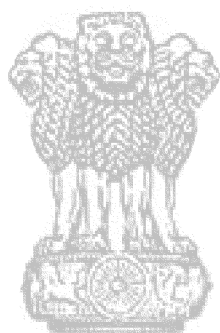


[Frontispiece.]

*faithfully yours*  
*Charles Dyer R.N.*

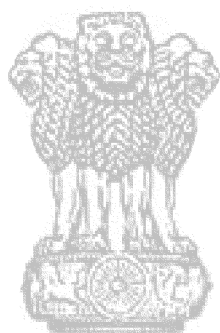


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# A Roving Commission



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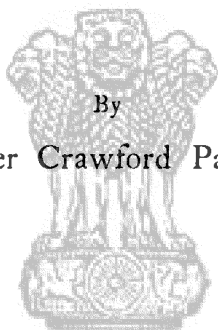


# A Roving Commission

*NAVAL REMINISCENCES*


By

Commander Crawford Pasco, R.N.



George Robertson & Company  
Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and London

1807



*Printed in England by*  
RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,  
LONDON & BUNGAY.

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To  
ALL OLD SHIPMATES  
BEFORE OR ABAFT THE MAST

(A RELATIONSHIP AS DEAR AS THAT OF BLOOD RELATIVES)

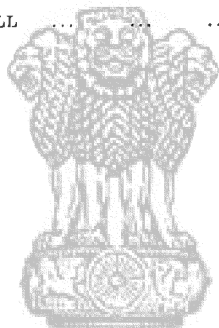
These Old Memories are affectionately Dedicated

BY THE AUTHOR,  
WHOSE REGARD FOR OLD SHIPMATES STRENGTHENS,  
IF POSSIBLE, AS THE SAND-GLASS WARNS HIM THAT HE IS  
FOLLOWING THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE.

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

IN preparing the following pages for press I have been careful to avoid the mistake, occasionally made, of so re-casting the matter, that in the completed revision the author has some difficulty in recognizing his own work. My effort, in which I trust I have fairly succeeded, has been to thoroughly preserve from beginning to end the impress of the writing hand and inditing mind. *A Roving Commission* is therefore simply what it purports to be, a sailor's narrative of a sailor's experiences. It is a round unvarnished tale which I have, as far as possible, delivered in its author's own words, affecting no inappropriate graces of diction, attempting no verbal embroidery, but confining my editorial function to preserving continuity and homogeneity. Herein I am certain that those acquainted with my good friend Captain Pasco, knowing the noble simplicity of his life, character, and conversation, will say I have done wisely and well.

T. H. PRICHARD.

## PREFACE

CONTEMPLATING the vast changes which have taken place in the Naval Service since 1830, it seems to me well that the rising generation should be as fully informed as possible with respect to the experiences their fathers have passed through. I have therefore added this, my contribution, to the general stock, and trust that its perusal may prove to its readers both interesting and instructive.

CRAWFORD PASCO.

*Rosebery, Malvern, Vic.,  
September 26, 1896.*

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# A ROVING COMMISSION

## CHAPTER I

1805—1830

Birth—Early boyhood—Late Admiral Pasco—Flag-lieutenant on board the *Victory*—Fireside anecdotes of Nelson—The seaman's letter—The signal "England expects every man will do his duty"—"Close action"—The result of a flogging—William Duke of Clarence—Nelson's promise, "If I live"—The flag-lieutenant's mistake, "How dare you trifle with my feelings, sir!"—A singular vision—Saved by a dream—No accommodation for the Admiral—Governor Macquarie—Governor Bligh—A martinet—An interesting record—After Navarino—A young hero—H.M.S. *Kent*—Launched in life.

BORN as I was at one of the principal naval arsenals of Old England (Plymouth Dock) within three years of the peace of 1815, my very nursery was pervaded by an atmosphere in which the old "salts" of war experience lived, moved, and had their being.

A boyhood spent under such influence naturally took colour from its surroundings; and the anecdotes of my father, the late Admiral Pasco, and some of his



old messmates, who often cracked their yarns of the past at our fireside, could not fail to inspire the youth of the family with an ardent desire to "avenge the death of Nelson."

My father was the senior lieutenant on board the *Victory* at Trafalgar, but by particular desire of Lord Nelson was doing duty as signal officer, and I could never listen to the following anecdote which he specially loved to tell without realizing the spirit of devotion which filled the breast of every British seaman for their illustrious Chief.

A few days before his great and last battle of Trafalgar, a ship was being dispatched home, and in the morning a general signal to the fleet announced, "Opportunity for letters to England." Letter-bags from all the fleet were collected on board the flagship *Victory* by an appointed hour, when the dispatches of the Commander-in-Chief being closed, all were sent to the departing frigate. The signal was then made to her, "Part company," in obedience to which she bore away under all sail, homeward bound.

The Admiral was walking the poop, possibly contemplating his hope of victory on the morrow, when a signal midshipman made some communication to my father in an undertone, and he, without noticing that Lord Nelson was just at his elbow, replied with some degree of vexation, "Confound it!"

"What's the matter, Pasco?" immediately asked the Admiral, and my father, not wishing to trouble him with the subject, replied :

"Oh, nothing particular, my lord."

"But," said the Admiral, "you would not have been vexed at nothing, now what was it?"

"Well, sir, my senior signal-man was late for the letter-bag, and has lost his opportunity of sending home."

"Make the recall instantly," said the Admiral, "that man's letter may be as important as mine."

The fast-receding ship was recalled, a boat was lowered, and the seaman's letter put on board. In that Admiral's breast beat "the heart that could feel for another."

Here I may appropriately mention too, another anecdote with respect to that historic signal which has since become the watchword of the British Navy. It has already been recorded in the life of Admiral Codrington, but it will well bear repetition. Just before the great battle Lord Nelson said, addressing my father:

"Mr. Pasco, I wish to say to the fleet, England confides that every man will do his duty, and," he added, "you must be quick, for I have one more signal to make, which is for close action."

"If your lordship will permit me to substitute the word 'expects' for 'confides,' suggested my father, "the signal will soon be completed, because the word 'expects' is in the signal vocabulary, but the word 'confides' must be spelt at length."

"That will do, Pasco, make it at once," said the Admiral, apparently pleased with the alteration.

It was accordingly made, and directly after followed the signal he loved, "Close action."

Before relating any further anecdote of Nelson, it may not be out of place here to mention the circumstance which ultimately led to my father serving under his lordship's flag. That circumstance was, simply, a rather severe caning inflicted on him when a youngster nine and a half years old in school at Plymouth. Running out when school was dismissed, and wishing he was old enough to volunteer for the sea—for in those old press-gang days a volunteer stood on higher ground than his compulsory ship-mates—in a run across the Parade-ground on Mount Wise, he came across a captain in uniform proceeding to his boat, and at once asked him to take him on board his ship. Patting the little fellow on the head, he said, "Yes, come along, my little man," and on board he went of H.M.S. *Pegasus*, commanded by H.R.H. Prince William Henry, afterward Duke of Clarence. He was entered in the book as captain's servant, and eventually put on the quarter-deck as a volunteer. The Prince took an interest in the boy's future, and some years after he had become a lieutenant, H.R.H. requested Lord Nelson to take Pasco as his senior lieutenant, which he did. In view, however, of the officer filling that post being first on the list for promotion, his lordship desired, in order the less to interfere with the routine and general discipline of the ship, that the junior lieutenant, being the last on the list for promotion,

should undertake the duty of senior lieutenant, and the senior lieutenant that of flag-lieutenant. The system in vogue at that time at Whitehall was that, in the case of a general action, the senior lieutenants of line-of-battle ships should receive post rank at once. Therefore my father, on the morning of Trafalgar, apprehensive lest the Admiral's arrangements should preclude him from the promotion to which he would otherwise be entitled, sought an interview with his Chief, but on entering the cabin found him on his knees, inditing that prayer for success on our nation's arms which stands recorded in history. He therefore retired to await a better opportunity, and on referring to the subject later the Admiral replied he could not make any change then, but added: "Depend upon it, Pasco, *if I live* you shall not be forgotten."

Unfortunately Lord Nelson *did not* live, and Pasco *was* forgotten, while the junior lieutenant, Quillam, was promoted over the heads of about six of his seniors.

To illustrate the temper of the time and the patriotic ardour with which Lord Nelson's great example had inspired all under his command, the following anecdote well deserves to be recorded.

While our fleet was in hot pursuit of the French towards the West Indies, a most anxious watch was constantly kept on the advance frigate *Euryalus* for the one desired signal, "Enemy in sight." So eager were all concerned for that communication that

the flags composing it were ever present to the eyes of the signal officers. One bright evening, running down the trade, up went three flags on board the *Euryalus*. Instantly every glass on the poop of the *Victory* was focussed on the signal. The upper and lower flags blew out clear, and were those of the long-looked-for signal, but the middle flag would not show. Suspense and anticipation were too much to bear, till at last my father decided that it could be nothing else, so he cheerfully reported to Captain Hardy, "Enemy in sight, sir." Captain Hardy immediately descended to the Admiral's cabin to report. Then while my father watched the signal being hauled down to confirm it, the middle flag unfurled—but oh, horror and confusion! the introduction of a wrong second flag quite destroyed the sense of the signal. But the mistake was made, and at once confessed to Captain Hardy, who said: "Well, Pasco, *you* will have to tell that to the Admiral, for *I* would not be the one to do it."

With what preface he could contrive to smooth the way, the flag-lieutenant endeavoured to explain the mistake, just as the Admiral was rubbing his hands with intense satisfaction at the approaching realization of his highest earthly hopes. A cold douche after a Turkish bath could not be so great a shock, and, stamping his foot, he exclaimed, "How dare you, sir, trifle with my feelings in that way!"

Following my father's narratives of personal experience to a later date, I have no doubt the



[To face p. 6.]

ADMIRAL PASCO.

subjoined will be of special interest to all lovers of occult mysteries.

Having been wounded in the great battle, on the return of the *Victory* to Spithead after Trafalgar, my father was landed with the rest of the disabled at Haslar Hospital, where he was visited by the father of Midshipman Smith, who had been killed beside him on the poop of the *Victory*. The bereaved parent's account of himself was, that he was a merchant in London, and on October 21 he was lunching, in company with two other gentlemen, at the Jerusalem Coffee House. Their conversation was on general talk, on 'Change, when this father, who knew only that his son was a youngster in Nelson's ship, off Cadiz or elsewhere, suddenly saw a distinct appearance of his boy falling dead before him. Dropping his knife and fork, he exclaimed, "Good God, my son is dead." When he received the particulars of the event from my father, he said it corresponded precisely with what he had seen.

But this vision was not more remarkable than one which, about twelve years afterwards, appeared to my mother, when residing at Plymouth during the absence of my father on the coast of Ireland in command of H.M.S. *Lee*, a corvette. It was about January 1818, when one night my mother was disturbed by a dream in which she saw the *Lee* in flames, but in her dream it was on a date that had not arrived by a month. On waking up, she endeavoured to dismiss it from her mind as "only a

dream." However the appearance was repeated more than once the same night, and in each case it was identical. Under these circumstances she felt she would not be justified in passing it unnoticed, nor would she tell her husband that she had had a dream.

What then would be the correct course for an anxious wife to adopt, who was naturally solicitous for her husband's safety? I have no doubt that many women would say, "By all means urge him, on that particular night, to be sure and be out of the ship if possible." This wife knew, while the *Lee* was lying in the Cove of Cork (now known as Queenstown), that her husband enjoyed much of the hospitality of his old friend Sir Herbert Sawyer, the Admiral in command, and whenever he dined with the Admiral he usually slept there.

But her course of training, as the wife of a naval officer, impressed upon her that if there was a post of danger on board one of his Majesty's ships, that post should be filled by her captain; so without giving any reason, she simply begged her husband, as a particular favour, that on such a night (naming the date indicated in the dream) he would on no consideration be absent from his ship.

He dined that evening with the Admiral, but before ten o'clock, rose to take leave, at which his host remonstrated, inquiring had anything offended him that he should not take up his usual quarters on a bleak winter's night. Declining to give the



Admiral any reason then, my father promised an explanation in the morning, when he would tell him that he merely went to gratify a whim of his wife. Reaching the ship about 10 p.m., he found all quiet on board. The officer of the watch received him, and the boat was made fast. But on descending the companion-ladder and opening the cabin-door a great body of flame burst out, and though a vigorous use of the water-buckets sufficed to save the ship, yet as the magazine-hatch was directly under the cabin-table there is little doubt that but for her captain's return, she would have been totally destroyed, perhaps with heavy loss of life.

Marking the very wide difference between then and now in matters connected with the Royal Navy, it was at that date by no means uncommon for the captain's wife and family to have quarters on board. The practice came to a sudden end as the result of the following incident. Prior to 1828, Admiral Lord A. Beauclercq arrived at Lisbon in H.M.S. *Blanche*, Captain Mends, to hoist his flag on board the *Windsor Castle*, Captain Darnwood. But Mrs. Darnwood was installed on board, and notified the Admiral of her deep regret that she had no vacant accommodation. The Admiral, therefore, soon made a vacancy by signalling the *Windsor Castle* from the *Blanche* to "land passengers," and since that event, captains have been forbidden to take their wives to sea.

The practice as above, however, still obtained when my father was appointed to the command of

his first ship after the battle of Trafalgar. This was the *Hindostan*, of 50 guns, a troop-ship, in which he conveyed General Lachlan Macquarie as Governor to New South Wales, and with him the 73rd Regiment, Major Maurice O'Connell, and on this occasion my mother and her two only children, son and daughter, made the voyage in the *Hindostan* round the world. On leaving Sydney for our homeward voyage, in company with the *Dromedary*, which conveyed some officers and their wives of the New South Wales Corps concerned in the impeachment of the late Governor, Captain W. Bligh, R.N., of *Bounty* notoriety, my mother had innocently devised a code of signals with pocket-handkerchiefs to be placed in different positions when the ships were conveniently near, that a friendly communication might be kept up between the ladies. But Bligh, who had taken passage in the *Hindostan*, claiming the right of a broad pendant, assumed command, and forbade this mode of communication, which he viewed with grave suspicion.

After passing Cape Horn, Captain Bligh was permitted to make the following record of domestic interest in Captain Pasco's Family Bible: "John Andrew Charles O'Connell Pasco was born on board His Majesty's Ship *Hindostan*, off Isle Grande, coast of Patagonia, in latitude 43° 55' S.; longitude, per chron., 319° 25' E., on 'Thursday, July 5, at a quarter before 8 a.m.; but by circumnavigating the globe East, and reducing the birth to the time at Greenwich,

it will be on Wednesday, July 4, 1810, at thirty minutes past ten in the morning.—W. B.”

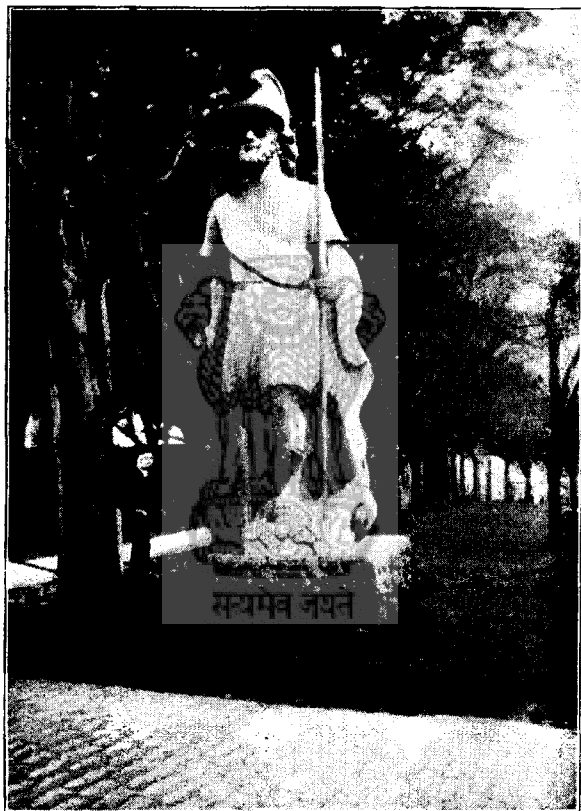
From the foregoing it will be easily understood that the natural bias of young Pasco was likely to be strongly nautical, with a distinct leaning towards the Navy. But had the incidents of voyages and travels in which both parents had shared been insufficient to determine one's future occupation, the *éclat* with which Codrington's fleet returned about Christmas 1827 after their victory in Navarino Bay amply settled the question.

The old *Genoa*, riddled from stem to stern, came into Plymouth Sound, her colours at half-mast, with the body of her late Commodore Bathurst on board. One young midshipman, Fred Grey, who had lost his right arm on board the *Allion*, was our guest for a few weeks, and lent such a charm to service afloat by his spirited relation of the proceedings of the engagements, that I became impatient for two more Christmases to pass that I might attain my twelfth year.

In the meantime, few Saturday afternoons were lost in seizing opportunities for boating with a school-fellow of the same age, also bent on the sea. Having made the acquaintance of sundry boatswains and gunners of the ordinary, one or other would often lend their boat to us for a sail, so that before our turn came for taking charge of a jolly-boat, we were quite *au fait* in its management under canvas. My companion and I often considered the desira-

bility or otherwise of our different studies. We agreed that arithmetic was an essential, but that Latin was simply absurd for sailors. Had we been intended for doctors or parsons, there might be something in it; but in maturer years how often have I wished that more experienced minds had endeavoured to convince me that, with a good Latin foundation, one might so much more readily acquire most Continental languages.

However, the Christmas vacation 1829 found me at Syntax in the Eton Grammar, and at the rule of Practice in arithmetic, which was ample qualification, in that day, for a volunteer of the first class. A vacancy for such, having been offered my father for me by his old messmate, Captain Devonshire, commanding H.M.S. *Kent* of 78 guns, lying as guardship in Hamoaze, harbour of Plymouth, close off Torpoint, I proudly entered upon my future career on board the *Kent*.



[To face p. 12.]

FIGURE-HEAD OF H.M.S. *Kent*, 1830.

## CHAPTER II

1830

On board the *Kent*—Captain Devonshire—Daily routine—Alterations and reforms—In a gun brig—Gulling the doctor—A new invention—Orders for the Mediterranean—Raw recruits—An invitation to dinner—Dining with the captain—Turning in—Water in demand—Five pints to the gallon—Impressions of Malta—"Heave one grain for dive"—A long fast—Dobbie's device—Hazing the corporal—Form fours and three deep—A naval poet—"The Midshipmites' Ball."

DUTY on board the old *Kent* in those early days was rather uneventful, if not rather monotonous.

Captain Devonshire was a confirmed invalid from gout, occupying his cabins with his family on board during the winter months, and his house at Torpoint during summer. To attend punishment or for reading the Articles of War, in full uniform, he was wheeled by his coxswain in an easy-chair from the cabin under the poop on to the quarter-deck, and as summer approached he was hoisted out of the ship and landed for a season.

The routine on board, for youngsters, was, certain hours for school, a.m. and p.m., conducted by an old

man named Bartlett, of about the status of a master-at-arms, but he had enough knowledge of navigation to carry us through trigonometry and the working out of a college sheet of that day—including chronometer and lunar—but that was about the extent of his curriculum.

Out of school hours we were in three watches, and ready to answer signals to the Admiral's office, which was usually for the purpose of copying orders.

One of us had to land every evening about eight o'clock, to fetch the letters from the post, the mail-coach from London being due at that time, after being about two days on the road. There was also a semaphore system by which important news might be signalled down from the metropolis, and I presume it was by that more speedy arrangement that the death of George IV. was announced at Plymouth the day after it occurred, when the booming of our minute guns was a novel sound to me.

This event brought our late Lord High Admiral, Duke of Clarence, to the throne as William IV., when a naval promotion was the result. Our respected but infirm captain was retired with rank of Rear-Admiral, which was then called a Yellow Admiral. Our commander, Philip Westphall, was posted, and our first lieutenant Waugh made commander. The former was succeeded by Captain Samuel Pym, C.B., who commanded the *Sirius* at the capture of the Isle of France, and Commander W.B. Green succeeded Captain Westphall.

Considerable change now took place in naval uniform. All the buttons had been flat, but a different device was in use for the various branches of the Service. The Admiral's line, down to volunteers of first class, was the plain crown and anchor; the Master line (since termed the Navigating branch) was a sheet anchor with two kedges, one pendant from either end of the stock. The Purser's was two anchors crossed, and the Medical branch a single anchor, but instead of the twisted cable it was twined with a serpent, the emblem of *Æsculapius*, while the Warrant Officers (gunner, &c.) had a plain anchor on a smooth polished brass button. The white cuffs and collars of full dress in George IV.'s reign were now changed to red, and the buttons, instead of being flat, were now convexed, which at first were easily converted by being punched on a block hollowed to receive the button.

Beyond the elementary schooling we enjoyed from the one who bore the rating of school-master, we had also a system of gunnery to learn from the gunner before the introduction of the *Excellent* under Captain Chads.

I have understood that the Service was indebted to Sir Thomas Hardy for initiating something like a system, which at the time I speak of (1830) had no lack of words of command, when it consisted of the following twelve, viz. : "Clear for Action," "Cast loose," "Prick the cartridge," "Prime," "Point," "Ready," "Fire," "Stop the vent," "Sponge,"



“Load,” “Run out,” and “Secure the gun.” But upon the establishment of the *Excellent* reforms were vast and frequent. Each new gunner joining from the *Excellent* brought some change in the drill, especially weeding the words of command of what had been considered superfluous.

Attached to all guardships at that time was a 10-gun brig called a “tender,” manned from the guardship, and commanded by one of the lieutenants. Our brig was the *Levret*, Lieutenant Worth, accompanied by Second Master John Caught, a mate and midshipman. The two latter could occasionally be exchanged, but once in the brig, they generally preferred remaining, as they enjoyed cruising on the coast of Ireland and in the Channel. Their usual occupation was to relieve homeward bound ships detained in the chops of the Channel by easterly winds and frequently short of water and provisions.

The youngsters who could not have the benefit of the brig for learning seamanship were sent on certain days in the week to the rigging-loft, in the dockyard, where, under a boatswain, they passed through a course of knotting, splicing, strapping blocks, &c., which we always looked forward to with pleasure.

But life in port was not without its spice of fun, as witness the following:

Admiral the Earl of Northesk, when Commander-in-Chief at Plymouth, often showed hospitality to junior officers, as also did Lady Northesk, and sometimes independently of each other.

On one occasion, one of the servants at the Admiral's house was taken seriously ill early in the afternoon, and a signal was made to the flagship for an assistant-surgeon. One was sent in reply to the signal, but he was notoriously soft and easily gulled. He landed under Mount Wise about 4 p.m., and hurrying to the Admiral's house met one of his messmates, a waggish mid, whom he told that the Admiral had signalled for him.

"Oh," said the mid, "I know what that means. You need not be in a hurry, he expects you there at dinner at six."

"What," said the doctor, "do you think so?"

"Certainly, nothing else," said the wag, and he persuaded the doctor to take a stroll with him till dinner-time.

Poor Lady Northesk meantime had visited her sick servant, and wondered at the time which elapsed since the signal was made, and the non-arrival of the doctor.

The company began to arrive for dinner, and in due time all were seated. The Admiral noticed the little doctor there, but supposed her ladyship had invited him, while her ladyship attributed the visitor to the Admiral. Dinner being over, and no doctor having yet visited the patient, Lady Northesk sent word by a footman to tell the Admiral, when he replied, "There is one at the table, better ask him to go," and the "cat" was out of the bag.

A most interesting trial of Mr. Snow Harris's

invention for protecting H.M. ships from lightning was successfully made on board H.M.S. *Caledonia*, at which several youngsters from the guardship were allowed to be present. The object of Mr. Harris's invention was to show that the electric fluid would confine itself to a copper wire employed, passing with it through the water. For this purpose a galvanic battery was placed on the main-deck of the *Caledonia*, and connected with the wire communicating with a loaded 24-pounder. The wire passed to the main-truck, and so down over the side to the sea, the end terminating at the vent of a loaded carronade on board a boat moored several yards from the ship, the bight of the wire between ship and boat being several feet immersed. As the electric spark discharged the gun on board the ship, the discharge of the one in the boat was instantaneous.

Captain Robert Fitzroy, about returning to the Straits of Magellan in H.M.S. *Beagle*, highly approved of the invention, and caused the copper plates to be applied to the *Beagle's* spars forthwith, commencing with a copper vane spindle screwed into each truck, connecting with copper bands screwed into aft side of the masts, and conducted down through the upper deck to the under side of a beam, which was in the purser's cabin, thence through to outside, and down to the copper on the bottom.

Some officers are wont to view any novelty with disfavour, and were ready to condemn this as injurious to the spars, which they insisted were weakened

by the plates being counter-sunk. But if any ship put the conductors to a high test, it was Fitzroy's little *Beagle*, which from 1831 to 1843 was exploring for years in the vicinity of Cape Horn, then round the world, and finally on the Australian coast, during which time she was frequently struck by lightning, and never sustained any damage beyond that once experienced by the purser. While lying in bed, he found his cabin so suddenly and fearfully illuminated, that the black locks which adorned his head when he went to bed, appeared at breakfast-time grey as a badger. For this invention Mr. Harris eventually was deservedly knighted.

In February 1831 we received our sailing orders for the Mediterranean, which involved a considerable increase in the complement of our crew, and most amusing were the replies of some raw hands from the mines in Cornwall to the interrogatories of the commander.

"Well, my man, have you ever been to sea before?"

"Yaas, zur, but not vur."

"Well, how far have you been?"

"Cross the watter in a boat," meaning he had crossed from Torpoint to Devonport.

Another was asked, "Are you married?"

"Well, not quite, zur," was the sheepish reply.

"Surely you are either married or single?"

"Well, I'se a courting, zur."

However, they turned out good hands in the after-guard at first, and smart topmen before we returned.

On March 18 we sailed in company with H.M.S. *Ganges*, Captain Burdett, who had just arrived from Portsmouth, and proceeded to Gibraltar, not escaping the usual weather in the Bay at that equinoctial season, which gave us landsmen a fair sample of foul weather.

But even this was made to lend itself to a seaman's natural love of fun, and, knowing that his friend could not accept, one afternoon, as the two liners were lying-to under close-reefed topsails, Captain Burdett signalled Captain Pym—"Come to dinner, have killed a pig."

Apropos of this subject, the first time that I had the honour of dining at the captain's table in company with several senior officers, after the cloth had been removed and the wine had passed round once, the captain said, "Youngster, you can go and see how the wind is."

"Aye, aye, sir," I replied, and started off, thinking how smartly I would bring my reply. Running at once to the binnacle and finding her head at S.E., I went to the quarter-master to inquire was she "Full and by?" when the officer of the watch asked what I was about.

I told him the captain's order, when he said, "Oh, that will do, youngster; he meant it was time for you to go to your berth."

But my sense of responsibility would not admit of that construction, so returning to the cabin, I reported the wind S.W.

A broad smile on the captain's face confirmed the lieutenant's supposition, and with the remark, "That will do, you can turn in now," I received my first lesson in social etiquette afloat.

Turning in, however, was a performance of some difficulty at that time for youngsters of twelve and thirteen to accomplish on the lower or orlop deck of a line-of-battle ship. One required a run of several yards to give sufficient impetus to reach the battens from which the hammocks were swung, and then you had to take another good swing before you could throw your feet into your hammock. But, once in, no bed is comparable to a well-slung hammock for comfort.

After the long war which closed in 1815, various improvements in the equipment of a man-of-war were introduced. Conspicuous among these, at the period to which these stray leaves relate, were chain cables—though hemp were not then abolished—and iron tanks in lieu of water-casks; while Jack no longer indulged in wearing a cue or pigtail, which had been found inconveniently liable to get drawn into a block or reef-tackle sheave when aloft, to the risk of the man.

As the water supply was limited according to the probable lengths of the voyage, the *full* allowance was considered as fixed at one gallon per man—the Admiral having no greater allowance than a boy—so that it was not unusual for the captain's steward to add, when delivering a verbal invitation to a junior

officer to dine, "If you need a glass of water, sir, please send one to the captain's filter."

A few members of the wardroom and gunroom messes were guests at the captain's table nearly each week-day, and on Sunday the captain was entertained by the wardroom officers.

A passage being sometimes prolonged by foul winds or calms, necessitated a reduction in the allowance of water. Then the rule adopted was similar to that with which I became altogether too painfully familiar in much later years, during the exploration of the coasts of Australia in the *Beagle*.

We were often on very short allowance, having to depend on such water as we could find by sinking wells; but as in the tropics we were subjected to six months dry season, a friendly shower could not be relied on as a source of supply, and much of the water procured was very brackish.

An Irish marine had charge of the tanks under the master, to whom he would appeal before serving out the day's allowances, with the query, "How many pints to the gallon to-day, sir, if you please?"

"Oh, it will not run more than five to-day, corporal."

"Very well, sir," replies the latter, "then I will give them one pint of the fresh, two of the brackish, and the rest of it downright salt."

But, to return to my early experience on board the *Kent* in the Mediterranean. One's first visit to Malta must leave indelible impressions on a youth.

The grand harbour and town of Valetta, the Dock-yard Creek, Bonaparte's Bay, &c., &c. The singular appearance of the boats, and the smitches' aquatic performances when shouting under the stern of a man-of-war, "Heave for dive, Senor; heave one graina for dive."

A grain was a coin of the realm of the value of one-third of a farthing, so it may be imagined how small it was. Yet, on throwing one into the water, the Maltese, two or three at a time, would dive after it and scramble for it till one would rise to the surface holding the coin up in proof of his being the prize-taker. Then he deposited his treasure in his mouth, being otherwise deficient of pocket or purse. Now-a-days, however, copper is despised, and nothing less than silver expected.

The beggars at Malta were a remarkable institution, affecting all kinds of decrepitude, and especially a starving condition, vowing that they had had nothing to eat in the past four years, in the following terms :

"Nix mongy, senor," "Nix mongy siner Navarin," which interpreted meant, nothing to eat since Navarino.

Navarino was fought in 1827, when the combined fleets of Britain, France, and Russia crowded Malta harbour for repairs after the battle, and their visit afforded quite a harvest for the beggars.

One middy in the fleet at this period, who was rather notorious for pranks and practical jokes, was



Dobbie, whose ship I need not name. He had overstayed his leave at Malta so long that he was to be treated as a deserter, and the Maltese Fencibles (half military, half police) were laid on his track. They caught him, and under the escort of a corporal and two privates he was being conducted toward the harbour for passage to his ship. Dobbie came along so orderly beside the corporal, with whom he occasionally conversed in a familiar way, and whom he flattered by styling him "sergeant" whenever he addressed him, that he threw the corporal off his guard. As they approached the Nix Mongerie stairs (a high flight of stone steps leading to the boats), Dobbie said, "By the way, sergeant, have you heard of that wonderful military evolution discovered in France, how to form four deep with three men?"

"No, Senor, that is not possible," replied his guard.

"Wait a moment, sergeant, while I show you," said Dobbie.

Then taking one private and standing him with his toes at the very edge of the wharf, facing the sea, he gave the order smartly, "Attention."

"There," said Dobbie, "that's one, isn't it, sergeant?"

"Si, Senor."

Then standing a second close in rear of the first, he said, "Well, that's two, isn't it, sergeant?"

"Si, Senor."

"Now, sergeant, you come here," and placing him in rear of the last, Dobbie promptly pushed all three overboard into the water, and taking to his heels, he escaped for another three days. So if the three did not form four deep, they certainly fell too deep.

However, that middies should get into scrapes and play practical jokes, is only in the nature of things; but Malta can testify to their higher capabilities, since it was in the harbour of Valetta that one of them, no doubt assisted by the whole posse of his shipmates, actually wrote a poem.

Now poems by midshipmen do not grow on every bush, so I think this one should be rescued from oblivion, so that at some future time it may be enshrined in the annals of the Service.

It was written in the year 1830, when there lay in Valetta harbour the following British ships of war: *Britannia*, 120 guns; *Ocean*, 84, Commodore Patrick Campbell; *Melville*, 74; *Spartiate*, 74, Captain Warren; *Revenge*, 74; *Madagascar*, 46, Captain the Hon. Sir Robert Cavendish Spencer (Bobby).

The middies were annoyed that no effort was made by the senior officers to return the hospitalities extended to them by the citizens.

To remedy the defect, they decided to take the matter in hand themselves, with what result is told in this metrical story of

## THE MIDSHIPMITES' BALL.

## I

With dinners and with *déjeuners*,  
 With balls by night and *fêtes* by day,  
 The happy moments flew ;  
 And yet, not any of the Fleet  
 Who liked to *share* in every treat  
 Would join to *give* them too.

## II

At length the Mids themselves, who find  
 Their seniors rather disinclined  
 To make a move at all,  
 Resolved at last to do their best  
 To make atonement for the rest,  
 And give their friends a Ball.

## III

Six ships were in the harbour seen,  
 But the *Revenge* in quarantine  
 Can hardly here be reckoned ;  
 The *Madagascar* first began,  
 The *Melville* next approved the plan,  
 The saucy *Spartiate* second.

## सत्यमेव जयते

First by the *Ocean* eighty-four,  
 Which Campbell's blue broad pennant bore,  
 Was opposition shown,  
 With which our largest ship afloat,  
*Britannia's* self refused her vote,  
 And left the three alone.

## V

Little for such neglect we cared,  
 With ball-room, band, and all prepared,  
 And Spencer's leave obtained,  
 The rest, we thought, would follow soon,  
 For sure, we felt so small a boon  
 Might certainly be gained.

## VI

We reckoned wrong ; for Campbell first,  
When on his ears the secret burst, .

This sullen answer gave :

“ Mids give a Ball ! Decided No.

What ! give a Ball before they know

How others should behave ! ”

## VII

A different aspect “ Bobby ” bore,  
Who, with a seaman’s frankness swore,

“ I wish to Gad ’twere done !

I’ll gladly offer all I can

To aid and further such a plan,

As if myself were one.”

## VIII

“ I won’t consent,” old Warren cries.

“ What ! not consent ! ” the knight replies ;

“ But how prevent it now ? ”

“ Nothing more easy, I conceive,

If on that night I stop their leave,

And suffer none to go.”

## IX

This was of course a settler quite,

But still on the appointed night

They found that after all,

Although the Middies’ leave was stopped,

Their first intention was not dropped,

For SPENCER GAVE THE BALL.

## CHAPTER III

1830—1832

A middy's duties—Heaving the log—Midshipman of a top—Setting the watch—Middies' diversions—"Cutting out"—A game of whist—Purloining the provender—Transferred to the *Nimrod*—With the experimental squadron—The new frigate—Dragooning poor Paddy—A hospitable hostess—Pratics and milk—Smart signal work—The difference between 41 and 14—The lieutenant's wild-goose chase—Bearing the brunt of another's burden—Mast-headed for shooting the cat—A naval cure for sea-sickness.

HERE it will be interesting to place on record the various duties which a youngster had to perform in the Navy during the third decade of the nineteenth century.

There were three watches, each being composed of a lieutenant, a mate, and a due proportion of midshipmen and volunteers, since termed cadets. These were called watchmates, which implied even a closer brotherhood than messmate or shipmate.

When a school-master was carried, regular hours were allotted for instruction, but studies were

interrupted by a signal for a midshipman, from the Admiral, when one would be required to proceed to the Admiral's office, taking with him the "order book" in which to copy any general order. This was sometimes more than a day's work. At night, either the first, middle, or morning watch had to be kept; another youngster of the watch had to "go the round" of the decks accompanied by the ship's corporal, carrying a lantern to see that there were no irregularities, such as smoking, or a light where it was not allowed. Returning to the deck, he reported to the officer of the watch, "All right below, sir."

At sea, the senior midshipman of the watch had to "heave the log" every hour, to ascertain the ship's speed.

A mizzen-topman had to hold the reel, on which was wound the log-line, at the end of which was attached the log-ship, a flat piece of wood in form of a quadrant, with a radius of six or eight inches, the base being loaded with lead to keep it in the water, while the upper corner floated. The two lower corners had each a hole, and through one the line was passed and knotted, and a leg of the line, a foot or eighteen inches long, with a bone peg to fix in the other hole, presented a firm resistance to maintain its place when once thrown into the water. A few fathoms of line called "stray line," to allow the log-ship to perform its duty, was marked with a piece of bunting to commence the marking of knots

which represent miles. Between the stray line mark another first knot was eight fathoms, each knot being marked with a small strand through the line, with one knot in the first, two knots in the second, and so on to six, and between each knot was a half-knot.

The quarter-master held the sand-glass ready as the stray mark went over the lee quarter, and the midshipman called out "Turn." The log-glass was turned, another instant the sand ran out, the quarter-master called "Stop," and the line was kept from running out further.

The mid reported to the lieutenant of the watch, "She is going  $5\frac{1}{2}$ , sir," or whatever it might be.

That officer, if judicious and painstaking in his duty, had watched through the hour the fluctuations of the ship's progress by an increase or decrease in the wind, or other circumstances affecting her speed, and would reply to the mid who had to mark the log-slate, "Give her seven," or it may be only four.

Above, I have said that each knot was eight fathoms, but I have not mentioned the length of the sand-glass. The long glass was twenty-eight seconds, but there was a short glass of half that time, fourteen seconds, for this reason, that twenty-eight seconds bears the same proportion to an hour that eight fathoms does to a nautical mile. But when a ship's speed exceeds five or six knots it would carry out such a length of line that, by using the short glass,

the half-knots equalled knots, so that four and a half became nine.

The first description of a log-ship and a line, I have heard, occurs in Bourne's *Regiment of the Sea*, 1573.

To be appointed "midshipman of a top" was another important post of duty. Whenever the hands were turned up to "reef topsails," "shift sails or spars," the midshipmen of the respective tops (fore, main, or mizzen) had to be aloft at their station to see the orders from the commanding officer were carried out.

This post, by the way, was no sinecure on the passage round the Horn in winter, when the rigging would be a mass of icicles, and the temperature aloft many degrees below that on the deck, so that, glad as one was to come down on deck after half-an-hour aloft, the reaction was most painful, as it also was on leaving the deck at the end of the watch to go below.

At the commencement of night watches, about five minutes after eight bells, at 8 p.m., midnight, and 4 a.m., the watch was piped to muster, when the mid of the watch, with a lantern, as the captain, called each man by name from his watch-bill. This was a pocket companion, called "Watch, Quarter, and Station Bill," as it contained every seaman's post at quarters for action, and his station aloft or on deck for any evolution to be performed with the sails.

Lastly may be mentioned, the duties connected



with the boat to which he belonged, and in the state and condition of which he took great pride, as this matter was one of the greatest emulation among the mids.

When off duty, the youngsters were as larky, and perhaps a bit more so, than were boys of their age on shore. Perhaps the effervescence of spirits, bottled up by strict naval discipline, then found freer vent, and as one specimen of a midshipmite's diversion, I may mention the following :

A system termed "cutting out" obtained among the occupants of the middies' berth, which was considered quite legitimate, and no breach of the eighth commandment, though the youngsters who now sought to gratify their appetites in a similar way would run a good chance of being sent to an industrial school. But what boy has not run risks when the indulgence of appetite was at issue, and the possession of delicacies enjoyed by the captain and lieutenants could not be hoped for by the hungry mouth-watering mid, unless he was prepared to venture on a "cutting out" expedition ?

The fitting of men-of-war at that time was performed by the crew of the ships as soon as sufficient had volunteered after the hoisting of the pennant, and a hulk was made use of as a temporary home for officers and crew until the ship's equipment, painting, &c. was complete. This was the case with the *Nimrod*, a 20-gun corvette, commanded by Lord Edward Russell, who, with his crew and officers, had

been transferred from the *Savage*, a 10-gun brig, at Plymouth, in the summer of 1832.

The *Egeria* was the hulk employed to tender her, and the captain often joined the gunroom officers (now termed wardroom in all classes of ships) in the evening for a rubber of whist, the party being generally made up of the first and second lieutenants George (or Jack) Ramsay and Leopold Kuper, and the surgeon, Alexander McKechnie.

Of course, provision for supper was not overlooked, but during the game sundry disputes about revokes, wrong leads, &c. often led to angry words, in course of which the disputants would become so absorbed and excited in the argument as to be blind to all surroundings. This was the opportunity watched for by the cutting-out expedition; and, seizing a chance, the youngster who had been told off by an oldster in the mid's mess, would slip into the wardroom and adroitly carry off a shoulder of mutton or some other portion of the supper standing on the buffet, from under the very noses of the excited card-players. Once produced in the mid's berth, it would be quickly reduced to its lowest fraction, and then the bone would be considerably returned in the same daring and adroit manner employed in its abstraction. The risk was great, but without doubt it added in a special manner to the enjoyment of the purloined banquet.

