

### III

#### THE SHERD OF AMENARTAS

On the day preceding Leo's twenty-fifth birthday we both journeyed to London, and extracted the mysterious chest from the bank where I had deposited it twenty years before. It was, I remember, brought up by the same clerk who had taken it down. He perfectly remembered having hidden it away. Had he not done so, he said, he should have had difficulty in finding it, it was so covered up with cobwebs.

In the evening we returned with our precious burden to Cambridge, and I think that we might both of us have given away all the sleep we got that night and not have been much the poorer. At daybreak Leo arrived in my room in a dressing-gown, and suggested that we should at once proceed to business. I scouted the idea as showing an unworthy curiosity. The chest had waited twenty years, I said, so it could very well continue to wait until after breakfast. Accordingly at nine--an unusually sharp nine--we breakfasted; and so occupied was I with my own thoughts that I regret to state that I put a piece of bacon into Leo's tea in mistake for a lump of sugar. Job, too, to whom the contagion of excitement had, of course, spread, managed to break the handle off my Sèvres china tea-cup, the identical one I believe that Marat had been drinking from just before he was stabbed in his bath.

At last, however, breakfast was cleared away, and Job, at my request,

fetched the chest, and placed it upon the table in a somewhat gingerly fashion, as though he mistrusted it. Then he prepared to leave the room.

"Stop a moment, Job," I said. "If Mr. Leo has no objection, I should prefer to have an independent witness to this business, who can be relied upon to hold his tongue unless he is asked to speak."

"Certainly, Uncle Horace," answered Leo; for I had brought him up to call me uncle--though he varied the appellation somewhat disrespectfully by calling me "old fellow," or even "my avuncular relative."

Job touched his head, not having a hat on.

"Lock the door, Job," I said, "and bring me my despatch-box."

He obeyed, and from the box I took the keys that poor Vincey, Leo's father, had given me on the night of his death. There were three of them; the largest a comparatively modern key, the second an exceedingly ancient one, and the third entirely unlike anything of the sort that we had ever seen before, being fashioned apparently from a strip of solid silver, with a bar placed across to serve as a handle, and leaving some nicks cut in the edge of the bar. It was more like a model of an antediluvian railway key than anything else.

"Now are you both ready?" I said, as people do when they are going to fire a mine. There was no answer, so I took the big key, rubbed some

salad oil into the wards, and after one or two bad shots, for my hands were shaking, managed to fit it, and shoot the lock. Leo bent over and caught the massive lid in both his hands, and with an effort, for the hinges had rusted, forced it back. Its removal revealed another case covered with dust. This we extracted from the iron chest without any difficulty, and removed the accumulated filth of years from it with a clothes-brush.

It was, or appeared to be, of ebony, or some such close-grained black wood, and was bound in every direction with flat bands of iron. Its antiquity must have been extreme, for the dense heavy wood was in parts actually commencing to crumble from age.

"Now for it," I said, inserting the second key.

Job and Leo bent forward in breathless silence. The key turned, and I flung back the lid, and uttered an exclamation, and no wonder, for inside the ebony case was a magnificent silver casket, about twelve inches square by eight high. It appeared to be of Egyptian workmanship, and the four legs were formed of Sphinxes, and the dome-shaped cover was also surmounted by a Sphinx. The casket was of course much tarnished and dented with age, but otherwise in fairly sound condition.

I drew it out and set it on the table, and then, in the midst of the most perfect silence, I inserted the strange-looking silver key, and pressed this way and that until at last the lock yielded, and the casket

stood before us. It was filled to the brim with some brown shredded material, more like vegetable fibre than paper, the nature of which I have never been able to discover. This I carefully removed to the depth of some three inches, when I came to a letter enclosed in an ordinary modern-looking envelope, and addressed in the handwriting of my dead friend Vincey.

"To my son Leo, should he live to open this casket."

I handed the letter to Leo, who glanced at the envelope, and then put it down upon the table, making a motion to me to go on emptying the casket.

The next thing that I found was a parchment carefully rolled up. I unrolled it, and seeing that it was also in Vincey's handwriting, and headed, "Translation of the Uncial Greek Writing on the Potsherd," put it down by the letter. Then followed another ancient roll of parchment, that had become yellow and crinkled with the passage of years. This I also unrolled. It was likewise a translation of the same Greek original, but into black-letter Latin, which at the first glance from the style and character appeared to me to date from somewhere about the beginning of the sixteenth century. Immediately beneath this roll was something hard and heavy, wrapped up in yellow linen, and reposing upon another layer of the fibrous material. Slowly and carefully we unrolled the linen, exposing to view a very large but undoubtedly ancient potsherd of a dirty yellow colour! This potsherd had in my judgment, once been a part of an ordinary amphora of medium size. For the rest, it measured

ten and a half inches in length by seven in width, was about a quarter of an inch thick, and densely covered on the convex side that lay towards the bottom of the box with writing in the later uncial Greek character, faded here and there, but for the most part perfectly legible, the inscription having evidently been executed with the greatest care, and by means of a reed pen, such as the ancients often used. I must not forget to mention that in some remote age this wonderful fragment had been broken in two, and rejoined by means of cement and eight long rivets. Also there were numerous inscriptions on the inner side, but these were of the most erratic character, and had clearly been made by different hands and in many different ages, and of them, together with the writings on the parchments, I shall have to speak presently.

[plate 1]

#### FACSIMILE OF THE SHERD OF AMENARTAS

One 1/2 size

Greatest length of the original    10½ inches

Greatest breadth                      7 inches

Weight                                      1lb 5½ oz

[plate 2]

## FACSIMILE OF THE SHERD OF AMENARTAS

One 1/2 size

"Is there anything more?" asked Leo, in a kind of excited whisper.

I groped about, and produced something hard, done up in a little linen bag. Out of the bag we took first a very beautiful miniature done upon ivory, and secondly, a small chocolate-coloured composition scarabæus, marked thus:--

[sketch omitted]

symbols which, we have since ascertained, mean "Suten se Ra," which is being translated the "Royal Son of Ra or the Sun." The miniature was a picture of Leo's Greek mother--a lovely, dark-eyed creature. On the back of it was written, in poor Vincey's handwriting, "My beloved wife."

"That is all," I said.

