

Rob Cleverdale's Adventure.

By Seward W. Hopkins.

Copyrighted, 1896, by Robert Bonner's Sons.

CHAPTER VIII.

There was no answer, and Rob's heart sank again. Torrovo was in the plot against him, too, and had simply come to satisfy himself that Rob was in his deadly prison.

After a short time—perhaps fifteen minutes—when Rob had given up all hope, he heard a greater noise outside. "Now!" he heard Torrovo say in a voice of command. "All together."

There came to Rob the sounds of men grunting as if straining at an effort, and suddenly the stone rolled away, letting in a flood of daylight. There stood Torrovo and a half dozen of the men from the "Black Cat" whom he had brought to move the rock—a job too great for one man to accomplish.

"My Jewel! My Jewel!" exclaimed Torrovo, in an extravagance of ecstasy, grasping Rob and hugging him. "You did that well! You did that well! By the saints, you did that well!"

This was a sudden change again. Rob wondered what kind of a man Torrovo was to brutally strike him one hour and hug him and call him a jewel the next.

"I don't understand!" he said. "I didn't think you were my friend."

"Not your friend! Indeed, what do you call the man who lets you out of that place?"

"Yes, but that rope's end!"

Captain Torrovo burst into a boisterous laugh.

"Oh, that! Why, didn't you understand? If I had treated you with kindness Elvin would have asked questions. And, when Starne came I clubbed you well, so that you would not raise your face for him to see it. Ho! We did it well! But for that we would both be dead now."

"Did they miss me?" asked Rob.

"No, thank me for that, too. I

of my age just because his son hates me?"

"Captain Elvin will kill anybody he wants to get rid of. He is the most suspected and the most feared of all men in Buenos Ayres. But he is so crafty that the government cannot catch him."

"But you! Why do you stick to a man like that?"

"Oh! I! Because it is to my advantage. You see, young señor, we are not all in favor of this government of ours. I did something once that brought me in disfavor. I was to be shot. I escaped, with the help of Elvin, and turned—well, I became the captain of the "Black Cat." Richard Elvin owns me body and soul. Now, you know why I am afraid to let him know I saved your life."

"But of course the danger is over now," said Rob. "You can take me to Buenos Ayres and let me find my uncle. Then your danger will end."

Captain Torrovo looked at Rob with wide-open eyes. It was as if he thought Rob had taken leave of his senses.

"Take you to Buenos Ayres! Take you to Buenos Ayres! What! Why, my danger would just begin. As long as I can keep you here with me and make Elvin think you are my nephew, I am safe. But once let you get to Buenos Ayres, and Elvin would have my life in an hour."

"But I would not tell that you saved me."

Torrovo shook his head.

"No, no. It will not do," he said. "You must give that up. You are one of the crew of 'El Gato Negro' now. You must so remain. What! It is not a bad life. You see the world. We live on the best. What more do you want?"

"I want to reach my uncle."

Torrovo turned on him savagely.

near him, and not to make any attempts to escape. Indeed, there was no possibility of escape. Rob might, if he felt so inclined, jump overboard, but they were far out at sea, and to commit so foolhardy an act was simply to leap to his death. So Rob bided his time, took things as easily as he could, and waited till the schooner should have returned to Argentina to try and reach his uncle.

In truth, Rob's condition on board the "Black Cat," after that one burst of passion from Torrovo, was not hard. The captain exacted no arduous tasks from him. He was well fed, and had been there willingly he would have found much to enjoy in the novel situation.

The swarthy crew treated him with a friendliness born of their fear of Torrovo, and their respect for Torrovo's friends.

So, by the time the "Black Cat" came to her anchorage at an obscure spot near the wharfage at Rio de Janeiro, Rob was in a tranquil state of mind.

It was evident that Torrovo had made this trip many times before. He knew all the ropes, and no sooner had the schooner made anchor than he was ashore visiting his old cronies and arranging for a fresh cargo to be carried to the cave on La Plata.

