robes of a Venetian Senator, his long, bony fingers clasping an ivory crucifix, lay a grinning skeleton. On the floor near by lay another figure, evidently that of a woman, the skull surrounded by what might almost be called a halo of golden hair, while the rest of the figure was clad in a dress of yellow brocade, with a jeweled girdle. On the breast there was a dark stain, from the middle of which the jeweled hilt of a dagger, protruding, showed by what death she had died. In the corner, kneeling in front of a large crucifix, was another figure, clothed in armor, but with no head-piece or gauntlets. For one moment I stood not knowing what to think of these horrible skeletons, when all at once a thought came to me. This, then, was the explanation of that story which I had read. There came into my mind a series of vivid pictures of how it had all happened: how the young Duke, wishing to provide a place of safety for his wife and her aged father, had brought them there; how they had been locked in through some treachery; how the old man, weak through age, died first; how his daughter, unable to bear the horrors of a death by starvation, perished by her own hand; how the young Duke was left to meet his miserable death alone; and how he remained faithful to the end, and died, at last, sinking exhausted before the crucifix.

But am I never to get out of this place? Am I to share their fate? Twice have I tried to get out, and each time I have failed; now I must try in earnest. With that I turned toward the doorway, and hastened along the passage. In such haste was I that I forgot to take proper care of my candle, and a sudden puff of wind blew it out, leaving me alone in the dark. But I did not stop for all that; I fairly ran, for I had for the moment but one desire, and that was to get away from what I had seen. At some moments I almost thought that I heard some one coming after me; at others, there seemed to be some one in front of me, and all the time it was cold, and damp, and dark, and very rough under foot. How long this continued I cannot say,—it seemed interminable to me,—but at last I saw a light ahead, and in a minute more I was back at the foot of the staircase from which I had started. I ascended several flights; on each story was a small door, but on only one had this been left open; into this I went. Yes! it was my own room. Tired with my subterranean wanderings I went straight to bed, and did not wake till late the next morning. The first thing which I did when I got up was to look for the little door. Sure enough, there it was. When I was dressed and had had my breakfast, I told my story to the manager of the hotel. He only shrugged his shoulders and said, "Impossible," but gave me permission to investigate; but nothing could I find, howsoever much I tried. The staircase truly was there; everybody in the house knew of it. It was used by the servants to get at the rooms on the different floors with which it communicated, by means of small doors, such as had aroused my curiosity the night before. As to the existence of my mysterious passage, however, I was never able to satisfy anybody but myself; for no indications of any kind could I find along the apparently solid stone wall which would lead any one to believe that there was a secret passage behind it. Nevertheless, I shall always continue to feel that I really found the explanation of that strange disappearance which happened so many centuries ago.

A Narrow Escape.

IT was in the year of eighteen hundred and froze to death, that I, Lawrence Mitford, ran away to sea in the good ship Gaspee, under command of my uncle, James Mitford.

The Gaspee was a clipper-built vessel, especially designed for blockade running; and although registered and owned in Thomaston, she was fitted with papers and passports (how obtained I know not) that enabled her captain to baffle any ordinary attempts to prove her real identity, which was of a somewhat questionable character at that period of ill feeling between the North and South.

I was a lad of but fourteen years, and having