"Very well," answered Leo, putting down the miniature, at which he had been gazing affectionately; "and now let us read the letter," and without further ado he broke the seal, and read aloud as follows:--

"My Son Leo,--When you open this, if you ever live to do so, you will have attained to manhood, and I shall have been long enough dead to

be absolutely forgotten by nearly all who knew me. Yet in reading it remember that I have been, and for anything you know may still be, and that in it, through this link of pen and paper, I stretch out my hand to you across the gulf of death, and my voice speaks to you from the silence of the grave. Though I am dead, and no memory of me remains in your mind, yet am I with you in this hour that you read. Since your birth to this day I have scarcely seen your face. Forgive me this. Your life supplanted the life of one whom I loved better than women are often loved, and the bitterness of it endureth yet. Had I lived I should in time have conquered this foolish feeling, but I am not destined to live. My sufferings, physical and mental, are more than I can bear, and when such small arrangements as I have to make for your future well-being are completed it is my intention to put a period to them. May God forgive me if I do wrong. At the best I could not live more than another year."

"So he killed himself," I exclaimed. "I thought so."

"And now," Leo went on, without replying, "enough of myself. What has to be said belongs to you who live, not to me, who am dead, and almost as much forgotten as though I had never been. Holly, my friend (to whom, if he will accept the trust, it is my intention to confide you), will have told you something of the extraordinary antiquity of your race. In the contents of this casket you will find sufficient to prove it. The strange legend that you will find inscribed by your remote ancestress upon the potsherd was communicated to me by my father on his deathbed, and took a strong hold in my imagination. When I was only nineteen years

of age I determined, as, to his misfortune, did one of our ancestors about the time of Elizabeth, to investigate its truth. Into all that befell me I cannot enter now. But this I saw with my own eyes. On the coast of Africa, in a hitherto unexplored region, some distance to the north of where the Zambesi falls into the sea, there is a headland, at the extremity of which a peak towers up, shaped like the head of a negro, similar to that of which the writing speaks. I landed there, and learnt from a wandering native, who had been cast out by his people because of some crime which he had committed, that far inland are great mountains, shaped like cups, and caves surrounded by measureless swamps. I learnt also that the people there speak a dialect of Arabic, and are ruled over by a beautiful white woman who is seldom seen by them, but who is reported to have power over all things living and dead. Two days after I had ascertained this the man died of fever contracted in crossing the swamps, and I was forced by want of provisions and by symptoms of an illness which afterwards prostrated me to take to my dhow again.

"Of the adventures that befell me after this I need not now speak. I was wrecked upon the coast of Madagascar, and rescued some months afterwards by an English ship that brought me to Aden, whence I started for England, intending to prosecute my search as soon as I had made sufficient preparations. On my way I stopped in Greece, and there, for 'Omnia vincit amor,' I met your beloved mother, and married her, and there you were born and she died. Then it was that my last illness seized me, and I returned hither to die. But still I hoped against hope,

and set myself to work to learn Arabic, with the intention, should I ever get better, of returning to the coast of Africa, and solving the mystery of which the tradition has lived so many centuries in our family. But I have not got better, and, so far as I am concerned, the story is at an end.

"For you, however, my son, it is not at an end, and to you I hand on these the results of my labour, together with the hereditary proofs of its origin. It is my intention to provide that they shall not be put into your hands until you have reached an age when you will be able to judge for yourself whether or no you will choose to investigate what, if it is true, must be the greatest mystery in the world, or to put it by as an idle fable, originating in the first place in a woman's disordered brain.

"I do not believe that it is a fable; I believe that if it can only be re-discovered there is a spot where the vital forces of the world visibly exist. Life exists; why therefore should not the means of preserving it indefinitely exist also? But I have no wish to prejudice your mind about the matter. Read and judge for yourself. If you are inclined to undertake the search, I have so provided that you will not lack for means. If, on the other hand, you are satisfied that the whole thing is a chimera, then, I adjure you, destroy the potsherd and the writings, and let a cause of troubling be removed from our race for ever. Perhaps that will be wisest. The unknown is generally taken to be terrible, not as the proverb would infer, from the inherent superstition

of man, but because it so often is terrible. He who would tamper with the vast and secret forces that animate the world may well fall a victim to them. And if the end were attained, if at last you emerged from the trial ever beautiful and ever young, defying time and evil, and lifted above the natural decay of flesh and intellect, who shall say that the awesome change would prove a happy one? Choose, my son, and may the Power who rules all things, and who says 'thus far shalt thou go, and thus much shalt thou learn,' direct the choice to your own happiness and the happiness of the world, which, in the event of your success, you would one day certainly rule by the pure force of accumulated experience.-- Farewell!"

Thus the letter, which was unsigned and undated, abruptly ended.

"What do you make of that, Uncle Holly," said Leo, with a sort of gasp, as he replaced it on the table. "We have been looking for a mystery, and we certainly seem to have found one."

"What do I make of it? Why, that your poor dear father was off his head, of course," I answered, testily. "I guessed as much that night, twenty years ago, when he came into my room. You see he evidently hurried his own end, poor man. It is absolute balderdash."

"That's it, sir!" said Job, solemnly. Job was a most matter-of-fact specimen of a matter-of-fact class.

"Well, let's see what the potsherd has to say, at any rate," said Leo, taking up the translation in his father's writing, and commencing to read:--

"I, Amenartas, of the Royal House of the Pharaohs of Egypt, wife of Kallikrates (the Beautiful in Strength), a Priest of Isis whom the gods cherish and the demons obey, being about to die, to my little son Tisisthenes (the Mighty Avenger). I fled with thy father from Egypt in the days of Nectanebes,[\*] causing him through love to break the vows that he had vowed. We fled southward, across the waters, and we wandered for twice twelve moons on the coast of Libya (Africa) that looks towards the rising sun, where by a river is a great rock carven like the head of an Ethiopian. Four days on the water from the mouth of a mighty river were we cast away, and some were drowned and some died of sickness. But us wild men took through wastes and marshes, where the sea fowl hid the sky, bearing us ten days' journey till we came to a hollow mountain, where a great city had been and fallen, and where there are caves of which no man hath seen the end; and they brought us to the Queen of the people who place pots upon the heads of strangers, who is a magician having a knowledge of all things, and life and loveliness that does not die. And she cast eyes of love upon thy father, Kallikrates, and would have slain me, and taken him to husband, but he loved me and feared her, and would not. Then did she take us, and lead us by terrible ways, by means of dark magic, to where the great pit is, in the mouth of which the old philosopher lay dead, and showed to us the rolling Pillar of Life that dies not, whereof the voice is as the voice of thunder; and

she did stand in the flames, and come forth unharmed, and yet more beautiful. Then did she swear to make thy father undying even as she is, if he would but slay me, and give himself to her, for me she could not slay because of the magic of my own people that I have, and that prevailed thus far against her. And he held his hand before his eyes to hide her beauty, and would not. Then in her rage did she smite him by her magic, and he died; but she wept over him, and bore him thence with lamentations: and being afraid, me she sent to the mouth of the great river where the ships come, and I was carried far away on the ships where I gave thee birth, and hither to Athens I came at last after many wanderings. Now I say to thee, my son, Tisisthenes, seek out the woman, and learn the secret of Life, and if thou mayest find a way slay her, because of thy father Kallikrates; and if thou dost fear or fail, this I say to all thy seed who come after thee, till at last a brave man be found among them who shall bathe in the fire and sit in the place of the Pharaohs. I speak of those things, that though they be past belief, yet I have known, and I lie not."

