, but there was no help for it. The Judge drew his arm jovially under his, and hurried him toward the gang plank. Rod was left behind with Edith in a variety of emotions. When the lad piloted his companion to the narrow,
dusty road winding up from the wharf, Wingrave and the Judge were waiting at the side of a rickety, Jamaican carriage, hitched to a team of sleepily nodding mules, as dilapidated as the vehicle.

Edith drew back with a laugh. "Is this the best we can do, father?"

"Oh, you'll get used to this, daughter, in the West Indies. Dirt is so common in Kingston that no one notices it!"

"That white duck suit of yours will be simply ruined, Mr. Wingrave!" he said teasingly.

The young Englishman shrugged his shoulders. "It doesn't matter. I have a dozen more in my trunks, if it is!" he returned in a superior tone. "If I had known your friend, Mr. Standish, wasn't equipped for the tropics, I could have loaned or given him one!"

The remark and the tone brought another hot flush to Rod's face in spite of the fact that he turned toward the driver as though he hadn't heard the words. He was relieved when the Judge clambered to the front seat and called to him to take the place at his side. The driver settled down on a stool before them, and clicked to the mules. The team raised their ears, tossed their heads together as though indulging in a whispered debate as to whether or not to proceed, and then apparently reaching a favorable
decision, hesitatingly placed their front feet forward and then hind feet and began a yawning ascent of the driveway.

For two of the party, the drive proved a distinct and pleasing novelty. Wingrave and the Judge had visited Kingston on several occasions, both before and after the earthquake and were familiar with its show-places. To Edith and Rod, however, the ride brought a constant succession of points of interest, whether in the market place with its riot of colors and strange fruits and copper-faced women kneeling over yellow triangles of bananas; or in the quaint old-fashioned squares, with their uneven cobblestones and shadowy, squatty buildings and picturesque bazaars suggesting mediaeval Spain; or in the imposing architecture of the government edifices, towering above the remainder of the city as though every stone recognized its superiority. The ruins of the earthquake were on every hand. Often the debris of wrecked buildings extended a third across the street, and it was necessary for the carriage to make a detour to avoid the litter. In an American city, a hurrying, jostling wrecking crew would have been at work, and its labor would have been continued without a pause until the pavements were cleaned. Kingston, however, was making only a half-hearted effort to
remove the debris, and to the amazement of the tourists most of this was being done by the women! Rod counted eighteen native women at work on one corner, carrying heavy baskets of stone and brick from the ruins of the bank, the loads balanced on their heads, as they trudged stolidly through the broiling sun, while groups of lounging men smoked on the curb and watched them!

In the next block, the carriage passed a long, low, brick building, with its second story shattered into a huge heap of broken bricks and mortar at one side.

"There is another vivid evidence of the power of the earthquake," said Judge Arnold. "That building is one of the newspaper offices of Kingston. When the disaster burst over the city, the editor was dictating an important item of late news to one of the linotype operators in the composing room."

"And what did he do?" asked Rod with interest.

"He kept on until he finished the article, and then looked out of the window to see what damage had been done!"

"He must have been an American!" said the youth enthusiastically.

"I believe he was!" responded the Judge smiling.
Rod was perhaps more interested in the curious types of people before him than in the buildings. Shuffling negroes stumbled lazily across the street, scarcely deigning to dodge the carriage. Shrill-voiced native beggars kept pace with the mules, pleading for a copper. Shrewd-eyed Japanese merchants, always in spotless duck suits as though they were the insignia of their trade, beckoned to them from the doors of their tiny bazaars, or perhaps enticingly held up a vase or a souvenir for their inspection. Jamaican girls with glaring red sashes and a half a dozen jingling bracelets on their arms, tripped merrily past. Trim, blue-uniformed native policemen in white helmets, most of them hardly larger than a good-sized boy, stalked down the street, generally three or four abreast as though relying on numbers to emphasize the majesty of the law. Barefooted hucksters, in heavy, rumbling carts, drove clattering, over the cobble-stones. Occasionally a private carriage galloped by, with a liveried coachman in front and expensively dressed ladies from the wealthy Jamaican families in the rear, fanning themselves languidly under their sun-shades. Now and then, a British soldier, with his uniform buttoned to the throat in spite of the heat, and his face tanned to the color of a negro, swaggered down the walk. It was all so different
from home! Rod drew a long breath. Almost for the first time, he realized how far he was from Boston Common!