When the fitting out of the *Nimrod*, to which I

had been transferred, was completed, we joined the experimental squadron under Admiral Sir Pulteney Malcolm, who was our Chief in the previous year in the Mediterranean.

Two new frigates, by different builders, were attached to this squadron to test their capabilities, the *Vernon*, 50 guns, Captain Sir W. Symonds, and *Castor*, 36 guns, Sir Robert Sepping.

These created much excitement and emulation in trying rates of sailing with all the fleet, working to windward, &c., as did the more laborious evolutions in which the Admiral occasionally indulged, shifting yards and topmasts, reefing in stays, &c.

But one special service on which we were engaged was cruising round the coast of Ireland, and landing a battalion of marines to review and drill, as a warning to poor Paddy to pay the tithes, which there was a disposition to resist, and I must confess I have often felt my sympathy with the alleged offender who was called upon to support a ministry with which he had nothing to do.

During this cruise the warm-hearted, hospitable nature of the peasantry was frequently manifested. As an incident of personal experience I may mention that one very warm day in August at Crookhaven, a snug little harbour south of Cork, I took a walk across the plain without meeting any one, until on my return at the outskirts of the town I reached a very

humble cabin, which, being excessively thirsty, I approached to ask a drink of water.

"Sure, is it water I'd give your honour?" cried the good-natured dame I met at the door. "Here, Kitty," calling her daughter, "be off and milk the cow."

Then my hostess, quickly stooping to the corner in which a heap of spuds lay, threw a handful on the embers of the fire, let in the centre of the earthen floor, and, before I was quite conscious of where I was, there was a bowl of warm milk from the cow and some roast potatoes which I thoroughly enjoyed, and in my English ignorance of Hibernian hospitality I took out my purse to offer payment. If ever I gave offence to any one, it was to that worthy old lady, who, at the sight of a coin, exclaimed, "Sure, can't I give ye a drink of milk without paying for it." I apologized and made up friends, and she then begged that if ever I came that way again I might be allowed to come in and see her. I never had that opportunity, but though nearly three score years have since passed, the memory of her genuine hospitality has never been effaced.

My station in the *Nimrod* was that of signal midshipman, which in the Channel Fleet was no sinecure. But I was fortunate in having a very smart signalman, Harry Day, who from long practice knew every flag while being hoisted up in a ball to be broken or shaken out on reaching the Admiral's mast-

head. So whenever a signal was going up, our answering pennant was up and broken as soon as the signal.

This was smart work, no doubt, but it led to a rather awkward *contretemps*. One evening, just before sunset, a signal for a lieutenant was made to us from the flagship *Donegal*, our pennants being 41; but as our answer was, as usual, prompt, we were not surprised to see the pennants immediately hauled down and then re-hoisted as 14, which was a signal to the *Stag* frigate, the next in line to the Admiral.

As soon as we had replied to the first signal, I reported to the first lieutenant (George Ramsay), "Signal for lieutenant, sir."

The second gig was instantly lowered down, and the second lieutenant, Augustus Kuper, sent to answer the call.

There being but a light breeze, we were not going more than two or three knots; but being almost the sternmost ship in the line, the lieutenant's crew had a tough pull to reach the Admiral, when Kuper was informed that we must have mistaken the signal, as none was made to the *Nimrod*, but only to the *Stag*.

The fact was, that the signal officer had not noticed our reply; but when he discovered they had hoisted 41 instead of 14, he immediately reversed the flags and corrected it.

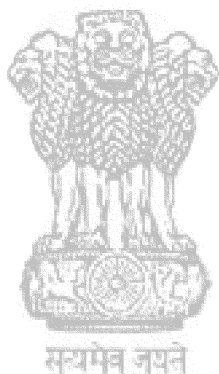
The blunder, however, was not admitted to Kuper, and he returned to our ship with a grave charge against me of stupidity in giving him that chase for nothing. No explanation from me could be listened to, and I was ordered to stay on the poop all night, so that I was ready for my duty at the signals at daylight.

Still I took an early opportunity to explain to Lord Edward, whom I could approach more freely than I could the first lieutenant, who was a sort of terror to us youngsters, though I have since had reason to feel that he was in reality a staunch friend.

On one occasion I thought him specially cruel; indeed what some might call a perfect brute. He saw me one day on the lee side of the poop behind the spanker, very squeamish, ready for what was called "shooting cats" over the lee quarter. He called out to me very sharply, "Mr. Pasco, take your glass to the mast-head and look out for signals."

*Mal de mer* usually takes all the pluck out of a fellow, and runs his physical strength to a low ebb. However, *nolens volens*, go aloft I must, and, slinging my telescope over my shoulder, I ascended the fore-rigging to the topmast cross-trees, when, with scarce strength to hold on, I took a rope's-end and passed it round my waist, slinging myself like a monkey on the bunt of the fore-topsail, where I was sick to my heart's content, and but for the friendly rope's-end I would soon have found myself bounding over the belly of the swelling sails, overboard.

After a couple of hours, my enemy, as I considered him, in the same way that a child may view a dentist who has drawn its tooth, called me to the deck, when, after such a spell at the end of a lever with the ship pitching in a head sea, returning to the deck, the ship's motion was scarcely perceptible, and from that time forward I and sea-sickness were strangers.



## CHAPTER IV

1832—1833

Difficulty with the Dutch Government—Boxing the signal code—Ordered to Portugal—Don Pedro and Don Miguel—The War of Succession—Sir George Sartorius commands Don Pedro's fleet—The siege of Oporto—Not the river Tagus, but the river "Nagus"—Signal service on shore—A fortunate deserter—Admiral Sir Charles Napier succeeds Sartorius—Challenges the Miguelite squadron—The challenge accepted—Not in the charter party—The sea-fight off the mouth of the Tagus—Napier's brilliant victory—A gallant merchant captain carries a man-of-war—In a tight place—The casualties—The gallant Admiral—Position of the squadrons—Oporto relieved.

IN the autumn of 1832 the fleet returned to Spithead, when, as the result of some diplomatic hitch with the Dutch Government, in which France was likewise interested, a combined fleet of British and French assembled under the command of Sir Pulteney Malcolm, K.C.B., of H.M.S. *Donegal*.

The French Admiral, Villeneuve (son of the French Commander-in-Chief at Trafalgar) was on board *La Suffrain*, and the combined fleet proceeded to



blockade the Scheldt, capturing several Dutch galliots.

The union of two nationalities in the fleet involved an arrangement of signals for the time being which would not disclose to each other the purport of the established code, therefore the alphabetical and numerical flags were so shuffled like a pack of cards, B becoming S, and E I, that the signal midshipman had rather a perplexing time of it.

However, this ended for me when the work of the *Nimrod* was changed by sending her to join the squadron in the Tagus under Sir William Parker, whose flag was on board the *Asia*.

The political condition of Portugal at that time afforded some lively excitement on this station in consequence of the fraternal quarrel between Don Pedro and his next brother Miguel, each claiming his right to the throne on the death of their father, Don Juan.

At this period, Pedro was Emperor of Brazil, a throne with which his brother considered he should be satisfied. Not so Pedro, who, like the bishop given his choice of Bath or Wells, preferred to take both.

So Pedro abdicated Brazil, placing his son on that throne, while he, as rightful heir to Portugal, came to Europe to abdicate that also in favour of his daughter, Donna Maria.

Don Miguel, the younger brother, being on the spot, had possession of Lisbon and the control of

the Army and Navy, facts which heavily handicapped Pedro in the race.

However, Pedro found friends at Oporto, which he made his capital, and bands of foreign adventurers were ready to espouse his cause, so that a motley group, composed of men from every nation in Europe, rallied under the new flag of Portugal, which had been white before with a crown in the centre, but now one half toward the staff was blue.

A very insignificant fleet had also been collected, manned by British seamen, and commanded by the late Sir George Sartorius, who resigned his commission as Captain R.N. to become the Admiral of the Fleet.

With his vessels he sailed to co-operate with the troops at Oporto, which was in a state of siege, surrounded by the Miguelites, who held the forts at the entrance of the Douro and walls thrown up on the south side of the river, thus effectually cutting off both men and supplies from the city, except such as could be thrown in by occasional dashing sorties at night to cover a landing on the coast, which was frequently attended by severe losses.

H.M.S. *Orestes*, Captain Glascock, and H.M.S. *Ætna*, Captain Belcher (surveying), were stationed in the Douro, but as we were a neutral flag, we were permitted to obtain fresh meat from the Miguelite camp on condition that we sold none in the besieged

city, where provisions were so scarce, and the poorer class were reduced to such a state of starvation that even rats were at a premium.

So closely, however, does comedy tread on the heels of tragedy, especially in time of war, that one incident of the siege presented a decidedly humorous side.

The wine-vaults of the merchants in Oporto were situated a short distance up the river at Villa Nova, on the Miguelite side of the stream. One morning a descent was made on them by the enemy, and the heads of all the butts were stove in and the contents started into the river. A strong fresh was running at the time, and bore the liquor on its bosom past the shipping, when an Irish seaman on board the *Orestes*, sying a cheap drink of port alongside, soon tested its quality by dexterously dipping a fire-bucket not too deep, and after a hearty draught he exclaimed: "By jabers: I have been in the river Tagus before, but this is the first time I was ever in the river Na-gus."

In order to keep up a communication between the senior officer inside and the commodore outside, a signal-station was established near the Torre de Marca in the Quinta of a British merchant, Mr. Proctor, who lent his garden house, an elevated building of brick, approached by a flight of steps, for the purpose.

Here a flagstaff was erected and two signalmen stationed, while a midshipman, Charlie Hillyar, was

hospitably entertained at the house by Mr. and Mrs. Proctor.

The city was subject to a continual bombardment, night and day, but the hissing of shot and shell or thunder of artillery never disturbed the rest of the sleepers.

One night a round-shot carried away the flagstaff and passed through the signal-house just above the men who were asleep on the floor. This they might calmly ignore, but the shot brought down a quantity of plaster, which, falling on them, induced them to look about.

When they found out what had occurred they so promptly repaired damages that before daylight the flagstaff was re-erected and ready for signal service.

I may mention here that the tempting bounties offered seamen to join Sartorius' fleet had sufficed to draw our best signalman, Harry Day, who served with me on the Irish coast, into the net, but the hardships he had to endure in Oporto, where he had been landed, brought him to his senses, and like a truly penitent prodigal son, seeing the old *Nimrod* off the port he gave himself up, and was brought on board by the bar-boat (a large native boat manned by a crew from an inside ship to convey mails, &c. to ships outside, a service which was not safe to attempt generally in an ordinary ship's boat, the bar being dangerous to cross). Day, however, in consideration of past good conduct, was forgiven, and not "brought to the gangway," as he had expected.

The anchorage outside, on the open coast, was very insecure, for should the wind have a point or two of westing in it, the rollers setting in made it impossible to weigh the anchor. Consequently, immediately we came to an anchor we prepared to slip the cable at a moment's warning by attaching a buoy-rope to the shackle inside the pipe, and having good cross bearings of the position, we had no difficulty, after a few days' blow, when we often ran into Vigo, of picking up our anchor on our return.

Discontent in the Pedroite fleet growing to open mutiny, a number of men deserted on the Spanish coast and found their way to Corunna, where we embarked them as distressed British subjects, and landed them at Portsmouth.

Some time after this, Admiral Sartorius resigned the command, and was succeeded by Captain Charles Napier, who, bringing with him a reinforcement of one or two fresh vessels, speedily challenged the Portuguese Admiral, lying in the Tagus with two heavy line-of-battle ships to meet him outside.

Napier's squadron, composed of only a few frigates and brigs, appeared to offer an easy prey to the opposing force.

The vessels were tendered by several paddle-steamers, one the *William IV.*, commanded by Captain Matthews, afterwards of the *Great Britain*, who spent the last years of his life as Lloyd's agent in Melbourne, but as these steamers were regarded

as non-combatants they were not taken into calculation, and the Miguelite Admiral decided to accept Napier's challenge.

Accordingly, he came out of the Tagus on July 5, 1833, to give battle to his foe, the strength on the respective sides being as follows :

## DON MIGUEL'S SQUADRON.

	GUNS.	MEN.
Don Juan (flagship) ... ..	80	750
Rainha ... ..	78	750
Martin de Fustos ... ..	48	450
Prince Reale ... ..	54	500
Cyvetta ... ..	26	250
Anday (brig) ... ..	20	150
Princess Reale ... ..	24	210
Tage ... ..	20	180
Isabella Maria ... ..	20	150
Totals ... ..	<u>370</u>	<u>3,390</u>

## DON PEDRO'S SQUADRON.

(Under Admiral Charles Napier.)

	GUNS.	MEN.
Rainha de Portugal (flagship, Captain George)... ..	46	320
Don Pedro ... ..	50	320
Donna Maria ... ..	42	250
Fortuenza ... ..	20	120
Villa Flor ... ..	18	100
Totals ... ..	<u>176</u>	<u>1,110</u>

It will thus be seen that in this action Napier's antagonist carried more than twice the number of guns and three times the number of men, the difference being 194 guns and 2,280 men.

When the Miguelites came out, Napier desired to bring them to close action at once, but at 11 a.m. it fell calm, and Napier ordered the steamboats to close and tow the squadron into action, but they all refused with the exception of the *William IV.* (Captain Matthews), on the ground that such a course was not in their charter party.

At noon, a light breeze sprung up from the N.W., giving Napier the advantage of the weather gage; he made sail on starboard tack, edging down on Don Miguel's line.

At 2.30 p.m., Admiral Napier made the signal, that when he bore up, each ship was expected to use her utmost exertions to attack the enemy pointed out as her opponent.

At 3 p.m., the nearest Miguelite ship, the *Princess Reale*, opened fire on the Admiral; 3.45 p.m., the Admiral commenced firing from the *Rainha de Portugal*, passing with the *Don Pedro*, and receiving the enemy's fire, except from the van ship, *Don Juan*, the Miguelite flag.

At four o'clock, Napier luffed up under the quarter of the Miguelite *Rainha*, and laid her on board on the starboard bow, and carried her by boarding in about seven minutes; the *Don Pedro* at the same time under the *Rainha's* lee quarter firing into her. At 4.15, the Admiral secured his prize, and ordered the *Don Pedro* to close with the *Don Juan*, which had borne up and set studding-sails. Napier's flagship being obliged to shift her fore-topsail and mainsail,

when the work was completed followed the *Don Pedro* in chase of the fugitive Miguelite Admiral in the *Don Juan*, and, closing with her, she struck her colours. At 4 p.m., the *Donna Maria* edged down on her opponent, the *Princess Reale* frigate, passing within six yards of her stern and raking her severely, luffed up under her lee, received her fire, then put her helm down and ran her bowsprit into her lee mizzen-rigging, and carried her by boarding. The *Don Juan*, in passing the enemy's line, shot away the fore-topmast of the *Martin de Fustos*, which ship became the opponent of the *Fortuenza* and *Villa Flor*, but was found too heavy for these small vessels, and was not secured till the evening, by the Admiral.

The corvettes and brigs fired at long range, endeavouring to cut away the Pedroite rigging, but when their frigate struck, they ran under every stitch of canvas they could set.

The corvette *Princess Reale* was taken by the steamer *William IV*.

Early in the action a dramatic incident occurred. Napier's stepson, whom he had adopted and called by the family name, was his flag lieutenant, and when the Admiral ranged alongside the *Rainha*, Lieutenant Napier, heading the boarders, sprang on board with about a dozen followers. The two ships separating again, this handful was for some time unsupported; but with their backs against the ship's side, they defended themselves with their



cutlasses until relief came and carried the ship. In due time all were subdued, and Napier triumphantly entered the Tagus with his captured foe. The casualties in the action were as under :

## MIGUELITE.

	KILLED.	WOUNDED.
Don Juan (the gallant Admiral) ...	0	0
Rainha ... ..	33	60
Martin de Fustos ... ..	14	25
Princess Reale ... ..	30	23
Totals ...	<u>77</u>	<u>108</u>

## PEDROITE.

	KILLED.	WOUNDED.
Rainha de Portugal ... ..	11	26
Don Pedro ... ..	7	21
Donna Maria ... ..	11	17
Fortuenza ... ..	5	15
Villa Flor ... ..	0	5
Totals ...	<u>34</u>	<u>84</u>

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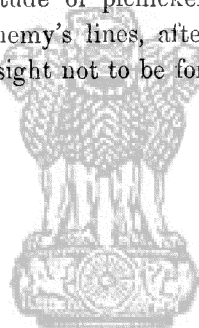
The Pedroite loss in officers was very severe, among those killed being Captain George of the flagship, Captain Goble of the *Don Pedro*, and Captain Blackstone of the *Fortuenza*; Lieutenants Woolridge and Edmonds of the flagship, and Mr. Moore, master, of the *Donna Maria*.

The wounded included Lieutenants Goodney and Kneaveth and the Admiral's secretary on board the flagship, dangerously, and Mr. Hillyar slightly; Lieutenant Stanhope of the *Don Pedro*, danger-

ously, and Lieutenant Purser of the *Fortuenza*, slightly.

The accompanying diagram, made by Midshipman Edward Troubridge, of H.M.S. *Stag*, shows the position of the squadron at various times of the action.

The siege of Oporto was raised after two years, and such a multitude of picnickers as that which crossed the old enemy's lines, after being cramped up so long, was a sight not to be forgotten.



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## CHAPTER V

1833—1834

At the signal station—Colonel Badcock—Mistaken identity—Mrs. Murphy—Death of Ferdinand VII.—Put not your trust in princesses—Ordered home—I join the *Blonde*—Orders for Jamaica—The Marquis of Sligo—A nobleman of weight—Fun at Madeira—"Gently, John"—The Consul's ball—A broad hint to go—Barbadoes—Native loyalty—Martinique and Port Royal—Johnny Ferongue and Bella Baptiste—The lieutenant's washing bill—A topsail sheet receipt.

SOON after the raising of the siege of Oporto the *Nimrod* was ordered into the Douro to relieve the *Orestes*, homeward bound. After sunset that evening the midshipman in charge of the signal-station on the heights returned to the *Orestes*, and at daylight I, with two signalmen (Harry Day and another), landed, to keep up the interesting "bunting conversation" betwixt the inner and outer squadrons.

It was, indeed, a situation full of novelties after service afloat.

The position of our signal-tower was at the end of a magnificent avenue of Spanish chestnuts. The

deck of the *Nimrod* in the river lay below us 200 or 300 feet or more, every order given in the quarter-deck being distinctly heard.

The signalman Day, during his service with the Portuguese, had picked up the language, and was of service in executing shopping commissions in town.

The kindness of my hostess, Mrs. Proctor, rendered my evenings at the Quinta thoroughly homely—a kindness I can never forget.

One acquaintance it was my privilege to make at this time, whose visits to my flagstaff I always enjoyed, was an old cavalry officer, Colonel Badcock, who had served under Wellington during the Peninsular War. He was, at this period, the military representative of the British Government watching the proceedings of the contending (brothers?) armies.

The Colonel would frequently ride up to me before breakfast on his charger and say, "Now, Pasco, if you like to take a scamper round the lines, you can; my charger never flinches from fire."

A ride on such an animal was indeed a treat.

The quantities of chestnuts about my premises suggested to the Colonel some of his Peninsular experiences, one being, that, as bearer of dispatches on one occasion, he was nearly cut off, and had to grope his way by night, feeding himself and horse for some time on chestnuts.

After a lapse of fifty-five years there can be no breach of confidence, or offence given in mention of the tender chord of a boy's heart being touched by the motherly kindness of one dear lady, Mrs. Taylor, the wife of a wine-merchant, and daughter of the late Bishop Majendie of Bangor (Wales).

The first afternoon of my experience at the signal-station, I observed a lady and a little girl (about seven years of age) on the road immediately under my signal-tower, which leads from the town up to their Quinta, or residence of the merchant. The child looked at me with a bright smile of recognition, and then ran to her mother with some remark which I could not hear, but the reply reached my ear:

"No, my dear, it cannot be, he has gone."

This was in a slightly foreign accent and evidently referred to my predecessor, Charles Hillyar, who had sailed that morning for England in H.M.S. *Orestes*. But it was plain to me that the child was not satisfied.

This excited my curiosity, and my eye followed them to their Quinta not far from me.

Almost immediately I noticed an upper window open and a spyglass directed to me, to which I was not slow to respond, an act which the young ladies were evidently accustomed to, and my excited little friend speedily ran down the road to me, exclaiming, "Why did you not speak to mamma, Charlie?" to

which I replied, "You mistake me for my cousin Charlie."

"No, you are not his cousin, you are himself."

My likeness to Hillyar must have been striking. At that time we had never met, but at subsequent periods elsewhere the same mistake was made; it sufficed, however, for an ample introduction to the family of Mrs. Murphy.

During the siege, the humane and benevolent disposition of Mrs. Murphy led her to establish a soup-kitchen for the relief of the poor Portuguese in Oporto, where food was at famine price. Mrs. Murphy, therefore, arranged with such residents as were able to have meat at their table, to collect all the scraps they could. The scrapings of dishes and plates and all such refuse usually thrown to the dogs were boiled for soup.

The men-of-war in the river being neutral were allowed to procure meat from the Miguelite camp on the south side of the Douro, but on the strict condition that none was sold in Oporto.

Occasionally the captain of one of the vessels would send up, with his compliments, a piece of meat to Mrs. Murphy, which was duly acknowledged by a handsome tip to the messenger and expression of thanks for the donor. Thus were the kitchen-scraps and other meagre means at disposal frequently supplemented for the benefit of the starving people.

During our stay in the Douro, our captain, Lord



[To face p. 54.]

ADMIRAL LORD ALCESTER.

Edward Russell, was invalided, and he was succeeded by Captain John McDougall, who had served with Lord Exmouth at the bombardment of Algiers in 1816.

The conveyance of mails from England was effected in small sailing vessels, the *Pike* schooner and *Raven* cutter, but sometimes a paddle-steamer would appear—the *Confidence*, *Echo*, &c.

While occupying the signal-station, the death of Ferdinand VII. of Spain was communicated by a passing mail-boat *en route* for Lisbon.

Another circumstance also occurred which caused no slight heartburning to the faithful subjects of Don Pedro, who had sustained such a lengthened siege in order to secure the throne of Portugal for his daughter, Donna Maria Secunda. This was the passing by of that young lady with the Royal Standard flying in sight of Oporto without paying them the well-earned compliment of a visit to thank them for their loyalty and devotion. There may, however, have been reason for making the landing at Lisbon, of which the citizens of Oporto were ignorant.

But to resume my narrative of personal affairs. My rather enjoyable shore life at the signal-station closed with the reception of orders to proceed to England to join H.M.S. *Blanche*, which, on survey, was found to need so much repair, that the *Blonde*, 46 guns, frigate, 1100 tons, was substituted to carry the



broad pennant of Commodore Francis Mason, C.B. to the Pacific station.

On my arrival at Plymouth I found the *Blonde* fitting out alongside the *Victorious* hulk, on board which the crew were temporarily lodged while the ship's outfit was being completed.

Very few of my messmates of that day can I find to compare notes with now, but many who have long since passed away still hold a warm place in my memory of that four years' commission, especially the late Lord Alcester, G.C.B., then F. Beauchamp P. Seymour, a youngster fresh from Eton, who, some time before his death, sent me his portrait as a remembrance of our old friendship, and the late Lord Edward Pelham Clinton, who was about a year my senior, but whose tender attention in time of sickness, and unbroken friendship as long as we were shipmates, is still green, and waiting only a glorious reunion, which, I trust, is to be enjoyed beyond the grave for those whose single trust is in the Lord Jesus, as I believe his was.

Lord Edward died at sea on board H.M.S. *Harlequin*, Captain Hastings, 1844, and I found a monument erected to his memory by his shipmates, in the old cemetery at Hong Kong, a few months after its erection.

The Marquis of Sligo having been appointed Governor of Jamaica, the *Blonde* was fitted for the reception of his lordship and family. The prodigious

proportions of the former were such, that a special hatchway leading to the commodore's cabin was cut to admit his measure. The good-nature of his lordship, however, seemed in due proportion to his size and weight.

The Marchioness and all the family, except the eldest son, Lord Altamont, accompanied his Excellency, the children being three daughters and two sons, John and Eulick, the younger a dear little fellow about three, and John, who afterwards entered the Navy.

We sailed from Spithead on February 14, 1834, and touched at Madeira on March 3, a visit which furnished us not only with casks of its famous wine, but also with several days of jolly rides for midshipmen over the hills to the Corale, &c., accompanied by the horse-boys who hold on to the horses' tails as we ascend, calling out, "Gently, John," lest we might go too fast.

Our desire always was to get rid of such attention. By and by we found, as we turned a spur of the mountain, that we had parted company with our grooms, so with a good laugh at our fortune we scampered on at full speed, with the idea that we should not meet again till we returned to the stables.

Our imaginary freedom was, however, very brief, as, after covering a mile or more of the road, we suddenly hear the objectionable injunction again behind us, "Gentle-ly, John," and the fellow had hold

of the horse's tail again. They had slipped over the hill by a short cut, and awaited our arrival at a convenient turn of the road.

Another day a select party of us were admitted to the convent, where some delicacies, most artistically and tastefully made up, were purchased, and I believe we had a sight of the celebrated nun Clementina.

After this, we all attended a ball given by the Consul, Captain Veitch, to the Marquis, his family, and officers of the *Blonde*. About midnight, when dancing had reached its height, our worthy host entered the ball-room with a night-cap on and his hat over that. He certainly looked a singular figure, but the Marquis, reading the interpretation, said excitedly to us mids—

“I know what he means, boys, but take no notice, we'll keep it up till daylight,” which we did, and enjoyed ourselves none the worse for the broad hint we had received to quit.

From Madeira we ran down the “trades” to the West Indies, calling first at Barbadoes, where I was able to make the acquaintance of the celebrated “Betsy Austin,” then keeping a fine hotel. Thirty years before, she had the honour of bumboating the *Victory*, when Nelson was in chase of the French fleet, and having a pleasing recollection of the first lieutenant, she was glad to pay special attention to his son.

Barbadians then were, and no doubt now are, very

proud of their loyalty to the British Crown, as may be guessed from the following verse of a song we found very popular :

“Neber see de day Badian run away ;  
Neber see de night Badian would not fight ;  
King George neber fear while Badian stand 'tiff.”

They were also very proud of their superior social culture, and were fond of saying, “English ladies go to Antigua for de larning, but they come to Barbadoes for de polish.”

A short visit was paid to the French island of Martinique, and thence we ran to Port Royal, Jamaica, which was reached on April 4, 1834.

During the run down the “trade” (as the passage through the tropic in the N.E. trade wind is termed), the figures of the quadrille were assiduously practised by the officers and the few young ladies, including the French governess, whose assistance to me in acquiring something of that language I should be ungrateful not to remember kindly.

The debarkation of our distinguished passengers made a sad blank in the social economy of the *Blonde* ; such, however, are the wrenches which seamen are too often called on to endure.

Two notable identities of that day at Port Royal were Johnny Ferongue and Bella Baptiste. The former was the principal storekeeper with whom the officers of the fleet usually dealt for any article from

a needle to an anchor ; but it was said that Johnny had such a keen eye for business, that if he saw an officer pass the shop he would call to his man, saying, " Who is that gone past ? "

" Mr. So-and-So, of such a ship, sir."

" Oh, put him down for a bundle of cigars and a pair of shoes ; he may be coming in for something by and by, and we may forget it then."

Bella Baptiste was the special laundress who was remarkable for returning the officers' washing invariably short of handkerchiefs. Dudley Pelham (son of Earl Yarborough), our third lieutenant, had been at Port Royal before and knew Bella's peculiarity, so he assured her that if every handkerchief was not returned, he would pay her nothing.

Much of Pelham's time during our stay at Jamaica was spent at Government House at Kingstown with our late passengers, and as idle rumours will fly about, the Blacks at Port Royal, seeing so little of this lieutenant, were satisfied that he was laying siege for Lady Louise.

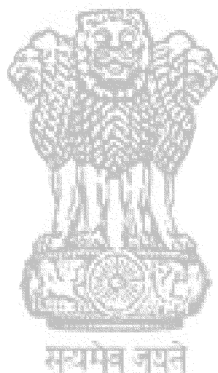
On the last day of our stay, Bella brought the washed clothes on board in her canoe, and Pelham, finding several handkerchiefs missing, kept his promise.

" Hands up anchor," was the pipe, and Pelham went to his station on the fore-castle.

Bella, in her canoe under the bows, could not or did not recall the name of her debtor, so she shouted, to

the amusement of all hands, "Where dat lootenant who going to marry de Gubernor's darter? He no pay for de washing."

However, the anchor was soon "catted" and "fished," head-yards swung round, and fore and main tacks hauled on board, when poor Bella paddled back in her canoe, paid (as the saying was then) "with the topsail-sheet."



## CHAPTER VI

1834—1835

Eastward Ho !—Crossing the line—Neptune on board—An interesting ceremony ; for onlookers—Rounding the Horn—The Admiral's little joke—Service in the Pacific—Peruvian Revolutionists—A mutiny and its results—A narrow escape—Sanguinary reprisals—The tithe of death—Death of Lieutenant Drummond—Commodore and boatswain—Napoleon the Little—"Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself"—A fatal delay.

IN order to get to the eastward out of the West Indian waters, we stretched to the northward through the Crooked Island Passage toward Bermuda.

We reached Jago, one of the Cape de Verde Islands, and from thence crossed the tropics to Rio Janeiro, but not without a cordial visit from his Oceanic Majesty Neptune, who on the previous evening hailed the ship, inquiring where from, &c., and had we any of his children on board who had not passed that way heretofore.

Having received a reply in the affirmative, he promised to be on board at 8 a.m. to-morrow.

This initiatory proceeding brought many on deck

to witness his departure in his fiery car, the green-horns stretching over the hammock-nettings to see him, if possible, when down showered several buckets of water from the tops on the unsuspecting onlookers.

Punctual to his appointment, next morning his Majesty was said to be on board, and all who had not been south of the line before were ordered to remain on the lower deck until sent for.

Most ominous were the noises of preparation for the awful ordeal, which had been described by the already initiated as something to be dreaded.

A dais or throne was improvised on deck for his Majesty and the Queen Amphitrite surrounded by various attendants, consisting of his doctor, the barber, and constables, all disguised in amphibious garb.

A spacious plunge-bath had been constructed in the open space before the mainmast, between the upper and main decks, by the stern of the launch, with a large sail more than half filled with seawater.

Across this bath on the upper deck was fixed a capstan-bar (wood, about three inches square and about eight feet long), on which the "new chums" were to be placed blindfolded, one by one, as they were brought up.

Presently two constables appear on the lower deck by the midshipmen's berth calling for Mr. So-and-so, who, possibly trembling, surrenders himself quietly to be blindfolded before being led to the slaughter.

He only knows that he ascends a hatchway to



the upper deck, where he hears the gruff voice of Neptune inquiring "Who is this?"

He also hears a most unearthly sound of animals roaring like bears and splashing in the water, while he finds himself placed sitting on the bar and supported by the constables, who are replying to Neptune's questions about this young gentleman's character, how he has behaved, &c.

If the replies are favourable, such as "He came along quietly," and "He never gives us any trouble," Neptune instructs his barber to give him the German steel.

But suddenly remembering that the patient may be a little faint, he desires his doctor to give him a sniff from his scent-bottle, which is corked, having a few needles or pins protruding.

But should the constables' report be unfavourable, Neptune will, perhaps, order the use of "Don Whiskerando," a blade of jagged, rusty hoop-iron, while the German steel is a plain piece of hoop-iron, and cannot punish in the same way when scraping off the tar which takes the place of soap.

Sitting blindfold on the bar during all this operation is frightful suspense, for you know not where you are till the bandage is withdrawn from your eyes, and you are pushed backwards into the water, where the bears duck you unmercifully for a time, and then let you scramble out and take part in the proceedings as "an old hand."

An Irish marine officer named McCarthy so

dreaded this ordeal from what he had heard, that he determined, if possible, to escape it by getting leave to proceed from Jamaica to Valparaiso overland; but his knowledge of geography was not in advance of an Egyptian midshipman on board (Abdel Kerim Moneef Effendi), who had an equal dread of the cold weather we should have to pass going round Cape Horn.

He consequently called on the Admiral (Sir Michael Seymour) at Rio, and requested him to remove him into his flagship, as he could not stand the cold off the Horn.

The Admiral's reply quite satisfied him when he said: "Very well, Mr. Kerim, if you find it too cold when you get to Valparaiso, I will instruct the commodore to send you back."

But our poor Turk was fearfully disappointed when he found us among the ice in July before we could reach Valparaiso, where the genial warmth helped him to forget the biting frost.

Arriving at Valparaiso, I was pleased to meet the little *Beagle*, which left home on her surveying voyage when I paid off in the *Kent*, 1831.

Having left the West Indies in April, facing the westerly gales in July off the Horn, the change of temperature was rather severe. The very short days and hard frosty nights clothed the rigging and spars with heavy icicles. Before the sun gained power to thaw toward mid-day, we used to cover the skylights with gratings and send men aloft to beat the ice off,

while those on deck were warned to "stand from under."

Our second lieutenant, William McLean, who was officer of my watch, and a most genial man, did his best to mitigate the severity of the climate during the middle watch by allowing us youngsters to construct a snow house under the weather-bulwark on the quarter-deck between two guns, shutting the wind out of the port-holes.

Under this shelter we all enjoyed a "middle watcher," consisting of gingerbread and cherry-brandy, or such-like comforts, which helped to make a hole in a dreary watch, as in the winter season you have but rarely the excitement of an iceberg to avoid; but in summer, the ice breaking up in the south furnished bergs to visit the Pacific and Atlantic in lower latitudes, which makes matters more exciting.

During our three years' service in the Pacific, the monotony was occasionally broken by revolutions, chiefly in the Peruvian Republic, which occurred soon after our arrival on the coast.

While on the station, the death of our Naval Commander-in-Chief, Sir Michael Seymour, at Rio, changed our blue pennant, the second-class commodore's flag, to a red one. His first-class rank entitled our commodore to carry a captain in the *Blonde*. Thus Commander Robert Smart, from the 18-gun corvette *Satellite*, was made acting captain of the *Blonde*, and our first lieutenant, C. W. C. Lydiard,

was promoted acting commander in the *Satellite*, into which he was kind enough to take me. We sailed in the *Satellite*, October 17, 1835, for Callao, where we spent many dreary months, broken only by the excitement of a revolution breaking out on January 1, 1835, when a revolutionary General Frere, who had some time before been banished from Peru, returned in an American vessel from the northern ports.

When it was known that he was in the bay, the soldiers in the Callao forts mutinied in his favour, making their officers prisoners, and giving the command to a Peruvian sergeant.

Being New Year's Day, Captain Lydiard had invited some ladies and gentlemen off to the ship, and I was sent in charge of the gig and cutter to bring them off.

Just as I reached the Mole to embark our guests, this sergeant had sent a party of raw recruits down to the Mole, with orders to keep it clear and prevent any boat going off that might arrest General Frere, and they immediately opened an indiscriminate fusillade along the pier.

Our boats being at the end of the steps, the shots passed over our heads, but there were other boats whose people were more exposed, and several among them were wounded.

One of these was Lieutenant William Drummond, our second lieutenant, who was shot through the left knee. At the same moment, Captain Lydiard,

who had just carried the Consul's wife out to my boat, and was returning to carry out another lady, struck his knee a smart blow against a stake, which brought him down and made him remark to Drummond, "I think I'm wounded."

Drummond replied, "I thought I was," but he was not so confident of it as was the captain of his injury. Drummond only knew that his leg gave way under him, he scarcely knew why. Two of my crew, seeing Drummond fall, ran to his assistance to carry him up to the Consulate at the end of the street.

While so engaged, the ruffian who had wounded him rushed up and tore his watch and chain off his neck and his hat from his head, and safely made his escape, as the men could not drop their wounded officer to pursue.

Following Drummond to the Consulate, we placed him on a bed up-stairs, while a boat was dispatched to bring the surgeons from on board. An old gentleman I met at the house, suggested my cutting the trouser off the leg and keeping cold-water towels applied, to keep down inflammation until the surgeons arrived.

When they came, they at once decided that the limb could not be saved, so little Dabbs (our doctor) said, "I fear, Drummond, we cannot save your leg."

"Oh, no, doctor," he replied, "I know that, so the sooner it is off the better."

The musket-ball had entered inside the knee and passed through the outer side of the joint, the hole

increasing, like a funnel, as the shot went through. The amputation was very soon over, and the sufferer made as comfortable as circumstances would admit. The surgeon and one of the men remained to nurse him, and I returned on board with my boat.

A military force was soon sent from Lima under General Salivera (a young ambitious officer), to suppress the mutiny. The troops took up position at the corner of the main street near the British Consulate, and immediately fronting the fortification to be attacked. Evening had closed in before operations commenced with a brisk artillery and musketry fire, which was vigorously replied to by heavy ordnance from the fort. It was from under this same fort that the Spanish frigate *Esmeralda* was cut out by Lord Cochrane when delivering these colonies from the Spanish yoke.

But the fire on the present occasion rendered the Consulate anything but a safe shelter for our wounded shipmate, so that during the night he was removed thence through the besieging troops to a house at the end of the street.

A few minutes after his removal a round-shot came through the wall and smashed the bed upon which he had been lying. About the same time the men were in the act of removing a large mirror from the drawing-room mantelpiece, when, as they lowered it from the wall, a shot came in immediately above it, perforating the space it had occupied.

By 10.30 the next morning the forts were retaken,

and the fact duly announced by the firing of a royal salute.

Drummond having expressed a desire to recover his watch, if possible, I was sent to the fort with the bowman of my boat, who could identify the robber; but on arriving at the fort we found the general was then decimating all he found in the fort, the men being ranged in line, and every tenth man taken out and shot.

When I made known my request he replied, "That fellow is dispatched already, and here is the watch," and having received it I took my departure, leaving him carrying on his work of slaughter until the Government ordered him to desist.

Drummond was delighted to recover his watch, which had been the gift of a sister, but although the stump of his leg was healing well, fever set in and he became delirious.

The doctor, fearing his patient might suffer from bed-sores, endeavoured to construct a water-bed. The carpenters made a water-tight box large enough to float a mattress, but it was several days before sufficiently stout indiarubber sheet could be procured; that, however, obtained, the operation of moving him from his original bed to this appliance afforded an opportunity to examine his back, when unfortunately a chafe was noticed, which speedily mortified, and spreading across his back terminated his life on the 31st of the month.

During his delirium, poor fellow, he fancied him-

self staying at Madame D'Enville's hotel in Lima, a house we all patronized, and missing his limb, he would call out to Madame to bring his leg, as he wanted to go out for a ride.

Poor Drummond! We buried him with military and naval honours at Bella Vista. The ship's yards were topped across at 8 a.m., and a procession of boats accompanied the corpse to the Mole, and thence a land journey was commenced on foot, led by the band of the U.S. frigate *Brandywine*, to the Bella Vista cemetery.

When the coffin, covered with black cloth, was ready to be lowered into the grave, the British Consul, Colonel B. H. Wilson, directed a seaman with a knife to cut the cloth in ribbons, as the Pisanos standing round might know it would be no use disinterring the coffin for the sake of the cloth.

When we first met the *Brandywine* at Valparaiso, and the two commodores exchanged visits, our boatswain, White, when he piped Commodore Deacon over the side, remarked to some one that they had been boys together in an American schooner, when White (being a British subject) was pressed by a British man-of-war into the service.

This, in time, reached the ears of the American commodore, who, delighted to meet a shipmate of his youth, sent his galley to us with an invitation to bring the boatswain on board the *Brandywine* to dinner, which Tom White was very pleased at. White, after being thus pressed into the service,



served on board the *Temeraire*, Captain Eliab Harvey, at Trafalgar.

General Salivera, from Lima, who had succeeded in subduing the mutineers at Callao and retaken the fortification, considered it now his turn to mutiny and upset the Government, as he held the key to the position in this fortress. He accordingly levied troops by pressing men into his service, stored the fort with provisions and ammunition, and in a few weeks was prepared to march to Lima and proclaim himself as President.

He was a smart little soldier, and it is said that when he joined the army as a private he expressed his determination to become President of the Republic, and he was vain enough to call himself "Napoleon cito" (little Napoleon).