[\*] Nekht-nebf, or Nectanebo II., the last native Pharaoh of Egypt, fled from Ochus to Ethiopia, B.C. 339.--Editor.

"May the Lord forgive her for that," groaned Job, who had been listening to this marvellous composition with his mouth open.

As for myself, I said nothing: my first idea being that my poor friend, being demented, had composed the whole thing, though it scarcely seemed

likely that such a story could have been invented by anybody. It was too original. To solve my doubts I took up the potsherd and began to read the close uncial Greek writing on it; and very good Greek of the period it is, considering that it came from the pen of an Egyptian born. Here is an exact transcript of it:--

ΑΜΕΝΑΡΤΑΣΤΟΥΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΟΥΓΕΝΟΥΣΤΟΥΑΙΓΥΠΤΙΟΥΗΤΟΥΚΑΛΛΙΚΡΑΤΟΥΣΙΣΙΔΟΣΙ  
ΕΡΕΩΣΗΝΟ

ΙΜΕΝΘΕΟΙΤΡΕΦΟΥΣΙΤΑΔΕΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΑΥΠΟΤΑΣΣΕΤΑΙΗΔΗΤΕΛΕΥΤΩΣΑΤΙΣΙΣΘΕΝΕΙ  
ΤΩΠΑΙΔΙΕΠ

ΙΣΤΕΛΛΕΙΤΑΔΕΣΥΝΕΦΥΓΟΝΓΑΡΠΟΤΕΕΚΤΗΣΑΙΓΥΠΤΙΑΣΕΠΙΝΕΚΤΑΝΕΒΟΥΜΕΤΑΤ  
ΟΥΣΟΥΠΑΤΡΟ

ΣΔΙΑΤΟΝΕΡΩΤΑΤΟΝΕΜΟΝΕΠΙΟΡΚΗΣΑΝΤΟΣΦΥΓΟΝΤΕΣΔΕΠΡΟΣΝΟΤΟΝΔΙΑΠΟΝΤ  
ΙΟΙΚΑΙΚΔΜΗΝΑ

ΣΚΑΤΑΤΑΠΑΡΑΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΑΤΗΣΛΙΒΥΗΣΤΑΠΡΟΣΗΛΙΟΥΑΝΑΤΟΛΑΣΠΛΑΝΗΘΕΝΤΕΣΕ  
ΝΘΑΠΕΡΠΕΤΡΑ

ΤΙΣΜΕΓΑΛΗΓΛΥΠΤΟΝΟΜΟΙΩΜΑΙΘΙΟΠΟΣΚΕΦΑΛΗΣΕΙΤΑΗΜΕΡΑΣΔΑΠΟΣΤΟΜΑ  
ΤΟΣΠΟΤΑΜΟΥΜΕΓ

ΑΛΟΥΕΚΠΕΣΟΝΤΕΣΟΙΜΕΝΚΑΤΕΠΟΝΤΙΣΘΗΜΕΝΟΙΔΕΝΟΣΩΙΑΠΕΘΑΝΟΜΕΝΤΕΛ  
ΟΣΔΕΥΠΑΓΡΙΩΝΑΝ

ΘΡΩΠΩΝΕΦΕΡΟΜΕΘΑΔΙΑΕΛΕΩΝΤΕΚΑΙΤΕΝΑΓΕΩΝΕΝΘΑΠΕΡΠΤΗΝΩΝΠΛΗΘΟΣΑ  
ΠΟΚΡΥΠΤΕΙΤΟΝΟΥ

ΡΑΝΟΝΗΜΕΡΑΣΙΕΩΣΗΛΘΟΜΕΝΕΙΣΚΟΙΛΟΝΤΙΟΡΟΣΕΝΘΑΠΟΤΕΜΕΓΑΛΗΜΕΝΠΟ  
ΛΙΣΗΝΑΝΤΡΑΔΕΑΠ

ΕΙΡΟΝΑΗΓΑΓΟΝΔΕΩΣΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑΝΤΗΝΤΩΝΞΕΝΟΥΣΧΥΤΡΑΙΣΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥΝΤΩΝΗΤΙΣ  
ΜΑΓΕΙΑΜΕΝΕ

ΧΡΗΤΟΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΗΔΕΠΑΝΤΩΝΚΑΙΔΗΚΑΙΚΑΛΛΟΣΚΑΙΡΩΜΗΝΑΓΗΡΩΣΗΝΗΔΕΚΑΛΛ  
ΙΚΡΑΤΟΥΣΤΟΥΣ

ΟΥΠΑΤΡΟΣΕΡΑΣΘΕΙΣΑΤΟΜΕΝΠΡΩΤΟΝΣΥΝΟΙΚΕΙΝΕΒΟΥΛΕΤΟΕΜΕΔΕΑΝΕΛΕΙΝΕ  
ΠΕΙΤΑΩΣΟΥΚΑΝ

ΕΠΙΕΘΕΝΕΜΕΓΑΡΥΠΕΡΕΦΙΛΕΙΚΑΙΤΗΝΞΕΝΗΝΕΦΟΒΕΙΤΟΑΠΗΓΑΓΕΝΗΜΑΣΥΠΙΟ  
ΜΑΓΕΙΑΣΚΑΘΟΔΟ

ΥΣΣΦΑΛΕΡΑΣΕΝΘΑΤΟΒΑΡΑΘΡΟΝΤΟΜΕΓΑΟΥΚΑΤΑΣΤΟΜΑΕΚΕΙΤΟΟΓΕΡΩΝΟΦΙΛ  
ΟΣΟΦΟΣΤΕΘΝΕΩΣ

ΑΦΙΚΟΜΕΝΟΙΣΔΕΔΕΙΞΕΦΩΣΤΟΥΒΙΟΥΕΥΘΥΟΙΟΝΚΙΟΝΑΕΛΙΣΣΟΜΕΝΟΝΦΩΝΗΝΙΕ  
ΝΤΑΚΑΘΑΠΕΡΒ

ΡΟΝΤΗΣΕΙΤΑΔΙΑΠΥΡΟΣΒΕΒΗΚΥΙΑΑΒΛΑΒΗΣΚΑΙΕΤΙΚΑΛΛΙΩΝΑΥΤΗΕΑΥΤΗΣΕΞΕΦ  
ΑΝΗΕΚΔΕΤΟΥ

ΤΩΝΩΜΟΣΕΚΑΙΤΟΝΣΟΝΠΑΤΕΡΑΑΘΑΝΑΤΟΝΑΠΟΔΕΙΞΕΙΝΕΙΣΥΝΟΙΚΕΙΝΟΙΒΟΥΛΟ  
ΙΤΟΕΜΕΔΕΑΝΕ

ΛΕΙΝΟΥΓΑΡΟΥΝΑΥΤΗΑΝΕΛΕΙΝΙΣΧΥΕΝΥΠΙΟΤΩΝΗΜΕΔΑΠΩΝΗΝΚΑΙΑΥΤΗΕΧΩΜΑΓ  
ΕΙΑΣΟΔΟΥΔΕΝΤ

ΙΜΑΛΛΟΝΗΘΕΛΕΤΩΧΕΙΡΕΤΩΝΟΜΜΑΤΩΝΠΡΟΙΣΧΩΝΙΝΑΔΗΤΟΤΗΣΓΥΝΑΙΚΟΣΚΑΛ  
ΛΟΣΜΗΟΡΩΗΕΠΕ

ΙΤΑΟΡΓΙΣΘΕΙΣΑΚΑΤΕΓΟΗΤΕΥΣΕΜΕΝΑΥΤΟΝΑΠΟΛΟΜΕΝΟΝΜΕΝΤΟΙΚΛΑΟΥΣΑΚΑ  
ΙΟΥΔΥΡΟΜΕΝΗΕΚ

ΕΙΘΕΝΑΠΗΝΕΓΚΕΝΕΜΕΔΕΦΟΒΩΙΑΦΗΚΕΝΕΙΣΣΤΟΜΑΤΟΥΜΕΓΑΛΟΥΠΟΤΑΜΟΥΤ  
ΟΥΝΑΥΣΙΠΟΡΟΥΠΙΟ

ΡΡΩΔΕΝΑΥΣΙΝΕΦΩΝΠΕΡΠΛΕΟΥΣΑΕΤΕΚΟΝΣΕΑΠΟΠΛΕΥΣΑΣΑΜΟΛΙΣΠΟΤΕΔΕΥΡ  
ΟΑΘΗΝΑΖΕΚΑΤΗΓ

ΑΓΟΜΗΝΣΥΔΕΩΤΙΣΙΣΘΕΝΕΣΩΝΕΠΙΣΤΕΛΛΩΜΗΟΛΙΓΩΡΕΙΔΕΙΓΑΡΤΗΝΓΥΝΑΙΚΑΑΝ  
ΑΖΗΤΕΙΝΗΝΠΙ

ΩΣΤΟΤΟΥΒΙΟΥΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝΑΝΕΥΡΗΣΚΑΙΑΝΑΙΡΕΙΝΗΝΠΟΥΠΑΡΑΣΧΗΔΙΑΤΟΝΣΟΝ  
ΠΑΤΕΡΑΚΑΛΛΙ

ΚΡΑΤΗΝΕΙΔΕΦΟΒΟΥΜΕΝΟΣΗΔΙΑΑΛΛΟΤΙΑΥΤΟΣΛΕΙΠΕΙΤΟΥΕΡΓΟΥΠΑΣΙΤΟΙΣΥΣΤ  
ΕΡΟΝΑΥΤΟΤΟ

ΥΤΟΕΠΙΣΤΕΛΛΩΩΣΠΟΤΕΑΓΑΘΟΣΤΙΣΓΕΝΟΜΕΝΟΣΤΩΠΥΡΙΛΟΥΣΑΣΘΑΙΤΟΛΜΗΣ  
ΕΙΚΑΙΤΑΑΡΙΣΤ

ΕΙΑΕΧΩΝΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣΑΙΤΩΝΑΝΘΡΩΠΩΝΑΠΙΣΤΑΜΕΝΔΗΤΑΤΟΙΑΥΤΑΛΕΓΩΜΩΣΔΕΑ  
ΑΥΤΗΕΓΝΩΚΑΟ

ΥΚΕΨΕΥΣΑΜΗΝ

The general convenience in reading, I have here accurately transcribed this inscription into the cursive character.

□μεν□ρτας, το□ βασικο□ γ□νους  
το□ Α□γυπτ□ου, □ το□ Καλλικρ□τους  
□σιδος □ερ□ως, □ν ο□ μ□ν θεο□  
τρ□φουσι τ□ δ□ δαιμονια □ποτ□σεται,  
□δη τελευτ□σα Τισιοθ□νει τ□ παιδ□  
□πιστ□λλει τ□δε· συν□φυγον γ□ρ ποτε  
□κ τ□ς Α□γυπτ□ας □π□ Νεκταν□βου  
μει□ το□ σο□ πατρ□ς, δι□ τ□ν □ρωτα  
τ□ν □μ□ν □πιορκ□σαντος. φυγ□ντες δ□  
πρ□ς ν□τον διαπ□ντιοι κα□ κ□δ□ μ□νας  
κατ□ τ□ παραθαλ□σσια τ□ς Αιβ□ης τ□  
πρ□ς □λ□ου □νατολ□ς πλανηθ□ντες,  
□νθαπερ π□τρα τις μελ□λη, γλυπτ□ν  
□μο□ωμα Α□θ□οπος κεφαλ□ς, ε□τα  
□μ□ρας δ□ □π□ στ□ματος ποταμο□  
μεγ□λου □κπεσ□ντες, ο□ μ□ν  
κατεποντ□σθημεν, ο□ δ□ ν□σ□  
□πεθ□νομεν· τ□λος δ□ □π□ □λρ□ων  
□νθρ□πων □φερ□μεθα δι□ □λ□ων τε  
κα□ τεναλ□ων □νθαπερ πτην□ν πλ□θος  
□ποκρ□πτει τ□ν ο□ραν□ν, □μ□ρας □,  
□ως □λθομεν ε□ς κο□λ□ν τι □ρος, □νθα  
ποτ□ μεγ□λη μ□ν π□λις □ν, □ντρα δ□