It was with quite a shock that the party saw it was past lunch time when they returned to the steamer. The drive had consumed the entire morning.

When Rod entered his state room after the meal, he intended spending the afternoon on deck, watching the process of unloading. For a moment he stood gazing out of the porthole at the blue water lapping lazily against the steamer’s side and the edge of the weather-scarred wharf in the distance. The rattle of chains and pulleys echoed harshly from above as though they were growling out a continuous protest against the weight of the barrels and eggs they were swinging up from the ship’s hold. The voice of a native dock-hand, singing at his work, floated out with strange distinctness from the line of ware-houses. Once there was a sudden, angry burst of shouts and the crash of a falling cask as a rope slipped. Rod opened his door and ran up on deck. A circle of perspiring workmen, coatless and shirtless, were tugging at a huge crate of barbed wire that had fallen from the steamer’s deck, splintering the rail, and tearing a jagged hole in the planks of the dock. An English over-
seer with a very dirty Panama hat, a very angry face, and a very red moustache, was giving a volley of hoarse, impatient orders from the head of an upturned keg.

This much of the scene flashed before Rod when a sharp, piercing scream of terror rang out suddenly from the stern of the ship. As the youth whirled about in the direction from which it had come, he realized with swift wonder that the voice was that of a girl. Rod saw that he was alone. Most of the passengers had retired to their state rooms after lunch for a siesta, and the officers and crew were either busy with the task of unloading, or had obtained shore-leave. His section of the deck seemed deserted. The scream had come from the stern and the boy listened intently for a repetition as he broke into a run, but there was none. As he was rounding the edge of the main passenger saloon, a door at his elbow was flung open and the blue-uniformed figure of the purser almost collided with him.

"What is wrong?" Rod panted.

The purser darted a backward glance at the questioner, but did not slacken his steps. "Girl overboard!" he jerked out.

"Where?"

The officer shook his head as though he had no breath to answer, and the next moment the
two were darting across the end of the deck. Rod darted a quick glance at the blue-green waters of the harbor, but there was no sign of a struggling figure visible. The purser came to a pause at the rail, scanning the surface eagerly.

"Look sharp!" he cried to Rod. "I caught a glimpse of her just as she fell. She was leaning over the rail, and the crash of that crate of wire when it struck the dock must have made her lose her balance. She can't be more than three or four yards away. You have younger eyes than I have. Can't you make her out? Watch for her head when it comes up. Her dress is almost certain to keep her afloat if she doesn't lose her wits. Sing out the instant you catch a ripple in the water!"

Rod strained his eyes out over the waves. The sun partially blinded him, and it was not until he shaded his face with his hand that he was able to see the water clearly. Then he uttered a low cry. Over at the left, a head had suddenly bobbed into view. The purser saw it almost at the same instant. The officer uttered a cheery shout of encouragement, and drawing back his arm, tossed a life preserver toward the sinking figure. It had scarcely touched the water, however, when Rod threw off his coat and hat and sprang to the top of the rail. The boy had
made a startling discovery. The struggling girl in the water was Edith Arnold! And even as he recognized her, he saw that she was too exhausted to reach the shelter of the bobbing life-belt.

The purser seized the boy's arm excitedly. "What are you going to do?"

Rod shook off his hand. "I am going to save that girl!" he said with a note of quiet determination. Again locating Edith's position, he balanced himself for an instant and leaped boldly out from the steamer's side. As he disappeared from the rail, there was a hurried step behind him, and a gray-haired man rushed frantically across the deck. It was Judge Arnold. The purser recognized him as the Judge sprang toward the rail, and divining the relationship between him and the drowning girl, caught his shoulder with a quick, firm grasp of sympathy. As the two peered over the side, Rod shot to the surface and struck out swiftly toward the spot where he had last located Edith's sinking form. The girl was not visible now. There was no sign of her position except a rapidly dwindling circle of ripples. Rod drew a long breath and dived. He knew the secret of keeping his eyes open under water. The circumstances of his first lesson flashed vividly before the lad in spite of the tension of the moment
as he darted a swift glance ahead through the light green depths of the harbor. There was not the slightest clue to guide him in his search. He started to swim forward with slow, cautious strokes. Had he missed Edith’s position? Had he dived too far to the side and passed her? He turned, as he asked himself the questions. His eyes were burning now so that he could hardly force them open. His breath was coming in short, smothered grasps as though a knife were slashing into his chest. He shot desperately upward toward the fresh air, with a roaring like the crash of a sledge-hammer in his ears. His bold declaration that he would save the girl had been a farce! Even then her lifeless body was probably sinking toward the bottom of the harbor, forever beyond the reach of help.