President Orbegoso and his Government fled from Lima on the approach of this usurper, and sought the aid of Santa Cruz, the President of Bolivia, whose forces, united to those who held to Orbegoso, successfully (after a year's struggle and many a march and counter-march, with occasional reverses) overcame Petit Napoleon on the plains of Arequipa, on February 7, 1836. He was then tried by court-martial, and on February 18 was shot by sentence of the court after just a year's reign, during which, while we were in Callao on November 29, 1835, on paying an official visit to the commodore, he was honoured by a salute of nineteen guns. Thus closed the career of Don Philip Santiago Salivera, whose

charming sisters, Gregoria and Carmencita, sought refuge in a convent.

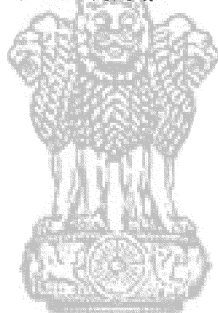
During these revolutionary epidemics such as Peru passed through, life was held very cheaply, and mere suspicion of disloyalty to one faction or the other was sufficient to send a subject for execution.

While at breakfast one morning at the Consulate in Lima, a servant brought a note to the Consul, who, perceiving nothing urgent about it, laid it beside him till after breakfast. Presently the tramp of troops marching through the street excited the attention of the party at table, who advanced to the balcony to see soldiers escorting a prisoner to the Plaza to be shot. The victim was accompanied on either side by a priest, one holding a cross before him, the other reading, probably in Latin, which evidently was not heard, as his eyes were fixed on the Consul in the balcony so intently that Colonel Wilson remarked, "How the man is staring at me; I don't know him." The note then flashed on his memory, and opening it, found it urgently beseeching him not to lose a moment, but to entreat the President to stay the execution while the Consul made certain inquiries indicated. He rushed at once to the President's rooms in the Plaza, where the troops had drawn up for the prisoner to be placed in position.

The Consul urged the President to throw up the window, and order the officer to desist for the present, but as the window was opened the volley was fired, and that man was hurled into eternity.

Colonel Wilson, however, made the inquiries indicated by the deceased, and found he was innocent.

Poor fellow, he could get no sympathy or help from his countrymen, but he felt that if he could secure the ear of the British Consul he might save his life, and his calculation only miscarried through the accident of the Consul failing to read the note immediately it was delivered.



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## CHAPTER VII

1835—1837

Loss of H.M.S. *Challenger*—Capt. Fitzroy's ride—"Challengers" ahoy!—The *Blonde* to the rescue—The *Challenger* embayed—How the ship was lost—Earthquakes and tidal waves—Destruction of Concepcion and Talcahuana—An incident of the event—An earthquake in Lima—How a midddy can sleep—A Valparaiso incident—The "Tremblor"—The major at mess—Turning the tables—Mr. Nobbs—Bobby Beecroft—An ocean idyl—A sacramental supper—Bobby's burial—Homeward bound—Death of William IV. and accession of Queen Victoria.

ON June 17, 1835, while anchored in Valparaiso, a rumour reached us of the loss of H.M.S. *Challenger* to the southward, but nothing definite was known until the next day, when a communication from the Consul at Concepcion confirmed the news, though the precise site of the disaster was not known.

Captain Fitzroy, of H.M.S. *Beagle*, immediately offered his services to Commodore Mason to accompany him in the *Blonde* to succour the crew, bringing with him Mr. J. Usborne (master's assistant), Bennett and Fuller, captain's coxswain and steward respectively.

Captain Fitzroy embarked that evening, and by the next morning the *Blonde* left Valparaiso for Concepcion, which was reached on June 21. Captain Fitzroy lost no time in repairing to the city to gain from the Consul some definite tidings of the whereabouts of the wreck, and engaging a guide and horses, he started next day overland to ascertain where the *Blonde's* services could be most effective.

Travelling night and day, late on the second night he found himself on the north or right bank of Rio Lebo. Seeing lights on the opposite side, he went close to the edge of the water that his voice might be more easily conveyed, and hailed "‘Challengers’ ahoy!"

What a commotion that voice occasioned in the camp of the shipwrecked crew! A boat was soon dispatched to fetch the travellers over, and instead of sleep, the rest of the night was spent with his old college friend, Captain Michael Seymour.

Learning the particulars of the wreck and latitude of their position, early next day saw the energetic Fitzroy with his guide in their saddles on their return journey, which was accomplished by early morning of the 26th. It was only four days since he left us, and in the interval he had travelled about 140 miles, to and fro over mountains and rough country, and through stormy and wet weather.

In the meantime an American schooner, hired to assist in the search, had been fitted out and dispatched with Mr. Usborne of the *Beagle*, and



*[To face p. 76.]*

SIR MICHAEL SEYMOUR.

Bennett the coxswain, also Mr. G. Biddlecomb second master of the *Blonde*.

Early on June 17, the *Blonde*, with Captain Fitzroy on board, had sailed to the southward against strong S.W. gales and thick hazy weather. On the second day we fell in with the schooner *Carmen*, but they had not seen the *Challenger* encampment. The continuance of thick weather prevented our closing with the land until July 5, when a smoke was noticed on a hill, and a flagstaff was soon after visible. We sent boats on shore to commence embarkation, but did not anchor until next day, when we brought up in twenty-seven fathoms and veered cable to 160 fathoms. By 5.30 p.m. Captain Seymour, with the rest of his crew, were on board, in all 142 officers and crew. H.M.S. *Challenger* was on her voyage from Rio Janeiro to Valparaiso, and after rounding Cape Horn she made to the north on a course which should have kept her about sixty miles from the coast; but thick weather prevented observation being made to ascertain their longitude, and about ten o'clock at night, when they considered she was many miles from the coast, the ship ran ashore under double-reefed topsails and high sea running.

Augustus Booth, mate, was officer of the watch, and at the first report of "breakers" he ordered the helm to be put down, but it was too late. A blue light was burnt, but no land was seen; the ship was thumping heavily, and they supposed themselves to be on an uncharted reef. As she seemed to strike

near the stern the mizzen-mast was cut away, which relieved her slightly, and, hanging forward, she swung with her stern to the eastward. When the day broke she was under high land, with her stern toward the beach, on which the surf was breaking heavily. The jolly-boat was lowered in hopes of taking a line to the shore and establishing a communication, but in attempting to land, the boat was swamped, and poor Gordon, a midshipman, and one seaman were drowned. A gig was then fitted with baricos (small casks), lashed under the thwarts to increase her buoyancy, and succeeded in reaching shore.

A raft was now constructed with spars on which to land the crew, with provisions and stores, such as sails, &c., for tents. Some Araucanian Indians, witnessing this disaster, galloped down to the shore on horseback with lasso or lazo, and, riding into the surf, they threw the noose over some weakly ones, who otherwise might have been drowned, and drew them safe to land. These Araucanians showed a most friendly disposition towards the castaways. A substantial encampment was established on the heights near the entrance of Rio Lebo, and perfect discipline maintained.

The *Challenger* had not been able to correct her dead reckoning by solar or stellar observations for some days prior to the wreck, and Captain Fitzroy attributed the error which had such disastrous



results to the earthquake disturbances which had been frequent for some months past, occasioning tidal waves and ocean currents which could not be anticipated in navigation.

In connection with these, February 20, 1835, was a date painfully remembered by all the inhabitants along the southern part of the coast of Chili, when the city of Concepcion was wrecked and the seaport town of Talcahuana entirely washed away. Similar disturbances, more or less severe, occurring along the coast, for some time, might easily have occasioned such unusual currents as might account for the *Challenger's* position, as Darwin shows grounds for believing that the undulations were from the S.W., which is the direction that would affect the navigation of the *Challenger* as shown.

We visited Concepcion and Talcahuana within four months of the disaster, when both towns were still a mass of ruins, especially the former. But of the latter, which had been swept clean by the wave, there was left no recognizable remnants. Various remarkable incidents were recorded, but impressions conveyed to youth gather embellishments with time, so that after the lapse of half a century or more they cannot be accepted as reliable history.

Still, as recollection enables me to repeat it, we understood, when the first sensation of the "Tremblor" (earthquake) was felt near Talcahuana, some men on the higher ground, seeing some children on

the beach, gathering shells, called out to them to run up the hill at once before the wave came on them. A nurse who was with them had left a baby sitting in a boat on the beach, but the impending peril admitted of no delay, so baby was forgotten while they escaped, and the wave rolled on impetuously over the town, taking the boat with it and back again as the water receded. Some time afterwards the boat was picked up, and the baby was found to be alive and safe.

I have no doubt Darwin refers to the same incident when he describes how a woman with a little boy, four or five years old, ran into a boat, but there was no one to row it out; the boat was dashed against an anchor and cut in twain; the old woman was drowned, but the child was picked up some hours afterwards, clinging to the wreck (*Naturalist's Voyage*, 1889).

Although the residents in the country are so familiar with such visitations, they never seem the less alarming, but any distinct intimation of such convulsion speedily drives every one from their dwellings into the streets or open for comparative safety. Yet, those who are accustomed to be "rocked in the cradle of the deep" may sleep on as unconscious of danger as the man who was suddenly awakened with the call, "The house is on fire!" and replied, "That is nothing to me; I am only a lodger."

Such may have been my feelings when sleeping in a French hotel in Lima, soon after the destruction of Concepcion. Between midnight and four in the morning, the peaceful citizens were disturbed to such an extent by the church bells calling the inhabitants to prayers that at the *table d'hôte* that morning the general conversation had reference to the severity of the shocks. Then for the first time I understood that every bed in the city had been vacated in a hurry and left empty for several hours, mine being the only exception. So soundly can a midshipman sleep in his watch below.

The only time I actually experienced the sensation of an earthquake was at Valparaiso, when engaged with my boat's crew watering ships by the use of a treadmill connected with a garden well. It was a primitive concern, into which one man got at a time, raising the water in a bucket-chain, a hose being used to convey it to the boat, a few hundred yards away. Some Chilian washerwomen, taking advantage of our aid, were following their avocation, while I availed myself of the opportunity to improve my Spanish by conversing in that language. All of a sudden they sprang up exclaiming, "Tremblor!" and taking me by the hand, one on each side, ran me out to the street before I quite realized the occasion.

But I heard a loud rumbling very like a heavy wagon being driven over a metal road, neither of

which were present to account for the sound. I then felt the movement of the earth's surface very like the feeling of a ground swell on the water in a calm, a gentle upheaval without the surface breaking. The walls of buildings cracked without falling, and tranquillity was restored.

These experiences naturally suggest reflections on the mutability of all mundane affairs, and the very instability of the apparently solid rocks and mountains. Acute, no doubt, are the feelings of those who, at the first indications of an earthquake, are moved with fear and alarm, not knowing to what extent the danger may run; yet that past, tears of penitence are dried, and the promises to lead a new life of virtue are postponed for another alarm.

The struggle of these Spanish colonies in the early decades of the nineteenth century to gain their independence from Spain led to the introduction of British blood in the patriot navy and army—Lord Cochrane, Captain Simpson, and others in the Navy, and General Millar, Colonel Wilson (who was A.D.C. to General Bolivar and afterwards British Consul at Lima), and Major Sutcliffe, whose remarkable history was disclosed in a strange way at the gunroom mess-table of H.M.S. *Dublin* in 1833.

As a guest at the table he had been telling some marvellous yarns which were considered incredible by his hearers, as he had the reputation of "drawing the long bow." Presently, the Captain of Marines,

who had served afloat during the French war, thought he could relate something in his experience that would eclipse all that the major had told.

"Ah," he said, "I remember when I was cruising in a frigate in the Mediterranean, picking up a young fellow who had escaped from Verdun prison in France."

"Stop," said the major, "do you think you could recollect that little fellow again?"

"No," said Captain Giles, "I could not say that, after more than twenty years."

All round the table ran a titter in expectation of the major's audacious claim to be accepted as the hero of the adventure.

"Well," the major asked, "can you recollect anything remarkable about the boat, and what tack your ship was on?"

"Oh yes, I could not forget that, for the only thing he could find in the boat to use as a sail was a tricolor flag, and the ship was on the starboard tack."

"That will do," said the major, and taking his watch out of its case, he showed a sketch of the boat going alongside the ship, which he was able to name, beside giving the name of the captain and certain of the officers, and so affording ample proof that he was really the "little fellow," now an immense portly major.

Yes, he had served in a small vessel at Trafalgar,

and a year or two afterwards was captured, but escaping from prison he reached England, when he gave up the Navy and obtained a commission in a cavalry regiment, in which he served in the Peninsular War, and was present at Waterloo, eventually carrying his varied experience to South America.

Equally rich in incident was the life of Mr. Nobbs, who, after serving in the British Navy, accompanied Lord Cochrane to South America as lieutenant, was present at the cutting out of the Spanish frigate *Esmeralda* from under the walls of the fortifications at Callao, and subsequently became school-master and chaplain to the Pitcairn Islanders, with whom he continued until his death at Norfolk Island. Young men who follow gold-field rushes in the latter half of the century fancy they lead very adventurous lives; but as brave men lived before Agamemnon, so adventurous lives were lived before they were born.

The sea too has its idyls as well as its adventures, and of the former I am tempted to narrate the following :

During the early part of the commission, Mr. Robert Beecroft, who was master of the *Blonde*, noticed a little boy loitering about a store in Valparaiso, and, inquiring who he was, found he was a lad from the Gambier group not far from Tahiti, who had been wrecked lately on this coast. This

touched a chord of sympathy in the master's heart, and he offered to take the boy as his servant.

He accordingly entered him as boy on the books of the *Blonde*, giving him his own name, Robert Beecroft, and placing him under the careful discipline of the boatswain's mate, John Natcher, who was instructed to chastise him for any misconduct such as lying or stealing, a duty which was not neglected.

In the course of the year the master was invalidated and sent home, leaving Bobby behind, and giving me instructions to fetch him home with the ship to the master's address. Bobby turned out a smart little fellow and a general favourite. While at sea one evening in calm weather the pipe went, "Hands to bathe." Bobby had just drank his pannikin of hot tea, but was always the first overboard when he had the chance. A quarter-boat was first lowered with a crew to keep the men within bounds, that a stray one might not venture far from the group and become an easy prey to sharks.

Poor Bobby, next morning, was in the sick list with severe cold on the chest, from which he never recovered. He was confined to his cot behind the screen on the main-deck, and received every care the doctor could bestow. One day toward the end of April 1837, he said to me, "Missa Pasco, Bobby going away soon—Bobby like to say good-bye to his messmates. Will you get me some fruit?"

I procured him some bananas, and the doctor allowed the men to see him, one at a time, but they were not permitted to stay and talk with the patient. So it was merely, "Good-bye, Bill," and a quiet shake of the hand to each. But when John Natcher came, Bobby said, "John, you sit down," and all the others having taken leave of their coloured mess-mate, Bobby said, "John, when I was bad you used to punish me; I not angry with you, I want you to eat fruit with me," and taking a banana in his hand he held it for John to take a portion. They broke it between them and each ate a part. It was indeed a solemn last supper, and a surety on Bobby's part of full forgiveness. (Rom. ii. 11, 15.)

At six next morning, May 1, he surrendered his earthly tabernacle to be "clothed upon," and that afternoon I interred the remains on San Lorenzo Island, beside three other shipmates, who in previous years had been buried there. As we were about returning home in the *Blonde*, the carpenter made a tomb out of hard wood, and cut out a neat inscription, with all their names and dates of death, and underneath six lines composed by a seaman—Ewing—as follows :

"Tremendous God ! Thy sovereign power  
Cut from us, like a withered flower,  
These seamen in their bloom ;  
In tribute to their memory dear,  
Their shipmates have interred them here,  
And raised this humble tomb."



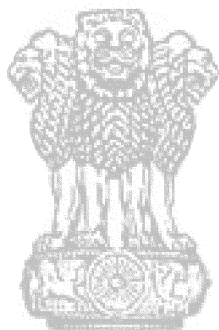
The front was painted white, the letters black, and, taking with me a bucket of thick yellow paint, after erecting the tomb we laid on a coat of paint on the back and round the edge, and then threw fine sand on the wet paint, so that when it was dry the block had the appearance of stone.

Leaving the Pacific, homeward bound, and rounding Cape Horn in August 1837, we did not learn of the death of William IV., and accession of Queen Victoria, until our arrival at Rio de Janeiro.

Sailing thence we reached Spithead by November, and those of the midships who had passed their seamanship examination at Valparaiso, before leaving, had now to present themselves at the Naval College, Portsmouth, to prove their efficiency in navigation and nautical astronomy. The Commander-in-Chief was Admiral Sir Philip Durham, K.C.B., who was one of the few saved from the *Royal George*, which foundered at Spithead with Admiral Kempenfelt, Sir Philip having at that time been a midshipman on board the ill-fated vessel.

I got through my exams. very well, and even had the satisfaction of being complimented by Sir Philip upon passing with the highest numbers, and was thenceforward *qualified* to tread her Majesty's quarter-decks as a lieutenant, though I had to wait another six years for the commission. My success in passing, however, was greatly due to Chas. Shadwell, who was then a mate on board the gunnery ship

*Excellent.* He had just published in pamphlet a Rule for determining the latitude by *two* stars observed at the same instant. That pamphlet enabled me to be the only one who worked out one question to be answered, and this placed me at the top of candidates that day.



सत्यमेव जयते

## CHAPTER VIII

1838—1839

Appointed to the *Britomart*—Under orders for Australia—Settlement at Port Essington—Interviews with the natives—Cabbage-palms and wild honey—Native social polity—Survey work in Torres Straits—Alligators—A nocturnal visitation—Taking vengeance—An enterprising saurian—The man-eater man-eaten—The lieutenant's dilemma—An artful dodger—Malay pirates—Captain Watson to the rescue—Setting a trap—Snaring the bird—The captain's ultimatum—Three days' grace and "Up you go"—Rescue of Joe Forbes—The chief released—Joe's story—The sole survivor of the *Stedcombe*—Joe in London—Joe in Melbourne—Joe's death.

A FEW weeks' holiday with my parents at Plymouth sufficed, before accepting an appointment to the brig *Britomart*, commanded by Lieutenant Owen Stanley, who had recently returned from an Arctic voyage with Captain George Back in the *Terror*.

The *Britomart* was commissioned as tender to H.M.S. *Alligator*, Captain Sir Gordon Bremer, who was instructed to prepare a settlement at Port Essington on the north coast of Australia. The

desirability of this had been urged on the Secretary of State for the Colonies by George Windsor Earl, Esq., who had spent some years among the East Indian Archipelago, and conceived that a British settlement in North Australia might establish a market for British manufactures with the Celebes and Molucca Islands. The fleets of trepang fishers from Macassar might also, it was thought, find a market at Port Essington, instead of seeking one at Singapore or elsewhere.

We left Plymouth in January 1838 for Australia, about the same time that James Brooke was preparing for his visit to Borneo in his yacht, the *Royalist*. The *Alligator* had to call at Adelaide to pick up the detachment of Marines left by H.M.S. *Buffalo*, with Captain Hindmarsh, to assist in settling South Australia.

We reached Sydney in July 1838, and by the end of October the expedition was snugly moored in Port Essington, which for space, accommodation, and shelter seemed second to none in Australia, Port Jackson excepted. The natives were numerous and disposed to be friendly, visiting the ships in their large canoes hewn out of huge gum-trees capable of carrying fifteen or twenty. They also used a lighter bark canoe sewn up at the ends, bedaubed with mud to make them water-tight.

A system of barter was very soon established by our giving biscuits and articles of clothing in exchange for fish, honey, and cabbage-palm, which they

respectively called "yap," "warego," and "ma-rou-in." The latter was specially acceptable in the absence of other vegetables, and was highly esteemed as a palatable diet. The edible part is procured from the tops of palm-trees, which reach a height of seventy or eighty feet, and is, in fact, the young undeveloped leaf, the outer covering of the edible portion being the next leaf to unfold. This leaf, when cut down and removed by the natives, forms a very strong and spacious basket in which they carry the honey obtained from the hollow branches of the eucalyptus, in which the wild bee deposits its treasure. The honey, though acceptable, is not comparable to that of the domesticated bee, extracted in a cooler climate from cultivated and other flowers, to which, no doubt, the superiority of the latter is due.

Beneath this outer fold is the inner part of the palm, which is six or eight inches in circumference and four or five feet in length; it is a pure white, of the substance and flavour of a nut, and may be eaten either raw or boiled. Quantities of the young palm were readily procured just shooting out of the ground, where, by splitting down a few of the outer leaves to the root, the centre stem was easily removed, the foot of which for about six inches is sweet and nutty. These beautiful palms were met with by Burke, as many years later he approached Carpentaria. Poor Wills greatly admired their majesty and beauty of foliage, but most strangely they do not appear to have attempted to utilize them for food.

The natives ascertained which were the limbs of the eucalyptus containing honey by whistling under the trees in a peculiar manner, and thus inducing the bees to hover over their treasure-trove.

The bee-hunter then ascends the tree, and with his tomahawk cuts down the limb nearer to the trunk than the spot indicated; then, on cutting off a three or four feet section of the felled branch he would find it supplied with honey. In substance it is thin and watery, and I never saw anything approaching to honeycomb.

The first step to intimacy with the aborigines appeared to be acquiring each other's name. They very soon understood the interrogative of "What your name?" and after giving the information sought, they would repeat the question, when they often received fictitious names in reply, such as "Lucky dog," or any other fancy name, which certainly lacked the melody and softness of their own nomenclature. For example, an aged chief was named "Adiaravie" (the "dia" being pronounced as though "y" were present to soften it). His daughter's name was Ma-mou-la-mard, and that of his grand-daughter Ma-ri-tima. The tribes in this neighbourhood seemed to recognize three degrees in their social polity, the Man-dro-dyellie, Man-burlgeat, and Man-dro-willie, the former only being chiefs.

As well as I could understand their explanation, when there were inter-marriages between the two

first classes, the issue became that of the mother; but should the union be with the first and last, the children would be the intermediate. Such a recognition of class has never come under my notice in other parts of Australia.

One chief was given the name of "Alligator," from the principal ship there, the meaning being explained to him by showing him the figure-head, which was a well-carved representative of the animal so common at Port Essington, where the natives call it "Ma-ra-ni-ad"; and dangerous creatures they are. One old woman, the mother of a man called Loca, bore evidence of the narrow escape she had had some years before of being killed by an alligator. She was swimming across the harbour, and just as she was reaching the shore she was seized by the left breast, but being caught also by her friends she escaped with the loss of that tender member (which in a black woman is particularly pendulous), and the terrible wound had healed as though seared with a hot iron.

It was not long before we made the acquaintance of one of these amphibious beasts, about twenty feet in length. Some stores and building material having been landed and placed on the higher ground, several feet above the water, a few men were left to guard it at night, and had their hammocks hung between two trees a few feet above the ground. A blanket covered the occupant, roof fashion, and hung down on each side within a foot or more of the

ground. One man, whose hammock was rather further in shore, observed in the moonlight the blanket of his shipmate gradually falling off, and then being dragged away towards the sea by a long ugly monster, while the one who had suffered loss was in a happy state of unconsciousness of the presence of the thief. Before he was awake both visitor and blanket had disappeared, and he was very sceptical about the story as told by his shipmate.

On the next afternoon, however, a circumstance tended to confirm the suspicion against the alligator. Some seamen had been bathing on the beach immediately below where the hammocks were hung, and with them was a little spaniel. While the men were dressing, the dog continued to enjoy a swim, until a sudden yelp turned the attention of the men seaward, when poor Fanny was seen to have disappeared in the jaws of the receding alligator. Means were at once devised for the capture of the intruder that night, if possible. A wooden toggle about a foot in length was secured to a chain a few feet long attached to a tree, and on the toggle, lengthwise, was fastened an opossum. Night was not far advanced before the marauder, tempted by previous success, ascended the embankment and swallowed the toggle, which he could not disgorge, but became an easy prey to the captors, who, on "inquiring within," found not only poor Fanny, but the shreds of the blanket.

Two other alligator incidents occurred in the



Victoria river, which was discovered by Captain Wickham when exploring Cambridge Gulf in his whale-boat in October 1830. He was lying in the river at anchor one night, each man except the lookout being snugly stowed in his blanket-bag. Just about daybreak, the boat suddenly heeled over on one side, causing the captain to roll off the stern-sheet into the bottom of the boat. The man on watch was awake and should have been ready for action, but was so scared by what he saw that he was helpless. This was a huge alligator with his long nose resting on the gunwale of the boat, trying to throw his flipper over the side, which, had the attempt been successful, would effectually have capsized her, and placed all, encumbered with their blanket-bags, at his mercy.

Captain Wickham promptly called out for all hands to work themselves as best they could to the lighter side and get out of their bags. No unnecessary time was lost in obeying the order. Then the muskets were loaded and five bullets discharged down the ugly gaping jaws. The alligator slipped off the gunwale, but getting foul of the lead-line, he was hauled up on the bank, and after a *post-mortem* his liver formed the chief dish of that morning's breakfast.

A few weeks later Lieutenant Stokes, while surveying near the entrance of the same river in Queen's Channel, landed in the forenoon on what then appeared to be a sandy point on the left bank.

Taking his theodolite on the highest part, he sent the boat's crew to some distance to procure firewood to cook the dinner. It was then about low water, and while engaged he did not notice the rising tide, which soon filled a channel between the sandrise on which he stood and the mainland. In fact he was on an island, with a rapid stream separating him from the mainland, and in that channel an alligator made his appearance as "monarch of all he surveyed."

The strip of land on which Stokes stood was not a mile in length, and the channel of water but a few yards then in width; but the stream was running like a mill-race, and every moment widening and deepening. Stokes soon stripped his clothes off, and strapping them on his head ran to the far end of the sandbank, hoping to jump across and escape the monster, who, as vigilant as the biped, was there as soon as he. Stokes then ran to the other end, only to be again overtaken and headed off, but he noticed it took the alligator some time to turn; but once round, he could, in the water, outstrip the man on land.

Every moment made the position more desperate, for in a little time the island would be submerged and the game played out; so, making a feint to double, while the alligator turned he suddenly plunged across his tail and reached the shore in safety, and fortunately the boat returned in time to rescue the theodolite.

But alligators, however enterprising and voracious,



*[To face p. 96.]*

THOMAS WATSON.

were not the only deadly foes those engaged in Australian coastal waters had to encounter, as will appear from the following. From the Sooloo Sea to the Arafura Sea the islands swarmed with ruthless pirates, veritable children of Ishmael in disposition if not in descent, whose hand was against every man. They were the terrors of the land and the scourges of the sea. Frequently was this curse felt as a menace to commerce in the China Sea at the commencement and half through the nineteenth century, till Rajah Brooke waved his philanthropic banner in his little yacht, the *Royalist*, and his still smaller one, the *Jolly Bachelor*, at Sarawak about 1840, nobly emulating the efforts of Sir Stanford Raffles, the founder of the British colony at Singapore, to improve the character and condition of the Dyak and Malayan races. One result of these piratical practices was the incident connected with the rescue from captivity of Joe Forbes.

During the infancy of the settlement at Port Essington, Captain Thomas Watson, as owner and commander of the schooner *Essington*, accompanied Sir Gordon Bremer's expedition in order to procure from the adjacent islands, cattle and vegetables for the use of the settlement, Captain Watson trading with the islanders for tortoiseshell and beeswax on his own account.

While absent on this trading voyage, he heard from a Dutch vessel that there was a European captain at Timor Laut. Watson therefore deter-

mined to make the attempt to rescue him, whoever he might be. Accordingly, approaching Timor Laut in April 1839, he prepared for his defence by sending two men up in the foretop with muskets and ammunition, making them hide themselves in a sail.

Standing in with a good commanding breeze, he made signs to the natives on shore to come off to trade. A chief came on board with two canoes and asked him to come into the bay and anchor. This Watson declined to do, but invited his visitor to be seated on the skylight while he showed him his various articles for trade—taking care when he set him on the skylight that the chief's feet were close to a ringbolt on the deck.

A boy was sent to hand up from the cabin the various articles for trade, such as beads, knives, tomahawks, &c., which the old chief was delighted to see, thinking when the stock was all exposed that his crew would knock Watson on the head and then enter into possession. Watson next called to his boy to hand up a pair of burnished handcuffs hanging in the cabin. These he first clasped, one on his own ankle, dangling the other to show it was a bright ankle ornament. This was so much admired that Watson generously presented it to the chief by placing one on the chief's ankle, and its mate he adroitly locked on the ringbolt. Then calling to his men aloft to uncover and show their teeth, so as to

let it be seen he had command of the deck, he told his sable mightiness that he was his prisoner.

He next explained to him that he knew there was a white prisoner on shore, and that if this captive was not brought off he meant to hang his majesty as high as Haman, at the same time explaining the threat by ordering his men aloft to reeve a whip at the yard-arm, and placing the end round the prisoner's neck.

It was admitted there was a white man on shore, but it was said he was so far in the interior it would be three days before he could come down. By this ruse the chief hoped Watson might be induced to anchor, and thus place his vessel in the power of the force he could bring against him.

But he did not know the strategist in whose power he now was. Watson told him he had no intention of anchoring, but his boats might go on shore for the man and bring him off if he was near at hand, or if he was at a distance the vessel would stand off and on till his arrival; "but," said Watson to the chief, "if he is not brought off by the third morning, up you go!"

The boats were sent on shore, and the schooner stood out to sea for the night, the prisoner in the meantime being kindly treated. But as they stood in next morning a stage was constructed outside the vessel by the fore-rigging, with the chief on it, and the rope from the yard-arm was placed round his neck, to show the natives on shore the dangerous position of

their "Ourang Kain" (chief). Trombones and gongs soon sounded, loudly mustering the crews of war prahus to come to the rescue. As they approached the vessel in great force, Watson told the chief, at the same time showing him his guns loaded with grape and canister, that he would sink them all before they could reach him; but, however the attack went, he, the chief, would swing from the yard-arm by the neck.

Quite satisfied of the truth of his threat, the chief waved to his fleet to turn back and bring the man off, else they would all suffer, and that he would certainly swing. Acting on this prudential advice, the men in the prahus returned to shore and brought off a wretchedly decrepit object, who had been shamefully treated as a slave for seventeen years, during which time, having never heard his own language, he had quite lost it, and had picked up Malay in its place. Watson then released his prisoner, making him several presents, and sailed away for Sydney.

He found much difficulty in getting the man's history from him, but as the rescued captive gradually recalled his mother tongue, to Watson's inquiry as to what he thought when he saw the vessel, he managed, in the only words he could command, to express his delight: "Joe belly sore—Joe can't eat," implying that he had lost all appetite.

In time, he explained that he came out from



[To face p. 100.]

JOE FORBES.



London as a lad of seventeen in a brig, the *Stedcombe*, which, in 1823, went to Melville Island, near Port Essington, where an unsuccessful attempt had been made to form a settlement, and having landed their stores, they visited this island to trade, as Watson was disposed to do, but the *Stedcombe* imprudently anchoring, the natives overpowered and murdered the crew except Joe Forbes, whom they kept as a slave.

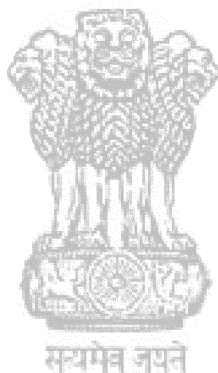
His hair had been allowed to grow all the time, and formed a coil on the top of his head, which, at the time of his rescue, was secured with a bamboo comb. Before landing at Sydney, where he was sent to the hospital, as a mark of gratitude he gave this long lock to Captain Watson, who more than thirty years after gave it to me.

Joe eventually returned to London. When the owner of the ship in which he sailed took him to the Mansion House to lay his case before the Lord Mayor, Alderman (afterwards Sir John) Pirie was on the Bench to hear the relating of Joe's experience, when the Alderman remarked that it was very strange that he should be there to receive this statement, as the *Stedcombe*, previous to that voyage, had been sold by him, and she had been supposed to have foundered at sea, nothing having been heard of her until then.

Joe again returned to the colonies as a seaman, trading between Melbourne and Sydney till 1857,

when he became ship-keeper of the Seamen's Bethel at Melbourne.

When wharf accommodation was provided at Sandridge, the Bethel was erected on shore, and Joe's occupation was gone. He did not long survive this, and in 1877 passed peacefully away at the age of seventy-one.



## CHAPTER IX

1839—1840

Waiting for the *Beagle*—Mistaken for a Malay—"You jumpee up here, John"—Farewell *Britomart*—Surveying on the north-west coast of Australia in the *Beagle*—Discovery of the *Adelaide*—Exploring the Victoria—Good holding ground—Short of water—A tropical downpour—Into the water out of the wet—Abel Gower's experience—Attack on Lieutenant Stokes—Reception at Swan river—Work resumed—Tommy the blackfellow—At Coupang Timor—Tommy and the Chinaman—The missing link—Darwin out-Darwined—Tommy the patriot—Tommy the perfidious—Tommy the prisoner—Surveying the Abrolhos—Fate of the *Batavia* and *Zeevyk*—Interesting ancient relics—A seventeenth-century breechloader—Seals and wallaby—A pretty big bag—How did the wallaby get there?—Two sides to a reef—Riding out a hurricane.

WHILE the *Britomart* was lying at Port Essington, I was dispatched in a boat to Point Smith, the eastern headland (about twenty miles from the settlement), at the entrance of the harbour, to make magnetic observations with the dipping needle, and to wait for H.M.S. *Beagle*, which was expected from Sydney.

The *Beagle* had left England about a year before, after her memorable cruise under the command of Captain Fitzroy, having on board as her naturalist the since famous Charles Darwin. She was now commanded by Captain Wickham, who had been first lieutenant under Fitzroy, while Stokes, her assistant-surveying lieutenant, had served on board her from the time he entered as a midshipman.

The *Beagle* was to be engaged in the survey of the north-west coast of Australia, and on her arrival off Point Smith I was to take her to her anchorage. When she arrived I pulled off to her, but so unkempt was my appearance, with my weather-worn clothes and long lank hair, which had not been shorn for many months, that those on board mistook me for a Malay, who had come off probably to pilot the vessel to her anchorage. As I drew alongside, an officer whom I recognized as Tom Birch put his head over the side and cried, "You jumpee up here, John," and I rather astounded him by replying, "All right, Tom, you catch hold of this chart, and I will be up directly." Recognitions and greetings over, I took the vessel up, and shortly after Birch proposed to me an exchange, which, on consideration, I accepted, and took his place in the *Beagle*, while he took mine in the *Britomart*.

After a short stay in Port Essington, the *Beagle* sailed for the north-west coast, and entered on her survey work, one of the earliest incidents of which

was the discovery of the Adelaide river. I may here remark that, generally speaking, the rivers in tropical Australia, meandering to the ocean through a mangrove-clad shore, are scarcely visible to a ship on the coast. Thus, the Adelaide river, emptying into Clarence Strait (which latter was named by Captain P. P. King after the Duke of Clarence), was discovered by my friend Fitzmaurice, almost accidentally, while surveying the Vernon Islands in Clarence Strait.

Returning to the ship one evening in March 1839, as he pulled across a mangrove bight toward Adam Bay, in which the *Beagle* was anchored, he noticed that at one time his boat was suddenly forced out of her course as though by a freshet from the bight. Reporting this circumstance on reaching the ship, and venturing an opinion that there was possibly a river there, the captain replied, "It's only a mangrove creek; however, provision two whale-boats for a couple of days, and I will have a look at it in the morning, but you may expect me back in the evening."

Next morning the captain left in his boat, accompanied by Frank Helpman in the whaler, and soon disappeared in the mangrove creek. They did not, however, return that evening as expected. The second and the third day passed, and when the fourth day came without bringing a sign of the boats, there was some anxiety as to the possibility of trouble having occurred with the natives.

The ship was therefore got under way, and we moved toward the bight, intending to send other boats to their relief; but as the vessel approached the bight the boats were seen coming out, not, as we expected, short of provisions after being four days on two days' supply, but with a line stretched between the awning-stanchions, festooned with game, ducks, and teal, while their stock of ship's provisions was untouched; and, what was of equal importance, they brought with them a good supply of fresh river-water. As this river emptied into Clarence Strait, it was named after Queen Dowager Adelaide, widow of the monarch who had been Duke of Clarence.

Following along the coast to the south-west, where on the chart at that time were sundry gaps marked, "No land seen in this direction," we were enabled to perpetuate the name of a former shipmate in the *Beagle* by calling a fine port then discovered, Darwin, and the outer point, Charles, after the celebrated naturalist.

When in the same year Captain Wickham discovered the Victoria river, of which I have made earlier mention in connection with the marauding alligator, he hastened back to the ship with the idea that he could take her at once into fresh water and pump into the tanks. This was joyful news, as the sinking of wells had entailed on us much heavy labour.

We therefore entered the river with a flowing

tide, and proceeded about ten miles within the entrance, and anchored about a quarter of a mile from the right bank in a part we named Holdfast Reach, a well-earned name indeed, for the two bower anchors with which the ship was moored were never recovered. The in-shore anchor was in five fathoms at low water, and the off-shore anchor in ten fathoms on a stiff mud bottom ; but when, about six weeks later, we attempted to weigh and depart, the in-shore cable was hove in at low water to the first shackle only, which was twelve and a half fathoms from the anchor, thus leaving fully seven fathoms unaccounted for. The cable was well stoppered in hope of the rising tide helping to draw it out of the mud, but, so unyielding was it, that the ship was carried down by the head until the strain broke the hawse-pipe, and compelled us to slip the cable at the first shackle and lose the anchor. The other anchor was then hove short at next low water with similar result, there being the same amount of chain unaccounted for. The common notion among the crew in the forecastle was, that when we returned to Woolwich we should find the anchors had reached the dockyard before us.

The river being salt at our moorings, and the navigation above impeded by bars of sand or rock at the bend of every reach, we sunk wells abreast the ship at first, but only very brackish water was obtained. Boats were then dispatched up the river in hope of getting beyond tidal influence, but nearly one hundred

miles was travelled to Steep Head, and still the water was salt. This was on November 1, about the end of the dry season, and probably no rain had fallen here for the past six months.

Resting here at mid-day on a bar, after landing casks and boats' gear ready for launching the boats into the next reach, a small cloud "like a man's hand" was noticed in the south-west, rapidly expanding with aqueous promise. The water-worn cavities in the rocks on the river-bank were full of a six months' accumulation of gum-leaves. These were soon swept out, and, stripping our clothes off and rolling them up in the sails to keep dry, we waited for the deluge. It came down in cataracts, and so icy cold that we were glad to plunge into the river to keep ourselves warm, leaving one man as "look-out" to warn others of the approach of an alligator. The river water was quite tepid, while the rain was many degrees colder.

This vast difference in the temperature of the rain and sea-water was noticed in the previous rainy season at Port Essington. When pulling down the harbour in a boat, a thunder-storm burst on us with heavy rain, the latter so bitterly cold that Pat Maloney, pulling the bow oar, put his hand over the side, and finding the sea-water so warm, he exclaimed in a beseeching tone to the officer in the boat, "Plase, sir, may we jump overboard out of the wet?"—a suggestion which was cordially



accepted by all hands, though one had to remain on the look-out for alligators while we towed the boat, swimming.

The shower above alluded to in the Victoria river gave us an ample supply to fill our casks and return to the ship. Before this rain fell, our meagre allowance of half a pint per man per day ill sufficed to allay the thirst of one of our party, a seaman named Abel Gower, who, during the journey up the river, soon consumed his allowance of water, and, striving to appease his thirst in some way, he attempted to moisten his lips with salt-water, though he was repeatedly remonstrated with and urged to refrain. He persisted, however, and before the rain came he became wildly insane, and was obliged to be secured in the boat till we returned to the ship two days later, when medical treatment happily restored the poor fellow.

An exploring party under Lieutenant Stokes, with Doctor Bynoe as naturalist, followed the course of the river on foot above Steep Head for a fortnight, to where the river was fresh, and the nature of the country improved. But few natives were met with, and they very shy.

Our provisions were now running short, and it was time to close the surveying season and make for the base of our operations at Swan river to replenish and recruit, so quitting this important Australian stream we spent a few days at anchor off Point

Pierce to rate chronometers, during which period Ben Bynoe the doctor, and the purser, Dring, amused themselves in the bush shooting specimens, but saw no natives.

On the day it was intended to leave that anchorage and proceed to Swan river, they returned on board about one p.m., just before Lieutenant Stokes left to take his final observations, and as no natives had been seen during our stay, the boat's arms were stowed away, and the last boat landed unarmed.