ἡπερὸν ἀγαθὸν δὲ τῆς βασιλείαν  
τῶν τῶν ξένους χεῖρας στεφανοῦντων,  
οἱτις μαλεῖα μὲν ἔχρηστο ἠπιστάμη δὲ  
πῶντων καὶ δὲ καὶ κῆλλός καὶ ἠμην  
ἠλῶρος ἦν· οὐ δὲ Καλλικρότους τοῦ  
πατρὸς ἠρασθεῖδα τῶ μὲν πρῶτον  
συνοικεῖν ἠβοῦλετο ἠμὲ δὲ ἠνελεῖν·  
ἠπειτα, ἠς οὐκ ἠνῆπειθεν, ἠμὲ γῶρ  
ἠπερεφῶλει καὶ τῶν ξένων ἠφοβεῖτο,  
ἠπῶγαγεν ἠμῆς ἠπῶ μαγεῖας καθῶ  
ἠδοῖς σφαλερῆς ἠνθα τῶ βῶραθρον τῶ  
μῶγα, οὐ κατῶ σῶμα ἠκειτο ἠ γῶρων  
ἠ φιλοσοφὸς τεθνεῖς, ἠφικομῶνοις  
δὲ ἠδειξε φῶς τοῦ βῶου εἶθῶ, οὐον  
κῶνα ἠλισσῶμενον φῶνην ἠῶντα  
καθῶπερ βροντῆς, εἶτα διῶ πυρῆς  
βεβηκυῖα ἠβλαβῆς καὶ ἠτι καλλῶων  
αἶτῶ ἠαυτῆς ἠξεφῶνη. ἠκ δὲ τοῦτων  
ἠμοσε καὶ τῶν σῶν πατῶρα ἠθῶνατον  
ἠποδεῖξεν, εἶ συνοικεῖν οὐ  
βοῦλοιτο ἠμὲ δε ἠνελεῖν, οὐ γῶρ  
οὐν αἶτῶ ἠνελεῖν ἠσχυεν ἠπῶ τῶν  
ἠμεδαπῶν ἦν καὶ αἶτῶ ἠκῶ μαγεῖας.  
ἠ δὲ οὐδῶν τι μῶλλον ἠθελε, τῶ κῶρε  
τῶν ἠμῶτων προῶσων ἠνα δὲ τῶ τῆς  
γυναικῆς κῶλλος μῶ ἠρῶη· ἠπειτα

Ἐργισθεῖσα κατεγοῦτευσε μὲν ἀτῶν,  
πολυμένον μῦνοι κλύουσα καὶ  
δουρμύνη κέθεθεν ἔπνευγεν, ἔμ δὲ  
φῶβος ἔφικεν εἰς στήμα τὸ μέγλου  
ποταμοῦ τὸ ναυσιπῆρου, πῶδω δὲ  
ναυσῶν, ἔφ' ἔνπερ πλῆουσα ἔτεκῶν  
σε, ἔποπλεῖσασα μῆλις ποτὶ δέσπο  
ἔθηνῆζε κατηγαγῶν. ὅ δὲ, ἔ  
Τισσοθενες, ἔν ἔπιστῆλλω μὲ  
ἔλιγῆρει· δέξ γῆρ τῶν γυναῖκα  
ἔναζητεῖν ἔν πῶς τῆ βῆου μυστῆριον  
ἔνεῖρξ, καὶ ἔναιρεῖν, ἔν  
που παρασχῆ, διῆ τῶν πατῆρα  
Καλλικρότους. εἰ δὲ φοβοῦμενος ἔ διῆ  
ἔλλο τι ἀτῆς λέπει τὸ ἔργου, πῆσι  
τοῖς ἔστερον ἀτῆ τὸτο ἔπιστῆλλω,  
ἔως ποτὶ ἔγαθῆς τις γενῆμενος τῆ  
πυρῆ λοῦσασθαι τολμῆσει καὶ τῆ  
ἔριστεῖα ἔκων βασιλεῖσαι τῶν  
ἔνθρῶπων· ἔπιστα μὲν δὲ τῆ τοιαῖτα  
λῆγω, ἔμως δὲ ἔ ἀτῆ ἔγνώκα ὅκ  
ἔψευσῆμην.

The English translation was, as I discovered on further investigation, and as the reader may easily see by comparison, both accurate and elegant.

Besides the uncial writing on the convex side of the sherd at the top, painted in dull red, on what had once been the lip of the amphora, was the cartouche already mentioned as being on the scarabæus, which we had also found in the casket. The hieroglyphics or symbols, however, were reversed, just as though they had been pressed on wax. Whether this was the cartouche of the original Kallikrates,[\*] or of some Prince or Pharaoh from whom his wife Amenartas was descended, I am not sure, nor can I tell if it was drawn upon the sherd at the same time that the uncial Greek was inscribed, or copied on more recently from the Scarab by some other member of the family. Nor was this all. At the foot of the writing, painted in the same dull red, was the faint outline of a somewhat rude drawing of the head and shoulders of a Sphinx wearing two feathers, symbols of majesty, which, though common enough upon the effigies of sacred bulls and gods, I have never before met with on a Sphinx.

[\*] The cartouche, if it be a true cartouche, cannot have been that of Kallikrates, as Mr. Holly suggests. Kallikrates was a priest and not entitled to a cartouche, which was the prerogative of Egyptian royalty, though he might have inscribed his name or title upon an oval.--Editor.

Also on the right-hand side of this surface of the sherd, painted obliquely in red on the space not covered by the uncial characters, and signed in blue paint, was the following quaint inscription:--

IN EARTH AND SKIE AND SEA

STRANGE THYNGES THER BE.

HOC FECIT

DOROTHEA VINCEY.

Perfectly bewildered, I turned the relic over. It was covered from top to bottom with notes and signatures in Greek, Latin, and English. The first in uncial Greek was by Tisisthenes, the son to whom the writing was addressed. It was, "I could not go. Tisisthenes to his son, Kallikrates." Here it is in fac-simile with its cursive equivalent:--

ΟΥΚΑΝΔΥΝΑΙΜΗΝΠΟΡΕΥΕΘΑΙΤΙΙΘΕΝΗΚΑΛΛΙΚΡΑΤΕΙΤΩΠΑΙΔΙ

οκ ν δυναμην πορευεσθαι.

Τισιοθνης Καλλικρτει τ παιδ.

This Kallikrates (probably, in the Greek fashion, so named after his grandfather) evidently made some attempt to start on the quest, for his entry written in very faint and almost illegible uncial is, "I ceased from my going, the gods being against me. Kallikrates to his son." Here it is also:--

ΤΩΝΘΕΩΝΑΝΤΙΣΤΑΝΤΩΝΕΠΑΥΣΑΜΗΝΤΗΣΠΟΡΕΙΑΣΑΛΛΙΚΡΑΤΗΣΤΩΠΑΙΔΙ

τῶν θεῶν ἄντιστάντων ἄπαυσμην τῆς  
πορεύσεως. Καλλικράτης τῷ παιδί.

Between these two ancient writings, the second of which was inscribed upside down and was so faint and worn that, had it not been for the transcript of it executed by Vincey, I should scarcely have been able to read it, since, owing to its having been written on that portion of the tile which had, in the course of ages, undergone the most handling, it was nearly rubbed out--was the bold, modern-looking signature of one Lionel Vincey, "Ætate sua 17," which was written thereon, I think, by Leo's grandfather. To the right of this were the initials "J. B. V.," and below came a variety of Greek signatures, in uncial and cursive character, and what appeared to be some carelessly executed repetitions of the sentence τῷ παιδί (to my son), showing that the relic was religiously passed on from generation to generation.