On shipboard Torrovo drank copiously, but was never under the influence of the liquor he drank. But Rob found that when free from the necessity of maintaining discipline among his crew he gave free license to his appetite. Thus it happened that when the fresh cargo was ready to come aboard, Capt. Torrovo was hopelessly and maudlin drunk. He staggered to where Rob stood on deck, carrying a blank paper in his hand.

"See here, boy," he said, striving to maintain his equilibrium and speaking thickly. "I can't do this. Old Elvin demands a full tally. He's no fool, Elvin. See, his people here are not to be trusted. And he don't trust me. You'll have to do this."

"What is there to do, captain?" asked Rob, somewhat afraid of the blackeyed drunkard.

"Why, you fool! Mark down what comes aboard. See, now?"

"Oh, yes. I'll do that. You go to bed."

"That's a good boy," said Torrovo.

With implicit confidence in the young American he went to his cabin.

Rob procured a pen and ink from the captain's room and, taking a convenient position on deck, making a table of a square chest, he carefully jotted down in a clear, firm hand each article as it was brought on board and lowered into the hold. There were bales of tobacco and bales of silk. There were casks of rum and hundreds of bottles of wine. There were more rifles and more ammunition—enough, Rob thought, for an army. All these, in proper order, and with each separate quantity specified, Rob noted in his tally.

This took all of two days. By the time the loading was finished Torrovo had slept off his drunkenness and the "Black Cat" set sail again for the south.

Rob had done a simple act, but it was destined to have great influence on his future, as also upon Torrovo's. Had Torrovo foreseen the result of that spree he would undoubtedly have restrained himself and remained sober.

At last, after three weeks' voyaging, the "Black Cat" reached her anchorage in the little bay. One of the crew was sent ashore by Torrovo, and Rob learned that this method was used to notify Captain Elvin when the "Black Cat" arrived with a contraband cargo. In a few hours the tall, ugly Englishman reached the place on horseback, and was followed by the same gang of swarthy laborers Rob had seen before. Rob was in constant fear lest Lemuel Starne—or Lemuel Elvin—should also come and recognize him. But the younger man never came there unless on urgent business with his father, and Rob was safe this time.

(To be continued.)

The Spectacle Habit.

"It is a singular and grotesque fact," said an eye specialist of New Orleans to a Times-Democrat man, "that a great many uneducated people get into the spectacle habit without any need whatever for wearing glasses. Take for instance, a man whose eyes become a little inflamed from exposure to the sun or some other cause. His sight is all right, and what he really needs is a soothing lotion of some sort to allay the irritation of the membrane. Very frequently, however, he will imagine that he requires a pair of spectacles, and will buy them at the cheapest place he can find without the slightest regard to the suitability of the lenses. In nine cases out of ten it is almost impossible for him to see through the things, but he will wear them as much as he can believe that his eyes are being benefited. Such instances are astonishingly common among the poorer classes, and the peddlers who go through the country districts always carry several dozen cheap 'specs' in their packs. They find a ready sale. I have had several country people come to me for treatment who were wearing glasses that contained only one lens. They would explain that they took the other one out so they could see to get around. When they were fitted with proper lenses they were very much surprised to find they could see better through them than with their natural eyes. The wearing of spectacles in some remote rural districts amounts almost to a superstition—when people arrive at a certain age they believe they ought to put them on, regardless of their actual vision."

The Real Lace Stage.

A trade paper says: "It is remarkable what a large amount of real lace is being taken for the holidays. Scarfs, handkerchiefs and yard goods are selling briskly." It is facts such as this which enable us to keep track of our national prosperity. The first effects of the Dingley law were seen in the larger buying of what we commonly call the necessities of life and in the disappearance of free soup kitchens and other such products of tariff reform. The next step in prosperity was evidenced by the more active buying of the so-called comforts of life. Then came the paying off of debts and the satisfaction of mortgages. After that came the time when the trade in those things which properly come under the head of luxuries showed large gains. The purchase of the more common and inexpensive luxuries naturally came first, but, as the Dingley law grows older, the people proceed step by step

A TREMENDOUS TOTAL

TWO BILLIONS OF MONEY NOW IN CIRCULATION.