The tide being low, they had to leave the boat at the edge of the coral reef and wade to the beach at the foot of a cliff. Stokes, carrying a chronometer, led the way, and before reaching the beach he turned towards the boat to hurry the men up with the sextant and horizon, when a terrible yell was heard from the forest crowning the cliff, and a volley of spears hurtled round the invader, who may not even have been recognized as a human being, as those natives had most probably never seen a man in clothing or a boat propelled by oars before. The whole party were clad in white, and, as I understood later, the ship at first sight was regarded as a floating island with three trees. One plain spear took effect in Stokes's left breast, passing through the muscle of the left arm and penetrating the lung.

Hearing distinctly the yell from the natives, I ran

out from the chart-room under the poop, where I was engaged, and saw the blood on poor Stokes's breast. The boats were instantly manned and started to support our crew on shore, but the natives at once retreated into the bush, and were not seen by any of our party, who were sent to avenge the act. For this I was not sorry, being satisfied that it was not an act of treachery on the part of the natives, but rather an act of defence against creatures such as they had never seen before.

The condition of poor Stokes was rather precarious for some days, and the doctor urged that the anchor should not be weighed, as the vibration caused thereby would be detrimental to his patient, who suffered severely from difficulty of breathing, the escape of air from the lung inflating the cellular membrane and puffing up his body to a frightful extent till relieved by punctures with a lancet. I will not venture to invite professional criticism here, as it is but the recollection of a layman after the lapse of half a century.

All hands were glad when the patient's condition justified the rattle of the windlass and chain-cable, and canvas was once more sheeted home for the Swan, as we had already been some weeks on "six upon four," which means two-third rations. I should mention here that the Swan river settlement, by which name the colony in Western Australia was then known, was the most convenient port for our

head-quarters on the western coast. Thither, therefore, we repaired to obtain fresh supplies, and to enjoy once more a resumption of intercourse with civilization.

When we reached the Swan river, nearly eighteen months had elapsed since we had enjoyed anything like domestic or family associations. Our society was limited to our shipmates and occasional aborigines, so that the sight of a group of colonists on Arthur's Head, on which stood the gaol, was one of such peculiar interest to us that glasses were concentrated on that headland to feast our vision on fair Europeans.

After a lapse of half a century I vividly recall two young ladies, who were dressed, one in blue and the other in pink. The anchor was no sooner down than a boat from the shore brought off an invitation for as many officers as could come, to attend a ball that evening at Perth, improvised in honour of our arrival, the hosts undertaking to provide quarters for their guests.

A ball in those days at the Swan was a social family gathering for which the *Beagle's* arrival afforded sufficient excuse, and one which we, after our banishment, were quite ready to enjoy.

During the evening I was introduced to a Miss Nun, who, in the course of conversation, remarked, how interested all the inhabitants were to see the ship approaching.

"And pray were you among the group I noticed on Arthur's Head?" I inquired.

"Yes," she replied.

"Were you, may I ask, dressed in blue or pink?"

"Oh, I was in blue, but it was my sister who was in pink," was the response, with a smile, perhaps of gratified surprise on learning that she had attracted so much attention.

After recruiting for too brief a season at the hospitable Swan, Lieutenant Stokes being convalescent, Captain Wickham decided to return to the north-west coast. Upon this trip, a native lad was, with his mother's consent, induced to accompany us. The boy's name was Yee-lal-nar-vup, but he also rejoiced in the British sobriquet of "Tommy." Poor Tommy soon felt home-sick or mammy-sick, for I noticed him one evening under the lee of the spanker crying.

"What are you crying about, Tommy?" I inquired.

"Cos my mudder cry now, I know, so I cry."

But when he was able to land on any sandy island where he could use his fish-spears, he forgot his mammy, for the time being at any rate, and was perfectly happy.

One day a rather peculiar incident diversified his sport. He had speared two or three fish, and had

laid them on the sand while he walked round the island seeking more, but when he returned to his plant, he found one fish gone. This puzzled him immensely, and, telling me the story, he explained how he looked for strange footmarks and found none. Said he, "My look down, no blackfellow walk here; my look up, and see big fellow eagle can't fly" (meaning he flew with difficulty); "my call out to him, 'To-morrow mine double-barrel carry him me directly shoot you.'"

Tommy thirsted for revenge, and for a while could not be appeased because it was not attainable.

Among his other accomplishments, Tommy became very expert in collecting shells among the coral. The coral being sharp and severe on the hands, we had constructed a protection out of the tops of Wellington boots like mittens for our own use, and Tommy greatly coveted these conveniences. "Missa Pasco," he said, "you lend me your handshoes;" thus unconsciously hitting on a common German form of speech.

Our voyage on this occasion was extended to the Dutch settlement at Coupang Timor, where members of the monkey tribe are numerous. There are also a number of Chinese engaged in business on the island. Both monkeys and Chinamen were novelties to Tommy, but from seeing the Chinese wear tails, he thought there must be some connection between

man and monkey. Taking him into a Chinese store, the China boy, who had never seen an Australian aboriginal before, said to Tommy, "You go away, you eat him man."

"No," said Tommy, very indignantly, "my not yeat him man, but you yeat him monkey, look you tail."

Our old shipmate, Darwin, had not then published his *Theory of Evolution* and *The Origin of Species*, and I have often regretted that I did not relate this incident to him, as it might perhaps have aided him in his scientific speculations.

When we returned to Swan river, after a six months' cruise, Tommy excited our wonder by the accuracy of his memory as to the courses taken by the ship, and the various incidents of the voyage, which he related to his tribe in camp. One statement he made was quite beyond the belief of his people. He had told them that the ship went on all night without stopping. I happened to be passing his camp when he called me, saying, "You come here, Missa Pasco, these stupid blackfellows say 'Ship can't walk all night,' you tell him."

I, of course, could only confirm what he told them.

The mountain scenery and rich tropical vegetation of Timor, with its wealth of palm, &c., were so superior to the surroundings of Freemantle and the coast-line of Torres country, that I ventured to

challenge his admiration for them. But, no, he was too patriotic to make the admission. It was not to be compared, he declared, to the lovely Swan river country—no, “not even the moon not so pretty as Swan river moon.”

Still, though Tommy's experience of travel raised him above his contemporaries, his intercourse with Europeans had not eradicated that innate jealousy which aborigines indulge towards other tribes. Soon after we had left Tommy with his tribe at Freemantle, a squatter from the York district brought a boy from his neighbourhood with him on a visit to Freemantle. Tommy and another boy considered this one an intruder, but, pretending to be friendly, induced the stranger to come with them to a secluded spot on the river-bank to fish, and as evening closed they made a murderous assault on him, and left him, as they supposed, dead, and hidden under bushes, while they returned to their camp. The York boy, however, lay quiet till dark, when he returned to his master and reported the assault. The offenders were arrested, tried, and transported to Rottenest Island, used as a penal settlement.

I visited Tommy during his incarceration, and asked him how he could have been so cruel. Tommy was very angry at his sentence, being under the impression that it was for killing the boy, whereas, as he explained to me, “My not kill him, mine only



yurt him little bit. That fellow plenty gammon he die."

These natives very cleverly deceive by appearing to be dead, as Tommy had explained to me in relating an incident of his personal experience. Some few years before, when he was a little fellow, soldiers had been sent out from Perth to shoot down the blacks. Tommy saw the soldiers coming, and he threw himself down, pretending to be dead. The soldier came up to him, and, poking him over with his musket, said to his comrade, "That fellow's cooked," so he did not waste a charge on him. Presently Tommy jumped up and ran; Tommy "gammoned" that time to some purpose.

Another trip down the west coast of Australia led to the discovery of a number of most interesting relics of a former visit by Dutch navigators early in the seventeenth century. Although the discovery of two dangerous reefs known as Houltemem's Abrolhos is attributed to the Dutch, their knowledge was probably derived from the researches of still earlier visitors, as is suggested by the name they bear, Abrolhos being a commonly used Portuguese expression conveying the meaning of, "Open your eye, keep a good look-out." Similar nomenclature occurs among Tasman's discoveries on south of Van Diemen's Land, "Pedra Blanca," a white rock, &c.

Captain Pelsart, when seeking the "Great South

Land," in the ship *Batavia*, found himself a wreck on the south-east corner of these dangerous reefs, in 1629, and about 100 years later the Dutch ship *Zeevyk* picked herself up on another portion of the same; from which time, so far as we are aware, they had not been visited or their intimacy courted. Being a low danger not to be seen until very close, ships passing through the Indian Ocean would be careful to give them a wide berth. But the *Beagle's* business being to specially make the acquaintance of such obstructions to navigation, about two months were spent in their examination.

The Abrolhos consisted of three distinct groups of coral reefs and islets, with a tolerably wide channel between each group, the whole occupying about a degree of latitude and nearly the same of longitude, and situated about forty miles from the mainland of Australia, opposite what we then named Champion Bay, and near where Geraldton now stands.

On the southern group, which we named Pelsart, after the unfortunate Dutchman who has left an account of his disaster, was found embedded in the sand a heavy beam of timber with a large iron bolt through it, but on the slightest touch it soon dwindled down to a mere wire from corrosion.

The spot marked by the beam was evidently that of the encampment formed by the castaway, as was

evidenced by the finding of a row of small glass demijohns, which having stood there for the past 210 years, they were half buried in the soil that had accumulated round them, and within the bottles was about the same depth of the *débris* of insects and animals that had crawled in and perished. There were also a number of small clay pipes, brass harness-buckles with gilt on them, and copper fish-hooks, made apparently from the copper of the wreck, to catch the fish with which these reefs abound. Among the various relics was found a copper doit, a coin of the Indian Netherlands Government, about a half-penny value, bearing the date 1620, as though testifying to the period of the wreck of the *Batavia*, which occurred nine years later.

The next or centre group was named Easter group, from that season being spent there, and on one of its islands we found similar relics, with the addition of a brass cannon of about four pounds calibre, with an iron swivel and mounts on the gunwale. It was a breechloader, having an oblong space cut out of the chase where the vent would be, and a movable chamber with a handle on its side. This used to contain the charge, and the breech was then wedged into the gun. That old relic may now be seen in the United Service Institute, near Scotland Yard, Whitehall, London.

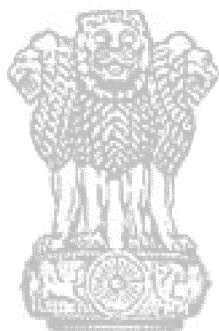
On this island, also, a copper doit was picked up, bearing date 1700, which would correspond to the

wreck of the *Zeewyk* in 1720. The channel between the Middle or Easter group and Pelsart group we named *Zeewyk*.

The third and northern group differed materially from the other two, which were very low coral islets, only a few feet above the ocean level, but these islands attained an elevation of fifty feet, and abounded with seal and wallaby. These animals were evidently strangers to humankind. They were apprehensive of no danger. They would stand looking at us, and were easily taken alive. So tame were they that two sportsmen (save the prefix sport!) in two days bagged over four hundred wallaby. As these islands are not visible from the mainland, the question is, How came the animals there? Was the channel, of forty miles across, a recent subsidence, and had this group once formed part of the mainland?

I might here moralize at length upon the strange tide in human affairs which thus brought to light the memorials of the old and less fortunate voyagers, centuries after they themselves had passed away; but as this chapter is already over long, I will close it by remarking that we are told that there are "two sides to every question," or a picture, and so we found there are two sides to a coral reef, a weather or dangerous side, and a lee or safe side. During Easter week of 1840, early in May, we rode out a heavy gale of wind within those reefs, while the

whole body of the Southern Ocean, with an unbroken fetch from the Antarctic, roared and raged against the adamantine barrier built up by those tiny insects which held in check the force that would have utterly destroyed the stoutest work of human hands exposed to its fury.



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## CHAPTER X

### PARENTHETIC

Intercourse with the natives—Quaint experiences at Champion Bay—Toeing the mark—Cutting capers and making friends—A naval dancing-master—Saving the instruments—Good friends all round—Chinese experiences—Reconnoitring Chuenpec—Cockney sportsmen—"Guard turn out!"—Ducking and dodging—A quack experiment—A surveying incident—An anxious mamma—The *séance* interrupted—Hazing John Chinaman—A dumb interpreter—Removing an obstruction—Safe and sound—So did Davis.

BEFORE proceeding with my narrative of survey work, which will hereafter take me away from the western coast of the Australian continent, I am tempted to devote a short and discursive chapter to the subject of intercourse with natives, when dependence has to be placed entirely on signs through total ignorance of the native tongue.

In this matter, conciliation is, of course, the first object to be kept in view, and I had many quaint experiences of this among the Australian aborigines and the Chinese, as well as among native races in

other parts of the world. A few examples will, I hope, prove interesting.

At Champion Bay, on the west coast of Australia, where now stands the thriving town of Geraldton, with its railway-line, telegraph system, and all other adjuncts of modern civilization, no white face had been seen before we visited it in 1840. It might possibly have been visited earlier by Captain Grey after the loss of his boat and provisions near Shark Bay, or his party might have been seen by the natives as it hurried southward to Perth, but of this there is neither record nor tradition.

When we visited the place in the *Beagle*, the blackfellows therefore had their first communication with white men, and it came about in this manner. Being on shore, we one day observed a numerous tribe on a hill, and, wishing to open up friendly relations with them, I advanced alone, unarmed, leaving the boat's crew secreted behind bushes to be ready to render assistance if necessary.

Arriving at the foot of the hill, I beckoned to the "lords of the manor" to come to me, and then held up two fingers to signify that two might come, feeling sure that one would not come alone. As they looked at me without response, I repeated the gesture several times till the old chief selected two young warriors to pick up their spears and meet the strange object in clothing—nearly all white.

They descended the hill, well armed, and approached within thirty yards. I intimated that I

was unarmed by holding up my hands, and suggested their laying their weapons on the ground and meeting me on equal terms. After considerable hesitation they did so, and timidly approached to within a dozen yards, when they stopped and eyed me from head to foot in evident wonderment as to the kind of animal before them. I then held out a red handkerchief, motioning them to come and take it, but the inducement was not sufficient. I danced and capered towards them, holding out the handkerchief for their acceptance. In this way I was able to reach their position, and, tearing the kerchief in two, gave half to each for head adornment.

In exchange they gave me a belt of woven kangaroo hair, having a long cord attached, which passed many times round the body. I next gave them some ship-biscuits, eating some myself to show them it was wholesome, and they seemed to enjoy the new delicacy. I then endeavoured to gain some words of their language for my vocabulary. I first tried to get their name for hair, by taking hold of a lock of their hair and saying, "What name this?" They replied by imitating both my words and gesture, catching me by the hair and saying, "What name this?"

I marked my disappointment by saying, "Stupid fellow you." Which they also repeated with the exception of the letter S.

As I then showed signs of bringing our interview to a close, they signified their desire to take some





*[To face p. 124.*

ADMIRAL STOKES.

kerchiefs to the tribe in the camp, so, in the same silent way in which our conference had been conducted, I promised to meet them at that spot at twelve o'clock to-morrow with more kerchiefs and biscuits if they would be there. This communication was made by pointing to the sun setting in the west, and then laying my head on my hand as if asleep; then quickly waking up and rubbing my eyes I pointed to the sun and then to the east, letting my finger rise slowly till it reached the meridian position, when, marking a cross on the sand, I intimated that I would be there after one sleep. We then separated as friends, they returning to their camp, and I to my boat.

Fulfilling my promise at noon next day, I found my sable friends were there to meet me, and a few yards before I reached the cross mark I beckoned them to come to me. But no, pointing to my mark on the sand they challenged me to keep to my bargain, which of course I did, and in this way friendly intercourse was opened up and business by barter duly inaugurated.

A very similar event occurred in the following year (June 1841), at Magnetic Island, in our passage through Torres Straits. The *Beagle* was at anchor about a mile from its east point, on which we had noticed a number of natives. Captain Stokes, who had succeeded Captain Wickham in the command, took up a theodolite station on a rocky islet to north of the ship, and desired me to return to the ship in

the gig, and arm my boat's crew as a precaution in case of opposition by the natives, and then proceed to the point over which we had seen the natives, and plant a flag that he might see it from his station. Of course I was enjoined to avoid as much as possible having a collision with the natives.

Before leaving the ship, a seaman was sent into the maintop with a telescope to keep his eye on us when we landed, and as I approached the point on which the flag was to be exhibited, two armed natives appeared, gesticulating excitedly, to warn us off. One of them I noticed continued to shake three pieces of shell which glistened in the sun.

Wishing to be as friendly as possible with them, and at the same time to carry out my captain's instructions, I ordered the crew to rest on their oars while I engaged the attention of the natives by jumping and swinging my arms so that their attention was taken off the two bow-oars, which were ordered to paddle imperceptibly in, while the three after-oars were idle. In this way we reached the point, which was eight or ten feet high. Immediately springing forward to the bow I scrambled up the rock, leaving the crew to spread the flag that it might be seen by the captain.

Before I reached the top of the rock the natives had retreated some yards, still gesticulating for me to retire. However, as on the former occasion, I arrested their attention by offering a red kerchief, which did duty as my passport to friendly communi-

cation, and in return for it and some biscuits, they gave me the three pieces of shell strung together.

During the interview they occasionally addressed themselves to others who were not visible to me, though the seaman who was watching our movements from the ship saw a number of natives close by me, crouching behind the rocks, receiving the verbal report from my two friends.

Having exhibited the flag a sufficient time at the point, I left them to retreat to my boat. Leaving the two natives behind, I slid down the rock into my boat, but had scarcely reached the stern-sheet before the group of about a dozen were at the rock pointing to the kerchief on the heads of their fortunate companions, and soliciting like favours. This was near noon, and I had to return to the ship for dinner after calling for the captain at his theodolite station; so by reference to the sun descending for a couple of hours, I intimated my intention to return with more kerchiefs.

When I related to my shipmates the friendly character of these children of the soil, I invited the doctor (Dr. Ben Bynoe), who was our naturalist, in succession to Darwin, to land with me, that, under the escort of the natives, he might ascend the hills and gullies in quest of specimens. Returning with a supply of kerchiefs and biscuits, which were duly distributed, I pointed to the doctor, and then to the hills that they might escort him thither, and

a pleasant and successful trip he enjoyed till near sunset, fairly electrifying the natives by bringing birds down on the wing with his gun.

I do not, however, claim credit for originating the dancing method of ingratiating myself with the native tribes, as my worthy messmate, Fitzmaurice, set the example at an earlier part of the voyage at Escape Cliff, near Cape Hotham, on the north-west coast, in 1839. He had landed for observation on the beach at the foot of the cliff, over which in the forest he saw a number of armed natives. On his instruments being brought to the beach from the boat, before commencing operations, he, in a friendly way, addressed himself to his sable audience above him by smiling and holding up his hands in token of his being unarmed. They smiled in return, and showed no belligerent intentions until he knocked the rings off his theodolite legs, which had looked to them as a single club; but when released of the rings, the tripod thus developed was supposed to be a fearful weapon, and spears were instantly poised ready for delivery.

Fitzmaurice, as promptly, to show the harmlessness of his action, instantly closed the tripod, and laid it on the sand, laughing good-naturedly at the affrighted blacks, who as readily dropped their spears and were satisfied.

Supposing now that all fear was dispelled, he again attempted to pick up the offending object; but no, he could not stoop to reach it without the

alarm being revived. It now became a question how to restore the instruments to the boat, and give up the intended observations for a future occasion, and it was here that the *pas de ballet* came in.

The boat's crew were directed to be ready to steal away the instruments as soon as the attention of the natives was drawn off, and Fitzmaurice, with his companion, Keys, commenced to dance and shout in an extravagant manner in a position between the instruments and the cliff above which the natives were posted. Fitzmaurice, while acting the clown in this ridiculous manner, began to tire, so he called to the crew to tell him when the last thing was in the boat, as he was getting exhausted. Fortunately the ordeal was not unduly prolonged, and waving a friendly farewell to the natives, the dancers returned to the ship. As this satisfied the natives that no harm was intended to them, the next day we could all land and enjoy the friendship of the tribe.

These quaint Australian experiences stood me in good stead afterwards in China and the Philippine Islands. Certain treaty conditions made at the close of the Opium War, 1842 or 1843, not being fulfilled in 1846, it was considered advisable to do certain exploring work, and the Colonel Commanding Engineer (George Phillpotts) was instructed by the General to examine Chuenpec, a fortification on a hill near the Bocca Tigris, at the entrance of the Canton

river. The Colonel was good enough to apply for the assistance of a naval officer to sound the approach to the shore, and to accompany him up the hill, suggesting that I should be that officer. We were to be dressed as merchant clerks on a sporting expedition, in plain clothes with fowling-pieces, and he arranged to call for me at midnight, coming alongside the ship, then lying at Whampoa, in a Chinese lorch. He did so, and we reached our destination early in the day, and having satisfied ourselves there were no obstructions to approaching the landing, we trudged up the hill to see the safest point for military to approach, hoping we might perform this unobserved by the guard inside. In the event of their being disturbed, the Colonel instructed me to endeavour to draw the attention of the Chinese off him, while he made his notes. He had scarcely finished, when out turned the guard, vociferating in their unintelligible language something which I had no difficulty in interpreting as "What are you fellows doing here?"

The Celestial language had found no part in my school curriculum, so the only reply I could muster was to think of the note of some bird I might possibly be looking for with my gun. The only one my ingenuity suggested on the spur of the moment was a duck, so putting my gun to my shoulder, I "quacked" vigorously to indicate my desire to bag a few other "quackers." This set the whole guard

in a roar of laughter at my supposed simplicity, as they seemed to imply, "Well, you are a greenhorn to come up the hill to look for ducks," and, pointing to the swamp at the foot, gave me to understand, "That is the place to look for ducks," for which considerate suggestion I "chin-chined" my military informants, and the Colonel and I retreated to our boat, having satisfactorily accomplished our mission.

Another incident of a similar description will here bear narration. Soon after this, while H.M.S. *Vulture* was at anchor in Blenheim Reach, near Whampoa, I engaged a sampan, with an old woman, and her little boy (twelve or fourteen), to take me a short distance up the river, that I might obtain a round of angles from a hill. Arriving at the point for landing, I desired the youngster to pick up my instruments and come with me, but to my surprise his mother would not listen to such a proposal, explaining that the Chinese in that part were "Qui-sai" (wicked). They were sure, she said, to kill me, and they would then kill her son for bringing me there.

Considering that her alarm was groundless, I assured her that I would run no risk, and take care of the lad. But no, she could not consent, until she saw the colour of a dollar, when her fears diminished sufficiently to let us go.

My own idea was that we should meet with no Chinese, seeing no sign of habitation on the hillside up which we tramped ; but, on reaching the summit,



I saw on the plain below me a large walled town, and on the flat country outside the town extensive paddy (rice) fields, on which were about fifty agriculturists at work with hoes and mattocks.

There being plenty of trees about me, I hoped I might not be noticed by them at a distance, so I made the boy sit down beside me while I set up my theodolite; and, fearing my Celestial youthful companion might take fright, and I lose his services as interpreter, if required, I took the precaution of placing my foot into the slack of his trousers. I then set to work, but presently noticed one of the men look up at us and communicate with the others.

Instantly all eyes were upon us, and, shouldering their tools, the Celestials made for the hill in single file. For me to attempt to put up my theodolite in the case and retreat would, I felt, occupy so much time, that they would overtake me before I could reach my old woman in the sampan. I therefore decided to remain quiet instead of encouraging them to pursue by reason of my flight, bearing in mind that

"To fly the boar, before the boar pursues,  
Were to incense the boar to follow us,  
And make pursuit where he did mean no chase."

Accordingly I proceeded with my work, as though there was no one near me, until they crowded so

inconveniently close, that I told my boy to request that they would keep further off. But my interpreter (?) was mute with terror, and for all the help he afforded me, might have stayed with his anxious mamma and saved me my dollar. Consequently, finding that I had to depend on dumb motions as a means for making myself understood, I commenced with a vigorous application of my elbows, which gained my object. But they soon intruded again, desiring evidently to look through the telescope of the theodolite.

I then explained to them that after my eye had seen all round, they should be gratified. This communication was made intelligible by touching *my* eye and then pointing to the various surrounding objects that I must see before they should be treated, which I indicated by touching the eyes of several within my reach. They seemed to be highly amused at my being so communicative without a word being spoken. They laughed and chattered good-naturedly with each other while I proceeded with my work, but presently another incident occurred requiring my wants to be interpreted.

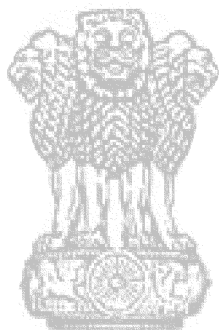
One very tall Chinese was standing directly in the way of an object to which I desired to point my instrument. The man was not near enough for me to touch and sign to stand aside, but looking round I picked out a short sturdy little fellow close to me, and, pointing to this tall gaunt creature, I made signs

to the little fellow to take a saw and cut the tall fellow down about the waist, and then, taking the little fellow with my hands under his shoulders, indicated that he should lift that top part aside after cutting it through, so that I (touching my eye) might see over the lower part.

That was a trump card for me. The tall fellow was evidently the butt of the party in consequence of his awkward gait, for there was a general roar of laughter directed to him, which evidently angered him. But I had all the rest by this time on my side, and he could do nothing to me. So, shouldering his hoe, he left to return to his work, leaving me one less to deal with.

When I had completed my round of angles, instead of letting them look through the theodolite telescope, I adjusted my ordinary spyglass, and having practised the "goose step" under the drill-sergeant, I stood on my left foot and extended the right foot in front while I looked through the glass; then I gave it to them to do likewise. Several made vain attempts to use the glass while standing on one foot, so I suggested that one mate should hold the other's foot up for him. This was tried with such effect that the observer was sent sprawling. But though disappointed at not seeing anything, they were all highly amused, and quietly dispersed, leaving me and my companion to return to the sampan and to delight the waiting mother with the joy of her child's deliverance.

I may observe in conclusion that the method of conciliating natives after the fashion I have described are by no means new or original, as Markham, in his *Life of John Davis*, mentions that during his Arctic cruise in 1586, "Davis caused his musicians to play while he and his companions danced and made signs of friendship."



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## CHAPTER XI

1841—1842

King George's Sound—Billy Spencer's birthday party—A grand corrobbery—Fairy boomerangs—Military waifs and strays—Adelaide to Hobartown—Sir John Franklin—Convict discipline—A murderous lottery—The Bay of Fires—Turning turtle—A friend in need—Resuscitating the apparently drowned—A pleasant family—"Don't let him go, mamma"—"Drowned again"—The Straits islander—Marriage by capture—Publishing the banns—Anderson at home—An old acquaintance—Mutton birding—A malodorous couch—The fate of the Tasmanian blacks—Deporting the tribes—The last man.

RESUMING my narrative of the cruise of the *Beagle* from the point of interruption; as we had been over a year out from Sydney, the visit to the western coast was concluded by a brief look at King George's Sound, where we saw a grand corrobbery by a numerous tribe of aborigines, not less than two hundred taking part in the dance.

Lady Spencer of Strawberry Hill, widow of the late Sir Richard Spencer, who had been resident

magistrate at the Sound, always gave an annual feast to the blacks on her youngest son's (William) birthday. Large fires were lighted in the forest before evening, and by eight o'clock the performance began by the women, with their opossum-rugs, and sticks for beating time, being seated on the ground in a large circle. The men, fantastically ornamented with daubs of clay, and bunches of feathers on their heads, &c., began their indescribable gestures, stamping their feet and shouting in time to the rhythm of the tattoo beaten by the women on the "possum" rugs, and finishing each round of the dance with vociferous shouts of "Billy! Billy! Billy!" in honour of the boy whose birthday they had met to celebrate. That over, there was an exhibition of skill with the boomerang. One end was lighted, and then the weapon, thrown with great force, described fiery circles through the darkness, whirling through the air with a whizzing noise, till, after its wonderful circumgyratory flight, it returned to the feet of the thrower. The spectators, however, did not feel particularly safe or comfortable until the fiery serpent, which seemed to be instinct with independent life, had done circling about them, and had landed inert upon the ground.

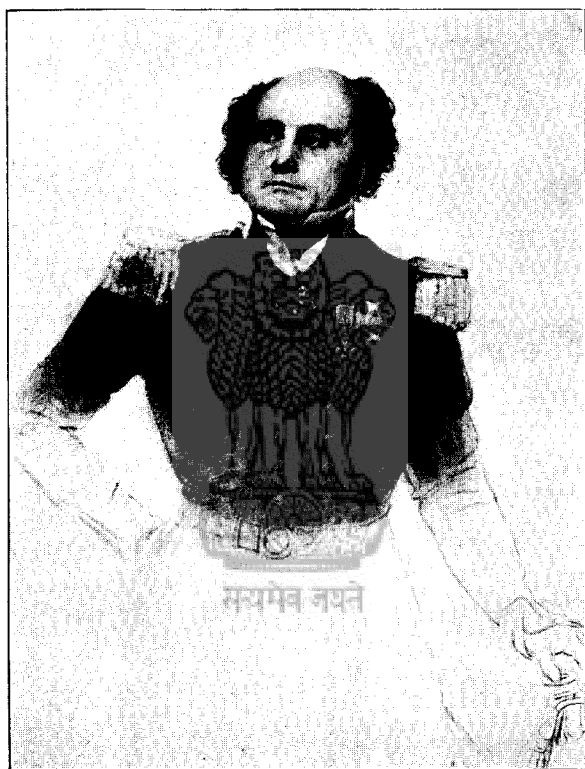
The climax of the evening's performance was, however, reached when the distribution of gifts began.

The men sat down in an outside circle, the women in an inner, and there came two men with wheel-

barrows, one containing a bag of flour, and the other sugar. They visited each individual, depositing a portion to each until the whole was disposed of, when a cheerful retreat was made to their camp.

Calling at Swan river on our way to the Sound, we picked up two officers from India, who had been ordered to Australia from Madras. One was Lieutenant Wellman, under orders to join the 80th Regiment; the other Vet.-Surgeon Haggar, commissioned to purchase remounts in Sydney. This circumstance furnished a good example of the ignorance of Australian geography, and the means of communication enjoyed, or rather denied, at that time, prevailing among persons beyond the colony. These gentlemen, being desirous to reach *Australia*, learned that a schooner was just about to leave Madras for Swan river. "Oh! capital, that place is in Australia, where we are going!" So on board they went, but, on reaching the Swan, they found that they had better have gone to England, and there have taken ship to Sydney.

They were there some months before we called in and offered them a passage, which they were very glad to accept. As a matter of fact, Western Australia had then less communication with Sydney in the east than it had with Europe or America. As it was, the *Beagle* did not go direct to Sydney, but called *en route* at Adelaide, where the new port was just opened, and a great flourish of trumpets was



*To face p. 138.*

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.



caused by a British man-of-war ascending to an anchorage in the new port, though she was only 240 tons.

His Excellency the Governor, Sir George Grey, and Lady Grey came on board, thus affording the former an opportunity for renewing the acquaintance of his old shipmates on the voyage from England to the Cape.

From Adelaide, instead of going through Bass Straits, we went around south to Hobartown (a name, even then, in a transition state between Hobartown and Hobart), where Captain Stokes, in order not to lose time for surveying while he visited Sydney to rate chronometers, obtained from the Governor, Sir John Franklin, the use of a colonial cutter, the *Vansittart*, of 70 tons, in which he placed Mr. Forsyth and me, with two mates and two seamen to act as leadsmen, with instructions to take up the survey from Eddystone Point on the N.E. coast round to Circular Head, including the Furneaux group of islands, Kent's group, and Corner Inlet on the Australian coast. This was rather a disappointment to those whose centre of attraction was Port Jackson. But when duty calls we must obey.

A month spent in Hobartown, preparing the cutter for her new occupation, was a boon for which I have never ceased to be grateful, as it afforded me much friendly intercourse with that Prince of Arctic enterprise, Sir John Franklin, his talented wife, and

devoted niece, Miss S. Cracroft. The Magnetic Observatory at Ross Bank was then in full swing, with three officers of the *Erebus* and *Terror* (Lieutenant Kay and Mr. Peter Scott of the *Terror*, and Mr. Joseph Dayman, mate of the *Erebus*), which two ships were then prosecuting their Antarctic explorations.

On the monthly term days, the magnetic observations had to be continuously made during twenty-four hours, at every two and a half minutes, which it was not possible for the permanent staff to carry out. On such occasions volunteers were enlisted, so that, being divided into two watches of six hours each, the twenty-four hours were provided for.

Sir John always took his stool at the vertical and I at the bifilar in his watch. One stood at the chronometer and called out "read" every two and a half minutes, and another recorded the readings of the oscillations of the different magnets. One little break, without interrupting the observations, would be the call for "coffee," which would be brought beside each observer, and discussed in snatches during the two and a half minutes allowed.

The end of March 1842 found the cutter in Port Arthur to obtain a new mast, and while there, we were able to visit some portion of Tasman's Peninsula with Captain Booth of the 21st Regiment, the commandant of the Penal Settlement, maintained

under very strict discipline, but, at the same time, as just as it was strict.

Captain Booth's system was to encourage the prisoners to subordinate conduct by rewarding them by gradual promotions to positions of trust. Thus, though a man commenced in irons and under sentence to hard labour, he might, in time, become an overseer, while he knew that any failure in his trust would at once return him to the chain-gang whence he came.

Some prisoners had escaped, and Captain Booth was about to make a journey to the coal-mines on the Peninsula, to inquire respecting it, and I was glad to accompany him. Much of the journey was performed in trucks on a tramway drawn by prisoners up the hills, or along a level; but when we had a down grade, the men, as soon as we began the descent, jumped up round the edge of the car, adding their weight, which gave the car an immense impetus, sending it down at a pace rather nerve-shaking to one not used to such a railway.

Prisoners were seen on various parts of the road, each having his special work allotted to him, and I was surprised to find among such a number how Captain Booth kept in his mind men's names and their allotted duty. He noticed a defect on one part of the road, and inquired of one man where So-and-So was.

"He is a little further on, sir," was the reply.

This man it was who was responsible for the repair of that section. He was at once interrogated about it, and endeavoured to excuse his neglect by saying, [that he had, some days since, forwarded a requisition for the necessary material, but it had not been sent.

"That is no excuse," he was told; "you know if your requisition is not promptly attended to, you have to let me know, when you will be held blameless; but if that is not repaired when I return to-morrow, you know the consequence."

I need scarcely say the defect was made good before we again passed over it.

Captain Booth was a brother of Augustus Booth, before mentioned as mate in the *Challenger*.

The settlement at Port Arthur took the place of Macquarie Harbour, after it was abandoned, for the reception of the worst criminals, at a period when the severest coercion was considered the only road to reformation. Those on the lowest scale of incorrigibles, with heavy irons on their legs, were daily brought out to their labour to be shackled by one foot to a large chain cable stretched along the ground, each prisoner about six feet from his next neighbour. Before each was a heap of stone, and a long handled stone hammer with which to geologize until dinner-time, after which the same weary round was repeated. Their meals were taken in huts, there being about six prisoners in a mess.

This perpetual monotony was only relieved by planning, when at their meals, how they might effect some change. One day a bright idea struck one, who proposed they should draw lots which of them should commit a murder, so that he upon whom the lot fell would go to town, with the chance of getting off by a fluke, and all the others would go as witnesses.

This being agreed to and the lots drawn, the appointed one carried out his murderous task after dinner by felling the man nearest him with his stone hammer, and the whole party had been conveyed in custody to Hobartown on board the *Vansittart* before we had joined her.

Leaving Port Arthur on Sunday, April 3, we took up our work in the Bay of Fires, a few miles south of Eddystone Point. This bay was a favourite shelter for coasting vessels between Hobartown and Launceston or Melbourne, during north-west gales, which hindered their passage through Banks Straits. Here I desired to land, and obtain observations for latitude.

Pulling in towards the beach in a whale-boat, and finding a heavy surf curling up a long distance from the shore, we cautiously lay outside to watch three rollers pass in, ready to "give way" in on the top of the third, in hope of it carrying us to the beach before a fourth came in, as our experience had taught us that the third surf-wave is always the highest.

Unfortunately, we here found a difference, the waves running in nines before they treated us to a lull. But one result could follow. —The boat was soon broadside on to the shore, on top of a crest about twelve feet above the sand, which invited a jump to try and reach the land before the boat turned over on us.

I lost no time in seizing my chronometer, and told my lad, Robert Horlock, to stick to the sextant, and jump. We did, but before our feet reached the sand the surf broke, giving us some yards to swim ere we could find a footing. Fortunately, two men or more witnessed our disaster, and ran to assist us by taking hold of the boat, which otherwise would have been swept out again with two of our crew entangled under the thwarts. They were soon extricated, but in an exhausted condition.

One of our helpers had, in earlier days, studied medicine, and promptly proceeded to carry out the course of treatment for the resuscitation of the apparently drowned. Under his hand the sea-water was persuaded to come out of them. He then stripped them, and rolled them up together in blankets, applying bottles of hot water to their feet, and plenty of manual friction.

I had taken good care of the chronometer, and my lad of the sextant, so, having obtained the observations for latitude, I had to wait only the recovery of my men before embarking. This delay enabled me to

make the acquaintance of the family of my benefactor, Mr. Bailey, who was manager of a sheep-station for Mr. John Foster of Hobartown.

The family consisted of his wife and three dear children, Jessie, Eliza, and Charlotte (or Chatty), aged about eight, seven, and five respectively. We soon became as friendly as if we had enjoyed a year's acquaintance; but the best of friends must part, and my men being braced up to face the surf again, we all repaired to the beach, where the boat had been faced round, bow seaward, the oars in their places, ready to launch.

I took leave of my friends, but dear little Jessie, perceiving the risk, cried to her mother, "Don't let him go, mamma," thinking that the authority which was supreme in their humble cottage was supreme everywhere. Truly "mother" is the name for God in the hearts of young children.

Every muscle had to be exerted to the utmost to pass the rollers in safety, but in mercy it was accomplished, and my friend Mr. Bailey undertook, when I came there again, to make a smoke on the beach if the surf was dangerous, as a warning not to attempt to land.

It was about two months later when I again anchored in the Bay of Fires. Night had fallen, so that our arrival was not known on shore. On this occasion I had brought various little presents for the children, such as dolls, books, and a large jar of

raspberry-jam, all of which I carefully packed in the boat ready for a start in the morning, so stowing them that in case of capsize I should not lose them unless I lost the boat.

Soon after daylight we made for the shore, watching the rollers as on the former occasion, but with no better result. We saw two men running hurriedly along the beach, but did not know that they were endeavouring to gather dead leaves to make a warning fire. The inevitable "turn turtle" was again our experience, but happily without further harm than a good ducking. Fortunately, I saved all my treasures for the children. I hastened over the sandhill to the cottage before my approach was known to them. As soon, however, as little Jessie recognized me, in a drenched condition, she exclaimed, "Oh, mamma, here's Mr. Pasco drowned again." My varied store was gratefully accepted by them, and a warm welcome was extended to us. Thirty years elapsed before I again met dear Jessie and Eliza, both then being mothers of large families, but the parents and Chatty had passed from time into eternity.

The social status of the Straits islanders, among whom our survey work henceforward lay, was decidedly "mixed," and their ethnologic classification heterogeneous. They were half European, half aboriginal, while to this point our acquaintances on shore had been either aboriginal or civilized colonists.

Many of the islands were the homes of old seamen



who had become seal-hunters, though of late the seal had become extinct, and their attention had been turned to collecting mutton birds. These men, as I understood, had been originally employed by merchants in Sydney to collect seal-skins, a vessel being sent at certain times to carry them supplies and receive the skins obtained, rum being a prominent factor in the transaction.

Thus, the existence of the men on the islands became a semi-slavery. But their natural yearnings to enjoy something approaching home, induced them to obtain the only material within their reach, by taking their boat to the Australian coast, and watching an opportunity of snatching a lubra from an aboriginal tribe. In this way were several domestic hearths established, and happily and respectably conducted. One instance in particular came under my notice.

Before going down to Flinders Island from George Town in the Tamar river, I heard in church at the latter place the banns of marriage published between some European and Mary Anderson, of Woody Island. A little surprised to hear such an approach to civilization at the island which I was about to visit, when I anchored there a few days later I was rather curious to meet the Anderson family.

Landing in a little bay, I found two or three huts, but no one at home, so I concluded that all hands had gone to the wedding; but when I ascended to the summit of the island with my theodolite, I saw

a group of figures down at the water-side on the opposite side of the island to where I had landed. They were busy loading a boat. An old man, with silver locks on his head, looked up the hill, evidently surprised to see a stranger there, and came toward me, but before he had time to ask me any questions, I accosted him by name as "Hallo, Anderson, seeing your cottage shut, I thought you had all gone to the wedding." Here was a double puzzle for him. How did I know his name? And what could I know about the wedding?