The next legible thing after the Greek signatures was the word "Romae, A.U.C.," showing that the family had now migrated to Rome. Unfortunately, however, with the exception of its termination (evi) the date of their settlement there is for ever lost, for just where it had been placed a piece of the potsherd is broken away.

Then followed twelve Latin signatures, jotted about here and there, wherever there was a space upon the tile suitable to their inscription. These signatures, with three exceptions only, ended with the name "Vindex" or "the Avenger," which seems to have been adopted by the family after its migration to Rome as a kind of equivalent to the Greek "Tisisthenes," which also means an avenger. Ultimately, as might be expected, this Latin cognomen of Vindex was transformed first into De Vincey, and then into the plain, modern Vincey. It is very curious to observe how the idea of revenge, inspired by an Egyptian who lived before the time of Christ, is thus, as it were, embalmed in an English family name.

A few of the Roman names inscribed upon the sherd I have actually since found mentioned in history and other records. They were, if I remember right,

MVSSIIVS. VINDEX

SEX. VARIVS MARVLLVS

C. FVFIDIIVS. C. F. VINDEX

and

LABERIA POMPEIANA. CONIVX. MACRINI. VINDICIS

this last being, of course, the name of a Roman lady.

The following list, however, comprises all the Latin names upon the sherd:--

C. CAECILIVS VINDEX

M. AIMILIVS VINDEX

SEX. VARIVS. MARVLLVS

Q. SOSIVS PRISCVS SENECIO VINDEX

L. VALERIVS COMINIVS VINDEX

SEX. OTACILIVS. M. F.

L. ATTIVS. VINDEX

MVSSIVS VINDEX

C. FVFIDIVS. C. F. VINDEX

LICINIVS FAVSTVS

LABERIA POMPEIANA CONIVX MACRINI VINDICIS

MANILIA LVCILLA CONIVX MARVLLI VINDICIS

After the Roman names there is evidently a gap of very many centuries. Nobody will ever know now what was the history of the relic during those dark ages, or how it came to have been preserved in the family. My poor friend Vincey had, it will be remembered, told me that his Roman ancestors finally settled in Lombardy, and when Charlemagne invaded it, returned with him across the Alps, and made their home in Brittany, whence they crossed to England in the reign of Edward the Confessor. How he knew this I am not aware, for there is no reference to Lombardy or

Charlemagne upon the tile, though, as will presently be seen, there is a reference to Brittany. To continue: the next entries on the sherd, if I may except a long splash either of blood or red colouring matter of some sort, consist of two crosses drawn in red pigment, and probably representing Crusaders' swords, and a rather neat monogram ("D. V.") in scarlet and blue, perhaps executed by that same Dorothea Vincey who wrote, or rather painted, the doggrel couplet. To the left of this, inscribed in faint blue, were the initials A. V., and after them a date, 1800.

Then came what was perhaps as curious an entry as anything upon this extraordinary relic of the past. It is executed in black letter, written over the crosses or Crusaders' swords, and dated fourteen hundred and forty-five. As the best plan will be to allow it to speak for itself, I here give the black-letter fac-simile, together with the original Latin without the contractions, from which it will be seen that the writer was a fair mediæval Latinist. Also we discovered what is still more curious, an English version of the black-letter Latin. This, also written in black letter, we found inscribed on a second parchment that was in the coffer, apparently somewhat older in date than that on which was inscribed the mediæval Latin translation of the uncial Greek of which I shall speak presently. This I also give in full.

Fac-simile of Black-Letter Inscription on the Sherd of Amenartas.

"Ista reliquæia est valde mifticu et myrificu opus quod maiores

mei ex Armorica ff Brittania mi□ore fecu□ co□veheba□t et q□dm  
fc□s cleric□s fe□per p□ri meo in manu ferebat q□d pe□itus illvd  
deftrueret, affirma□s q□d effet ab ipfo ſathana co□flatu□  
preftigiofa et dyabolica arte q□re p□ter mevs co□fregit illvd  
i□ dvas p□tes q□s q□dm ego Johs□ de Vi□ceto falvas fervavi et  
adaptavi ficut ap□paret die lu□e p□r□ poſt feſt beate Mrie vir{g}  
anni gr□e mccccxlv."

Expanded Version of the above Black-Letter Inscription.

"Ista reliquia est valde misticum et myrificum opus, quod majores mei  
ex Armorica, ſcilicet Britannia Minore, ſecum convehebant; et et quidam  
ſanctus clericus ſemper patri meo in manu ferebat quod penitus illud  
deſtrueret, affirmans quod eſſet ab ipſo Sathana conflatum preſtigioſa  
et dyabolica arte, quare pater meus confregit illud in duas partes, quas  
quidem ego Johannes de Vinceto ſalvas ſervavi et adaptavi ſicut apparet  
die lune proximo poſt feſtum beate Marie Virginis anni gratie MCCCCXLV."

Fac-simile of the Old English Black-Letter Translation of the above  
Latin Inſcription from the Sherd of Amenartas found inſcribed upon a  
parchment.

"Thys rellike ys a ryghte miſtycall worke & a marvaylous y□ whyche  
myne aunceteres afore tyme dyd conveigh hider w□ y□ ffrom Armoryke  
wh□ ys to ſeien Britaine y□ leſſe & a certayne holye clerke  
ſhoulde allweyes beare my ffadir on honde y□ he owghte uttirly ffor

to fruffhe y<sup>e</sup> fame affyrmyng y<sup>e</sup> yt was ffourmyd & confflatyd  
off fathanas hym felffe by arte magike & dyvellyffhe wherefore my  
ffadir dyd take y<sup>e</sup> fame & to braft yt yn tweyne but I John de Vincey  
dyd fave whool y<sup>e</sup> tweye p<sup>ar</sup>tes therof & topeecyd y<sup>e</sup> togydder agayne  
foe as yee fe on y<sup>e</sup>s<sup>daye</sup> daye mondaye next ffolowyng after y<sup>e</sup> ffeeste  
of feynte Marye y<sup>e</sup> bleffed vyrgyne yn y<sup>e</sup> yeere of salvacioun  
ffowertene hundreth & ffyve & ffowrti."

Modernised Version of the above Black-Letter Translation.