Increase of Five Hundred Millions in the Past Two Years of the Amount of Sound Currency in the Hands of the People.

There has been a gain of about \$500,000,000 in the amount of money in circulation in the United States in the past two years of restored protection and prosperity. The figures of this gigantic increase of material wealth and of money in the hands of the people have a suggestiveness that is startling. They show what the country escaped when in 1896 it chose between William McKinley and William J. Bryan. They are also peculiarly suggestive in connection with the presidential contest next year.

One more financial month like November will bring the total of money in circulation in the United States past the two billion dollar line. On Nov. 1 the total money in circulation was \$1,963,716,148, and on Dec. 1, \$1,985,930,964, an increase of \$22,214,816 in the month. A gain of even two-thirds this amount in the present month would bring the total money in circulation in the United States past the two billion dollar line for the first time in our history.

The steady and rapid growth in the circulation of money in the United States, both gold and total of all kinds of money, is indicated in a compilation made by the treasury bureau of statistics from data supplied in the annual and monthly statements of the bureau of loans and currency of the treasury department, showing the amount of gold and total money in circulation in the United States at annual periods during the past twenty years. It shows an increase in that length of time from \$138,641,410 of gold and gold certificates to \$778,385,303, and of total circulation from \$816,266,721 to \$1,985,930,964, with the prospect, as already indicated, that the two billion dollar line will shortly be crossed. While the general growth in that time has been remarkable, that of the past three years is especially marked. On July 1, 1896, the total money in circulation in the United States was \$1,509,725,200, and on Dec. 1, 1899, \$1,985,930,964, an increase during three and a half years of \$476,205,764, or 31½ per cent; while the gold coin and certificates increased from \$498,449,242 to \$778,385,303, an increase of \$279,936,061, or 56 per cent.

The following table shows the total gold coin and certificates, and the total money of all kinds, in circulation on Jan. 1 of each year from 1879 to 1899:

Year	Gold coin and certificates	Total money
1879	\$138,641,410	\$816,266,721
1880	201,942,207	942,452,459
1881	292,515,754	1,083,552,382
1882	359,585,540	1,193,205,955
1883	432,195,814	1,237,388,040
1884	474,263,726	1,262,769,127
1885	527,717,488	1,291,265,205
1886	469,989,147	1,287,818,433
1887	469,505,864	1,314,386,297
1888	495,095,200	1,383,842,809
1889	509,722,960	1,406,248,107
1890	498,891,811	1,430,270,909
1891	555,127,876	1,528,736,258
1892	556,105,209	1,588,781,729
1893	530,064,099	1,610,683,874
1894	586,014,990	1,729,018,266
1895	538,868,276	1,626,568,622
1896	534,664,986	1,579,206,724
1897	555,630,068	1,650,223,400
1898	584,126,049	1,721,100,640
1899	702,996,838	1,897,301,412
1899 (Dec. 1)	778,385,303	1,985,930,964

Why Times Are Better.

Warner Miller says: "In all my business career times were never better than they are now." We have never had so complete and scientific a system of protection of American interests in operation as we have now. That explains in part why times are better now than ever before. For the other part, we have never until now seen the completed effects of the protective tariff. In the past we have been struggling, by means of the protection of American industries, to build up American enterprises, to put them on their feet. Today, in many instances, this has been accomplished, and the sole duties of the protective tariff in regard to these enterprises is to preserve to them what they have already achieved, and to give them a chance to branch out, now that, at last, they stand on a firm basis. Times are better than ever before, and they are likely to remain so because protection is likely to continue to be the policy of the country.

The Real Lace Stage.