They were there loading their boat with bales of mutton bird feathers, ready to start next morning. So I invited the party to breakfast with me on board the *Vansittart* before starting, which they did.

Mary's mother was an aboriginal Australian, and Mary a bright and intelligent half-caste. I saw much of the family of young children while there, and was particularly gratified to find that the old seaman, who, as a boy, had served on board the *Russell* under Nelson at Trafalgar, had given attention to his children's education as regards the two first "R's," for he had taught them their letters from a large family Bible, which they learnt to read with great interest. So thorough had been his teaching, that when I questioned them in both the Old and New Testaments, I was so surprised at their intelligence that I told him he reminded me of old John Adams of the *Bounty* and Pitcairn Island. After that I always called him John Adams, but the two islands,

which by the sealers had been called Woody Islands, we now named Anderson's Isles.

On Preservation Island was Jimmy Munro, who held the title of King of the Straits, and had been there then (1842) for thirty-seven years. He had his lubra, but no family of his own. She had one little girl, whom he had brought with the mother, but I never knew what part they had been taken from till forty years after, when I met the "little girl" at Corranderk Aboriginal Station in Victoria as Mrs. Briggs, then an old grandmother.

Visiting this station, where I knew some of the blacks, Mrs. Briggs said she knew me when she was a little girl at Preservation Island, and remembered my having given her some biscuits. She told me that she and her mother were near Port Nepean at the entrance of Port Phillip, when Jimmy came in with his boat and carried them off. She told me the name of my vessel, in proof of her memory, the *Vansittart*.

The mutton bird industry is a curious one. The birds come into the islands on a particular day in each year (I think about September 20), near the equinox. They arrive then for the laying season, and burrow like rabbits up the hillside of sandy islands, and there lay their eggs. Before the young can take wing they have to run to the water. Their captors prepare for this by constructing a hedge of bushes, a few feet above the water-line, and about the centre of the fence ; on the inner side they sink

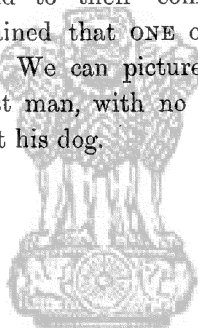
a hole six or eight feet deep, and otherwise roomy. At daybreak, before the birds are ready to start, a man is posted at each end of the hedge to drive them as they run down the hill toward the hole, into which they fall and are smothered. They are then plucked by the lubras and the carcasses thrown out, except a few kept to smoke like herrings. But the grand staple for commerce was the feathers, which were sold to the Van Diemen's Land upholsterers ; but before a stranger can enjoy sweet slumber on a bed made of these feathers, his olfactory organs have to become adapted thereto.

The aborigines of Tasmania, when, during the second and third decades of the nineteenth century, they desired to assert their claim to their island home, were considered by the white intruders to be decidedly in the way. Therefore the latter attempted to drive the tribes on to Tasman's Peninsula, in which they failed, but Mr. Robinson (a blacksmith, I believe), who had had much intercourse with the blacks, and had some influence over them, undertook to induce them to surrender.

He succeeded, and the natives were embarked and transported to Flinders Island, where they were established under a medical superintendent. Huts were built and clothing provided, but nothing could compensate for the loss of liberty to rove over their own territory.

It being pretty certain that all the blacks had not been deported, a reward was offered by Government

for the capture of any, and thus the sealers along the coast were induced to try and kidnap any they met. Near Cape Grim, on the north-west coast, some Hunter Island sealers induced some blacks they met to come with them in their boat to some good kangaroo ground, and they brought six to Launceston and claimed their head-money. The captives were then conveyed in the *Vansittart* to Flinders Island to their compatriots, through whom we ascertained that ONE of their party had been left behind. We can picture the forlorn condition of that last man, with no companion in his forest solitude but his dog.



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## CHAPTER XII

1842—1843

The swearer reclaimed—Port or larboard—Sir John Franklin on short commons—Terrible privations of an A.D.C.—Surveying in a buoy-boat—After many years—Inconvenient fidelity to promise—End of survey work—Visit to Sydney—Homeward bound—Arrival at Mauritius—A memorable thanksgiving service—The loss of the *Regular*—Taking to the boats—An anxious night—Sail ho!—A double rescue, *La Cléopâtre* and *L'Alcmène*—Captain Roy's narrative—The finger of God—Grateful shipowners—Queen Victoria and King Louis Philippe—Gallantry rewarded—An unexpected meeting—English gratitude and French gratification—A strange rencontre—The Frenchman once again—Lost in the bush—Found—The last of the Frenchman—"There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow."

CONTINUING the record of our surveying cruise among the islands of Bass Straits, I may remark that the colonial crew of the *Vansittart*, who were mostly ticket-of-leave men, were not at all choice in their language. This I feared might lead to one of my leadsmen from the *Beagle*, Harry Butters, relapsing into a cursing habit of which he had been broken.

One night, in a squall on board the *Beagle*, we were taking in sail, and Butters aloft was using such blasphemous language to a boy assisting him, that I hailed him to come down. When he reached the poop where I was, I asked him if he knew what he had been saying. He did not know what I alluded to, so I told him that he had been praying to the Almighty to strike him blind ; and had his prayers been answered, he might now be deprived of sight.

He assured me he did not mean all that. I lent him a tract to read, entitled "The Swearer's Prayer," which he and his messmates read, and they agreed to always check one another in the habit. Never losing an opportunity of remonstrating with my new crew, I was thankful that it was not without good effect.

One day a seaman aloft let something fall on a man's foot on deck, when the injured one, picking up his foot in pain, looked round to see was I on deck, when he called to the man aloft, "If he was not there, I would have launched out at you." Thus admitting that the presence of his monitor checked him from a volley of oaths.

In 1842 the use of the word "larboard" was still in vogue in the mercantile marine, but "port" had been originally substituted by Captain Fitzroy in the former voyage of the *Beagle*, finding it was as essential to use it for the braces in working ships, as for the helm, which was always the practice. The use of the word "port" we had often tried to persuade Johnston, the master of the cutter, and his mates

to adopt, but they scorned the innovation. We had not long to wait for an example to prove the necessity; for, getting under way one morning in a position where it was necessary the vessel's head should cast to port as the anchor was atrip, the master shouted to the mate to "handspike the jib on the starboard bow."

"Aye, aye, sir," replied Mr. Walker, and he "handspiked" it on the larboard bow, to the vexation of Johnston, who, stamping his foot, roared, "I told you the starboard bow."

"It is the larboard bow," shouted Walker. So I remarked to Johnston: "Will you be convinced now?"

"No," he replied, "the fellow has only done that to please you."

This was not the case, for the mate was as stubborn as the master on that point.

Toward the end of March 1842, Sir John and Lady Franklin, with a party, left Hobartown to travel overland to Macquarie Harbour, on the west coast, to explore and inquire into the capabilities of this part of the island, which, with the exception of the port itself, formerly a penal settlement, but now abandoned, was a veritable *terra incognita*.

Having accomplished the journey to the port, instead of retracing their steps, they had arranged for a small vessel, the *Breeze*, with pilot Bruce, to meet them at Macquarie Harbour and take them back. As the sea-trip need not exceed, perhaps, three days, the



schooner had only scant provision ; but, unfortunately, after she entered the port and the party had arrived, a heavy north-west gale set in, which prevented the *Breeze* leaving. The *Vansittart* was detained by the same gale at Georgetown in the Tamar, waiting to continue the survey of Flinders Island, and the Government became apprehensive of the safety of his Excellency and party, and sent a message for the *Vansittart* to take in provision and hasten to relieve the party at Port Macquarie. The gale had abated, and we were just starting, when Mr. Gunn, of Launceston, remarked, "I am sure Sir John will be out of snuff ; wait till I procure a canister."

The rappee being added to our "medical comforts," we made sail on Sunday night, May 15, and hurried to the rescue, to find our birds had fled. Still pushing on to overtake them, we reached Research Bay at midnight of the 19th, and sent the mate to Bruce's cottage to know if he had arrived. He had not, and his poor wife was in great anxiety about him. But daybreak showed us both the *Breeze* and the yacht *Eliza* (into which the party had embarked) standing in. Taking our supplies on board (including snuff), Sir John exclaimed, when he saw the precious canister, "Oh, Pasco, that is better than all the beef and biscuit."

"It must have reminded you, Sir John," said I, "when your provisions ran short, of your experience in North America."

"Not at all," was the hearty, laughing reply ; "we

got on famously ; the greatest sufferer in the party, I fancy, is poor Bagot (A.D.C.), for he ran out of eau de Cologne and scented soap. I don't know how he'll get over it."

We all got to Hobartown on Friday evening, and on Sunday, May 22, I accompanied Sir John and family to church, and when Dr. Bedford read the Psalm for the day (cvii.), I imagined that he had specially selected it from its appropriateness to the party having passed through so many straits and difficulties.

The *Vansittart* being required for some colonial duty, I was transferred into a small vessel called the *Helen*, used as a buoy-boat in the Tamar, and commanded by James Cook Smith, who was grandson to the immortal Cook the circumnavigator, and an agreeable companion and assistant he proved. We never met again until shortly before his death, forty years afterwards, when I found him in a paralytic state. Taking his hand without telling him who I was, I said, "You will remember me, my old friend?" As well as he could articulate, he said, "Yes, I do: buoy-boat." He could not recall my name, but remembered my association with the boat.

The *Vansittart* once more restored to us, the work was resumed among the islands, but our precise locality not being known to the *Beagle*, Captain Stokes contrived to leave us instructions in a bottle, which he hung in a tripod formed with saplings on a

beach of the east island of Kent's group in Murray Pass, knowing we had not yet "passed that way." But we passed about ten days later, and in sailing through were struck with the tripod on the beach with a bottle hanging from it; so hauling the jib-sheet to windward, we sent a boat on shore and brought off our instructions to meet the *Beagle* at Circular Head in January following, which we did. Post-offices were scarce in those days.

As I pulled rather a long face at being left behind when the ship went to Sydney at the beginning of the year, the captain promised that I should see Sydney before we went home. So when we met at Circular Head he told me to bring my traps on board, as he promised to take me to Sydney before we left for England, and he would send another to the *Vansittart* to take my place.

A change had, however, come over the spirit of my dream during the year, and now I preferred to remain where I was. But, having promised, Captain Stokes was firm to his word. So with a bleeding heart I had to obey, after only ten days' acquaintance with one whom I hoped to claim as my own before another year had flown, though, such are the inscrutable decrees of Providence, it was nearly ten years before I could carry out my intent.

Thus ended my personal part in the survey of Bass Straits.

Having paid a brief visit to Sydney, I said farewell to many dear friends and returned to Hobartown in

time to make the acquaintance of the distinguished comet of the year 1843, which appeared on March 4, and remained visible till April 15, when we were on our way to King George's Sound, homeward bound.

From the Swan, our course lay in the N.W. in order to pick up the S.E. trade to carry us to the Mauritius, where we arrived toward the end of May, to find two French frigates, *La Cléopâtre* and *L'Alcmène*, the former commanded by Captain Roi, bound to China. But what brought them to this port we did not learn until, being in church on Sunday, before reading the thanksgiving service, the clergyman announced that "The crew and passengers of the late ship *Regular* were desirous of returning thanks for their wonderful deliverance from shipwreck."

Casting my eye round the church, I noticed two pews occupied by seamen and two ladies. During the sermon, the circumstances, as detailed by Captain Carter of the late *Regular*, and by Captain Roi, were related to us.

The *Regular* was on her voyage from Liverpool to Bombay with a quantity of iron in her cargo. Off the Cape of Good Hope, in a heavy N.W. gale, she sprung a serious leak, and to relieve her of much straining she was run before the wind, while the pumps were worked continually for three days and nights. The crew were becoming exhausted, without any good result, and Captain Carter, fearing the ship could not be kept afloat till morning, decided about

4 p.m. to get his boats out, as the last chance of saving their lives. Having run, during the past three days, so far to the S.E., he feared they were out of the track of shipping going either to India or Australia, still, "While there is life there is hope"; but landsmen might tremblingly ask, what prospect could there be for a frail open boat, when a noble ship founders in the storm?

"See the rain in torrents come,  
Darkness overspreads the sky ;  
Wretched they who have no home,  
Where for shelter can they fly ?  
Precious Ark, in Thee the soul  
Is secure from every harm ;  
Storms may threaten, billows roll,  
They shall not produce alarm."

A little provision was gathered, and the long-boat and cutter, after much labour, got into the water. The former was under the command of the captain with the second mate, and carried a portion of the crew and two ladies (passengers). The remainder of the crew manned the cutter, commanded by the chief mate.

As though nothing was to be left to complete this dark dispensation that was calculated to render their position cheerless in the extreme, a slight delay on the part of the mate, after the long-boat had cast off, deprived them of each other's society; added to which, a heavy sea broke into the long-boat and damaged their scanty supply of biscuits.

With the buoyancy of a gull on its native element

the boat rode the waves, alternately mounting a roaring summit and then descending the briny valley, followed by enormous albatross and other sea-fowl, which through that long and dreary night seemed impatient for their prey, and called forth the little remaining strength of the crew to beat them off. Doubtless, through the darkness of that night, amidst the howling tempest, a "still small voice" whispered comfort to some there, directing the eye of faith to the Star of Hope which can peer through the heaviest cloud.

"We are in God's hands," they may have exclaimed, "let Him do what seemeth Him good."

The night spent, they were permitted to see another morning dawn upon them, but only to know they had run further into the inhospitable Southern Ocean. A hurried glance round the horizon, as the boat ascended a foaming crest, only convinced them of their utter desolateness.

A little sea-sodden biscuit was served round as their choicest fare. There was no appearance of their companions with the cutter, so that little doubt remained with those in the long-boat that their fellows in distress had done with the things of time and had entered on eternity.

The second mate was at the stern-oar elevated on the after-thwart, the better to command the steerage, with anxious eye watching each following wave, lest by the slightest inattention on his part the boat might broach fatally to.

Suddenly, he descried, for an instant, an object which brought to his lips an eager joyous cry of "Sail ho!" that electrified his companions; but before his discovery could be verified, the half-discerned object was hidden as the boat swept down into the trough of the sea, and during the seemingly interminable interval before it again mounted the crest he was subjected to much censure for trifling with the feelings of his fellow-unfortunates.

But he held to his belief that he had seen a sail, and, eager to confirm the correctness of his report, all anxiously watched as the boat ascended the next crest, when Captain Carter shouted, "Not ONE, but TWO sails steering direct for us—we *must* be seen."

On came the heaven-sent ships under treble-reefed topsails and foresail, with the *tout ensemble* of men-of-war. A few minutes and they were abeam of the boat. So close was the nearest frigate, that as she rolled the officer walking the deck was clearly distinguishable, but evidently no more notice was taken of the boat than if she had been an albatross.

Hailing would have been useless in such a gale, and as a last resource, when almost too late, Carter tore a shawl from one of the ladies' shoulders and waved it frantically till the attention of the officer on deck was attracted, who, running to the captain's skylight, reported, "A boat close by with a large red flag."

Who has not experienced, when a particular chord on the memory is struck, the rapidity with which corresponding past events will pass under review? So was it with the noble-minded Captain Roi. A few years previously he had suffered shipwreck in the China Sea, and, after some days' exposure in his boat, had been rescued by a Liverpool merchant-ship.

Roi's experience in the school of misfortune was now to be employed for the benefit of the fellows of those who, in the providence of God, had been instrumental in rescuing him, which controlling power this Christian captain was not slow to acknowledge.

"Turn the hands up! Round the ship to, and bring the boat under our lee!" Then to the medical officer: "Let cots be slung in the sick-bay, and hot water be ready in the coppers for baths, and let each officer send a change of clothes for the use of the strangers."

Such directions, when the cause of humanity is the plea, are cheerfully obeyed by all true blue-jackets under whatever flag they sail; and such were the crews of *La Cléopâtre* and her consort *L'Alcmène*. A favourable opportunity was watched, and all were hoisted into the ship, snatched by the hand of Providence, in a most remarkable manner, as will be seen, from a watery grave.

While everything which kindness could suggest was being done for the comfort of the rescued, Captain Roi inquired of Captain Carter if all his



crew were there, and was informed that one boat held on too long at the foundering vessel, and Carter added, "I fear she must have gone down with her."

"No," said Roi, "I will not give them up. You have not run more than about fifty miles since you left. We will haul on opposite tacks and work back to the position of your abandoned craft and see."

As the two frigates were separating with look-out men at the masthead, *L'Alemène* made the signal, "See a boat," and she rescued them likewise.

These two frigates were bound for China, but Captain Roi generously took the waifs of the ocean, being British subjects, into the Mauritius to land them there.

Captain Roi, as soon as his guests were refreshed on board, related to Captain Carter the following particulars which led to their meeting, proving the falsity of the term chance in such cases, and showing how indisputably our ways are ordered by God; that He of His infinite power directs our minds and actions to work out His will, as, or more surely than we can direct the course of the ship.

The narrative must convince any one who is not obstinate against all conviction, that it was distinctly the guiding hand of the Almighty alone that made these frigates the instruments of deliverance. The following is the account by Captain Roi, as given to Captain Carter :

"Yesterday afternoon, about four o'clock, when you

were about to abandon your ship, I was on deck, and remarked to the officer of the watch, that we had run our easting down, and it was time to haul up to the N.E. But, I said, I will look at the chart first, and fix the course. I went into my cabin for that one purpose. A book lay open on my table, which I took up just to cast my eye over another page, before going to my chart; but I sat down and immediately fell asleep, a most unusual thing for me during daylight. I slept on, I knew not how long, but when I awoke found myself in the dark, and both cold and hungry. My last waking thought, however, was changing the course. I went at once on deck, supposing that had been done, but found the ship still steering east. 'How is this?' I inquired; 'did I not direct the course to be altered?'

"'I was told,' the officer replied, 'that you were going to consult the chart and then fix the course.'

"'So I did; what time is it?' I asked.

"'Past midnight, sir; this is the middle watch.'

"'That being the case,' I said, 'we will continue on this course until we get sights for longitude after breakfast.'

"Less than half-an-hour before that would have been done the rescue was accomplished. Truly

'God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea  
And rides upon the storm.'

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take ;  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust Him for His grace ;  
Behind a frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face.'

"Some two years ago," added Captain Roi, "I was cast away in the China Sea, and picked up under the direction of the same Divine Providence by a Liverpool ship. I am what you call a Roman Catholic, and you, I presume, are a Protestant. Now, let us throw all such differences overboard, and I hope we may all join in a general thanksgiving." To which Captain Carter and his people heartily consented.

From the Mauritius, Carter and his crew returned to Liverpool, and the French frigates continued their voyage to China ; but hearing this account in the church, before they left I visited *La Cléopâtre* to thank the officers for their conduct.

Captain Roi was not on board, and his lieutenant declined any praise, remarking, that when a Frenchman is wrecked, an Englishman is generally the first to help him.

He mentioned how pleased his captain was to find he was able to repay his obligation to a Liverpool crew. He seemed to convey the idea that seamen of all nations are seasoned in the harness cask of the

ocean, and that "Neptune expects that every seaman will do his duty."

When Carter reached Liverpool and made his report to his owners, a meeting was convened at Lloyd's to hear his tale, and the ship-owners were so impressed with the conduct of the Frenchmen that a subscription was at once raised to present to Captain Roi a jewel-hilted sword to be sent out through our Foreign Minister.

One gentleman at the meeting mentioned the fact that her Majesty was about to embark at Woolwich on a visit to the Court of Louis Philippe—the first time that our dear Queen left England. These events were placed before her Majesty by her ministers, and one of her first utterances to the King of the French was to thank him for the kindness of his officers to her subjects.

This so gratified his Majesty that he desired his Minister of Marine to send a letter, expressive of his royal approval, to be read on the quarter-deck of the two frigates. Captain Carter had no idea of what was taking place at the Tuileries, but his owners put him in command of a new ship bound to China. A few months before, I had taken my departure for China, and was surprised to see Captain Carter walk into a hong at Canton where I was. Carter explained that he had just arrived with a new ship, and, but a few days before, he had met his benefactors in the French frigates, at Macao.

"Of course," he said, "I went on board *La Cléopâtre* to pay my respects; but, to my surprise, as soon as I was recognized coming over the gangway, the officers rushed at me with open arms and embraced and kissed me on both cheeks. This took me quite aback, for I thought that all expressions of gratitude were due from me, but I found that the royal letter had just been read."

What may be received as a sequel to the foregoing incident occurred to me some thirty years afterwards in Australia. I met a groom at a roadside inn as I was passing in the saddle towards Wood's Point, who replied to a question in a foreign accent. I asked of what nationality he was. He replied that he was French, when, in conversation, it transpired that he was Captain Roi's coxswain on board *La Cléopâtre*, and was delighted to find that I had been on board his ship at the Mauritius.

"And what other ship have you served in?" I inquired.

"When *La Cléopâtre* returned home, I remained out in *La Gloire*."

"Then I suppose you were in her when she was wrecked on the Corean coast?"

"I was," he replied.

"Then," I said, "we have been shipmates, for in the *Vulture* we conveyed all of you to Macao, when you embarked for la belle France."

This man soon became absorbed among the mining population, and I saw no more of him for some

months, when another remarkable incident brought him again under my notice.

One Monday evening, returning down the Goulburn river from Wood's Point, the landlady, Mrs. Allen, informed me of a commotion that had been caused during the past week by a German carpenter named Blunner, who was supposed to have been either lost in the bush or drowned in the Goulburn river. Search-parties were formed by the neighbours, some scouring the scrub, and some dragging the river for the body. Three days had been so spent, but as all search proved vain, it was then abandoned, the presumption being that, if drowned, the body had been swept down the river.

On the morning of my arrival, two men, an Irishman and a Frenchman, who had joined in the fruitless search, had just gone out prospecting near Mount Terrible, a mile from Allen's. As they approached the foot of the mountain they came to where two tracks diverged, which led to the men disputing which they would take. The Irishman chose one, but his mate would not consent, insisting on the other being preferable. They thus delayed a few minutes in the dispute, when the Frenchman carried his point, and had only gone a few yards when they saw an object crawl out of a tunnel on all-fours, too weak and exhausted to get up. Here was the lost man, who voraciously drank a billy of coffee offered him, and then vomited a quantity of grass, the only food he had taken for three days.

The men then carried him back to the house, and we sent him home to his family, a few miles down the river.

"Why, Mrs. Allen," I remarked, "that is as strange a tale as I once knew occur to the crew of an English ship that was rescued by a French man-of-war more than thirty years ago." She replied that "Jimmy tells a yarn about that, and says that he knows you, but we thought he was only blowing."

"And who is Jimmy?" I asked.

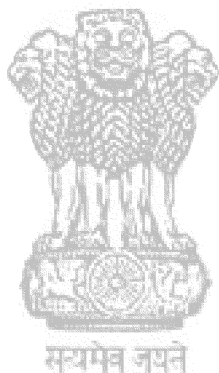
"Jimmy the Frenchman, we call him," and he proved to be my acquaintance of six months previous, who was in *La Cléopâtre* in 1843.

I met him that evening, and endeavoured to show him that he had been used by God in rescuing Blunner, as his ship had been in picking up the crew of the *Regular*.

I have not seen him since, but a dozen years afterwards I received a letter from a man who claimed me as an old friend, and desired to obtain employment in Melbourne, instead of as a wardsman in the Alexandra Hospital. The letter was all clear enough, but the signature was beyond my power to decipher, so I replied to it fully, begging him to tell me, was he old or young, weak or strong, that I might know what would suit him, and cutting his signature off his letter, gummed it for the address to the hospital. I thus discovered it was from the Frenchman, formerly of *La Cléopâtre* and *La Gloire*, and as he was then past threescore-and-ten, I strongly urged

him to hold on to the hospital as the best place to be found for one so advanced in years.

The directing finger of God, in these cases, is to my mind indisputable, and I accept them as additional proof, if such were wanting, that our times are in His hands, and that "there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow."





## CHAPTER XIII

1843—1845

Appointed to the *Albion*—Exchange into the *Vestal*—Outward bound—"Taking down" the Yankee—New York hospitalities—Republican equality—A general introduction—The Ambassador and his *attaché*—Bound for Brazil—The gunner's Spanish—How the sentry obeyed orders—Stranding of the *Gorgon*—Naval courts-martial—The mate on trial—The master's case—The lieutenant's turn—An inconvenient witness—Bound for the Cape—Man overboard—The runaway—Orders for Tasmania—Cracking on—A flying visit—On to China—Taking in treasure—A pinch of tea—Devotional sailors—Eastern craft beats Western watchfulness—Dust and ashes.

AFTER a brief spell ashore, I received orders to join H.M.S. *Albion*, a new 90-gun ship, a two-decker of 3083 tons, commanded by Captain Nicholas Lockyer. Following six years' service in a 240-ton brig, I felt lost on board the big ship then fitting out for the Mediterranean, and before she was ready to leave England, I received an offer to exchange into H.M.S. *Vestal*, Captain C. Talbot, then on the eve of starting for the East India station. From this squadron ships were detached for service in

Australia, consequently I had a better prospect for revisiting the colonies in which I had so recently been interested.

The exchange was effected, but not without strong objection on the part of Captain Lockyer, who was not acquainted with my friend and successor, Mowbray, though I did not fail to assure him that Mowbray was a much better fellow than I, and was sure he would not repent the exchange.

I certainly felt more at ease in a frigate of 900 tons. We left Plymouth Sound on January 16, 1844, for New York, to convey Sir John Packington as an Ambassador to Washington, relative to a disputed boundary of the Oregon territory. We crossed the Atlantic on the northern route, skirting the 51st parallel from 26° to 36° meridian W. of Greenwich, with strong S.W. gales, during which we sprung our bowsprit, and were off Sandy Hook on the twenty-seventh day, when, with a very light wind in our teeth, the pilot boarded and desired to "brace sharp up," telling his boat (a smart lugger) not to wait for him, but go into port at once.

After making a few boards (or tacks) the pilot looked to windward for his boat, but seeing her to leeward, he remarked with a degree of vexation, "Holloa! what is the fellow about down there?"

He was told that they had been doing their best to get to windward of us, but that we were working within nine points, not, as he supposed, being a square-rigged ship, in twelve points. He could not

credit it until he watched the binnacle as she went round in stays, and found the *Vestal* did not go to leeward of the nine points, and that without leeway in smooth water, with a royal breeze.

At New York we spent a fortnight alongside Brooklyn Navy Yard, getting a new bowsprit, enjoying much hospitality from the inhabitants, the *Raritano's* (frigate) officers showing themselves very fraternal.

A seamen's church had just been constructed on two large flat-bottomed vessels, the superstructure being a neatly-furnished edifice, with a steeple. The font was a capstan, so that the seaman's child christened there stood on the same footing as the Scottish borderer's babe fed from the bowl-hilt of his father's sword.

I was pleased to have an opportunity of attending the consecration of the church on invitation, when the service was conducted by Bishop Huderdunck, and the vessel was moored in the river, where it was most convenient for the crews of ships in port.

This being my first visit to the United States, where I had understood there were no class distinctions, but that Jack was as good as his master, if not better, I was rather surprised to find something like armorial bearings on private carriages, and that our naval brethren rather looked down on the military, as only shopkeepers dressed in uniform.

On the celebration of Washington's birthday, a grand military ball was announced for February

22, at the Tivoli Saloon. We were invited, and took for granted we should meet the *Raritanos* officers there; but when we told them of the invitation, they exclaimed with something approaching horror, "Oh, Britishers, you are not going there, are you?"

"Yes, of course," was the reply, "are not you?"

"One of us will have to go to represent the Navy, but they are what you would call 'Brummagem' soldiers."

We had accepted, and several went about 9 p.m., when dancing had commenced. We were received by the Colonel and the officers in an ante-room that ran across the hall opposite the ball-room entrance, where each Britisher was coupled to a United States officer to be formally introduced.

Presently a young sub. inquired, "Colonel, are you ready?"

"Yes, Mr. Brown, we are all ready."

Then this young Master of Ceremonies marched into the middle of the dancers, and facing the orchestra in a gallery, called out, "Stop the music, we are going to introduce the Britishers," when the band was told to strike up the grand Washington march, to which martial strain we marched two and two into the ball-room, where the whole company had fled to line the walls, leaving the floor clear. We marched round in procession to the time, and when the circuit was completed the Colonel announced: "Now, gentlemen, you are introduced to all the

company, and you can dance with any girl you please."

Thus were all formalities on the part of stewards dispensed with. An hour or two was spent as is intended at such gatherings. About midnight we left, and repaired to a private family whose invitation we had also accepted, and were very pleased to enjoy an agreeable hour or two of music in a more select company than that of the Tivoli Saloon. But it was very plain to me that the boasted equality of the States did not exist without an "upper crust."

A rather strange incident occurred to our Ambassador after reaching the Globe Hotel. Having landed his Excellency in the barge, I returned to dine with him and his *attaché*, Mr. Biddle. After dinner, as I was about to leave, Sir John said to his *attaché*: "Now, Mr. Biddle, see that you have my credentials all ready to take with us to Washington in the morning." But when Mr. Biddle opened the dispatch-box, in which the important state papers were deposited, he turned with a very long face to his chief with profuse apologies: "Oh, I am so sorry, sir, I must have left the dispatch-case on the dressing-table at Elliot's Hotel, Devonport."

Never with pen or brush could I hope to convey an adequate picture of that Ambassador's countenance. It must be left to the reader's imagination. But I felt I *was de trop*, for Sir John evidently wished to say something to his *attaché*, so I took my leave and returned to sleep, thankful that I was not

just then in Mr. Biddle's boots. No doubt the box was recovered in due time, as the Oregon question was settled without my interference.

Before our departure from New York, an incident happened which, as it earned for me a sobriquet I bore for many years after, I am tempted to mention. For some reason or other, Captain Talbot finding fault with Lieutenant M——, told him in a pettish way that he had no lieutenant in whom he could place any confidence. M—— coming into mess, jokingly repeated the remark. I at once sought an interview with the captain to ask him if *I* was included in his general remark. "No, Mr. Pasco, you might have known I did not include you," was the reply. I went away quite satisfied, and made known in the mess the result of my interview; as the result of which M—— branded me with the sobriquet of "Honesty," a nickname which was clinched by a subsequent incident occurring a year after at Malacca, which will be told in its place.

Plenty of ice was finding its way down the Hudson river, and accumulating near the entrance, so that when we were ready to leave, it took two powerful tugs, named *Samson* and *Hercules*, to tug us through the ice. We took our departure on February 27, 1844, and sailed for Brazil, arriving at Rio Janeiro on April 11, where the *Vestal* remained till May 19, when she moved on to meet the commodore in the River Plate. We anchored off Monte Video on May

30, in stirring times of war between General Rosas of Buenos Ayres and the Monte Video authorities.

Approaching this anchorage, an opportunity offered for the gunner to display his knowledge of history and geography to the less educated members of the crew.

"Do you see that hill?" said the gunner to some men on the forecastle; "well, that was the first land Columbus saw when he discovered America, and he says, says he, '*Monte*, I see; '*Video*, a mountain,' and it has been called Monte Video ever since."

The Monte Video Government had the services of Garibaldi with an Italian regiment at this time, and in the defence of foreign interests it was necessary to land a detachment of Marines from the British and French men-of-war in the port. A mixed guard of British and French was posted at the Custom House, and sentries of each nationality at the gates, with orders "that nothing was to pass in." The gates were wide open, when a wild bull came tearing down the street in front of the Custom House. Seeing his chance, he made for the gates. The French sentry very prudently jumped behind the gate, but the Royal Marine prepared with fixed bayonet to "receive cavalry." Taurus, attracted by his red jacket, rushed stem on to him, receiving the point of the bayonet on his forehead. His weight bent the weapon, but the shock sufficed to change his course and send him down the street, and the gallantry of

the marine was rewarded by Commodore Purvis of H.M.S. *Alfred* with corporal's stripes.

Prior to our arrival a severe pampero had driven H.M.S. *Gorgon* on shore, in spite of three anchors down and steam up to relieve the cables. The unusual high tide occasioned by the gale landed the *Gorgon* high and dry on the sand, a position which ordinary mortals would have considered meant her irretrievable loss; but the counsel of Lieutenant Astley Cooper Key, who was a mathematician of much merit, was heeded by his captain, Charles Hotham, and by perseverance and patience, the *Gorgon*, after some months of labour, was afloat again, and did good service on the coast of Africa.

After fourteen years' service I here had my first experience of a court-martial (too often not inaptly termed a court-partial). Mr. George Durbin, formerly a mate in the *Alfred*, had come out in the *Vestal* at his own request to be tried, as he had been refused by the Admiralty an appointment to any other ship, having left the *Alfred*. That vessel he had left, with the good-will of his superiors, to join a brig, that he might gain experience; but when the commodore applied for a mate in his place, the question was, "Why did you allow Mr. Durbin to leave?"

That was a query which an honest man would have taken the responsibility of answering directly by admitting that he had permitted it not on account of any fault in Mr. Durbin, who was an exceptionally good officer, but under the counsel of his commander.



His superior, to save himself, preferred to libel his inferior by asserting that he was a troublesome officer of whom he was glad to be rid, very probably never thinking that Durbin would show fight by demanding a trial.

A more lame prosecution could not well have been attempted. It resulted in a clear acquittal, and the President of the Court, showing his estimation of the defendant, who had come out with him from England, asked him to join the *Vestal*. He accepted, and a year later he gained his lieutenantancy after an engagement with pirates in Borneo.

It was after this brush with the pirates that another court-martial was held under circumstances even more disgraceful to the "superior." The squadron was at anchor near islands imperfectly surveyed, but certain coral patches were known to exist.

During the captain's absence from the ship, on duty, the Admiral made the signal to the *Vestal*, then about to get under way, "Can you clear shoal?"

The first lieutenant at once told the master to answer the signal, as it was a question for the department of navigation. The master was a careful old pilot, and he took every pains to inform himself correctly before replying to the signal, which he did in the affirmative. When the captain returned he gave the order to "make sail and up anchor." The master informed the captain of the signal, and of his

reply, but requested the captain to come down to the chart-room and judge for himself.

As the regulations were that the master was to navigate the ship *under the direction of the captain*, the two descended to the cabin to look at the chart, and returned. The anchor was weighed, but as the wind was strong and the anchor had to be weighed some fifteen fathoms from the bottom, the master apprehended that time should not be lost in catting and fishing the anchor, but begged the captain to fill the head-yards and board the fore and main tacks, or we might not weather the shoal.

The captain, who had just considered the position as well as the master, replied, "Plenty of room yet, master," and insisted on fishing the anchor before making sail; but his judgment was inferior to that of the master, and thump she came broadside on to the reef.

Knowing that the captain had been absent on duty, the Admiral inquired, "In whose charge was the ship when she struck?" It grieves me to say, that the man who was professionally and in every other way responsible, was capable of placing the blame on the shoulders of his subordinate, who had urged him to take the steps that would have prevented the mishap, which occurred solely through his own refusal and neglect. The master was accordingly court-martialled, but the captain's conscience impelled him, the evening before the court was to sit, to tell the master that he had spoken to

the other members of the court, and made it right with them. It is to be hoped that for the honour of the other members of the court, they did not listen to any such effort to influence their judgment.

The court assembled, and the individual who had every right to be the prisoner at the bar was sitting as one of its members. Still the master's friends were satisfied that a simple statement of the facts would amply clear him of any blame. The master only called one messmate to prove the care he had exercised in carrying out his duty, and he then handed in the written defence which, at his request, his witness had prepared. That done, the acting Judge Advocate (a naval purser) looked over the defence, saying it was his duty to advise the prisoner as well as the court. When he saw that the simple statement of facts on which the master rested for his exoneration implicated the captain, the Judge Advocate told the master if it was read it would bring the captain to a court-martial, but if he would leave that out he knew the mind of the court sufficiently to assure him "it would be all right." Before agreeing to make any alterations, the master desired to confer with his friend, who told him if he left the facts out he might as well tear up the defence and throw himself on the mercy of the court. "But," argued the master, "if I do get off with that defence, you know the ship will become too hot for me." He therefore yielded to the advocate, and was "severely

reprimanded." He continued in the ship until she paid off, but was *never again employed*.

The reputation of the Masonic craft is supposed to be what Cæsar claimed should be that of his wife, "above suspicion," but the brotherhood existing between the advocate and the captain has been fatal to any respect I ever entertained for a Mason, merely as a Mason.

Not long before this scandal on naval courts-martial, a lieutenant of the same ship was tried on several charges of neglect and inefficiency by a court of inquiry (sometimes termed a court of iniquity). The charges referred to matters extending over several months, and were taken from the captain's private journal, in which he had noted the alleged offences. The only witness the accused desired to call was the same messmate who afterwards bore his testimony to the master's innocence. On naming his witness, the captain, who was prosecuting, expressed his readiness to abide by that witness's opinion. Being called into court, the witness was asked by the President, "Do you remember such a date?" naming one about five months before.

"Yes, perfectly."

"Was it necessary in consequence of the weather to deviate from the given course for the safety of the ship?" Up to this point the witness had no idea of the aim of the questions, but now the circumstances were plain.

During the first watch of that particular night, running with a high breaking sea on the starboard quarter, the ship sustained some damage by a sea staving in several ports on that side ; but when this witness relieved the deck at midnight, he was told of the damage that had been done. The captain at this time said, addressing the witness, "I'll go and turn in now, for I have been up all the first watch."

As he was descending to his cabin, a very threatening curl of a sea seemed just about to break on the quarter. The witness called to the helmsman to put the helm up. He did so, and the sea broke on the stern, doing no damage.

Telling this to the captain before he reached his cabin, the witness remarked that he would run her off her course for a moment till the sea broke, and afterwards he would keep her a little to windward and make the course good. The captain replied that he was quite satisfied, and the middle watch passed quietly away without providing further work for carpenters in the matter of repairing damages.

The lieutenant (now under trial) followed in the morning watch, and was told that the captain approved of the ship being run off her course to avoid the breaking sea. However, about 5 a.m., the captain came on deck, and seeing the ship off her course he called to this oft-offending officer of the watch, blaming him for being off his course.

"Only for a moment," he replied, "till the sea breaks, sir, and I will keep her up again."

The simple entry was made in the journal, "Lieut. M—— off his course; careless steering."

After many months the recorder had forgotten the surrounding circumstances, and was able to swell his list of charges by one of "careless navigation in steering on a certain day." The witness, however, had a clear recollection of it all, and forthwith explained to the court, when the prosecuting captain, in an irritated manner, said, "I won't take this officer's opinion."

Until then the witness did not know by whom he had been called by signal to attend the court to give evidence. The President reminded the prosecutor that he had already agreed to abide by this witness's opinion.

However highly this witness may have been held in his captain's estimation before, he now unquestionably fell many pegs, and by afterwards bearing adverse testimony to his captain in the master's case, the ship became "too hot" for him, and he accepted a vacancy in another vessel. These painful experiences sadly destroyed the ideal which he had been taught to entertain of the integrity and honesty of the naval profession.

But, to return to Brazil. It was August 16 before we left the Plate for the Cape, *en route* for China, and on Monday 19th, when it was blowing hard from the S.W., and while the ship was going

rather more than twelve knots an hour, a seaman was sent out to stow the jib. A flap of the sail knocked him off the jibboom under the very bow of the ship. Considering her speed, it might have been expected that the man would have been run over and killed, but a boat was speedily lowered, and it was the happy lot of the witness before-mentioned to command the boat, pick up the man, and bring him on board.

When he did so the captain seized the officer's hand with hearty gratitude, saying to him, "I'll never forget this." Perhaps he did not forget it, but the officer's testimony in the witness-box decidedly took the keen edge off his memory. I suppose we must be content in saying, "It's only human nature"—Nature truly, but not grace.

By September 9 we were in Simon's Bay, Cape of Good Hope. We lay there for ten days, and with one messmate I walked up to Cape Town to visit the Observatory where Sir Thomas Maclean presided. While at this anchorage an unfortunate incident occurred. Among our crew was a somewhat wayward younger son of good family at Mallow in Ireland, who had run from home and volunteered into the service. He now repented, and wished himself home again. The high land over Simon's Bay appears at night to be but a short distance from the anchorage, and with the wind blowing toward the land it seemed but a short swim from the ship's stern to the shore. This poor fellow made the attempt, but soon realized his

risk of drowning, and called for help when passing the *Cleopatra* at anchor astern of us. He was picked up and brought on board of us, and punished for attempting to desert.