"Thys rellike ys a ryghte mistycall worke and a marvaylous, ye whyche  
myne aunceteres aforetyme dyd conveigh hider with them from Armoryke  
which ys to seien Britaine ye Lesse and a certayne holye clerke should  
allweyes beare my fadir on honde that he owghte uttirly for to frusshe  
ye same, affyrmyng that yt was fourmed and conflatyed of Sathanas hym  
selfe by arte magike and dyvellysshe wherefore my fadir dyd take ye same  
and tobrast yt yn tweyne, but I, John de Vincey, dyd save whool ye tweye  
partes therof and topeecyd them togydder agayne soe as yee se, on this  
daye mondaye next followyng after ye feeste of Seynte Marye ye Blessed  
Vyrgyne yn ye yeere of Salvacioun fowertene hundreth and fyve and  
fowerti."

The next and, save one, last entry was Elizabethan, and dated 1564. "A  
most strange historie, and one that did cost my father his life; for in  
seekyng for the place upon the east coast of Africa, his pinnance  
was sunk by a Portuguese galleon off Lorenzo Marquez, and he himself

perished.--John Vincey."

Then came the last entry, apparently, to judge by the style of writing, made by some representative of the family in the middle of the eighteenth century. It was a misquotation of the well-known lines in Hamlet, and ran thus: "There are more things in Heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy, Horatio."[\*]

[\*] Another thing that makes me fix the date of this entry at the middle of the eighteenth century is that, curiously enough, I have an acting copy of "Hamlet," written about 1740, in which these two lines are misquoted almost exactly in the same way, and I have little doubt but that the Vincey who wrote them on the potsherd heard them so misquoted at that date. Of course, the lines really run:--

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.--L. H. H.

And now there remained but one more document to be examined--namely, the ancient black-letter transcription into mediæval Latin of the uncial inscription on the sherd. As will be seen, this translation was executed and subscribed in the year 1495, by a certain "learned man," Edmundus de Prato (Edmund Pratt) by name, licentiate in Canon Law, of Exeter College, Oxford, who had actually been a pupil of Grocyn, the first scholar who taught Greek in England.[\*] No doubt, on the fame of this

new learning reaching his ears, the Vincey of the day, perhaps that same John de Vincey who years before had saved the relic from destruction and made the black-letter entry on the sherd in 1445, hurried off to Oxford to see if perchance it might avail to dissolve the secret of the mysterious inscription. Nor was he disappointed, for the learned Edmundus was equal to the task. Indeed his rendering is so excellent an example of mediæval learning and latinity that, even at the risk of sating the learned reader with too many antiquities, I have made up my mind to give it in fac-simile, together with an expanded version for the benefit of those who find the contractions troublesome. The translation has several peculiarities on which this is not the place to dwell, but I would in passing call the attention of scholars to the passage "duxerunt autem nos ad reginam advenaslasaniscoronantium," which strikes me as a delightful rendering of the original, "ἄγαγον δὲ εἰς βασίλειαν τῶν τῶν ξένους χεῖρας στεφανοῦτων."

[\*] Grocyn, the instructor of Erasmus, studied Greek under Chalcondylas the Byzantine at Florence, and first lectured in the Hall of Exeter College, Oxford, in 1491.--Editor.

Mediæval Black-Letter Latin Translation of the Uncial  
Inscription on the Sherd of Amenartas

Amenartas e gen. reg. Egyptii uxor Callicratis sacerdoti Ifidis  
qua dei foveat demonia atte duat filioli' fuo Tififtheni ia

moribusque ita mandata: Effugi quodam ex Egypto regnante Nectanebo  
cum patre tuo, propter mei amore pejerato. Fugientes autem versus  
Notum trans mare et xxxiii menses per litora Libye versus  
Orientem errantem ubi est petra quedam magna sculpta instar  
Ethiops capit, deinde dies iiiij ab ostium fluminis magni eieci  
partim submersi fumus partim morbo mortui sumus: in fine autem a  
feris hominibus portabamur per paludes et vada. ubi avium multitudo  
celum obrabat dies x. donec advenimus ad cavum quendam montem,  
ubi olim magna urbs erat, caverne quoque imense: duxerunt autem  
nos ad reginam Advenastaniscoronatam que magice utebatur  
et peritia omnium rerum et fatis pulchris et vigore  
inseparabilis erat. Hec magno patris tui amore perculsa  
primum quod ei conubium michi morte parabat. postea vero  
recusante Callicrate amore mei et timore regine affecto nos per  
magica abduxit per vias horribiles ubi est puteus ille profundus,  
cuius iuxta aditum iacebat senioris philosophi cadaver, et  
advectis motu stravit flammam Vite erectam, instar columnae  
volutatis, voces emittente quasi tonitrus: tuum per ignem  
in petu nocuo expers transiit et iam ipsa sese formosior viva  
est.

Quibus factum iuravit se patrem tuum quoque immortalem  
ostensurum esse, si me prius occideret regine consubernium  
mallet; neque enim ipsa me occidere valuit, propter nostratum  
magica cuius egomet partem habeo. Ille vero nichil huius generis maluit,  
manibus ante oculum passis ne mulieris formositatem adspiceret:

postea eu[m] m[ag]ica p[ro]cuffit arte, at mortuu[m] efferebat i[n] de  
cu[m] fletib[us] et vagitib[us], me p[ro] timore[m] expulit ad oftiu[m] m[ag]ni  
flumi[n]i veliuoli porro in nave in qua te peperit, uix post dies h[ab]e  
Athenas inuenta fu[it]. At tu, O Tifisthen[is], ne q[ui]d quoru[m] ma[gi]do  
nauci fac: necesse eni[m] est muliere[m] exquirere si qua Vite  
mysteriu[m] i[m]petres et vi[di]dicare, qua[m] tu[m] in te est, patre[m]  
tuu[m] Callierat[is] in regine morte. Sin timore sue aliq[ui]d causa re[m]  
reli[quit] quis i[m]fecta[m], hoc ip[s]u[m] o[mn]ib[us] poster[is] ma[gi]do du[m] bonvs  
q[ui]s inueniatur qui ignis lauacru[m] no[n] p[ro]horrescet et p[ro]tentia  
dign[us] do[m]i[n]i abib[us] ho[m]i[n]u[m].

Talia dico incredibilia q[ui]de[m] at min[us] e[st] n[on]ta de reb[us] michi cognitis.

Hec Grece scripta Latine reddidit vir doctus Edm[und]s de Prato, in  
Decretis Licenciatus e Coll. Exon: Oxon: doctissimi Grocyni quondam e  
pupillis, Id. Apr. A[nn]i. Dn[omi]ni. MCCCCLXXXV°.