A trade paper says: "It is remarkable what a large amount of real lace is being taken for the holidays. Scarfs, handkerchiefs and yard goods are selling briskly." It is facts such as this which enable us to keep track of our national prosperity. The first effects of the Dingley law were seen in the larger buying of what we commonly call the necessities of life and in the disappearance of free soup kitchens and other such products of tariff reform. The next step in prosperity was evidenced by the more active buying of the so-called comforts of life. Then came the paying off of debts and the satisfaction of mortgages. After that came the time when the trade in those things which properly come under the head of luxuries showed large gains. The purchase of the more common and inexpensive luxuries naturally came first, but, as the Dingley law grows older, the people proceed step by step

to the purchase of more and more expensive luxuries.

It appears from the trade movement noted in the report above quoted that we have now reached the real lace stage, and as every one who has ever paid for a piece of real lace knows, that is a pretty advanced stage, as represented by the amount of money which changes hands. People supply themselves with almost everything else wished for before they buy real lace. The remarkable activity along this line is merely the trade method of saying that these are unprecedentedly prosperous times.

THEY TELL THE STORY.

Record Mortgages in Nebraska Show Exceptional Prosperity.

A great truth was spoken when the Kansas City Journal exclaimed: "Nebraska is as prosperous as Iowa, but her people are too much blinded by Bryanism to admit the fact at the polls." The records of mortgages filed and released each year in Nebraska during the past seven years ought to be sufficient in itself to demonstrate to the people of that state that it is under Republicanism that they prosper. The record is as follows:

Year	Filed	Released
1892	\$38,847,633	\$31,912,276
1893	34,601,318	26,178,745
1894	31,690,054	26,438,090
1895	25,753,364	22,548,917
1896	16,474,606	18,213,382
1897	15,630,721	22,215,759
1898	21,303,855	27,498,070

The Nebraska business man, farmer or professional man who could look upon such a record and then vote for Bryan is indeed blind. The figures speak for themselves, and it is very plain that the return of prosperity has struck the people of Nebraska. It has enabled them to materially reduce their indebtedness during the past few years, and it is putting them on their feet again for a fresh start. Before 1896 the record shows that the aggregate amount of the mortgages filed each year was much greater than the aggregate of releases, clearly demonstrating that in those days of hard times the people of Nebraska were slipping deeper and deeper into the swamp of debt, while beginning with McKinley's election the tide turned. With the coming of McKinley the people of Nebraska began to not only make a good living for themselves, but they commenced to lay something by and soon they began paying off their debts. The people of Nebraska have, indeed, had their eyes closed by Bryan when they will permit him to make them believe that the paying off of their debts and the burning up of their mortgages has been an injury to them! —Des Moines (Iowa) State Register.

Her Happy Brood.



But No Mercy for Wage Earners.

Says the New York Journal: "By removing the high (?) tariff the power of trusts would be greatly curtailed." What free-traders years after with such a mighty hanker is a return to the golden free-trade era when from 10 to 25 per cent of our wage-earners were robbed of work and wages because America was at the mercy of foreign trusts, especially, tin trust, cotton cloth trust, machinery trust, woolen goods trust, boot and shoe trust, wire and wire nail trusts, hosiery trust, knit underwear trust, linen goods trust, hair-cloth trust, besides other merciless foreign trusts too numerous to enumerate.

The foreign trusts did, however, leave us or create for us the free-trade soup houses of 1857 and 1893-4. In the eyes of free-traders earth presents no lovelier sight than a gigantic foreign trust which robs our laborers of jobs.

And especially were foreign trusts beautiful beyond measure in the eyes of free-traders because under foreign trusts goods were from 25 to 75 per cent higher than under so-called American trusts.

Free-Trade Mathematics.