That crushed him, poor fellow, entirely, and he became seriously ill with a chest affection. It was my privilege to visit him in his hammock and have many interesting conversations with him, in course of which he unbosomed himself to me, declaring who he was, and his one desire to return home. I was thankful indeed when the doctor agreed to invalid him and send him home.

While we lay in Simon's Bay I learned from the *Cleopatra*, the commodore's ship, that there was specie awaiting transit to the Australian colonies, but the commodore had no ship he could spare. I mentioned this to our captain, suggesting that as we should have the N.E. monsoon to contend against when we reached the China Sea, we should not lose any time in getting to China if we took the colonies *en route*, and approached China by the Bashee Channel. The captain concurred, and spoke to the commodore, who approved of the idea.

Next morning the freight was embarked, and we sailed for Van Diemen's Land, a trip in which, during my watch at all events, I did not spare the canvas, balling off many days together over 200 miles a day, and one score of 282 miles. On this night, during the middle watch, the ship gave a lee lurch, letting the water in by the captain's cot, and he sent for me,



desiring that I would not let my desire to get on get the better of my judgment. I assured him I would run no risk.

We carried on till we approached the S.W. cape of Tasmania. The weather was then thick, and the wind blowing hard from the N.W., and fearing to approach the land under such circumstances, the ship was laid-to on the port tack to wait a better chance. But as the wind appeared likely to chop round to S.W., it was suggested to bear up and make the land, which was sighted in half-an-hour.

Rounding the Eddystone and turning up for D'Entrecasteaux Channel, we fired a gun for a pilot off Research Bay, when my old friend Bruce hurried off, fearing we should run foul of the Actean Reef. Seeing him hasten over the side, I met him at the gangway and said, "Don't make a noise, Bruce."

"Oh, you are here, are you, then it's all right; but I thought it was some one who did not know where they were."

We brought up that evening in Oyster Cove, and next morning, some fresh butter and eggs having been sent off to the captain, he, in acknowledgment of his indebtedness to me for getting in that night, invited me to breakfast with him.

After a week's spell here we moved on to Sydney on November 1, reaching Port Jackson on the 6th, where a fortnight was enjoyed before entering on our final stage to China on November 22.

Passing on the west side of New Caledonia, up to

Stewart Island, and thence north-westerly to the Raven Island of the Caroline group, we entered the Bashee Channel on Christmas Day, and reached Hong Kong on December 27.

During the year, having left Plymouth on January 16, we had visited North and South America, the Cape of Good Hope, Tasmania, and New South Wales and China, and had travelled by log 27,409 miles during 182 days at sea.

We now joined the squadron under Sir Thomas Cochrane, and our first duty was to embark about two million dollars in Sycee money at Canton, some of the result of the late Opium War.

The ship was anchored near Whampoa, about twelve miles below Canton. Various commissariat officers representing the British Government were present in a hong to receive the mandarins with the specie, and with them were several shroffs, who are experts at detecting spurious metal. A strong guard of soldiers under arms being present, the silver was emptied out on to a carpet for the shroffs to examine, and lay aside any doubtful pieces. A row of one hundred boxes were ranged along the hong with their lids branded, ready to be screwed down. Each box, when full, contained £1000 worth of silver, duly weighed and placed in bags before many witnesses, and when screwed down the boxes were conveyed by coolies between a guard of two marines to the lorch, where my crew with a guard of marines received it.

The month of January was intensely cold, and a kind friend, William Leslie, of Dent and Co., offered to send me some wine or spirits to keep me warm on the trip down at night. This I declined, but said I would accept a pinch of tea that I might make a brew going down. Attending to my duty in embarking the treasure, I forgot my tea until after I had started, and then asked the coxswain if Mr. Leslie had sent me a small packet to the boat. He replied, "A small packet, sir, why here is a chest of tea," and there was a magnificent lacquered chest of choice tea, which I could not think of opening for so small a requirement. Fortunately a ship-captain, who was glad to travel under our convoy, had some samples of tea which I was welcome to open, so I kept the valuable present intact, and sent it home sewn up in a blanket to preserve it the better, and greatly was it appreciated.

The lorcha had its Chinese crew, and whenever we approached a danger in the river a short religious service was observed in the fore-part of the vessel, the men burning joss-sticks and performing sundry other devotional acts until the danger was passed, when apparently a thanksgiving service was held, thus furnishing a wholesome lesson to Europeans by an open acknowledgment of their dependence on a Supreme Being for their safety.

The specie received on board, we conveyed it to Singapore, to tranship it into the *Cambrian* frigate to take home, when in due course it reached the

bullion-room of the Royal Mint; but despite all the care taken, though the right number of boxes were delivered, and though the marks and brands were as they should be, one box was found to contain rubbish, stones, and brick-bats of precisely the correct weight. This box was returned to China for a Board of Inquiry, but the how, when, or where the fraud was perpetrated remains a mystery. Eastern craft had been too much for Western watchfulness, as we also found it on another occasion, when, among a number of chests of tea supplied by Mr. Whampoe of Singapore to the squadron, several were found to contain only dirt, rubbish, dust, and ashes. Truly has Bret Harte said that

“For ways that are dark, and tricks that are vain,  
The heathen Chinee is peculiar.”

सत्यमेव जयते

## CHAPTER XIV

1845

Madras and Trincomalee—Fever on board—At Penang—Infantry drill—Saluting the Admiral—"I shall be happy to serve you"—A proposed exchange—Claiming a promise—Rajah Sir James Brooke—On sick list—Job's comforters—Return to duty—An eager crew—Preparing for the attack—Night in the boats—A morning tot; might have been rum, but wasn't—The advance up the river—Attack on Malludu—A flag of truce—Unconditional surrender—Forcing the boom—Poor practice—Firing the town—A touching episode—Return to the ship—Join H.M.S. *Cruiser*—A reconnoitring expedition—A capsized—A rough experience—Rejoin the *Vestal*.

LEAVING Singapore after delivering over our treasure-chests, we next visited Madras and Trincomalee, during which time a serious fever broke out among the crew, which consigned a number to the Trincomalee hospital. Here several deaths took place. Two officers, the purser and second master, both died at Madras. In order to purify the ship, while in Trincomalee, the holds were all cleared out to permit of cleansing and whitewashing; but to preserve the trim of the ship and to avoid any chance of

spoiling her superior sailing qualities, everything was carefully marked to ensure it being correctly replaced; yet with all the care in that way the *Vestal's* character for sailing was lost, so delicate are Symonite models in their trim.

By June 1845 we rejoined the Admiral and squadron in the Straits of Malacca, spending some weeks at Penang in drilling on shore and in boats. As I was junior (or boots), the drudgery of drilling fell to my lot, and from so many years spent in surveying vessels I had it all to learn before I could teach, so I used to get the sergeant of Marines to put me through my facings at quiet times for platoon exercise, and read up for battalion drill.

At Penang, the practice was to land for drill at sunrise, and drill till 8 a.m. After drilling for an hour I used to pile arms, and give the men a quarter of an hour's spell, when they generally went up cocoa-nut trees after the nuts, but they were instructed to "fall in" as soon as they heard the drum.

One morning during this recess I observed the Admiral with his staff on horseback coming down the hill from the Admiral's house, when they would pass me on their way to the boat. I sung out for the drummer, but he was *non est*; still, my company must fall in ready to present arms as the Chief passed, so I made as much row with the drum as I could, and got the fellows down in time, and the Admiral was accordingly saluted, which evidently

gave such satisfaction that I received for the first time an invitation to dinner.

The idea in the squadron was that Sir Thomas was very strict and unyielding, so that officers generally were shy of him, and I did not anticipate much cordiality or friendliness. But when I was summoned, I was met by the Admiral with a friendly shake of the hand and the encouraging words, "I am delighted to make your acquaintance;" and when I took leave he said, "I shall always be happy to serve you."

When I returned on board, I remarked to my messmates that the old Admiral was not such a Turk as they seemed to think, as he received me and took leave with marked friendliness. They replied, "He says that to every one; it is a polite way he has of speaking, without meaning what he says."

"Never mind," I said; "I always give a man credit for what he says, and if I should have occasion I will remind him of it."

Such an idea was laughed at as a vain delusion.

Not many weeks had passed before the squadron was at Malacca, and met a new brig-of-war, the *Osprey*, from England, under orders for New Zealand, which at the time was in the throes of Heki's war. Her second lieutenant, Freese, an old messmate of mine in the *Beagle*, begged me to exchange with him, as he did not get on with his captain. I replied, that I would first consult my friend (meaning the Commander-in-Chief).

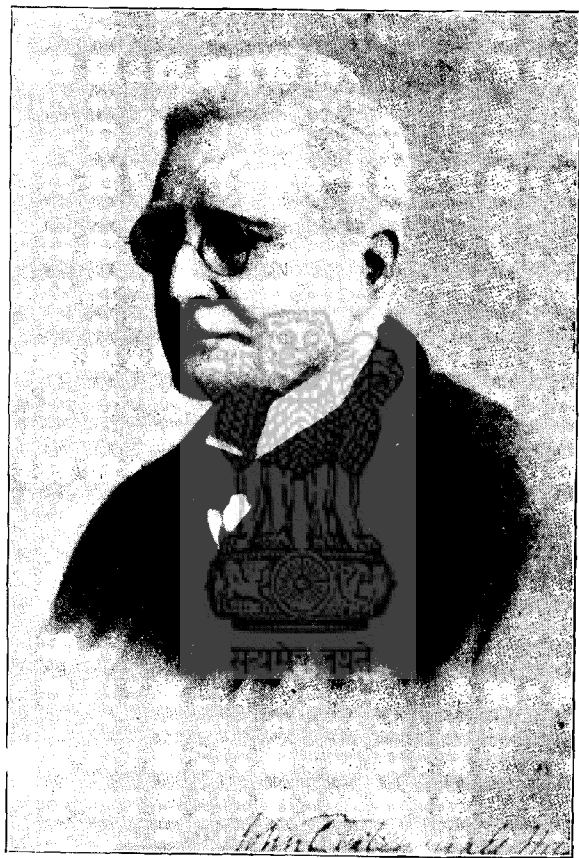
I landed early in the forenoon to call on the Admiral, but when I told the flag-lieutenant (John Hay) my wish he thought I was joking. Being convinced that I was in earnest, he took in my card, and then ushered me into the presence of the Admiral. I was received very cordially and asked some commonplace questions, as, "Did I like the walks about Malacca as well as those about Penang?"

I replied, but said I did not wish to take up his time unnecessarily, so forthwith I reminded him that when I had the honour of dining with him at Penang he was good enough to say that "he would always be happy to serve me." "Now, sir," I continued, "I have not my father here to go to for advice, and in his absence I take the liberty of appealing to you."

"Indeed, Mr. Pasco," said he, "I am very proud that you place this confidence in me, and I shall be happy to give you my best advice."

"Well, sir," said I, "overtures have been made to me to exchange into the *Osprey* going to New Zealand, and I thought I should have a better opportunity of distinguishing myself there as second lieutenant in the brig than as fourth in my frigate; for although I have the duty of drilling the small-arm men in the *Vestal*, should they at any time be called into active service my seniors would have the privilege of commanding my men while I should be left on board." I took the opportunity of explaining





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ADMIRAL SIR JOHN HAY, BART.

that, as my messmates used to boast that such would be the case.

"In the first place," the Admiral replied, "I have an objection to officers leaving my squadron unless I wish to get rid of them; and in the next place, I will take care that you shall not be left behind."

I thanked his Excellency for his advice and made my bow.

"You'll dine with me this evening?"

"Most happy, sir," and away I went quite jolly, to the surprise rather of John Hay. I did not relate my interview to my messmates, but merely declined the offer to exchange.

That evening I had the pleasure of meeting Rajah Sir James Brooke, who had come from Sarawak to ask the Admiral to call on the Sultan of Borneo, who desired the assistance of our navy to bring a rebellious rajah to subjection, as he refused to agree with the Sultan to suppress piracy. Sheriff Ousman was the most northern rajah in Borneo, presiding over the Malludu district. He had been threatened with the Admiral's interference some time before, and had returned a defiant reply that the whole British Navy should not disturb him. Consequently he made his position as strong as he could by erecting forts (constructed with timber), and placing a heavy boom across the river, just musket-shot below the forts, which had the town in its rear.

To subdue this pugnacious rajah the Admiral had been quietly preparing, but the arrival of H.M.S.

*Fly*, Captain Francis Blackwood, from the survey of Torres Straits in order to try two of his officers (the second master Mr. Pym, and clerk Mr. Milrey) by court-martial, delayed our departure a few days; then calling at Singapore for provisions, we passed on. But the last night at Singapore found me on the sick list with severe fever, that for some days I was in a high state of delirium. Each morning, as we crossed the China Sea toward Borneo, the Admiral inquired by signal how I was progressing. This inquiry, one of my messmates kindly assured me, was due to the Admiral's impatience to promote one of his junior officers into the vacancy. But when the crisis had passed and some amendment made, my messmate, with the best intention, urged me "not to slip," if only to have the satisfaction of disappointing the Admiral. I did not so read the inquiries.

On August 17, when the squadron anchored some miles from the place to be attacked, my captain, who was to command the expedition of boats, went to the Admiral for his final orders, when a lieutenant, senior to me, asked him to give his name to the Admiral as a volunteer to command the small-arm men in the place of the officer on the sick list.

The good old Chief had not forgotten his promise, so he informed the captain that before he gave the reply to Lieutenant Lambert, he was to ask if I felt able to go.

At 11 p.m. the captain returned from the Chief

and sent for me. I was still in my cot, but I scrambled out and went to the captain, who, giving me the Admiral's message, said, "But of course you could not think of going."

"Thank you, sir," I answered, "I am quite ready."

"Well, we start at 5 a.m., and you have to make up your crews, as several are on the sick list as well as you."

It soon got wind on the lower deck, and those who were convalescent, but still on the sick list, were loud in protesting against being left behind. They declared they were more advanced toward perfect recovery than I was, and begged me not to leave them out. As I preferred taking my own men to others, I consulted the doctor, and he gave his permission on the condition that I gave them plenty of gentian and took some myself.

By 5 a.m. the expedition assembled in about twenty boats, large and small, with about five hundred seamen and marines. We were taken in tow by the *Vixen* steamer and *Pluto*, with the brig *Wolverine*. We reached the depth of the bay near the entrance of the river up which the rajah had his stronghold, late in the afternoon, for the Admiral's inspection, and to await the morning tide, to get over the bar into the river.

The fleet of boats, with awnings spread, were anchored in a long double line, and after supper the men were allowed to beguile the time with a song before going to sleep. The evening was about as

charming as a tropical evening could be. The moon was nearly at full, the air calm and sky clear, and while the men were singing we could hear the gongs and tom-toms up the river mustering the forces of the enemy ready for the morning's conflict.

One seaman in my boat, Robert Featherby (a convalescent), had a splendid voice, and when he sang the "Gipsy King," the whole line of boats were silent, listening to him, not forgetting to encore, after which all our force were soon hushed in delightful sleep.

When the day broke the captain passed word to serve a bite of biscuit and pannikin of water round, as there would not be time to get another breakfast until after the place was taken. We broke our fast in that way, but to carry out the doctor's instructions I called Featherby aft to give him a tot for his good song last night. I poured something from a black bottle into a pannikin. He accepted it smilingly, plainly under the impression that it was medicine of a different sort, and taking his hat off, smoothing his hair down, and removing his quid, he said, "Here's your good health, sir." He tossed off the liquid, which might have been rum; only it wasn't. His face was a study, as the bitter taste convinced him of his mistake, but he said nothing, and allowed no sign to betray his disappointment to the crew.

In the advance up the river the captains in gigs took the lead, followed by launches and pinnaces

with carronades and rockets, the small-arm men in boats bringing up the rear.

In our progress the flotilla of boats disturbed tribes of monkeys, which leapt from tree to tree, chattering in the liveliest manner as they followed us up stream.

We had gone about two leagues up the river when Captain Talbot, who was in the lead, returned, ordering a pioneer party with axes to advance to cut through the boom placed to hinder our approach. Gun-boats were also ordered to the front to cover the axe party, but the small-arm division was ordered to anchor by the stern, as the flood was running, and to be ready to trip as soon as an opening in the boom was effected. At this time a flag of truce came from the forts in a boat to inquire the object of our visit. The messenger was informed that we required the unconditional surrender of the forts and the person of the Rajah Sheriff Ousman, a claim not likely to be tamely conceded.

As the bearer of the flag of truce returned with his message our axes were laid to the boom, which was secured by a heavy chain-cable across the river, but as soon as their boat was out of range, the forts opened fire on our boats. The guns having been carefully laid for that spot made good practice, and nearly all the damage they did was by that first round, for our guns and rockets replied with such telling effect that they could not well recover their aim, but fired away at random. Still it occupied an

hour before we could get a boat through, when an assault was first made on a small three-gun battery standing on higher ground than a larger battery of ten heavy pieces. The former was carried by storm, and its guns turned on to the larger fort, giving them notice to quit, which was promptly obeyed, and the surrender was soon completed. But they retreated into the forest at rear of the town, occasionally turning to oppose our advance.

I and a portion of my men were placed under the orders of Commander Clifford of the *Wolverine*, our duty being to burn the town. As I was approaching with two seamen, I observed a well-dressed Malay in front, who was escaping, suddenly turn round and prepare to throw a spear at me. I directed my men with muskets to "bring him down." A ball penetrated the shield he held before him just as he delivered the spear, which fell a few yards from me, he falling with the ball in his head. From Rajah Brooke's Journal of that day I gather that this was the bearer of the flag of truce in the morning, his name being Sheriff Mahomed.

The town was built of light inflammable material, erected on piles, and a match applied to the floor soon demolished it; but apprehending that, although the male population had fled from the fighting party, women and children may have sought refuge in the houses, I staid the work of the torches until I had called to see if any one still remained.

In the first house examined I found secreted in a



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RAJAH SIR JAMES BROOKE ("One Tongue!").



corner, behind some boxes, an old woman with two children, one of the latter evidently in a high state of fever. Not being able to speak the language, I had to use as much force as was necessary for their removal; and for their safety I escorted them about one hundred yards to a shady tree on the edge of the river, so that, should the fire spread in that direction, they might slip across the river.

Returning to my work of destruction, I saw that it was continued until nothing but burning embers remained. I then went to visit my *protégées* under the tree, but the old crone with the healthy child had fled, leaving the sick one, I suppose, as a legacy for me. I soon handed it to the care of some *détenues*, as we did not encumber ourselves with prisoners.

The rajah had escaped with his life, but we learned that he was badly wounded. By this time it was mid-day, with the sun nearly in the zenith, and had it occurred to me (which it did not) I might have feared a relapse of my fever; but now, after our very light repast at daybreak, our appetites were strong, and a recess was allowed to find a meal, when ducks, goats, or any other dainty taken was cooked on the embers of the smouldering dwellings, after which, recalled to our boats, the return journey down the river to the ship was commenced. My pinnace had to tow the launch, which had been used for a hospital, where the wounded were provided for, and no less than five amputations had been per-

formed that morning in this boat, as the wounded were sent down to her out of range of the guns.

On our way we met a canoe, with three Malays, coming out of a tributary creek with vessels of fresh water, so we made use of them to dispense the water to the sick as we went down, and when their vessels were empty they were set free.

In these modern days of torpedoes, &c., it may seem surprising that no attempt had been made to blow up the boom instead of spending an hour chopping at it under a heavy fire. At that time, however, submarine explosions were not in vogue; yet, in consequence of our experience on that occasion, experiments were made by the *Excellent*, the gunnery school at Portsmouth, which I believe led to the blowing up of the *Royal George* at Spithead by Colonel Pasley.

Among our wounded was poor Leonard Gibbard, a mate of the *Wolverine*, who was in the act of using an axe at the boom when a ball entered between his shoulders, penetrating to his chest. He was hoisted into the *Wolverine*, and Captain Clifford gave up his cabin for him, but the skylight was so small an opening that there was some difficulty in lowering him through it. My crew were quartered on board the vessel for the night, when Harry Hillyar, the first lieutenant, generously vacated his cabin for me, as I was supposed to be still on the sick list.

Next morning I was ordered to join the *Cruiser*,

Captain E. Fenshaw, who was to reconnoitre another river on the east side of the bay, and further north, called Bankoka. Sailing down the bay with a fine breeze, it was noticeable how numerous the sharks were following the brig. By 3 p.m. we were abreast the river to be examined, and anchored. From a mast-head view I found the river fronted by extensive shoals, on which the surf was breaking heavily, but a lane of smooth water inside could be entered by following the shoal to its northern extremity about two miles off. By four o'clock we left the ship in two boats, the commander and I in the gig, and a lieutenant in the cutter, with two days' provisions for the two crews. A strong southerly breeze soon carried us along, the cutter leading.

A heavy squall just breaking as I was steering, I sang out, "Stand by the halyards," and told the bowman to be ready to gather down the luff of the sail, but the captain said, "You need not be afraid of my gig, Pasco, she is as stiff as a church."

He had scarcely uttered the words when a high sea filled the sail, and she was keel out in a moment. I had fortunately just unbuckled my sword-belt ready for a swim; but I lost it, as the captain did his, as well as a good rifle in a case, and all our boats' arms and ammunition; and as the sharks, but half-an-hour before, had been so numerous, one watched to see who would be the first to be taken. In great mercy we were all spared, though it was

twenty minutes before the cutter was able to put back to our relief.

Endeavouring to take our swamped boat in tow, we found the wind had increased to a gale in our teeth, and we could make no progress. As the sun set, darkness followed, but vivid lightning disclosed the position of the ship.

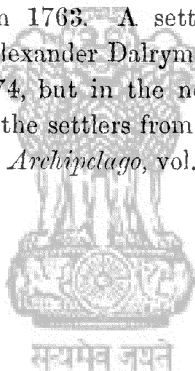
We now anchored the gig with an oar attached to the anchor to show the position of the boat by the morning should she sink, and just then the moon, that had passed the full, arose and enabled us to estimate the angle between it and the ship, which a flash of lightning showed. Calculating the moon's amplitude on reaching the ship, it gave us the bearing of the boat from the ship. We had been scarcely half-an-hour from the *Cruiser* when we capsized, but with the gale against us and the heavy rain, it took us from sunset to ten o'clock to regain the ship. Once on board, a good rubbing down with a rough towel, and a suit of dry clothes (borrowed), fortified one against evil consequences from the long immersion of the four hours' soaking in the rain, and these comforts being supplemented by hot coffee before turning in, no evil results followed.

At daylight a boat was sent on the bearing calculated, and returned with our gig, which was ready for us to resume our examination of Bankoka river after breakfast.

This we did, but without any discovery of a fresh

stronghold. Returning that evening, we were met by the *Wolverine* with instructions for me to return in her to meet my own ship *Vestal* at Balambangan, where I was thankful to have my own cabin again, and the doctor was not a little surprised that I had left all trace of fever or disease behind me.

This island of Balambangan is one with a history connected with the British, to whom the Sultan of Sulu ceded it in 1763. A settlement was established on it by Alexander Dalrymple, a distinguished navigator, in 1774, but in the next year the Sulu pirates drove all the settlers from the island (Horace St. John, *Indian Archipelago*, vol. ii. p. 29).



## CHAPTER XV

1845—1846

After the fray—Malludu revisited—A mother's love—*Vae Victis*, according to Rajah Brooke—Suggestive spoils—On to Manilla—In memory of Magellan—Development of steam-power—Inexorable logic—“Iron can't swim”—Then and now—“*Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis*”—A pioneer war-steamer—A happy suggestion—Following it up—Return to England—An acceptable recognition—Arrival of the first P. and O. steamer *Chusan* in Port Phillip.

THE day after the engagement in Malludu, before the Admiral left, he sent a detachment up the river to see that the destruction of the place was complete, and on this visit a Malay woman was found in a fainting state, severely wounded in the right arm below the elbow.

A little child about two years of age was also found clinging to its wounded parent. The surgeons, finding her limb could not be saved, prepared to amputate. On their attempting to remove the child, the mother resisted, and held it firmly in her left arm during the whole time the operation was in

progress. Concluding that after the amputation of the limb she must be faint and weak, they again endeavoured to remove the child, but the mother still resisted them, with vehement gesticulations and excited speech, till Rajah Brooke came along and asked her why she would not rest quietly, as her life depended on it, explaining that the surgeons feared the ligatures might break out in her excitement, and she would bleed to death. She now, by the good rajah's interpretation, explained what she had been saying, under the impression that we were going to cut off the right arm of all prisoners (not knowing the need of amputation), and while holding the child by her left elbow, gesticulated with her left fist, saying, "If it's an arm you want, take this, but don't hurt my child."

Rajah Brooke was much moved by this strong maternal feeling, seeing the mother was ready to sacrifice her only remaining arm as a substitute for her child, but he assured her that it had been necessary to remove her shattered limb to save her life, and that every care should be taken of the child. He then asked whether she wished to be landed where she had been found, or would she go under his care to Sarawak?

Finding that he spoke so feelingly, she replied that she had no home to return to; the entire town was destroyed, and all her male relations had fallen on the previous day, her husband, father, and two brothers, and she readily elected to find a refuge at

Sarawak, whither she went a few days after with the noble white rajah in H.M.S. *Cruiser*.

There was ample proof of the piratical character of these people. The boom which was constructed to hinder our advance was secured by the chain-cable of a German ship most probably, as we found, hanging in the fort, a ship's bell ornamented with vine-leaves and grapes, and the name "Wilhelm Ludwig, Bremen," on it. We found also a ship's long-boat and other articles of ship's furniture. The poor woman spoken of above stated that Sheriff Ousman (the rajah) had been wounded in the neck and carried off. It was supposed that the remnant of the enemy had retired to Bangisse, but five years later they were found to have located themselves on the S.W. coast of Palawan at Malanut in Tabayo Bay, under a Sultan a cousin of Sheriff Ousman, as will be shown later on.

The squadron now took its departure from Borneo for China, but H.M.S. *Vestal*, in leaving the anchorage, met with an accident by striking a coral reef. This led to the court-martial already spoken of in a previous chapter, and which need not be further noticed. From this we called in at Manilla, the capital of the Spanish settlement on the Philippines, which up to this time had maintained a curious geographical monument of the original discoverer of that part, Magellan, who, after his voyage of discovery from the Atlantic to the Pacific by the Straits which bear his name, in continuing



a westerly course to reach Cathay or the coveted Indies, unfortunately met his death in this neighbourhood. The country was first settled by emigrants from Peru, who, following Magellan's route, lost about sixteen hours on the passage, while later visitors from Europe, coming by way of the Cape of Good Hope, gained about eight hours. The latter, therefore, in arriving at Manilla on Sunday, find that, locally, it is still Saturday, so that up to this time, as the Europeans in China had reached it from the west, there had always been a difference in the day of the week between Hong Kong and Manilla. However, about 1845, they passed an edict at Manilla to change the days, and make them correspond with the Singapore calendar, after the old custom had been in vogue since the days of Magellan.

By this time the application of the principle evolved from the fertile brain of the youthful James Watt was being actually developed at sea, as in alliance with the genius of George Stephenson it was finding its potent embodiment in the iron horse on shore. Toward the close of the reign of George IV., when the smell of gunpowder had scarcely left the Iberian Peninsula and the shores of Trafalgar, and when I was still a school-boy struggling with the difficulties of the Eton Latin Primer,—though with naval ardour first fired by the sight of the arrival of the ships after the battle of Navarino, one of them being the old *Genoa*, with the body of Commodore Bathurst on board,—the

British oak forests were becoming so thin that shipbuilders began to look to iron as a substitute. Of course there was general incredulity as to the practicability of the idea, and a school chum of mine, with the advanced intelligence of the class, demonstrated beyond doubt that as a poker would not swim, neither would an iron ship. Of course it couldn’t, and what numskulls people were to think otherwise.

But “we are none of us infallible, not even the young,” and despite this demonstration, the experiment was eventually tried with success. Still the school-boy order of intelligence contended, surely sound Riga hemp and wholesome Stockholm tar can never be replaced by iron and steel for cables and rigging, nor can iron tanks ever be used as substitutes for the “good old” wooden casks that had held water in Benbow’s time. But they have, and what an incalculable blessing the latter have proved!

Thus, little by little our conceit in the wooden walls of Old England has waned, and though their grand historic associations will always keep them of glorious memory, the models of the old battle-ships, the *Victory*, the *Agamemnon*, the *Arethusa*, &c., have at this date of writing given place to the modern iron pots of the *Royal Sovereign*, *Royal Oak*, and *Empress of India* type. What would Nelson, Collingwood, and Trowbridge say to this change, could they again tread the quarter-deck, and where would be their favourite tactics of “Yard-arm

to yard-arm, lads!" and "Boarders away!" when opposed to guns of modern range and weight, and all the deviltry of torpedo-boats, &c. ? Would they not exclaim, "This is not fair fighting, it is only scientific slaughter" ?

The changes have also had their effect on officers and men. The former, after their Cambridge or Oxford course, may be better mathematicians—and mathematics is an essential branch of navigation—but I doubt if they are better seamen. The latter also is a changed character in appearance, and most fortunately in personal surroundings, having his sewing-machine on board, even as some modern housemaids stipulate for the use of the piano. But he is no longer Jack Tar as of old, with his cue and quid; he is Mr. Ultra Respectable John Tar, who can read, write, and cipher like a bank-clerk, but who when suddenly transferred from his iron tank to a small sailing craft is often about as handy as a dismounted cavalry man on a turnpike-road.

But in 1845, though steam for a propelling power had been for some time employed in the mercantile marine, it was a comparative rarity in the Navy. What few steam-vessels there were we rather contemptuously called "Smoke Jacks," though their own officers more pretentiously styled them "Naval Cavalry." To one of these new ships I was next transferred. She was H.M.S. *Vulture*, a paddle-steamer of 1190 tons, horse-power 470, mounting two 68-pounders on each broadside, and two heavy

chase guns of 113 cwt., one on the bow, the other on the stern. These were considered heavy armament in those days. The top of the paddle-boxes were roomy troop-boats, ready to be turned off in a moment for landing troops. The ship was rigged as a brig, and could be navigated under canvas, when one-third of the floats were removed and the shaft secured with the vacant portion of the paddle in the water. Contrast this ship with the modern battle-ships of the *Majestic* and *Magnificent* type, 14,900 tons displacement, 12,000 horse-power, steaming 18 knots, carrying heavy ordnance, torpedoes, quick-firing machine-guns, and all modern electrical apparatus, and it will at once be realized what enormous strides naval architecture and naval armament have made in the interval.

The year 1845 was one to be marked all red in the commercial calendar of China, since it saw the extension from India to Hong Kong of the P. and O. S. N. Co.'s service, which had been quietly growing in influence and power since its birth as the Peninsular Company in 1837, as a happy augury wherewith to commence the present gracious reign.

Up till then, a steamboat enterprise, as represented by such vessels as the *William Farwell*, of 206 tons and 60 horse-power, or the *Braganza*, of 688 tons and 260 horse-power, did not extend its travelling limit beyond Gibraltar. Then our brother officer Waghorn suggested the short cut to India *viâ* the Isthmus of Suez, which in due course was brought into first prominence by the enterprise of the Penin-

sular Company. To signalize this, it adopted "Oriental" as an addition to its original title, and it has since carried by charter the title in which the West is wedded to the East as the Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Company.

The appreciation of the greater facilities for trade and commerce which the extension of its service to China afforded, was heartily expressed by a group of gentlemen in front of the Club-house, as the mail-steamer approached the anchorage one day, in my hearing, and I ventured to remark that I wished my friends in Australia could receive their letters as punctually. I said I saw no reason why they should not, and one gentleman, interested in the idea, asked me what scheme and route I would propose. I said: "Simply by a branch steamer being at Singapore ready to receive the Australian mails as they arrive from Ceylon, and she could either slip through Torres Straits to Sidney or round Cape Leenwin, and then all Australia would be tied up with Britain." The gentleman who had asked the question then declared himself as the editor of the *Hong Kong Register*, and begged to be supplied with the particulars of the proposal for his paper.

Having so limited an acquaintance with the power of steam, I made my calculations from a seaman's, not from a stoker's point of view, regarding the prevailing winds as an important factor. This, with our experience at the end of the century, sounds very simple, but we live and learn. However,

as the result of my cogitations, I produced the following letter, which duly appeared in the *Hong Kong Register*, and soon found its way into the *Sydney Morning Herald*. I have since seen it in several Australian papers, reproduced as the genesis out of which sprung our present splendid mail service.

“H.M.S. Vulture, *Hong Kong*,  
“September 21, 1846.

“To the Editor of the *Hong Kong Register*.

“SIR,

“The rapid strides of steam have extended its usefulness under the auspices of the enterprising P. and O. S. N. Co. during the past year to this distant station, and, anticipating a yet further extension to the more salubrious climate of Australia, to which a more ready communication than hitherto is most desirable, I am led by an article in the *Swan River Enquirer*, relating to this subject, to offer an opinion, and endeavour to show by what route those interesting colonies, at present as remote from each other as from the mother country, might be brought together to share alike in the advantages, whether political or domestic, about to be offered. . . .

“It is a well-established fact that during the months of November and April inclusive, along the north shore of Australia, the N.W. wind blows, and during the remaining portion of the year, the S.E. trade wind is steady. It is also observed that

during the N.W. monsoon on the north coast of Australia, easterly winds prevail more or less (though not to be depended on) on the south coast through Bass Straits, and in the opposite season I am disposed to think the S.E. trade hangs more easterly, and certainly the westerly wind is met with in a lower latitude on the west coast.

“Upon which data I will base the following propositions, viz. first, that during the months of November and March (inclusive) the Australian branch leaving Singapore should proceed *viâ* Port Essington and Torres Straits to Sydney, returning south through Bass Straits, calling at Georgetown (Tasmania) or Adelaide and Swan River.

“Secondly, that during April and October inclusive, leaving Singapore, should proceed *viâ* Swan River and Bass Straits to Sydney, returning through Torres Straits.

“In point of actual distance I can see there is only six hundred miles in favour of the eastern route, which becomes nullified by the prevailing winds favouring each route.

“Port Dalrymple (Georgetown) appears a more convenient intermediate station between Sydney and Swan River than Adelaide, there being about two hundred miles saved, besides the claims of all Tasmania entitling her to the preference.

“With respect to the two routes of Torres Straits (commonly designated the inner and outer), I should make choice of the inner, as, with the aid of Captain

P. P. King's excellent chart of the N.E. coast, with the subsequent additions by H.M. ships *Beagle*, *Fly*, and *Bramble*, the navigation within the Barrier Reef may be compared to that of a well-buoyed harbour with smooth water (a luxury always appreciated by steam-vessels).

“Wishing all prosperity to Australia,

“I remain, &c.,

“CRAWFORD PASCO, Lieut. R.N.”

As I have said, this letter found its way into the leading Australian papers, and set the ball rolling. Five years later I returned to England an invalid, and when ready once again for the voyage out, appearing at 122 Leadenhall Street, to engage a passage, I was surprised to find a P. and O. Co.'s boat on the berth for Port Phillip as the first-fruits of my letter, the subject of which had been in process of steady agitation ever since it appeared in the *Register*.

Learning my name, the worthy secretary of the Company, Mr. James Allan, told me that the directors would be glad to give me a passage at a nominal charge, and would be obliged if I would render the commander, who was not so well acquainted with the Australian coast, any assistance in navigation. This arrangement was particularly agreeable to me, and I was pleased to find the first vessel, the *Chusan*, was commanded by an old shipmate, Henry Down, who had been chief officer of



the P. and O. *Ripon* when I last went to China, three years before.

The calculation made in the proposal of the route *viâ* Singapore to Sydney was eighty days, and the *Chusan* duly accomplished it, *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope, to the great joy of all the Australian colonies. Melbourne was the first port visited on July 29, 1852. The Chamber of Commerce testified to their appreciation of the service thus inaugurated, by presenting Captain Down with a gold medal specially struck for the occasion, while the papers expressed much admiration of the appearance of this magnificent vessel of 700 tons and 80 horse-power, though had her voyage been postponed for a few months, this little pioneer would have been thrown into the shade under the lee of the Transatlantic steamer *Great Britain*, which made her appearance in Melbourne waters before the close of the year. But promptness and vigour have ever marked the actions of the P. and O. Company.

## CHAPTER XVI

1846—1848

Back to China—Strangers in a strange land—Proving identity—A glad return—Kindness for kindness—"Only fit to be poisoned"—Operations against the Chinese—Enforcing the treaty—Clearing the way to Canton—Attack on the river forts—"They'll bob presently"—Poor practice—The cost of curiosity—Blowing up the French Folly Fort—Into the jaws of death—An unpleasant surprise—A providential escape—Return to Hong Kong—A primitive defence force—Return to barracks—On guard.

THE foregoing has, I hope, been a pardonable digression, and now we will "turn astarn," and get back to China in the busy forties.

First I will mention an incident which again brought me in touch with the natives of Port Essington, on the north coast of Australia, in a rather singular manner. Fred Mundy, our purser on board the *Vulture*, was fond of a game of billiards, and had noticed in the yard of the hotel he patronized for the purpose of play, three strange black boys, who, he was informed, had been brought from some part of Australia by the master of a small vessel, then dying

of fever up-stairs. When Mundy related this circumstance to me, who had told him many a yarn about the aborigines of that country, I vaguely wondered if they knew any of my Port Essington friends, and I gave him a test by which to ascertain if they had been in anything like recent touch with the tribe. These were the words of a little song which that tribe had composed in admiration of a little child of one of the marines. She was a fair flaxen-haired lassie with bright blue eyes, and rejoiced in the name of Barbara. At that time the knowledge of the English language by the natives was almost limited to asking one's name; but, sitting before the marine's hut one day, looking at the child, they began—

“Minnie Minnie Poonah Poonah-poonah,  
Tag-a-la-na pee-you pee-you pee-you;  
Mat-u-la-na ga-la thala duela,  
What-a-name a pie-a-minny Barbaree?”

I instructed Mundy to use these words in the hearing of the lads, to see if they at all recognized them, and should they take any notice he was to ask, “Did they know Wongie Wongie?”

On hearing the song, the boys ran up to him to know “how he knew their wongy” (or language). After the fashion of the Scotchman, who always answers one question by asking another, he inquired, “Do you know Wongie Wongie?”—the name bestowed on me by the tribe they knew as that of one who had left when they were about three years old. They had been told he was a shipman, who had gone away

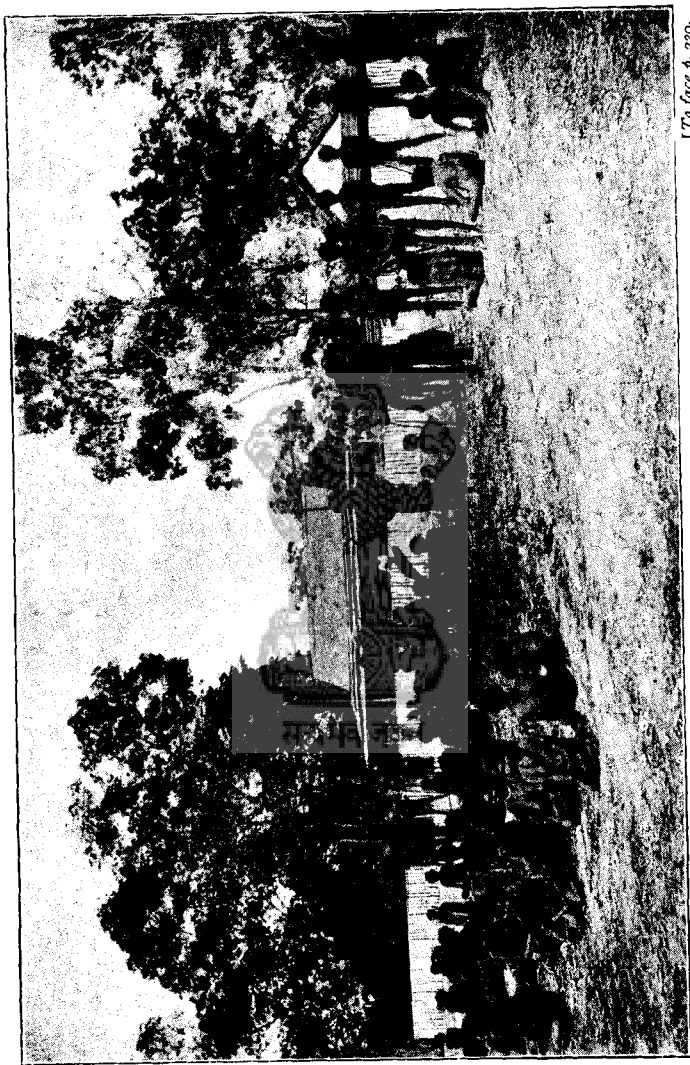
and would never return. Mundy, however, made them understand that I was on board the man-of-war, and sent them off in a sampan.