Expanded Version of the above Mediæval Latin Translation

Amenartas, e genere regio Egyptii, uxor Callicratis, sacerdotis Isis,  
quam dei fovent demonia attendunt, filiolo suo Tisistheni jam moribunda  
ita mandat: Effugi quodam ex Egypto, regnante Nectanebo, cum patre tuo,  
propter mei amorem pejerato. Fugientes autem versus Notum trans mare,  
et viginti quatuor menses per litora Libye versus Orientem errantes,  
ubi est petra quedam magna sculpta instar Ethiopis capitis, deinde dies  
quatuor ab ostio fluminis magni ejeti partim submersi sumus partim

morbo mortui sumus: in fine autem a feris hominibus portabamur per paludes et vada, ubi avium multitudo celum obumbrat, dies decem, donec advenimus ad cavum quendam montem, ubi olim magna urbs erat, caverne quoque immense; duxerunt autem nos ad reginam Advenaslasaniscoronantium, que magicâ utebatur et peritiâ omnium rerum, et saltem pulcritudine et vigore insenesibilis erat. Hec magno patris tui amore perculsa, primum quidem ei connubium michi mortem parabat; postea vero, recusante Callicrate, amore mei et timore regine affecto, nos per magicam abduxit per vias horribiles ubi est puteus ille profundus, cujus juxta aditum jacebat senioris philosophi cadaver, et advenientibus monstravit flammam Vite erectam, instar columnae volutantem, voces emittentem quasi tonitrus: tunc per ignem impetu nocivo expers transiit et jam ipsa sese formosior visa est.

Quibus factis juravit se patrem tuum quoque immortalem ostensuram esse, si me prius occisa regine contubernium mallet; neque enim ipsa me occidere valuit, propter nostratum magicam cujus egomet partem habeo. Ille vero nichil hujus generis malebat, manibus ante oculos passis, ne mulieris formositatem adspiceret: postea illum magica percussit arte, at mortuum efferebat inde cum fletibus et vagitibus, et me per timorem expulit ad ostium magni fluminis, velivoli, porro in nave, in qua te peperit, vix post dies huc Athenas vecta sum. At tu, O Tisisthenes, ne quid quorum mando nauci fac: necesse enim est mulierem exquirere si qua Vite mysterium impetres et vindicare, quautum in te est, patrem tuum Callieratem in regine morte. Sin timore sue aliqua causa rem reliquis infectam, hoc ipsum omnibus posteris mando, dum bonus quis inveniatur

qui ignis lavacrum non perhorrescet, et potentia dignus dominabitur hominum.

Talia dico incredibilia quidem at minime ficta de rebus michi cognitis.

Hec Grece scripta Latine reddidit vir doctus Edmundus de Prato, in Descretis Licenciatus, e Collegio Exoniensi Oxoniensi doctissimi Grocyni quondam e pupillis, Idibus Aprilis Anno Domini MCCCCLXXXV°.

"Well," I said, when at length I had read out and carefully examined these writings and paragraphs, at least those of them that were still easily legible, "that is the conclusion of the whole matter, Leo, and now you can form your own opinion on it. I have already formed mine."

"And what is it?" he asked, in his quick way.

"It is this. I believe that potsherd to be perfectly genuine, and that, wonderful as it may seem, it has come down in your family from since the fourth century before Christ. The entries absolutely prove it, and therefore, however improbable it may seem, it must be accepted. But there I stop. That your remote ancestress, the Egyptian princess, or some scribe under her direction, wrote that which we see on the sherd I have no doubt, nor have I the slightest doubt but that her sufferings and the loss of her husband had turned her head, and that she was not right in her mind when she did write it."

"How do you account for what my father saw and heard there?" asked Leo.

"Coincidence. No doubt there are bluffs on the coast of Africa that look something like a man's head, and plenty of people who speak bastard Arabic. Also, I believe that there are lots of swamps. Another thing is, Leo, and I am sorry to say it, but I do not believe that your poor father was quite right when he wrote that letter. He had met with a great trouble, and also he had allowed this story to prey on his imagination, and he was a very imaginative man. Anyway, I believe that the whole thing is the most unmitigated rubbish. I know that there are curious things and forces in nature which we rarely meet with, and, when we do meet them, cannot understand. But until I see it with my own eyes, which I am not likely to, I never will believe that there is any means of avoiding death, even for a time, or that there is or was a white sorceress living in the heart of an African swamp. It is bosh, my boy, all bosh!--What do you say, Job?"

"I say, sir, that it is a lie, and, if it is true, I hope Mr. Leo won't meddle with no such things, for no good can't come of it."

"Perhaps you are both right," said Leo, very quietly. "I express no opinion. But I say this. I am going to set the matter at rest once and for all, and if you won't come with me I will go by myself."

I looked at the young man, and saw that he meant what he said. When Leo means what he says he always puts on a curious look about the mouth. It

has been a trick of his from a child. Now, as a matter of fact, I had no intention of allowing Leo to go anywhere by himself, for my own sake, if not for his. I was far too attached to him for that. I am not a man of many ties or affections. Circumstances have been against me in this respect, and men and women shrink from me, or at least, I fancy that they do, which comes to the same thing, thinking, perhaps, that my somewhat forbidding exterior is a key to my character. Rather than endure this, I have, to a great extent, secluded myself from the world, and cut myself off from those opportunities which with most men result in the formation of relations more or less intimate. Therefore Leo was all the world to me--brother, child, and friend--and until he wearied of me, where he went there I should go too. But, of course, it would not do to let him see how great a hold he had over me; so I cast about for some means whereby I might let myself down easy.

"Yes, I shall go, Uncle; and if I don't find the 'rolling Pillar of Life,' at any rate I shall get some first-class shooting."

Here was my opportunity, and I took it.

"Shooting?" I said. "Ah! yes; I never thought of that. It must be a very wild stretch of country, and full of big game. I have always wanted to kill a buffalo before I die. Do you know, my boy, I don't believe in the quest, but I do believe in big game, and really on the whole, if, after thinking it over, you make up your mind to go, I will take a holiday, and come with you."

"Ah," said Leo, "I thought that you would not lose such a chance. But how about money? We shall want a good lot."

"You need not trouble about that," I answered. "There is all your income that has been accumulating for years, and besides that I have saved two-thirds of what your father left to me, as I consider, in trust for you. There is plenty of cash."

"Very well, then, we may as well stow these things away and go up to town to see about our guns. By the way, Job, are you coming too? It's time you began to see the world."

"Well, sir," answered Job, stolidly, "I don't hold much with foreign parts, but if both you gentlemen are going you will want somebody to look after you, and I am not the man to stop behind after serving you for twenty years."

"That's right, Job," said I. "You won't find out anything wonderful, but you will get some good shooting. And now look here, both of you. I won't have a word said to a living soul about this nonsense," and I pointed to the potsherd. "If it got out, and anything happened to me, my next of kin would dispute my will on the ground of insanity, and I should become the laughing stock of Cambridge."

That day three months we were on the ocean, bound for Zanzibar.