

**THE ADVENTURES
OF MARK WILLIS**

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The Adventures of Mark Willis by Mrs. George Cupples

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MRS. GEORGE CUPPLES

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A TIMELY RESCUE

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ADVENTURES
OF
MARK WILLIS



BEATING THE WAVES

T. NELSON AND SONS,
LONDON, EDINBURGH AND NEW YORK.



THE
ADVENTURES OF MARK WILLIS.

BY
MRS. GEORGE CUPPLES,
AUTHOR OF "THE STORY OF OUR ISLAND," "THE LITTLE CAPTAIN,"
Etc. Etc.



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THE ADVENTURES OF MARK WILLIS.

CHAPTER I.

SETTING OUT IN LIFE.

“**SAY, Mark,**” shouted a boy about thirteen years of age to another who was sitting under the shade of the noble lime-trees in the old ‘College Green,’ Bristol—“I say, are you not going with us to Clifton this afternoon?”

Mark sighed as he answered, “No, Bently, I can’t go.”

“Why, what’s come over you, Mark?” replied his friend. “You were always ready to enjoy our half-holidays, and now you do nothing but sit here moping and making yourself miserable. Come along; I know your mother would like you to go,—she said to me this morning she hoped you would, at any rate.”

“Oh yes, I know that; but I tell you I cannot come;”

and Mark rose up and walked away in the direction of his home, leaving Jack Bently standing staring at him.

"Well," he said, as he joined some other boys who were waiting for him, "I can't make the fellow out. He must have taken his father's death dreadfully to heart; or it may be because people say they are poor now, and will have to come down in the world. Well, it's a pity, whatever the reason is, for Mark was a good fellow."

When the boys were gone, Mark, who had only walked to the other side of the green, came back to his seat, and sat down once more with the same listless look about him. He pulled a book out of his pocket and began to read, but soon put it away again; and, leaning his back against one of the trees, he gazed through the entrance to the green at the masts of the ships, the flapping sails, and small craft plying about the river. He closed his eyes and listened to the strange medley of sounds: the busy hum of men; the rush of carriage wheels; the Heave-*yo* of the sailors as they warped a ship, newly arrived, to its berth; and to the swift run of the crane as it dropped its heavy burden with a dull thud into the hold. Above all came the sudden swell of the organ booming through the open door of the cathedral, and Mark opened his eyes to exclaim, "Oh, I wish 'old Fritz' would stop! We have enough of it every day, I'm sure; but he's practising, I suppose, some of his great pieces."

He drew the book again from his pocket and read very