When they arrived alongside the *Vulture* they shouted out lustily for Wongie Wongie. I promptly replied, and told them to come on board, but it was somewhat disappointing to observe that they showed no signs of pleasure at the suggestion. The fact was, they had been deceived by one man who had enticed them into his vessel at Port Essington, as they supposed for a sail down the bay and back again, instead of which they were carried out to sea and away to a strange land. Wongie Wongie had therefore to prove that he was indeed himself the genuine Simon Pure, and no counterfeit.

When I asked their names, they gave them as Medlone, Mi-jolk, and Alad-yin, neither of which were known to me. I then asked Medlone, "Who is your father?"

"My father Old Alligator," he replied. This was the name given to the chief of the tribe after that of the senior ship at the settlement, the *Alligator*, commanded by Sir Gordon Bremer.

I then told Medlone that if Alligator was his father, his mother was Na-man-go-ra. This could not have been a guess, and the three boys showed unmistakable joy of countenance, satisfied they had found one who knew something about them. I then asked Medlone about his own little sister Ma-ri-li-ma; his mother's sister Ma-moo-la-ma-ra, and his old grandfather



*[To face p. 220.]*

PORT ESSINGTON, 1875.

A-dia-ra-vie. The mention of the latter name brought a copious flow of tears to poor Medlone's eyes, for the old man had "tumble down," or died; and it is a peculiarity of, I think, all tribes in Australia, that the name of a deceased should never again be mentioned.

The man who had kidnapped the lads and brought them to China never recovered from his illness, and the boys became unmistakably mine, to the surprise of the Chinese boat people who had known me for some time, and who, seeing the boys, would always afterwards exclaim, "Aye yah! Pasco, how can three piecey black chiloe?"

Fortunately in the course of about a month I found a small schooner going to Torres Straits during the N.W. monsoon to gather up any wreckage which may have been left on the reefs during the past season. Though Port Essington was much out of his route, I made it worth his while to call, giving him a letter to Col. McArthur the Commandant, and a list of China merchandise which was likely to find a market at the garrison.

Poor boys!—their very hearts seemed to overflow when I explained to them that they were going home.

We were much gratified afterwards by receiving a letter from Col. McArthur, describing the joy in the aboriginal camp at the return of Medlone and Alad-yin, though without Mi-jolk, who unfortunately had died on the passage. Their return was commemorated by

a great corrobbery, and the burden of the song that night was all about Wongie Wongie picking the boys up.

Had one never been able to accomplish another worthy object, that alone was worth living for, as was proved more than twenty years later, when a pearl-fisher on the coast, some distance from Port Essington, had his boat with two men blown away in a storm and upset in a fearful surf. When the vessel went to search for the boat, only its wreck was found on the beach, and the men were supposed to have been drowned. The master subsequently heard that there were two white men among the tribe at Port Essington, where, on calling, he found them well cared for.

They stated that when the boat capsized and rolled over in the surf, two natives who witnessed it rushed into the surf, and each seizing a man, rescued him from a certain watery grave.

Though they could not speak English, the natives made signs to them to follow them, and made them understand they would take them to food and shelter. Medlone then explained to them that when he was a little boy a white man was kind to him, and now if any of his tribe see a white man in trouble they are bound to help him. These are a race that a certain class of miserably ignorant Europeans think are only fit to be poisoned.

Resuming now the narrative of our service in China, I may say that this to a certain extent consisted in

enforcing the obligations entered into by China in the treaty of peace. Under this, the opening of the city of Canton for British trade had become due, and our Plenipotentiary, Sir John Davis, was determined, if possible, to see this carried into effect. But at the time both our naval and military armaments were at rather a low ebb, the Admiral being in India with most of the squadron, and the General had only the 18th Royal Irish of Europeans and the 42nd Madras Native Infantry, beside a few sappers and a Colonel of Artillery (Brigadier Chesney).

The naval force was limited to the *Vulture* and the brig *Espiègle*. A council of war was held very privately at Government House, Hong Kong, consisting of Sir J. Davis, General D'Aguilar, and Captain Macdougall, R.N. Not a whisper of it was known either in the barracks or on board the ships. Yet at our supper-time the Chinese bum-boatman, Chuenpee, asked me, "What for Governor want more kow-kow pigeon?" ("kow-kow pigeon" meaning war).

"No, Chuenpee, all peace now," I answered, "no more kow-kow;" but he knew better. The fact was, the Chinese servants at Government House smelt a rat by seeing the three big guns closeted so long, and a servant carrying in refreshment could pick up enough of a feather to see how the wind blew. Thus a rumour spread among the Celestials at Hong Kong as to what was in contemplation, even before we had any idea of it ourselves.

But our enlightenment came when at midnight we



received orders to embark the troops. By 2 a.m. we were away with half of each regiment, leaving the remainder to garrison Hong Kong, and by nine the next morning we were close to the Annughoy forts at Bocca Tigris. We steamed up to the gates of the fort, the paddle-box boats were turned off, and the military formed into two divisions; one we landed at the gates of Annughoy, which were barred against us, and the other crossed to the fortified islands opposite.

The artillery or sappers, as accomplished burglars, promptly placed a bag of powder, about 25 lbs., with a short fuse, against the gate of the fort; and as the explosion blew it in, rushed the place, taking it without further opposition, as the Chinese commander was evidently unprepared for such a rude visit. The garrison was then compelled to form a line from their magazine to the water-side and discharge all their powder into the stream, while the artillerymen and some blue-jackets were engaged in spiking the big guns, of which there were upwards of three hundred. Similar operations were done at the island forts; but the Chinese contrived to dispatch tidings up river to Canton as to the conduct of the rude barbarians at the entrance.

The action taken was necessary to keep our rear open before proceeding up the river to bring the city to book, and compel the mandarins to open the city as arranged by the treaty.

All teeth being drawn here that might otherwise bite on our return, the advance was made up stream,

but before the Barrier Forts, about seventy miles further up, were reached, they had received sufficient notice to prepare, and there were obstacles which did not admit of our vessels approaching. Consequently a simultaneous assault was made in boats on the four forts standing two on each bank of the river.

When the paddle-box boats were ready to take in troops, the General called to me, "How many can you take in that boat, Lieutenant Pasco?"

I replied, "Fifty of the Royal Irish, sir, but of Native Infantry as many as you like to give me."

This distinction was necessary in consequence of the 18th being a rather rowdy, disorderly set, while the 42nd Native Infantry were a tractable set of men; you could do anything with them. They had long been under the influence of a Christian, Adjutant Todd. However, I had to accept the half hundred of the 18th, with their officers.

My dear messmate, Coote, and my senior, commanded the division ordered to operate on the right bank, and I on the left. Away we went, the Chinese busy on all sides training their guns to give us a warm reception with a cross fire. The soldiers in my boat, I noticed, were staring ahead to see what they could, but as it was desirable to render the boat as small a target as possible, I requested the captain of the company to desire his men to get down in the bottom of the boat until they had to land.

This officer promptly gave the order to get down, but the Royal Irish, not seeing the need, were so slow

to obey, that I remarked to John McCabe, a subaltern who had just been raised from the ranks for distinguished bravery at Sobraon, "Your fellows are very badly in hand."

"Never mind," replied McCabe, "they'll bob presently,"—and they did. The forts opened fire, the round-shot came flying over our heads with a terrific whizzing, and down every fellow dropped below the gunwale as promptly as could be desired.

"Ah, ha!" said McCabe, "I told you they would bob."

Poor McCabe! I afterwards learned from Sir Henry Havelock that he died at Lucknow during the eventful siege, when a captain in the 18th Royal Irish.

The Chinese gunners made such wretched practice that not a boat or man was touched. We pulled in between two embrasures, and quickly placed a bag of powder against the gate, which had of course been closed against us. One Chinaman had the curiosity to watch us from over the gate, considering it was too secure for us to open, when presently the explosion took place; the gate was burst in, that poor fellow paying the penalty of his curiosity. I am, however, thankful to say that this was the only casualty on either side.

The next day the destruction of a fort called the French Folly had to be attended to. This fort was on the point of a creek emptying into the river, and behind it a few hundred yards distant was a large

village. The fort we were instructed to blow up, but in order not to sacrifice life, a detachment of soldiers with only blank cartridges in their pouches were sent to the rear in skirmishing order to fire away in the direction of the village, and thus warn any from approaching the fort while the engineers were engaged in laying the train to the magazine. That completed, the bugle recalled the infantry to the boats, and we pulled across the river out of reach of the explosion, leaving a gig to embark the engineers as soon as they had fired the train.

While the gig was hastily retreating, I noticed an old woman coming down the creek from the village, sculling herself in a sampan, but keeping as close under the walls of the fort as possible to be farthest away from our boats. Poor old creature, we could do nothing to warn her of her terrible danger, since to shout was only to make her hug the fort more closely. She seemed devoted to destruction.

With an awful roar the terrific explosion took place, sending guns, beams, and stones into the air, which, falling back into the river, churned up the water and made it boil like a pot. "Poor old woman!" we all thought, "no hope for her and her sampan," and a hearty cheer rang out as, when the smoke and stour cleared away, the sampan was discerned with its affrighted occupant sculling away, with more than redoubled vigour, her arms going as if by steam, which at least indicated, that though

she must have been terribly frightened she was not much hurt.

Having, with the limited force at his command, thus drawn the Celestial teeth intended for the defence of Canton, his Excellency the British Plenipotentiary was able to bring the High Commissioner Keying to terms, though that wily diplomatist contrived to stave off the day for opening the city for trade by declaring that if it were done immediately the excited state of the populace might cause trouble.

However, we were able now to return to Hong Kong, and found the garrison in the Bocca Tigris forts prepared to resist, as well as they could, our re-landing. The tops of the walls were lined with men, each being supplied with a heap of stones, like monkeys with cocoa-nuts. But despite this formidable indication of threatened resistance, the troops were returned to barracks, and the *Vulture* resumed her old duty as guardship in Blenheim Reach near Whampoa.



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GRAHAM GORE, Commander R.N.

## CHAPTER XVII

1849—1850

Sir John Franklin—Missing a vacancy—A rest on the oars—Under orders again—*En route* for China—Cruel kindness—From Alexandria to Suez—The Red (hot) Sea—Hong Kong once more—H.M.S. *Royalist*—A New Year sensation—Returning the call—The survey of Palawan—A Spanish settlement—A poultry barter—"Pass up my shirt"—Malay hospitality—Influence of Rajah Brooke—A tempting offer—Six to one—Friends all—A happy inquiry—"Bargoose, Captain Pasco"—"Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it shall return to thee after many days."

I HAVE mentioned, in a former chapter, our visit in the *Vestal* to Trincomalee in 1845. It was during the time so covered that a paragraph in the *Times* announced to me the fitting out of an Arctic expedition which Sir John Franklin was likely to command. I wrote to him by next mail, hoping that he would kindly keep a vacancy open for me if the report was true. I subsequently found that my letter reached Lady Franklin a few days after his departure, but that nevertheless my wish had been anticipated, and a vacancy had been kept open until within a few days

of sailing, in case I might turn up. Sir John had secured two of my *Beagle* shipmates to accompany him, namely, Graham Gore, first lieutenant, and John Weekes, carpenter; both as true and noble characters as ever trod a deck.

My Arctic longing was denied me, and when the *Vulture* was paid off at Sheerness it stranded me on half-pay for a season. This, however, I proposed to turn to advantage. My education having been very limited, I agreed with another old messmate, Coote, to enter the Naval College for a year to improve my mathematics. For choice, I would have preferred leave to return and settle in Tasmania, but this the Admiralty did not approve.

Two specially valued brother officers of mine, Captain Charles Shadwell, and Captain W. T. Bate, whom I had met in China at the conclusion of the work on which he had been engaged, strongly urged me not to return to the survey branch, as there was only slavery in it and no promotion. I therefore joined the College a few weeks before the summer vacation, and enjoyed with my old messmate, who had joined with me, a cruise in his brother's yacht, the *Turquoise*, to the Channel Islands and Brest.

On our return, hearing that Lady Franklin was going to the Orkney Islands to gain some tidings from old whalers of the condition of the Arctic Sea, and the probabilities of success for the searching expedition for her beloved husband and his companions, I proposed to accompany her.





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MAJOR-GENERAL SIR W. HILL, K.C.S.I.

Calling first on the hydrographer, to tell him where I was going, as an appointment to the Observatory at Hobart might probably be offered me, I was asked by Sir Francis Beaufort if I had any objection to go to China again?

"Oh, yes, sir," I replied, "it is the last place I ever wish to see again."

"Then that settles it," he said.

"May I ask, sir," I said, "why you put the question?"

"Why," said he, "I offered the command of the survey in that part to a man who will only accept it on the condition that you accompany him as his assistant."

I felt sure it could not be dear Bate, who had urged me strongly against accepting a surveying appointment, and I could think of no other who was likely to desire my companionship. But Bate it was, and hearing it I said, "I am ready to go with him to the ends of the earth." And off we started by the next P. and O. steamer, the *Ripon*, Captain Moresby.

This was our first taste of P. and O. hospitality, and under the command of a man who had distinguished himself as a marine surveyor in the Red Sea, we enjoyed much fraternal intercourse. The passengers, ladies and gentlemen chiefly for India, seemed to form their own little sets and parties, while we two naval men seemed consigned to a cold outside social circle, which included a number of Addiscombe cadets *en route* to join their regiments for the first time.

One young subaltern of the "Queen's," going out to join his regiment at Malta, was commended to our care by our mutual friend, Sir Edward Parry, with whom we spent our last Sunday evening at Haslar. He occupied a berth in the same cabin with Bate and myself, and he was pleased to unite with us in morning and evening devotions. After the third day we were joined by a very earnest Christian soldier, who had for some years devoted himself to his Divine Master's service, in the Madras Presidency, Major William Hill, then the Judge Advocate. He was *en route* to Hong Kong to claim a most worthy partner for life, so that he was united with us in "taking sweet counsel together," the whole journey out, as also was one lady going to join her husband at Hong Kong.

Unhappily, it was not ordained that they should meet in this world, for as we anchored, the first gentleman who reached the vessel told us that they had just received news of his death at Shanghai. He had made arrangements for friends to meet her in case he was not able to reach Hong Kong in time, which they did, but, with the cold sympathy of the world, they considered it more kind *not* to tell her the reason of his absence until they had "cheered her up" and fortified her for the shock by having a gay dinner-party and lively music in the evening. Had she been one who could appreciate such an empty and unsatisfactory sympathy before, she was now impressed with its utter vanity and deception.

One young German lady, a member of the Moravian

Sisterhood, was bound to Bombay, being betrothed to a Moravian Brother ; but not being known to any of the other lady passengers, she, like us, was out in the cold, and, to outward appearance, painfully alone. It was not in our power to mend this state of things by introducing her to British sisters whom we did not know ; nor were we at all aware of her circumstances and objects until we reached Malta. There Captain Bate and I had to pay our respects to the Admiral, Sir William Parker, with whom we lunched. The mail *viâ* Marseilles arrived four days later than our dates from London. To my surprise Sir William gave me a letter enclosed in his bag. This was from Sir Edward Parry, enclosing me a letter from their Governor to Mdle. Schooman, our fellow-passenger, whom nobody knew. Bate and I at once returned to the *Ripon*, to find this lonely girl sitting on the skylight behind the coal-screen, reading.

She was rejoiced to receive her friend's letter, but declined to accept our escort to show her Malta for a few hours. However, the ice was broken, and we were sufficiently introduced to take some interest in her, so that when we reached Alexandria, her name was included in our party of six for filling a vehicle from Cairo to Suez, as was then the route.

We all became deck passengers from Alexandria, through the Mahmodel Canal and up the Nile to Cairo, where, after a few hours at Shephard's Hotel, the first batch of three or four vehicles with pas-



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ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD PARRY.

sengers started soon after sunset for the desert and Suez. Two hours later the second batch started, which included our party, and a third two hours later, so that the same horses, after two hours' rest, went on again at the different stages. Luggage and loading of various descriptions came at the same time on camels, so that during the journey you might see sundry articles of your own on transit, but the owners had no trouble whatever about it. All that you might leave in your cabin at Alexandria, whether a portmanteau, a fiddle, or a tooth-brush, all would be found safe at Suez in due time.

Owing to some mishap to the steamer that was to have taken us on to Ceylon, we had to take up our quarters at the Suez Hotel. It was early in September. The temperature was about the highest of the season. Some of the ladies found it almost beyond endurance. Captain Bate very thoughtfully proposed to the married men that we should engage two large Arab boats, and, dividing our passengers into two parties, he would take charge of one boat and I the other, so that each day after lunch we would run down the Gulf of Suez a few miles and back to tea. The suggestion was carried out, and the trips were highly appreciated by every one, the happy result being to blend all into one harmonious party, instead of continuing our journey a number of unsympathizing sections.

A week, however, of exposure to this climate in September told so severely on even robust young



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CAPTAIN W. T. BATE, commanding H.M.S. *Royalist*, 1849-53.

men, that when the *Precursor* arrived with several officers, invalided after the destructive battle of Chillianwallah (two of whom died on the way up the Red Sea), our party were thankful to take leave of Suez. Middle. Schooman and several cadets (among whom was George Lucas, to whom I had become much attached, and who had been a warm member of our prayer-meetings, and young Hardy) left by another steamer for Bombay.

The *Precursor* did not leave such pleasant recollections on the minds of her passengers as did the *Ripon*. Perhaps the intensity of the heat accounted for much complaint; there was no cooling breeze to refresh you, but a temperature that, without exceeding 90° Fahr., was the same at midnight as mid-day.

Several comparatively strong young men swooned from heat apoplexy, among whom was my own commander, Bate, and I had little hope that he would survive. His hair was cut off close (which I secured under the cover of his Bible to send home to his sisters). He and all like patients (and they were many) were then treated with mustard-poultices on the nape of their neck and muscles of the limbs. Two ladies, one going to Calcutta as a governess, and a European nurse, succumbed before we cleared the Red (hot) Sea.

At Point de Galle (Ceylon) the passengers were transferred to the *Pekin*, Captain Baker, by which we reached our destination (Hong Kong) on Satur-



day, October 20, 1849. Though it was nearly two years since I had left Hong Kong, I was warmly greeted on all sides by Chinese boatmen and girls exclaiming, "Aye yah Pa-si-co; no have seen you long time, you have go England catchee wife?" This latter idea arose from the common custom of merchants paying a visit to the old country on such an errand.

The state and condition of the little *Royalist*, which was now to become our home, was anything but cheering. Still all difficulties had to be faced and put straight in our new commission. Although she was supposed to be ready for sea, Captain Bate saw enough to desire the Admiral's permission to clear her out thoroughly, to smoke her to destroy vermin, and otherwise cleanse her. This being accomplished, we commenced our survey about the approaches to the Canton river above Macao, before tackling our main survey of the Palawan Passage and Island, which was almost a *terra incognita*.

The historian, Robertson, in reference to Columbus's effort to cross the Atlantic, says: "As his course lay through seas which had not been formerly visited, the sounding-line or instruments for observation were continually in his hands." This pretty well describes the anxious position of those who have to form charts of hitherto unmapped coasts; but for the present we were on more frequented regions, which, however, presented ample room for improving the charts in detail. As we were liable to have

some intercourse with the Chinese, we added an interpreter to our staff as a necessary individual.

The Chinese New Year's day in 1850 fell on February 12, according to our calendar, and on that date the ship lay at anchor near the Canton river. To take necessary observations, one officer was detailed to ascend the river about twelve miles in his boat, and to land on the left bank, while I had the similar duty to perform on the right bank, where a steep hill had to be ascended. In the valley at its foot was an extensive inundated flat, where several buffalo were grazing, but no people or habitations were visible till we reached the summit, from which, on the inland side, a large walled town was to be seen.

To provide for anything occurring which might render a precipitate retreat advisable, it was necessary to take notice how to replace the theodolite in its case. We had hardly commenced work before an ominous sound of gongs, tom-toms, and excited voices arose from the town, whence a number of men with bamboos were issuing to menace the *fan-qui* (foreigners) seen on the hill. Holiday festivities were evidently in full swing. The town was crowded with idlers, and, under the circumstances, prudence dictated retreat.

We soon placed ourselves out of their sight by descending toward the valley to return to the boat, where the crew, considering they would have an hour or two to themselves, had landed to wash their clothes. As we descended the hill-side, a crowd

of over a hundred Chinese came out towards the point at the foot of the spur to cut off our retreat.

Presently we heard a musket fired from the boat, and the coxswain, not seeing us, hailed in a voice likely to reach us on a calm morning, "'Roy-a-lists' ahoy!" Then came another shot, and another; but when he saw us, fearing the buffalo might deter us from crossing the flat, he called out, "Never mind the buffalo, sir, but come straight for the boat."

The crew had been taken by surprise, and had barely time to jump into the boat and load their arms, but not with the intention of purposely wounding any one. However, seeing the attempt to cut us off, they aimed at the rock which terminated the point and spur of the hill, so as to intimate that if our pursuers attempted to pass that it would be at their peril. Thus our men kept our retreat open. We floundered through the swamp and into the water to the boat, when the Chinese, having picked up the men's duck-jumpers, returned to the town. We pulled back to the ship, and on our arrival found the other boat had met with a precisely similar reception, even to the loss of the clothes.

The capture of our dunnage was not to be lightly tolerated, so the interpreter was then instructed to write a "chop" to be taken to the head of the village, rebuking him for the rude behaviour of his people, and desiring a written apology and the return of the clothes.

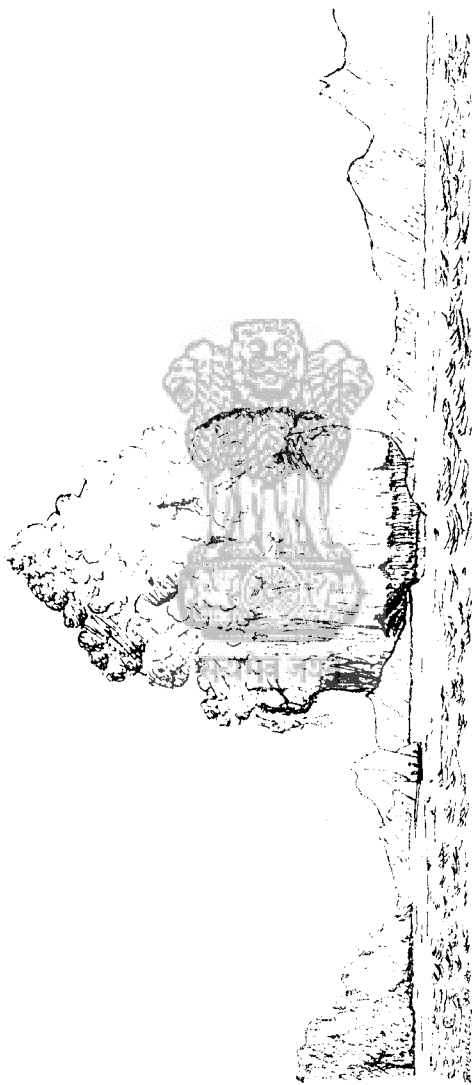
Next morning we returned, with three boats

manned and armed, threatening condign punishment if the terms of the missive were not promptly complied with, explaining to them at the same time that our visit was a peaceful one. The interpreter accompanied me to the scene of offence, and finding a herd-boy out minding cattle, we cut him off and gave him the "chop" to take to the mandarin.

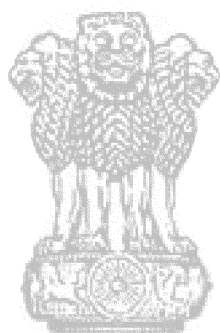
The effect was immediate. The mandarin, without loss of time, returned an apology as well as all the clothes, explaining that some people came in and reported that pirates were approaching, and the town all turned out to drive them off. The next day the other place was visited with like result.

By April 2, 1850, we took our departure from Hong Kong for Palawan, calling at Manilla to rate chronometers, and carry a meridian distance to the north end of Palawan, with the object of commencing a trigonometrical survey of its coast, and fixing the position of the numerous coral patches along that portion of the China Sea.

Palawan is a strip of island about 250 miles in length, but only from ten to twenty miles wide, with a backbone of rugged hills running nearly its entire length, from 1000 to nearly 7000 feet high, the highest being to the south end toward Borneo. It is nominally claimed by Spain, but only the northern appeared to be under its control, this being occupied by settlers from Manilla, who paid tribute to the Spanish authorities, while the southern portion is



MUSHROOM ROCK,  
N.W. coast of Palawan, between Borneo and Manila.



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the home of Malays from Borneo, with whom, I think, the Spaniards do not venture to meddle.

The seat of Spanish government, or the principal town, is on the north-east side of Palawan, and is called Tay Tay. It was then presided over by Señor Alcalde Don Antonio Gimenez. The military establishment consisted of a captain of infantry, first royal regiment, one lieutenant, and two subalterns of the same corps, including rank and file about two hundred men.

The padre in spiritual charge was F. Francisco Avellano, a friendly and intelligent ecclesiastic, from whom we gathered that this place was first settled in A.D. 1600, when the Spaniards erected a stockade, which in a few years was abandoned. The permanent fortress now standing was commenced in 1710, and finished in 1738, as marked on a stone in the interior, bearing the arms over the gateway of Ferdinand and Isabella. There were several gunboats stationed here, under the command of a lieutenant of marine, Don Claudio Montero, whose duty seemed to be to collect revenue.

The population of Tay Tay was about 600, but there were also several small settlements along the coast varying from thirty to fifty inhabitants, each possessing an elevated stockade on a convenient rise near the village, to which the inhabitants could retreat for security and defence in case of attack by pirates, a too frequent occurrence.

Fronting the coast near to Tay Tay are several

precipitous islands of limestone formation ; the form of one reminded us of an elephant, and that of another near it of a castle, so they received the names of "Elephant" and "Castle."

The limestone cliffs on this part of the coast are the abode of myriads of swallows, occupying caves in which they form the nests so highly prized by the Chinese for their glutinous property, therefore these form a valuable export, as well as beeswax, which is also collected in large quantities.

The base of these cliffs on the coast is much waterworn, so that a distance of fifteen or more feet is washed away to a height of about eight feet above water-level, thus forming an overhang where a boat can shelter.

Proceeding down the eastern coast during the first year of our survey, we found a beautiful land-locked harbour which we named Port Royalist. A river poured into it, called by the natives Ewyig. They seemed a very simple race of people, preferring to barter their produce for clothing rather than coin. I visited the village of Ewyig, about four miles up the stream, which I found very tortuous, and having banks densely clothed with heavy timber. Finding the people possessing poultry, which I wished to secure for our sick mess, I inquired the price, when they offered me three for a "bad-io" (a shirt), so, pulling off my jacket and vest, I divested myself of the coveted article, and then replaced my outer garments. On reaching the ship the captain re-



marked, "Holloa! what has become of your shirt, Pasco?"

"Lads," I said, calling to the men in the boat, "pass up my shirt," and the three fat hens coming over the side told the story of the barter.

During the following year we were on the opposite coast of the island, and though the distance across is not much more than ten miles, the high range intervening seemed to forbid communication.

Noticing some natives on the western shore, I went in with the boat to cultivate their acquaintance. Seeing us approaching, one man displayed something on a staff to act for a white flag, which I presumed might be his emblem of peace. I therefore exhibited a white kerchief in response, but on nearing the shore this white flag was removed from the staff and put over the owner's shoulders *à la* shirt, and on closer acquaintance I recognized it as once my property, though it had been a stranger to soap all the year. I inquired where he obtained it, and he told me from Ewyig, so we concluded there must be a pass through the range. I then presented him with a piece of soap, which it is to be hoped was well used in the wash-house. This incident suggested the name of "Shirt" for the tongue of land.

Continuing down the eastern coast toward the south end of Palawan, we passed the limit of Spanish (or rather Bissayan) settlers, and for several miles saw no natives. A group at last were seen from my boat on the beach one forenoon, and from their dress



[To face p. 244.]

A NATIVE OF PALAWAN.

and appearance we concluded they were Malay. A heavy surf on the beach rendered it unsafe to attempt to run the boat in, so we anchored at a safe distance outside the surf and hoisted the British red ensign, which we concluded would be known to them. Immediately the flag was unfurled they all ran into the jungle, returning well armed with sundry angry demonstrations. Pointing to the flag, I inquired, did they not know it?

They did not know the country, but they did the colour, which they accepted as a challenge; but, pointing to their head-dresses, which were white turbans, they said, "We are for peace."

I replied, if that was the case I would be as white as they, so substituting a white kerchief for the obnoxious red flag, I told them we were Egris (English).

"Do you know Tuan Brooke?" they inquired.

"He is a friend of mine," I replied.

They then faced round from the boat, and raising their weapons, threw them into the jungle, and turning again to us with their hands upheld to show they were unarmed, invited us to land as friends.

Leaving the crew in the boat, and taking my interpreter, Ramme Sammie, with me, we swam through the surf, and were met by two men in the water to help us on shore. The Datu, whose name was Tammi, conducted us to his house, about half-a-mile from the shore. The way was through dense jungle and across a rapid stream which comes pouring

down from Mantalcengahan mountain, which is nearly seven thousand feet high, and only eight miles from the shore. We were received with every demonstration of friendship, and invited to partake of their hospitality. They said they had never seen a ship before, and had only heard from traders who visit them from Borneo of one white rajah whose character, as conveyed to them, was so pure that they were ready to accept any of his nation as friends.

This shows, or should show us, how important one's example may be in the presence of strange people.

Having some tracts with me in the Surat character, and finding that Tammi the Datu could read it, I gave them to him, he gratefully accepting and promising to read them. He remarked that he had heard that the English Rajah Brooke, being at that time the sole representative of the nation to whom he could make reference, had only one tongue (*satu-bee-long*), implying that he was a man who always spoke the truth; his word was his bond; if he made a promise he kept it; and he wished his countrymen were like that. This seemed a glorious opening for a mission field, and I asked, "If one of my countrymen will come and teach you our ways, will you receive him kindly?"

"If *you* will come" (placing his hand on my shoulder), "you shall have as much of my land as you may require," was the answer.

This was a great temptation. To throw up my commission in the Navy and take up my abode with

them, was, however, not in my power; but I told him that the books I had given him would enable him to obtain some ideas of the secret of our speaking the truth.

After spending a few days in their neighbourhood, engaging their services to cut firewood for the ship, we worked south till it was time to cross the China Sea to Singapore to recruit and provision.

Returning four months later, we nearly suffered shipwreck on the north point of Balabac Island (Cape Disaster), and finding an apparently deserted village up a stream we had ascended, we left some similar tracts to those I had given Tammi at Tacbolobo. These I left in a canoe in payment for the water, and went on about our business, working northward towards Tacbolobo, which was about sixty miles distant.

We had then been absent from the ship four days, but had not worked the boat twenty miles from Cape Disaster, when in a narrow channel through which I must pass we fell in with six Malay boats. They looked very suspicious, having laid themselves abreast each other with their sterns to the shore, so that they presented a rather formidable battery of six guns, having one in each bow. Prudence dictated to make preparation for possible trouble; so we hove-to while our carronade, which we had kept as ballast in the bottom of the boat, was mounted and loaded in readiness. We then continued our course up the channel toward the strangers, who seemed

busily engaged in landing their cargo. Heaving-to when I reached within hail, I inquired who they were?

"We are men of Balabac," was the reply.

We then told them we were English, and asked, "What are you afraid of?"

"If you are English, we are not afraid now," they answered; "but when we first saw you, we did not know who you were." Never having seen a European boat and canvas sails before, we were a bit of a puzzle to them.

Having assured them they had nothing to fear from us, the chief was invited to come alongside me, which he did with his vessel. He told me that two days ago he saw a ka-pel prang (large ship) at sea, and asked me, "Could I tell him, was that Pasco's ship?" He was speaking in Malay, and my name so distinctly spoken astonished my boat's crew as well as myself. But I was satisfied he had communicated with Tammi at Tacbolobo, where he admitted he had been to trade. I replied that not only was the ship he had seen, Pasco's ship, but that I was Pasco. He at once sprang into my boat, and, grasping my hand, exclaimed, "Bargoose, Captain Pasco" (bargoose signifying "very good").

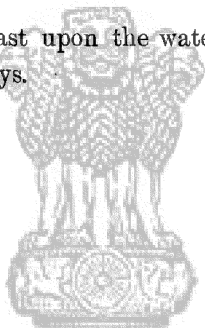
He then told me that I had given Tammi some books, and asked had I any I would give him. This convinced me that Tammi valued the gift, and that this man had seen them and coveted the

like. I said, "You tell me you come from Balabac. I went up a river there, and found the village shut up, and a canoe covered up under cocoa-nut trees."

"That is my village," he replied; "these are my people, and that is my canoe."

"When you reach home, my friend," I told him, "you will find some books similar to Tammi's in the canoe."

So my bread cast upon the waters came back to me after many days.



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## CHAPTER XVIII

1850—1851

On the western coast of Palawan—"Ware hawks!"—The Lannu pirates—A quiet watch—Sighting the pirates—A slight miscalculation—One boat and three cartridges against a fleet—Discretion the better part of valour—The chase—A dire extremity—Shaking out the ensign—A dead stop—Turning the tables—A vanished foe—On the look-out—Into the hornet's nest—Trapped—Making the best of it—Up the river—A very tight corner—A fortunate get-away—A visit in state—The General's coat—The Sultan at home—Exchanging courtesies with cut-throats—On delicate ground—The great klang—An anxious wait—"Off with his head"—A graceful act—"From an old enemy to a new friend"—"All's well that ends well"—Retreat cave—A record in stone.

CONTINUING my narrative of the Palawan survey and the incidents arising out of it, I may remark that until our visit to Tacbolobo we were not aware that Malays occupied any portion of Palawan; but in the following year, when we commenced the survey of the western coast, beginning at the northern end, we then learned why these Manilla or Bissayan people erected something intended for a defence at every village.



Having left the *Royalist* at anchor outside the north end of Endeavour Strait, we pulled through it in the gig with Captain Bate, Dr. Johnstone, Mr. M. Milman, Purser Johnny Collinson, master's assistant, and five seamen in the crew. We steered south into Malampaya Sound till we reached a small settlement called Pancol, in the north-east corner of the ground. Thence we pulled up a small creek, which would take us within three or four miles of the capital, Tay Tay, on the east coast. Leaving the boat and crew in the creek, we landed and walked to Tay Tay, where we were hospitably received by the officials.

Returning next afternoon to our boat, and calling at Pancol about 5 p.m., with the intention of proceeding toward the ship, we were informed by the villagers that one of their fishermen had reported that morning a fleet of Lammu pirates on the coast, which they expected would attack them during the night, and begged we would remain the night to protect them. Not believing there were pirates so far from Sooloo or Borneo as this, the only reason I could assign to such a request was that they were glad to have some visitors with them for a change, but on telling the captain their report, he said very kindly, "Never mind, if it will gratify them, we will stop and set a watch for the night."

Accordingly we divided the crew into watches of two hours apiece, and I, for one, went to sleep,

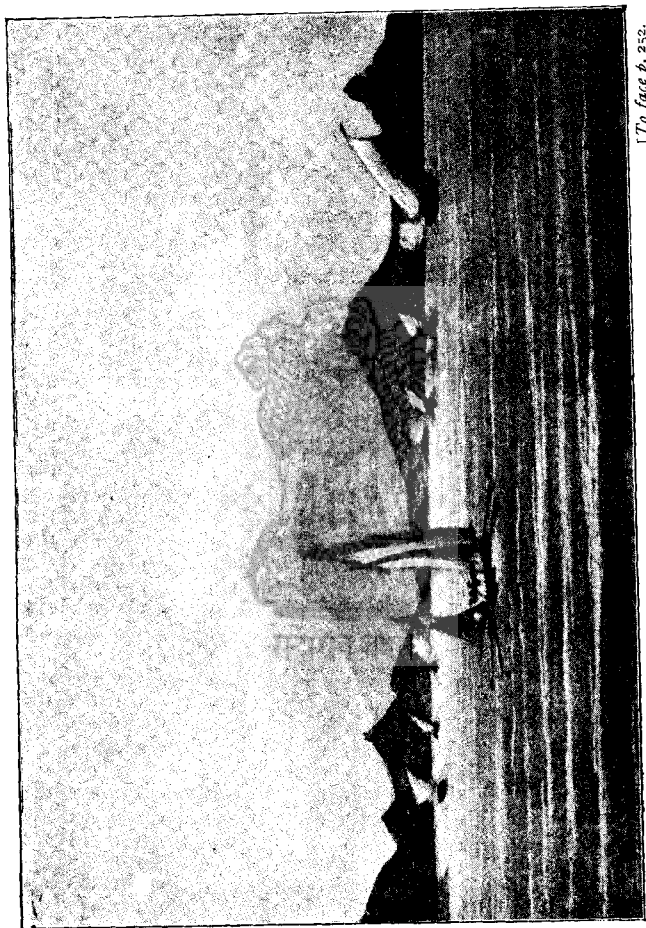
not believing there was any foundation for their alarm, although their sentry in the stockade kept up a vigorous call of "Alerto!" throughout the night. Daylight broke, but no enemy, as I had predicted, having appeared, I suggested to the captain that we should boil the "billy," have a pannikin of cocoa, and move on.

By the time the sun was up on this lovely calm morning we were on our oars, with the mast up, ready to take advantage of a breeze when it came. While this was being "whistled for," we pulled easily across the Sound among beautiful woody islets in a westerly direction, till we could open Endeavour Strait to turn north for the ship, about twelve or fourteen miles distant. Presently, Captain Bate asked me to give him his glass, which was under my seat as I steered. Looking across the Sound to the west, under the high land about two and a half miles from us, he exclaimed as he pointed in that direction, "There are those rascals; steer for them."

I ventured to remark, "If they are the Lannu that the Spaniards expected, I would suggest reaching the ship as quickly as possible for a reinforcement."

"There are only a few blackfellows in two or three canoes," said the captain, "and surely we will be a match for them, so give way, men."

In order not to delay the men at their oars, the doctor and purser proceeded to load the muskets,



[To face p. 232.]

PURSUED BY PIRATES.

so as to have them ready for instant action, but found that the ammunition had all got wet during our absence, and that the balls attached to the cartridges were alone of service. But with the powder remaining in our private flasks we contrived to load three muskets, which dear Bate thought ample.

The crew bent to their oars with a will, till the captain, still watching with his glass, saw what he had hitherto mistaken for cliffs to be five large war prahus, with an elevated deck, each mounting thereon a long brass piece. He now admitted that I was right. "But," he said, "don't let the fellows think we are afraid of them; alter your course gradually round to the north as if we took no notice of them."

By this time we were not much more than a mile from them, and immediately our head began to turn, they set up, as with one voice, a terrific yell as from a pack of four hundred wolves, for that, we afterwards ascertained, was the number in these vessels. Each large prahu was pulling forty oars below, and thirty on the upper deck, while what the captain had supposed were canoes had forty in each.

They came after us at such a prodigious pace that we longed for a fair breeze to assist our oars. A breeze did spring up, but so dead fair that the immense mat sails of the prahus had the benefit of it before we felt it, and the odds became pain-

fully against us. Our dear Chief, whose faith never failed him, encouraged the crew to pull their best, as though it depended on their exertion. "But don't forget, boys," he added, "there is a God above us who knows our need, and will deliver us if He sees fit."

As soon as they got, as they supposed, within range, the leading prahus opened fire. Their shot at first fell short of us, but soon they whizzed over our heads, cutting up the water ahead of us. Captain Bate had decided not to waste our three charges until they had got hold of us. Noticing that our ensign (St. George's Cross) was hanging becalmed against the mizzen, that they should not suppose we had struck our colours, I desired Collinson to reach up and shake the fly of the ensign to the breeze. He did so, and had a hundred blunderbusses been discharged in their faces, the pirates could not have been more staggered, for they immediately lowered their sails and gave up the chase.

