

wondered why the sunshine had lost some of its golden lustre, and how long he could bear to sit, passively, while the birds sang for him, the flowers bloomed, and all nature was intent upon showing him the beauty of work and the wrong of idleness. At last, he took one of the brilliant tropical birds in his hands, tenderly, and said, with sudden inspiration: "I will transfer your radiant beauty to your sweet song." "But when he asked for palette and brush, he was told, with a half-scornful smile, "We do not paint pictures in this land of sweet idleness." So the beautiful bird was reluctantly released, and the canker of discontent grew apace in the heart of our hero.

At length there came a day when, in a fit of idle musing, the old familiar spirit of the editorial sanctum came upon and took entire possession of him, and he conceived an overwhelming desire to "write up" this strange and beautiful land, to which he had been so mysteriously transported; but pens, and paper—where to get them? Experience had taught him the futility of appealing to his fair sovereign, but a rich fund of natural ingenuity soon came to his relief. The distilled juice of a crimson berry was made to serve for ink, and the smooth, pearl-colored bark of a strange tree was easily converted into parchment, while a quill from the wing of a songster made an effective pen. To what use his suddenly-inspired article was to be put, when written, was a question that never entered his calculations. He only knew that the impulse was upon him, and he must write. So he wrote, and wrote, and losing himself in the brilliance of his effort, saw, in fancy, the readers of the *Champion* reveling in his vivid delineations of the wonders of the unknown land, and so engrossed was he with his congenial task, that he heard no warning sound, until suddenly his of-

fended sovereign stood before him with uplifted hands, and face distorted with anger and disapproval.

"Ingrate!" she cried. "How dare you?" and snatching his work from his grasp, threw it over a ledge of rock, far out into the foaming sea.

"How dare I?" he hissed, springing to his feet in hot rebellion. "Woman, beware! lest your galling chains drive me to—to—"

"To what?" she asked tauntingly, as he faltered.

"To kill you!" he growled, with a threatening movement toward her.

"Kill me? Ha, ha; that is good," she shrieked, derisively; and to his utter amazement, she floated away from him, out over the cliffs, hung, for a moment, above the briny waves, then swiftly faded into air, and disappeared.

A cold sweat came out upon his brow, and he sank, trembling, to the ground. "A foul thing of evil, and I in her power," he groaned.

Presently a sound fell on his ear, and he started and listened. It was as if a strangely familiar voice, borne to him upon some pitying breeze, were saying: "What is life without a battle?"

"Aye, what, indeed?" he cried, as he sprang to his feet and dashed wildly to the verge of the cliff. There, not far away, rocking on the waves, was a small vessel, and over her bulwarks leaned a slight, well-remembered figure, with arms held out pleadingly toward him, and the light of an earnest soul shining out eloquently from a pair of clear, brown eyes.

"Come closer," he cried. "Oh, my guiding star, come closer, and take me from this hated bondage."

But even as he spoke, it seemed to him that the welcome vision was receding, rather than approaching. Those pleading arms, still held toward him, were slowly vanishing in distance and