A Lincoln (Neb.) newspaper is rapidly acquiring a reputation for accurate computation. In 1895, under the Wilson tariff, wool was 9 cents per pound, while under the Dingley tariff it is 12. Now common people say that wool is 3 cents per pound higher. Not so, however, reckoneth our modern Colburn, because last year it went up at one time to 15 cents. Therefore, whatsoever, whereby and provided, farmers lose 3 cents per pound on wool by the Dingley tariff. Mathematics, from a purely free-trade point of view, tendeth to quicken and enlarge the intellect.

Of Course He Would.

Five years ago green hides were selling at 3½ cents per pound, now they are selling at 13½ cents. Would not any farmer prefer to pay 50 cents more on a pair of boots and have hides remain at the price they are now?—Benton (Ill.) Republican.

DO NOT ABANDON PROTECTION

A Bridge That Has Served So Well Is a Good Bridge to Swear By.

Notwithstanding all the object lessons that have been administered by the protective tariff, there are those who still preach free trade, for which there is no justification beyond the philanthropic idea of helping the foreign laborer.

It is every man's duty to help his brother, but in order to accomplish this it does not occur to the average mind that it is incumbent to lower oneself to the level of the brother.

Level up, and not down, is the true principle upon which humanity should act.

When the foreign laborer makes an attempt to better his own condition it will be time enough for the American laborer to lend him a helping hand.

Under free trade labor in this country played second fiddle to that of Europe; under protection it has always manipulated the first violin. Is there any reason why it should now voluntarily relegate itself once more to second place?

The argument of the free trader is that inasmuch as America can undersell Europe in her own markets it is time to eliminate protection.

If this argument is good, then the American manufacturer should discard his improved machinery, reduce the pay of skilled labor to the level of that allowed the roustabout, and generally impress upon his employes that their sole duty is to put in so many hours a day.

The fact of the matter is that protection afforded American manufacturers the opportunity to advance their own interests, while at the same time enabling them to better the condition of their employes. That they did this is infinitely to their credit.

Protection is the bridge that enables American industries to reach their present high efficiency, and it would be a crime to abandon it so long as there is the shadow of danger of any other nation successfully invading our home markets.—St. Louis Star.

PROTECTION AND CURRENCY.

The Tariff Being Right the Money Question Will Take Care of Itself.

The great blunder made by Cleveland and the Democratic party in 1893 was in trying to maintain the gold standard while throwing wide open the trade doors of the American Union to foreigners. The consequences asserted themselves almost instantaneously. As the foreign goods poured into the country gold flowed out, and in a short time we were suffering all the ills which manifest themselves whenever apprehension concerning the sufficiency of the supply of basic money exists.

This state of affairs continued until after the election of McKinley gave the country assurance that the tariff would be so adjusted that the wants of the country would be satisfied with the products of American workshops. The easing up was at once noticeable, but the full effect of the benefit was not experienced until exports largely exceeded imports. Then a sense of security took the place of distrust, and the people ceased to concern themselves about the gold question. This state of mind will continue so long as the Republican party is true to its traditions and adheres steadfastly to protection, the great trade regulator. As long as we impose our tariffs judiciously we need not fear an adverse trade balance, and while it is in our favor there will always be plenty of gold in the country to meet all currency requirements. The lesson of the situation ought to impress itself on our legislators. It is a very simple one. It is: Stick to protection and favorable trade balances and the money question will take care of itself.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Marine Legislation Demanded.

The extent to which the people of the United States are dependent on foreign shipping for their sea-borne commerce furnishes a conclusive reason for prompt action looking toward the rehabilitation of the American merchant marine. In these days of open and opening doors, when the United States is preparing to control the trade of her new dependencies, and besides is clamoring for access to other and bigger markets, it is not creditable to us as a nation that we are carrying in American vessels not more than one-sixth of the total volume of American over-sea commerce. It is in the power of the congress of the United States, acting upon the recommendation of President McKinley in his last annual message, to bring about a radical change in the marine situation, to so reverse the case that five-sixths of American commerce with foreign countries shall be carried in American ships. There is a general demand for legislation with this end in view. The people expect it.