We were then in a narrow strait, and no ship in sight, but the captain took advantage of the armistice to spell the men's arms by running their oars across. The Malays seeing this conjectured that we desired to decoy them into a trap, and that possibly when we passed the point of the strait they would find a whole fleet of men-of-war there. They did not exactly "flee from the boar before the boar pursued," but they were sufficiently

on their guard to send forward two unmasted prahus, each carrying forty men, to follow us at a respectful distance.

As we passed the point at the entrance to the channel the scouts did not follow, but landed men to crawl over the sandhills and see what was beyond. What they saw was a little bark at anchor with her sails loosed to dry, which probably made her look larger; but, like the timid spies who crossed Jordan and reported Jericho as an impregnable place, these brave marauders made their way back with their alarming report.

Perhaps it was as well for them that they did, for within an hour of leaving them we were back in the strait with our four boats carrying in all forty men, a carronade and a rocket-tube, besides small-arms, but they had vanished. Meanwhile the ship worked down to the southward, outside the island which forms the strait, so that if the boats succeeded in driving them down south, we should have them between us. Had they followed us to the ship, which would have been quite unprepared for such a visit, our sixty all told would have had a tough task against a well-armed four hundred. We blockaded the southern strait for the night, with the ship anchored in mid-channel, and the boats spread on each side to watch they did not get out; and in the morning we took the boats down to Pancel, where we first heard of them, to make further inquiry as to their lair or rendezvous.

Our friends told us that when these rascals see a man-of-war they slink into a hiding-place where it was difficult to follow, and which we had not then discovered. We found it afterwards, and named it "Pirate Bay."

The Spaniards also told us that there was a large settlement of Malays toward the south end of Palawan on the west side, called Malanut, presided over by a Sultan.

Our surveying had to be conducted now along this coast, the ship taking the off-shore soundings during the day, and the boats triangulating along the coast from six every morning until they met the ship again towards evening. A sharp look-out was therefore kept, in the daily expectancy of meeting these fellows again, though the reason of their fear on seeing our flag was not then known to us.

Seeing nothing of them on our way south for about six weeks, I began to fancy there was no such place as Malanut, until one afternoon, seeking water for the ship, I pulled into a small river that was salt at the entrance, and having gone up a mile, to my horror I saw a large Malay boat full of men come in astern of me. I remarked to my crew that I feared we were in a hornet's nest, but as we could not attempt to escape past them down the narrow stream, it struck me that the safest plan was to put a bold face on it, and tell them who we were, and that I had some idea who they were.

"Hullo!" I shouted as they came within hail, "this place Malanut?"

"It is," was the answer.

"Is the Sultan about?"

"He is."

We were certainly in a tight corner, but as the boat came alongside I told the chief, whose rank was indicated by his dress, that I was from a ka-pel prang Egris (a British man-of-war), and going to pay my Chief's respects to the Sultan.

This individual told me the Sultan was his father, and he would be happy to take me up to him. "In for a penny, in for a pound," I thought; we must go through with it now whatever happens. Fight was out of the question except in the last extremity, where it might come to selling our lives as dearly as possible, but for the present I deemed it best to "let the fox's skin eke out the lion's hide," so with a cheerful face but an anxious heart I prepared to accompany my Malay friend—or enemy.

After a short pull we reached the town, an extensive place, having a building-yard for constructing piratical prahus; just such a place as Malludu was, that we had destroyed in Borneo, five years before.

On nearing the village, my royal guide pulled ahead of me, and landed at a jetty, inviting me to do likewise, adding that the Sultan lived further up, and he would walk up with me.

"Not if I know it," I thought. "It is hardly good enough to leave my crew and go through the jungle



with this pirate," so, hitting upon a lively ruse, I told him that as it was getting late, and I must reach my ship by sunset, I must return, and now I knew the place, my Chief would come himself to-morrow in person, instead of doing the honours by a deputy. But the fellow made a sudden grab at the stem of my boat, saying, "You can't go now." Then followed an order in Malay, sharply delivered, and about a dozen of his men ran off, I knew not for what, but the only thing that occurred to me as wanting were as many swords as there were heads to remove.

"Lads," said I to my crew, "we are decidedly in a fix, but keep cool, and don't move without an order."

Fortunately our suspense was not long, for the Malays presently returned laden with the most acceptable presents they could offer to a crew on salt provisions, viz. fruits and vegetables in a great variety, as much as we could well carry. Then we were at liberty to depart, and, after thanking our friends for their gifts, very glad we were to show them the stern of the boat as we retreated down the river to meet the ship standing in for the coast looking for us. We reached alongside before she came to an anchor, and the captain, seeing the extraordinary load we had in the boat, exclaimed, "Hullo! where have you been to get those good things?"

The doctor rejoiced to see specifics for his



H.M.S. *Royalist* ON A CORAL REEF.

[To face p. 268.]

scorbutic cases, such as he did not possess in his pharmacopœia, and in reply to the pile of queries from all sides I told them, "This is the head-quarters of those fellows who chased us in June."

Then I went down to narrate our adventure, and to detail how I had escaped by proceeding to pay my captain's respects to the Sultan, and, knowing that they deserved to be cut up root and branch, they gave me the fruits as a peace-offering. Then I further explained how I had engaged the captain to call on the Sultan in the morning.

"Indeed," said the captain, "then we will all go up in state, and if the Sultan shows himself a friend we will give him the General's coat."

Now our military Commander-in-Chief in China at that time was General Stavely, who had been on Wellington's staff at Waterloo, and this coat of scarlet, richly embroidered with oak-leaf pattern on cuffs and collar, and having gold epaulettes, had been worn by young Stavely in 1815.

On our departure from China, he, in a merry mood, gave us this coat to be bestowed on any chief we might meet worthy to wear such a gorgeosity, and that chief we had not yet found.

Preparations for our visit were soon made. Ramme Sammie, the steward, was to act as interpreter, and carry the coat carefully wrapped in tissue-paper, and in the morning the party started in state to carry out my promise.

Arriving at the landing with all our boats, with

colours flying and officers in uniform, my friend of yesterday met us to conduct us to the audience-chamber of his Highness. This we found to be a spacious hall of wood, erected on piles, and the Sultan was sitting *à la Turk* on an ottoman at one end of the hall, with chairs on either side for our accommodation. The two sides and end of the hall were lined with Malays (about one hundred) under arms as a body-guard. After the formalities of introduction were gone through, which were nothing remarkable, we inquired of his population.

He replied that it was about three thousand, but, he added, all were not at home just then. Oh, yes; his Highness had heard of piracy on the coast, and he had sent out a fleet to intercept them.

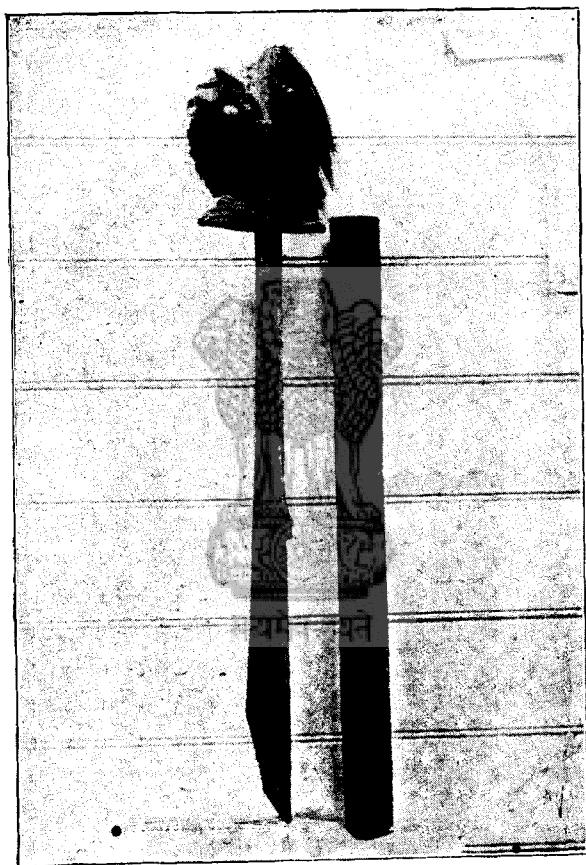
On inquiring the strength of his fleet, he described precisely the force we had met in Malampaya Sound, but we did not allude to that incident. We then asked what part of Borneo he came from?

"From Malludu," he replied.

"Now I begin to see daylight," I thought. "This accounts for the magic effect of the white ensign on his virtuous fleet, sent out to suppress piracy. Being staggered by the sight of the flag which had made its power so sharply felt five years before, they did not care to provoke another collision."

I then asked his regal Sultanship did he know Sheriff Ousman?

"He was my cousin," said his Highness, "but he is dead now."



[To face p. 260

THE GREAT KLANG.

I then told him we had understood that he was badly wounded in the neck at the destruction of Malludu, but we had not heard of his death.

"Were you there?" the Sultan excitedly inquired.

("What a fool you were to allude to that," said dear Bate; "depend upon it there will be mischief now.")

"I hope not, but I cannot help it if there is," I replied. "He has asked the question, and I must tell the truth.") "Yes, I was there," I answered.

Without further remark the Sultan turned to his armour-bearer, standing behind him, and desired him to bring from the armoury a klang (large sword) that was in that engagement.

My dear captain quietly remarked to me, "Depend upon it, he is going to have your head off now, and we cannot help you."

It was certainly a painful suspense, and it culminated when the messenger returned with a ponderous weapon in a wooden scabbard. The hilt was decorated with a bunch of bells and four tufts of human hair dyed in blood. In the hands of an expert wielder it would have made short work of an unfortunate victim, but instead of exclaiming, "Off with his head; so much for Buckingham!" his Highness, who had never read Shakespeare, and therefore lacked the force of example, took the great klang by the blade, and handed me the hilt, begging my acceptance of it as from an old enemy to a new friend.

This display of chivalry fully entitled him to the General's coat, which was now produced, and he was asked, when presented with it, to promise that if any foreign vessel came to grief on his dangerous coast, he would render them assistance. This he undertook faithfully to do, though we knew their practice had been to plunder the vessel and either murder or make slaves of the crew. The coat was put on, and he certainly never looked so much like a Sultan before. It evidently greatly delighted his people round the hall. And so we parted in peace from old enemies, the escapees from Malludu which we had destroyed in August 1845.

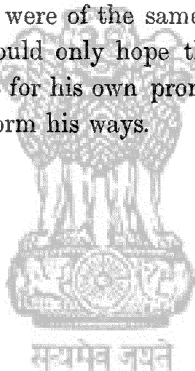
But they were the same in seed, breed, and character, notwithstanding their recent friendliness, for on returning northward after this eventful visit, we ascertained at Mindoro Island that about a fortnight before we fell in with them they had plundered the village of Paloan on the west side of Mindoro, carrying off some men and women into slavery, who must have been on board when we met them. One man at Paloan exhibited his wounds received in his unsuccessful effort to rescue his wife. At Bacuit also, a village on the west coast of Palawan, near the north end of the island, we were conducted up the cliff about thirty feet to a cave called Retreat Cave, on the limestone rock of which was a tastefully-designed record of the arrival of six piratical boats at 3 p.m., Wednesday, May 5, 1825.

The last line was somewhat indistinct, and probably

wished death to the Moors, as the Malays were styled, but in its entirety it ran :

“El dia miercoles  
5=de Mais de a—  
No de 1825 ; a las 3  
Pr. la tarde : cuando  
Llego los 6 embarcacion  
R t te Moo oo.”

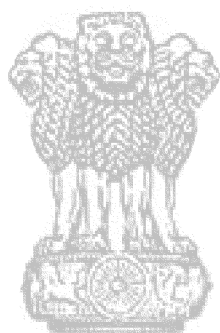
That our hosts were of the same kidney we could not doubt, and could only hope that respect for his own safety, if not for his own promise, would induce the Sultan to reform his ways.







VILLAGE OF BACUIT,  
North-west Coast of Palawan.



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## CHAPTER XIX

1851—1852

Palawan survey (continued)—A spell at Hong Kong—Back to the work—Stranding of the *Royalist*—Afloat again—A visit to Tacbolobo—Back for repairs—A remembrance of Franklin—On sick-list—Invalided—Ordered home—Taking leave of old friends—A hearty send-off—Homeward bound once more—Not wanted on Arctic service.

AFTER spending from April to September in each year on the survey of the Palawan Passage, a visit to Singapore to recruit and refit was an agreeable change for a few weeks.

Meeting here H.M.S. *Lily*, Captain Tench Bedford, a very old friend of mine, and H.M.S. *Sphinx*, Captain C. Shadwell, an old and much-esteemed friend of both Captain Bate and myself, this stay in 1850 formed a peculiarly agreeable break in the rather dull monotony of our service. However, the most pleasant holiday comes to an end, and on October 10, as the *Sphinx* was bound to Hong Kong and the *Royalist* returning to Palawan, Shadwell gave us

a friendly tug out of port, casting us off at 6 p.m. with a hearty farewell, while we pursued our way for a further season of solitude.

This was relieved a fortnight later by meeting a Liverpool ship, the *Sappho*, bound to Hong Kong, whose companionship we enjoyed for a week, till our courses diverged; she going to the north for China, and we to pick up the land for an anchorage between Balabac and Palawan.

But as we approached the land towards the evening of October 28, the weather set in thick and squally, obscuring the coast-line, so that after sunset the hope of finding an anchorage was abandoned, and the course changed to stand out for the night.

Unfortunately the change was just too late, for as the helm was put down, breakers were heard though they were not visible, and before the ship had well answered her helm, she struck heavily on a coral reef. The sails were instantly hove aback without avail. Boats were lowered down, a kedge laid out astern, and the chain brought to the capstan and hove taut, to no purpose except that it prevented her being driven further on to the reef. The pinnace was then hoisted out, and the topgallant-masts sent on deck.

At 10 p.m. the weather partially cleared, and the north point of Balabac (which we now named Cape Disaster) was seen ahead, the reef on which we lay fringing the shore for nearly a mile from the beach.

The ship thumped heavily throughout the night,

and frequently lifted the rudder off the pintles, but she made no water, nor did she show any sign of weakness.

At midnight we "spliced the main brace," by issuing to the crew a half allowance of rum, and then worked on till 2.30. a.m., securing the boats on the lee side of the ship. Finding the tide falling, so that for a time, at all events, she would lie quiet, we "piped down," which means that the crew could go to their hammocks after rather hard work.

At 5.30 a.m. the ship was aground fore and aft, and we constructed a raft with spare spars, topgallant-mast, studding-sail-booms, and mizzentop-mast on the lee side of the ship. We cleared the holds, loaded the raft with wet provisions, and put the guns overboard on the reef with buoys to show their position.

At 9 a.m. the ship suddenly fell over to port  $15^{\circ}$ , and then gradually to  $25^{\circ}$  inclination. A shoot was next constructed from the bow on to the reef, which was dry at low water, and the ballast (iron pigs) was shot in a heap ahead of the ship.

The anchor being out astern and the cable taut, the vessel could receive no injury from the ballast if she floated with the rising tide. The men had a good time at low water, rambling over the reef collecting coral shells and curios. An extra allowance of lime-juice was mixed in a large tub for them to quench their thirst at pleasure. With the exception of two tons, all the water was emptied out of the tanks to further lighten the ship.

After 5 p.m. on the 29th, with the rising tide, the ship resumed her activity by vigorously kicking the reef with her keel, to the certain destruction of the latter, and continued the exercise all night, the masts trembling alarmingly. It seemed we were on hard and fast, so we piped down again, and I had ensconced myself in the captain's easy-chair to snatch a necessary sleep, when, towards 2 a.m., she gave one or two unusually heavy thumps, which brought dear Bate out of his bunk with a cry of, "What do you think of that?"

I was too sleepy at the moment to think anything of that, but he sprang on deck, and was rejoiced to find that it had been the vessel's parting kicks, as she had swung off the reef afloat to her anchor.

I was on deck pretty smartly after him, and soon roused up the crew for another brief turn of work. The cable was shifted from the stern to the bow and securely moored, and we then piped down again, the carpenter having sounded the well and found she had not made an inch of water by leak; so much for a solid teak bottom. No iron ship, and few wooden ones, would have stood such a bumping and have remained seaworthy.

After breakfast, the fellows turned to with a will to clean out the holds and restow them, recover the guns and ballast, dismantle the raft, and stow the spars. On the site of our disaster we picked up in one piece nearly twelve feet of the keel which had

been wrenched off, and five weeks later used it to repair the capstan, which had been damaged when weighing anchor in a heavy sea-way.

After leaving Cape Disaster, in working up north towards Tacbolobo on the south-east coast of Palawan, several prahus were met, engaged in trade, landing rice, principally for the northern part of Borneo and Sooloo. Beeswax and tortoiseshell are also sent to Sooloo; linen, iron, and brass wire being the trade used in exchange.

While the cutter was inshore surveying, some of my Tacbolobo friends kindly inquired, was Tuan Pasco there? and as the ship approached next day, a friendly offering in the shape of a few melons was brought to me. On landing we were met by the Datu Tammi and about twenty others, among whom was a Malay from Malludu, named Sheriff Hassen, who stepped forward and presented a commendatory letter from Rajah Sir James Brooke, of which the following is a copy:

“ *H.M.S. Meander,*  
*Malludu Bay, Dec. 9, 1848.*

“The bearer, Sheriff Hassen, is a well-disposed and quiet person, exercising considerable influence in Malludu Bay and its vicinity. He has engaged to advance a legitimate commerce, and to assist any Europeans that may be distressed.

(Signed) J. BROOKE,  
Commissioner.



[To face p. 270.

LADY FRANKLIN.



This, I had no doubt, was the man who had made such a favourable report of the white rajah, upon the strength of which Tammi described him as having but one tongue.

From Tacbolobo we worked northward, sounding over very uneven bottom, passing from seventeen to thirty fathoms, then over a large patch with only six fathoms on it about ten miles from the shore, and then into twenty and thirty-five fathoms mud bottom. The cutter, which had been inshore surveying, returned at 6 p.m., reporting an important-looking opening on the coast, west of the ship, which might be a river.

The next day being Sunday, we remained quietly at anchor, but on Monday morning the captain and I, with two days' provision in the gig and cutter, left to examine the possible river. A light breeze off the land brought a delightful fragrance of honeysuckle, but the opening proving to be only a mangrove creek, we left the mosquitoes in undisputed possession. A very unpleasant piece of coast-line was this, lacking secure anchorages, and as our damaged keel spoilt our sailing qualities, it increased our anxiety in our endeavour to beat to windward to reach the only snug haven, Port Royalist. When it was reached, a stormy night forbade our entering, so under small sails we kept the sea till next day, when we were thankful to accept the shelter of this snug port and repair various damages aloft.

It was now time for us to shape a course for Hong

Kong, where our little bark could be docked for repair. Hither, therefore, we sailed, and when the ship was docked, the sight her bottom presented made it a marvel that she should have continued her work so satisfactorily for three months after her mishap.

It was while lying at Hong Kong that the mail-steamer for Suez came in at the western entrance on February 15, bringing me the portrait of Sir John Franklin, appearing on an earlier page, which his devoted wife had kindly sent me.

The *Enterprise*, Captain R. Collinson, C.B., entered by the Lyemoon Pass from Behring Sea to provision and recruit, as the season was too far advanced to prosecute the search for the Franklin expedition that year, while McClure in the *Investigator* (Collinson's consort), having entered the ice before the *Enterprise* arrived, wintered in the ice.

It was a great treat for dear Bate to enjoy the companionship of his old commander until April 2, when Collinson took his departure for Behring Strait, to be ice-bound for the next three years, but then to bring his ship home, while his consort, which had not seen him since they parted company near the Pacific end of Magellan Straits in April 1850, had been imprisoned in the Bay of Marcy until she was abandoned in 1853, never to return.

The repairs to the *Royalist* being completed, she started again to resume her survey of Palawan, being towed out of Hong Kong by H.M.S. *Reynard*,

Captain Peter Cracroft, on April 23, 1851, but the continuous exposure and incessant work so told on my constitution, that in October, while refitting at Singapore on the 21st, I was suddenly stricken down with a severe attack of illness, and taken by my old Port Essington friend, George Windsor Earl, to his quarters at Campong Glaur, and tenderly nursed by his kind wife. I had only been there a few days when H.M.S. *Amazon* arrived, Captain Charles Barker, the senior naval officer in the Straits of Malacca. He was an old friend, who had not seen me since he was a boy more than twenty years before. He was so shocked at my appearance that he said at once, "You must be invalided; I will send my surgeon to consult with you at once."

The medical decision was that I must leave, and that to continue surveying duties would certainly be fatal. This brought dear Bate to my bedside, under the impression that I had suggested such a course to the senior officer, for he met me with an injured expression, saying :

"I thought, Pasco, that you and I knew each other well enough to make any intervention unnecessary if you wanted to leave."

I assured him that I had never thought of such a thing, but that Captain Barker, who had not seen me since I was a ruddy youth, was alarmed at my state.

Bate then suggested that I should go with him

up the China Sea to Hong Kong during the cool season, doing no duty, and asked if the doctor made no objection, would I consent?

"Certainly," I told him, and on November 6 we again sailed for Palawan.

When Christmas Eve came round we were lying becalmed about ten miles west of Mindoro Island, and the doctor consented to my going under his care, well protected by a double awning over a mattress in the stern-sheets of the gig, that I might interview the natives either in Spanish or in Biscayan language, to secure a buffalo and some pigs for Christmas fare for the crew.

We reached the shore, after a hot pull of two hours, at half-past three p.m., and were met by about twenty natives, who promised to bring in poultry and vegetables, and to kill a buffalo. The village of Paloan consisted of the wrecks of half-a-dozen huts, the largest of which may be termed the town-hall, where the chief functionary received us. It contained an old wooden chair for the chief magistrate, I presume, and an ominous-looking stocks.

They gave an indistinct account of a visit paid to them in the previous May by a pirate fleet, consisting of seven prahus, with probably four hundred men. They killed one man and plundered his farm, and carried off captive one man and five women, and plundered their huts.

One of the women was the wife of a young man,



*[To face p. 274.]*

LIEUT. PASCO.

who exhibited the wounds he had received in his endeavours to rescue his wife.

This, I remembered, was the story related to us after our return from our visit of state to the Sultan of Malanut, and no doubt the mauraders were identical with those who chased our boat three weeks afterwards in Malampaya Sound.

Proceeding up the China Sea, we passed Luzon in the Philippines, and in latitude 18° N. we met the north-east monsoon so strong, so cold, so bracing and invigorating, that I felt my health improve as suddenly as it had left me in the previous October. I therefore resumed duty, and desired to continue, but the doctor would not listen to the suggestion, and at Hong Kong, on February 7, a medical board pronounced me unfit to continue surveying work in the tropics. I was, however, permitted, as it was the cool season, to accompany the ship to Whampoa, to assist in completing my share of the chart of Palawan, which was accomplished on February 20, leaving me a week to prepare for the departure of the mail-steamer from Hong Kong.

As a memento of China, I took the opportunity of getting my portrait painted by a Chinese artist, without letting my shipmates know that I was getting it done; the artist had only three sittings, and on my last day at Whampoa the captain and I dined with the Vice-consul, Mr. Bird, on board his lorch. During our absence from the ship, my artist came on board with my portrait boxed up.

"What have you there?" inquired one of the officers. "First lieutenant's facee," was his reply; so he had to exhibit it, and several, including the petty officers and some of the crew, expressed unqualified approval, and asked, "had it been paid for?"

"No," replied the Chinaman, "my wanchee money, ten dollars."

That was soon subscribed, and a letter presenting the portrait was placed on my drawers with it for me to see when I reached my cabin after all had gone to bed.

This was my last night in that cabin, which had been my home for nearly two and a half years. Often when we contemplate pleasure in the foreground, we neglect to consider the cost. The approaching day for my leaving the *Royalist* and proceeding to England, I had looked forward to with pleasure, and received the congratulations of my shipmates at the prospect of meeting friends at home.

However, as noon, the hour of my departure, drew near, very different feelings prevailed, and gladly would I have exchanged places with any who were remaining in the ship. I do not remember ever feeling so intensely the pain of leave-taking. Certainly my ill-health might to some extent account for it; but I knew the feeling of warm regard was mutual.

Thus when we were about to go over the side of



[To face p. 276.]

CHARLES SHADWELL, K.C.B., Commander of H.M.S. *Sphinx*,  
China, February, 1852 ; Commander-in-Chief, China, 1872.



the boat, manned by a volunteer crew of sixteen men, chiefly petty officers, I shook hands with several of the crew; and the captain, who was coming with me to Canton to join the steamer *Firefly*, to take me to Hong Kong, took occasion to remind the second master, who was left as commanding officer, of a recent Admiralty order forbidding any demonstration on an officer leaving a ship, remarking, as the crew seemed inclined to run up the rigging, "You had better pipe down," thus sending every one below.

We shoved off, but the oars were scarcely in the water before the crew were in the rigging, giving such a hearty farewell cheer that dear Bate could not be angry at such a disobedience of orders, but gracefully acknowledged the compliment by "tossing" the oars. But it was too much for me; I thoroughly broke down while dear Bate held my hand firmly with true sympathy. Then the Chinese boat-people, ascertaining the cause of the cheer, took up the demonstration, and carried it on with volleys of crackers from their boats right up the river.

On reaching the *Firefly*, Bate would not take leave, and kindly came down with me to Hong Kong, sending the pinnacle back to the ship, but allowing my boy, William Bray, to come also.

Reaching Hong Kong at 4 a.m., we learnt that the *Sphinx*, Captain Shadwell, had arrived, so taking a sampan we went on board.

We went quietly up the starboard side, telling the midshipman of the watch who we were, and we would not disturb Captain Shadwell, but lie down on his lockers till he got up in the morning. But Captain Shadwell had heard the boat come alongside, and wondered who could be its passengers. His wonder increased when he found us noiselessly descending the ladder to his cabin, and heard Bate say in a whisper, "You take that locker, and I will take this." Having sat up all the previous night, we were soon fast asleep, no doubt causing Shadwell to wonder still more at our cool impudence in thus quartering ourselves on him. About 6 a.m., a midshipman came in with a lanthorn to report daylight. "Bring the light here," hastily called out Shadwell as he jumped out of bed. This disturbed both of us, and springing to our feet we were met with Shadwell's cry of recognition as he shook an accusing finger first at Bate and then at me.

"Ha, ah ! jolly burglar and petty larcenist !" But our crimes were soon overlooked, and we were made heartily welcome.

I spent the day with Bate and Shadwell, and slept on board the *Sphinx*; but at 6 a.m. on February 28, took leave of all my friends and my boy Bray; and in the sampan of my old friend Chuenpee left the *Sphinx*, as she steamed ahead on her way to Whampoa.

My spirits were now indeed at a low ebb, as I

noted in my journal that day, "May the Lord ever go with dear Bate and all these shipmates I am leaving."

After taking my passage home by the mail-steamer, I spent the morning with Dr. and Mrs. Balfour at Hong Kong, enjoying a delightful season of prayer, and at noon repaired on board the P and O. s.s. *Malta*, Captain Potts.

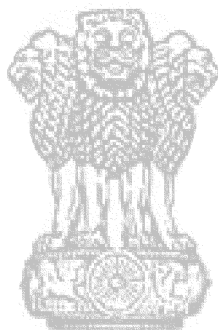
At 2 p.m. precisely, with the punctuality common to the P. and O., we slipped from the buoy and steamed ahead outward (or rather homeward) bound. My cabin companion was Dr. Moncrieff, late Bishop's chaplain at Hong Kong, and we united in prayer in our cabin, being afterwards joined by other passengers, ladies and gentlemen. We occupied the spare ladies' saloon for that purpose.

On reaching Point de Galle (Ceylon), at 6 a.m., March 13, we had to wait the arrival of the *Hindostan* to take us on to Suez, whence the old-fashioned horse vehicles rolled us across the desert to Cairo, and thence by Nile steamboats to Alexandria, when the P. and O. s.s. *Bentinck* completed the journey to Southampton by April 17.

The weather was comparatively cool, and this so knocked out of me the invalid which the tropics had put in, that I at once started off to the Admiralty to secure a vacancy in the *Assistance* with Sir Edward Belcher, on the eve of departure to search for the Franklin expedition; but my old chief, Sir

F. Beaufort, the hydrographer, would not sanction an invalid embarking on Arctic service. Under these circumstances I declined any other service, and applied for two years' leave of absence, to run round the world for my health's sake.

My application was granted, and I forthwith entered upon my long holiday as a gentleman at large.



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## CHAPTER XX

1852.

Start again for Australia—Coming out with the *Chusan*—An unreliable card—Man overboard—No rescue—Through Port Phillip Heads—An eye-opener for the captain—An historic event—On to Sydney—Return to Melbourne—Official appointment—Tasmania revisited—End of the roving commission—Riding at anchor.

HAVING now a long-desired opportunity of revisiting Tasmania, I lost no time in seeking a passage to Australia. A P. and O. steamer was, I saw, advertised to leave for Port Phillip, and I hastened to 122 Leadenhall Street to secure a berth, when, on hearing my name, a gentleman at the counter inquired, "Have you ever been in China?"

I replied that I had only just landed by the last mail.

"Then I suppose you are the gentleman who suggested in a Hong Kong paper how to connect Australia with Great Britain by steam."

I pleaded guilty to the heinous charge, and the clerk who was attending to my application was

instructed not to take my money, the penalty for my offence being the offer to go out with this vessel, the *Chusan*, the pioneer of the service, which I have recorded more fully in an earlier chapter.

As I have said, the voyage was the more agreeable because the vessel was commanded by Captain Henry Down, who had been chief officer on board the *Ripon*, in which I had gone to Alexandria *en route* for China in 1849.

I may here remark that iron vessels were comparative novelties at the date of the *Chusan's* first trip, and as she was an iron boat, the question of magnetic influence on the compass was duly considered; and to take no avoidable risk, the ship was swung by Mr. Stebbing in Southampton Water, and a card of deviations, proposing to give the error of his compass, was furnished, that was guaranteed to direct the navigator safely to Australia and back again, if necessary. Had it, however, been relied on, it is to be feared that the pioneer mail-steamer to Australia would have been posted at Lloyd's among the missing. But to test the correctness and reliability of this card, I, as the captain's coadjutor, undertook to make daily observations by amplitudes and azimuths to determine this necessary point. It very soon proved as we travelled south that the card was a deceiver and not to be trusted. After crossing the equator the application of the errors was reversed, for, where on the north side of the equator the correction of, say, half a point had to be added, now

being south of the equator it had to be subtracted; consequently the use of the card was abandoned, and by frequent use of the sun, and sometimes of the stars, an excellent landfall was made throughout the voyage.

Calling at St. Vincent and at the Cape of Good Hope for coal, it was July 29 before we reached Cape Otway, and there being no pilots outside the Heads at that time, the captain, under the impression that I had assisted in the survey of Port Phillip, asked if I could take the ship in, which I consented to do on the condition that I was up in time to get an amplitude at sunrise.

We hove-to for soundings about 5 a.m. It was blowing a strong gale N.W. with a heavy sea, and while sounding, Cape Otway light was seen bearing N.E. fifteen or twenty miles distant, an excellent landfall.

We set on at full speed, rejoicing in the prospect of a speedy termination to our hitherto prosperous voyage.

When I came on deck before sunrise, Captain Down said, "Now that you are up, Pasco, I will go down and shave. We will furl the topsails and put her under reefed trysails when we haul up for Port Phillip."

Under full steam, and the gale with a following sea after us, we were not going less than twelve knots. As I kneeled on the skylight at the standard compass waiting for the day-god to arise and shine, just as the

limb of the sun came above the horizon bearing N.E., a poor fellow on the lee topsail-yardarm fell overboard. Flinging the grating on which I was standing and a lifebuoy overboard, I ordered the helm to be put down, and stopped the engines. Then jumping into the starboard quarter-boat (a gig of four oars, 24 ft. long with 6 ft. 4 in. beam), I sung out for volunteers.

The first man to answer was Tom McEwan, a native of Nassau, New Providence, who was on the topsail-yard when his mate fell. He sprang at a back-stay, and slid down like a monkey. Three other seamen followed, and we commenced to lower, when William Bencraft, the chief officer, volunteered to come also. Not being required to pull an oar, he undertook to bale; I had sent one man to the mizzen-mast-head to keep the poor fellow in sight, and extend his arm in the direction we had to pull. A quarter-master was at the foremost-tackle to lower, and the carpenter at the after-fall, and we were nearly half-way down when the quarter-master called to me, "Shall we let her down with the run, sir?" As the sea frequently rose up to the boat, that is what we might have done, but at that moment the after-tackle fouled and would not render. It was then either hoist her up again and abandon the enterprise, or cut the after-fall.

The desire to save life overcame all thought of risk, so the quarter-master was ordered to watch as the last strand cracked, and let go at the right instant.



Then I out knife; the quarter-master was keen-eyed and prompt, and down she went, square as a die; but as at that moment the ship pitched heavily into a wave, the stern rose, leaving a yawning vacuum into which the boat was sucked under the counter, almost against the fan of her screw, while the barnacles made an ugly impression on my temple and knuckles in an endeavour to save my head. But the next pitch of her bow released us, and we faced the sea to pull back against it in the direction of our unfortunate shipmate. All we could do was to stem the breaking seas and keep her head straight for them, steering by voice to the oarsmen, for the rudder was of little use. It was "Pull starboard!" "Pull port!" and "Steady!" till after a hard half-hour's strain we reached the lifebuoy and grating with the poor fellow's hat floating together.

We had had several gospel talks together on the voyage, and my hope was that as he had seen the natural sun rising above the horizon as he fell, his thought may have been directed to the "Sun of Righteousness," that "shall arise with healing in His wings, to such as fear His Name."

Intent on the endeavour to pick our shipmate up, and to manage the boat, in the attempt we had never looked for our ship; but now, where was she? Not to be seen!

The gale being from off Cape Otway, I gave up any idea of reaching that coast, and the only course open seemed to scud under a goose-wing of the

sail, and get under the lee of King's Island by night-fall, which the present gale would enable us to reach on about a south-easterly course. So we stepped the mast and reduced the sail ready for a start, when the *Chusan* hove in sight again, steaming to our relief.

During her absence, in trying to turn and come to us, the sea had broken so violently on board as to put the fires out, and some fear was entertained for her safety ; but when the ship was able again to sight the boat, which those on board were surprised had lived through such a sea, she bore down on us, and we were soon alongside. Another boat had to be hoisted in to leave her tackles vacant to hoist us up by. Finally, we were all got on board ; but my condition was such that I had to be carried down to my bed, my clothes taken off, and a bottle of brandy poured over me, while the horny hand of a seaman was employed rubbing me vigorously. I was then rolled up in an opossum rug, and left to recover.

In the meantime the ship was hove-to, waiting for me to take the pilot's place on the bridge, and when I was released from medical control my first business was to calculate the true bearing of the sun at rising, and thus ascertaining the error of the compass, to ensure the only safe course being taken to enter Port Phillip. But before that was effected we passed through a heavy breaking Rip, which to a stranger made it seem that we were among rocks. So strongly did

this strike him, that Captain Down called to me, "Is it all right, Mr. Pasco?"

"All right, if you keep on full speed to ensure good steerage," I answered.

Presently we passed into smooth water and arrived off Shortland's Bluff (since called Qucenscliff), where the pilot (old Loutitt) came off.

When he had boarded us, Captain Down called me to the bridge and said, "Here's a pilot, Pasco."

"I am glad of that," I replied, "for I never saw this place before," to the utter astonishment of poor Down, who all the morning had been under the comforting belief that he was in the hands of an experienced pilot.

But I had every reliance in the sailing directions of my shipmates in the *Beagle*, and having proved their correctness, I gladly returned to my bed, while Loutitt took us up the West Channel to Hobson's Bay.

A crowd of shipping occupied the bay, many of them deserted by their crews, who had gone to the "diggings." But we were the centre of attraction, and great were the rejoicings in the commercial, domestic, and every other world at the receipt of the mail from Europe within eleven weeks.

It does not sound much when the magnificent 7000-ton liners, the floating palaces of half-a-dozen competing companies, can do the trip in a month, but it was so great a stride in advance then, that, as I

have previously said, the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, in appreciation of such service, caused a massive gold medal to be struck and presented to Captain Down, and the newspapers dilated with pride over the arrival of this splendid steamship of 700 tons and 80 horse-power.

The seaman we failed to rescue was named John Dowal Whittle, an attendant at a daily class we held on board for the study of navigation. We always commenced school by reading a chapter of the Bible, and had been going through St. John's Gospel. I secured the poor fellow's Bible from the cabin, intending to send it home to his mother at Weymouth, where my brother was in command of the Coast-guard, and in the flyleaf I copied the sixty-ninth Psalm, from the Bishop of London's Psalms and Hymns, 1841. The words seemed so descriptive of the accident.

“O Lord, amidst the raging tide  
 Preserve my helpless soul ;  
 My heart is faint, my footsteps slide,  
 As the dark billows roll.

Lord, for Thy tender mercy's sake,  
 Support my sinking frame ;  
 Redeem my soul, my fetters break,  
 And put me not to shame.

For Thou didst never yet despise  
 The contrite sinner's prayer :  
 Thou wilt refresh my longing eyes,  
 And banish all my care.

When others leave me, Thou art near,  
My drooping soul to raise :  
And Thou wilt change my grief and fear  
To songs of thankful praise."

(Malachi iv. 2.)

7 a.m. 429. vii. 52.

*Cape Otway, N.W. 10 m.*

This book I sent home to the mother of the drowned seaman, and twenty years after (1873) saw it at Weymouth in possession of her grandson.

Landing at Cole's Wharf, Melbourne, with Captain Down, we were met by J. B. Ware, Esq., the acting agent for the P. and O., who accompanied us to pay our respects to his Excellency, C. J. Latrobe, Esq., Governor.

On the following day his Excellency, in company with Captain Lonsdale (Colonial Secretary), Captain G. Ward Cole, R.N., and other distinguished colonists, visited this magnificent mail-steamship, and were specially interested in the little boat that had proved her seaworthiness in a storm which was almost too much for the ship.

To this port only had I taken my passage, intending to cross the Straits to Tasmania by the first opportunity, to fulfil a ten years' engagement; but as the directors of the P. and O. Company had dealt liberally with me, I was in duty bound to see the ship through Bass Straits, which was not lighted where most needed, and on to Sydney.

I promised Captain Down that I would go on with him so far. Accordingly we took our departure on

August 1, and in passing through the Heads secured the following landmark, which I noticed when entering and which proved safe, viz. the gable-end of a small building on the south side of the lighthouse, which, together with a fall in the cliff, both in line with the lighthouse, gave a tolerably direct course out or in to Port Phillip. The note is not wanted now, but it may stand as a reminder to modern Melbourne of the comparatively short space of time which has elapsed since the Heads could only be passed in safety by adopting these primitive guides.

Approaching the promontory, after 8 p.m., we were anxious to make the Cleft Island, because, being much lower than the mainland behind it, there is great difficulty in picking it up at night, and I felt that a light on this island would aid navigation for rounding Wilson's Promontory, and avoiding the rock on the north-east side of Rodondo.

On August 3 (the eightieth day from Southampton) we arrived at Port Jackson, and were berthed at Moore's Wharf, near the entrance to Darling Harbour.

The gratitude of the colonists was here marked by a magnificent ball and supper in the building since completed for the Museum; but I felt at the time a far more useful way of expressing their grateful sense of the advantage conferred upon them by the P. and U

O. Company's enterprise, would have been to erect a lighthouse on either Cleft Island or on the forty-foot rock near Rodondo, which might have been named "Chusan" Light. Either of those two sites would, in my opinion, have been preferable to the promontory itself, where a light has since been established. The benefit of the above leading mark was duly recognized a few years later by the erection of a lower light on that line.

At Sydney we experienced the effects of the "gold fever" among the crew, several of whom ran to the goldfields; but early in September the first direct mail for Europe *viâ* Suez was made up in Sydney, and I returned with the *Chusan* to Melbourne, where Mr. Latrobe offered me the appointment of Water Police Magistrate at Williamstown, and the position of Superintendent of Water Police, a body which, by the way, had no existence at the time. Such an organization was, however, an urgent necessity. My visit to Tasmania on particular private business had therefore to be paid and completed with as little delay as possible.

On my return on October 1, I was gazetted to the dual offices above mentioned. Thus, I, who had never been inside a court before, found myself presiding on a Bench; but as the chief business was to keep seamen in order, the work was to some extent genial and familiar. Still it was rather tame and monotonous, after roving in various climes among

many nations. But my ship had reached harbour; my roving commission was over, my pennant hauled down, and in subsiding into the landsman I reverently realized that

“There’s a Divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them how we will.”