The first breath of the tingling salt air, as he flashed to the surface, Rod never forgot. It was a thrill of new life. He lowered his feet gently and stood treading water as he glanced swiftly over the surface. As he did so, he could hardly repress a cry. At his elbow, so near as almost to brush his arm, was Edith Arnold’s white, set face, with her long brown hair wrapped about her neck and shoulders in a great wet mass. Rod’s first impression as his arm closed about her body was that she was dead.
But he was given no opportunity for speculation.

By this time, at least a score of persons were crowded by the steamer's rail, and his first intimation that there were observers of the rescue came in a sudden, confused burst of cheers. Rod glanced upward. Half-blinded as he was by the water, the figures above him seemed as vague and far away as though they were on the edge of a skyscraper and he in the street below. The black hulk of the steamer suddenly oppressed him by its very size. At the foot of the huge mass of iron and wood, towering out of the waves, he seemed so hopelessly puny that for an instant his steadiness almost deserted him. The thought brought him back to the question as to whether he should try to make the steamer or the dock with his burden. A voice from the ship answered it for him. As his eyes became more used to the glare of the sun, Rod recognized the features of Judge Arnold at the railing.

"We are lowering a boat for you! Can you keep afloat?"

Rod attempted an answer and was startled to find that his throat was so parched it was impossible to raise his voice above a whisper. Judge Arnold stepped back, and reappeared with a life preserver. His aim was good. The belt splashed into the water not three feet from
the boy's shoulders. It was not until Rod slipped it under his arms that he realized how weak he was growing. He peered down at Edith's face as he tried clumsily to brush the tangled mass of hair back from her eyes and make her position more comfortable. The girl had not moved once since he had found her.

Another burst of shouts from the steamer brought Rod's eyes again to the ship. He judged that the crew had lowered a boat, but from his position it was for the moment hidden from him. He tried to raise himself farther out of the water. The effect overbalanced him, and he fell backward. For an instant, he fancied he was sinking again.

Then a strong hand clutched his collar, a cheery voice sounded in his ear, and a hard, wooden surface rubbed against his shoulders.

The events of the next ten minutes were never quite clear to Rod Standish. He had a confused remembrance of being carried to the dock with Edith Arnold, and thence across the gang plank to the deck above; of a staring crowd that persisted in making a noise and trying to shut off the air; and of a dishevelled, white-haired man with tears streaming from his eyes and a trembling voice which the boy couldn't in the least understand. The black-whiskered ship's surgeon was bending over Edith's motion-
less form and working her arms up and down like the handle of a pump. Rod was conscious of a thumping headache and a desire to be alone. Some one took his arm and asked him if he could walk. He struggled to his feet and touched the doctor on the shoulder. The surgeon understood his question before he asked it.

“Don’t worry about her, my boy! You had something less than half a minute to spare.”

“You mean that Miss Arnold is safe?”

“I mean that she has grazed death so closely that had you been thirty seconds later, you would have been too late.”

Rod took the friendly arm extended to him—he did not know whose it was—and stumbled toward his state-room. He was suddenly aware that his garments were very wet, and that water dripped in a rivulet on the deck as he walked.

The man who was helping him was increased by another at his other arm with one of the deck stewards in front of the trio with the key to the state-room. As the strange group reached the door, Rod suddenly tore himself from the friendly support, and sprang back with a hoarse, startled cry. His face was blanched to such a pallor that his companions sprang toward him in alarm. The boy motioned them wildly aside as he thrust his hands into first one pocket and then another.
It was gone! His father's wallet had slipped from his pocket during his struggle in the water. And it contained all of the money he possessed in the world!

The scanty funds, with which he was to commence life in a new land, were lying at the bottom of Kingston Harbor!