

CHAPTER LII

The Charming Yoomy Sings

The morrow came; and three abreast, with snorting prows, we raced along; our mat-sails panting to the breeze. All present partook of the life of the air; and unanimously Yoomy was called upon for a song. The canoes were passing a long, white reef, sparkling with shells, like a jeweler's case: and thus Yoomy sang in the same old strain as of yore; beginning aloud, where he had left off in his soul:--

Her sweet, sweet mouth!

The peach-pearl shell:--

Red edged its lips,

That softly swell,

Just oped to speak,

With blushing cheek,

That fisherman

With lonely spear

On the reef ken,

And lift to ear

Its voice to hear,--

Soft sighing South!

Like this, like this,--

The rosy kiss!--

That maiden's mouth.

A shell! a shell!
A vocal shell!
Song-dreaming,
In its inmost dell!

Her bosom! Two buds half blown, they tell;
A little valley between perfuming;
That roves away,
Deserting the day,--
The day of her eyes illuming;--
That roves away, o'er slope and fell,
Till a soft, soft meadow becomes the dell.

Thus far, old Mohi had been wriggling about in his seat, twitching his beard, and at every couplet looking up expectantly, as if he desired the company to think, that he was counting upon that line as the last; But now, starting to his feet, he exclaimed, "Hold, minstrel! thy muse's drapery is becoming disordered: no more!"

"Then no more it shall be," said Yoomy, "But you have lost a glorious sequel."