Two Kinds of Misrule.

Land in the little island of Guam, that was worth only \$15 an acre under Spanish rule, is now selling for \$100 an acre. There is a striking similarity between Spanish rule and Democratic rule.—Springfield (Mo.) Republican.

Children Settled Divorce Case.

The divorce suit of William Miller, a prominent oil producer of Toledo, Ohio, came to an unexpected ending in court. Miller had filed sensational charges against his wife. Alimony had been arranged and the two children, a little boy and little girl, were left to choose with which parent each would go. The little ones pleaded so earnestly for both that the parents became reconciled and the case was dropped.



THERE WAS NO MERCY IN THE SCOWLING FACE.

cursed you and said I had sent you on board the schooner. They went away, and I set sail for the mouth of the river. Then, when they had time to get far away, I came back. I knew where to find you. Oh! You are wise enough. But come on board. You must be hungry."

"I am starving."

Torrovo led the way back to the river, where the boat from the "Black Cat" was waiting. They were soon on board, and a substantial meal was at once set before Rob, who did full justice to it. Captain Torrovo sat near him smoking while he ate.

"I tell you, it was a close shave," said the captain. "When I saw the young man I thought it was all up. But I clubbed you well, did I not?"

"I should say so," said Rob, shrugging his shoulders, which still ached from the drubbing. "But what is the meaning of it all?"

"The meaning of it—the meaning of my part of it is this: For some reason or other, Starne wanted you to die. If he or Elvin knew I saved your life either one would kill you and me. They stop at nothing. I don't know why Starne wanted to kill you, but I know enough not to let him kill me."

"Who are these men?"

"Well, Elvin—Richard Elvin, the captain—is the chief of the Independents. That is a party opposed to everything in the present government. He is the boss of the smugglers, is rich, lives in Buenos Ayres, and is constantly conspiring in some way against the government, as well as getting richer in every way he can. The secret of his wishing your death must be connected with your relationship to Horton."

"But who is Lemuel Starne?"

"He isn't Lemuel Starne at all. He is Lemuel Elvin, the captain's son."

"But he hates me."

"Perhaps not. He may simply want to get you out of his way."

"But how can I be in his way?"

"I don't know. I am not in their secrets."

"Is Elvin so cruel as to kill a boy

"See here!" he said in a tone that could not be mistaken. "I am not quite so bad as Elvin or as Starne. I saved you twice. But if you think I am going to run my head in a noose to take you to your uncle, you are mistaken. You stay here, do you understand? Obey me and you will get along. But try to play me false and I will kill you before Elvin has a chance to kill me."

Rob looked at him appealingly. There was no mercy in the dark and now scowling countenance. He strolled on deck and gave sundry orders. The dark crew sprang to work, the anchor was raised, and sails spread. The "Black Cat" headed down the river.

"Where are we going? Where are you taking me?" asked Rob, who had followed Torrovo on deck.

"To Rio de Janeiro," said Torrovo, calmly. "We go to get another cargo of rum and tobacco."

Rob stood helplessly, with beating heart, sorrowfully watching the waves made by the "Black Cat" as she gathered headway.

Was he never to find his uncle? Was he never to see his dear mother again? Was he to live and die a prisoner among these outlaws?

There was no answer to his frantic thoughts.

He was on his way to Brazil. What disasters might not befall him before he ever saw Buenos Ayres, or even New York, again—if, indeed, he ever saw either?

"Go get some sleep," said Torrovo, now losing his severe manner. "You need sleep; go get it."

Rob did not dare disobey even so simple a command. So he went to his cabin, and on the comfortable bed sobbed himself to sleep once more.

CHAPTER IX.

The journey to Brazil lasted about two weeks, and passed without any noteworthy incident. Of course Rob was sorrowful over his gloomy prospects, but he was wise enough to hide his feelings when Captain Torrovo was